

Anti-Bullying Policy

Draft



**Happy, Safe and Successful
Learners**

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Section [1] Our Mission Statement

St Benedict's College is a Catholic, all ability, inclusive school committed to delivering excellence for all. Together with home and community, we strive to enable our students to be happy, safe and successful.

Our Motto

Guigh agus Foghlaim - Pray and Learn

Our Values

Staff and students in St Benedict's College will:

- Respect themselves, others, their school and their community
- Demonstrate kindness, empathy and concern for others
- Be inclusive and tolerant of other religions, cultures and traditions
- Be honest and truthful
- Be charitable and giving and demonstrate a commitment to service and social justice

Section [2] The Legislative Context:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19)
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978

The Policy & Guidance Context

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)
- Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)
 - Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2016)
 - Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)

The International Context

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Linked Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Health and Safety Policy Positive Behaviour Policy

E-Safety Policy

Educational Visits Policy

Key Points

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

- Provides a legal definition of bullying.
- Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
- Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.
- Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:
 - In school, during the school day
 - While travelling to and from school
 - When under control of school staff, but away from school (eg. school trip)
 - When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere eg. in another school in the ALC
- Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.

The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils' (A.17)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child's right to:

Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation. (A.19)

Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)

Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)

Education. (A.28)

Section [3] What is Bullying?

At St Benedict's College we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils should be able to learn in a happy, safe, supported environment so they are afforded every opportunity to succeed.

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of "bullying":

1.—(1) In this Act "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—

(a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,

(b) any other act, or

(c) any combination of those, by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), "act" includes omission.

while bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

- *severity and significance of the incident*
- *evidence of pre-meditation*
- *impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)*
- *impact of the incidents on wider school community*
- *previous relationships between those involved*
- *any previous incidents involving the individuals*

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour.

This list is not exhaustive and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour

Verbal or written Acts

- *saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others*
- *making fun of others*
- *calling another pupil mean and hurtful names*
- *telling lies or spread false rumours about others*
- *try to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s*

Physical Acts

- *Hitting*
- *kicking*
- *pushing*
- *shoving*
- *material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions*

Omission (Exclusion)

- *Leaving someone out of a game*
- *Refusing to include someone in group work*

Electronic

- *Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above*
- *Impersonating someone online to cause hurt*
- *Sharing images (eg. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone*

Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.

There may be various motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

Appearance	Breakdown in peer relationships	Community background
Political affiliation	Gender identity	Sexual orientation
Pregnancy	Marital status	Race
Religion	Disability / Special Educational Needs	Ability
Looked After Child status	Young Carer status	Those with or without dependants

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason we will not refer to a child as 'a bully', nor will we refer to a child as 'a victim'.

Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

- A child displaying bullying behaviours
- A child experiencing bullying behaviours

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

Section [4] Preventative Measures

In St Benedict's College we aim to promote a strong anti-bullying ethos to create a safe learning environment for all.

Examples of these preventative steps include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum eg. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PD and other areas of the LLW Curriculum (eg. sectarian, racist, homophobic, disablist, etc.)
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (eg Take 5)
- Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, eg Safer Internet Day.
- Development of peer-led systems (eg. School Council and take 5 Champions) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- Development of effective strategies for playground management, eg. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, Nurture room and lunchtime clubs
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (eg. break time, lunch)
- Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.

While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways we can further build upon this related specifically on the journey to and from school. This includes:

- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.
- Measures to empower pupils to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour of their peers during the journey to and from school. This may include the implementation of peer monitoring systems on buses, trains and ferries, and for those walking.
- Regular engagement with transport providers (eg. Translink, EA Transport, etc.) to ensure effective communication and the early identification of any concerns.
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community (eg. local shops, cafes, residents, etc), including information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
- Appropriate deployment of staff to support the transition from school day to journey home (eg. staff duty at school gate/bus lane, where appropriate)

The legislation also gives our school the authority to take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school.

St. Benedict's College will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support our pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This may include:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PD/LLW, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.

- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (eg. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (eg. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Bring your Own Device Policy)

Section [5] Responsibility

Everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of our school community. Everyone in the school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

- Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:
 - foster positive self-esteem
 - behave towards others in a mutually respectful way
 - model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour
 - be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
 - inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour
 - refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
 - refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour
 - intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
 - report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff.
 - emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
 - explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others.
 - listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
 - know how to seek support – internal and external
 - resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

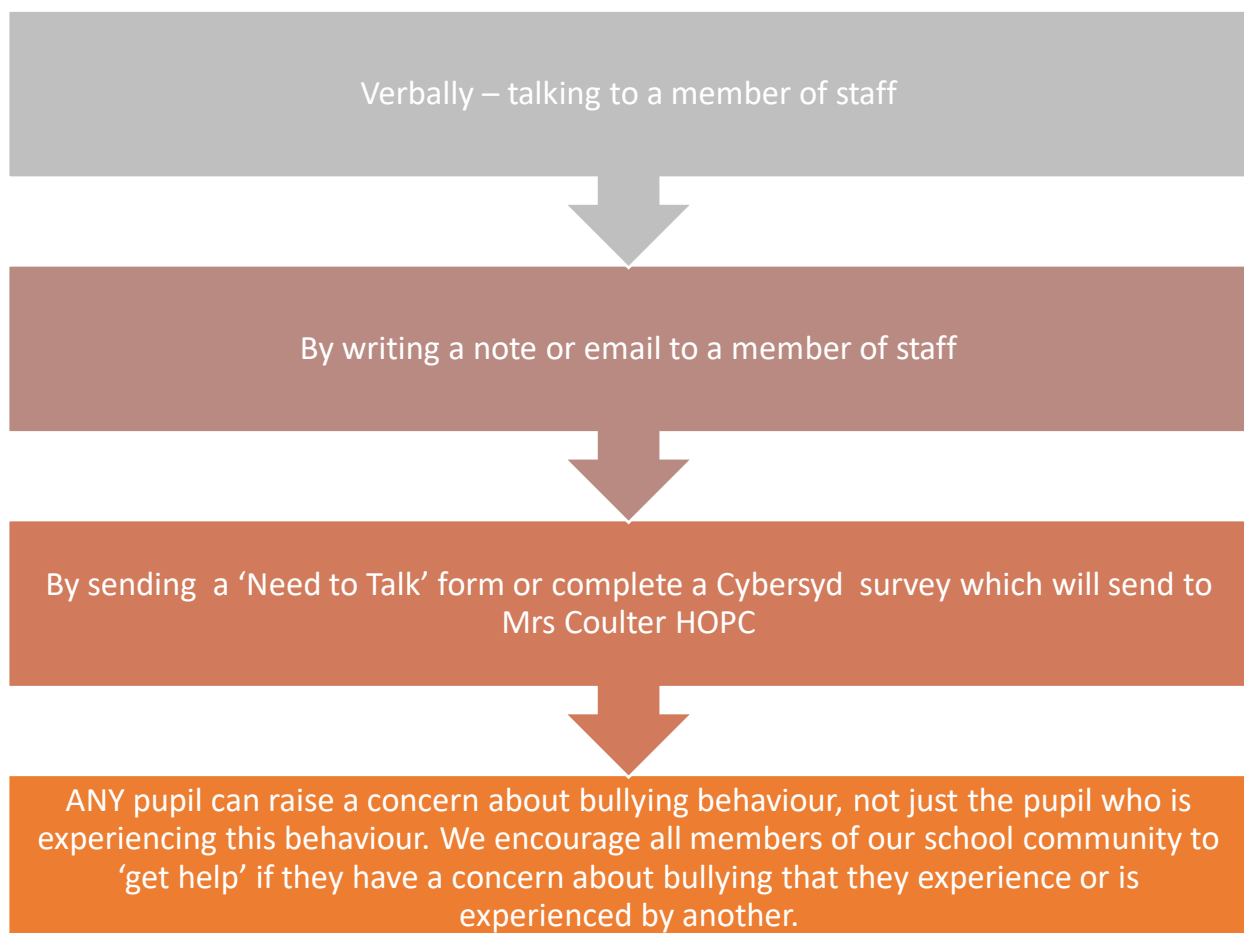
Section [6] Reporting a Bullying Concern

This section outlines the various ways in which pupils, parents and anyone else with concerns can make these known to the school. While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, we are open to receiving such reports from anyone.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and that feedback will be made to the person who made the report. However, it must be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and her parents/carers.

[6.1] Pupils Reporting a Bullying Concern

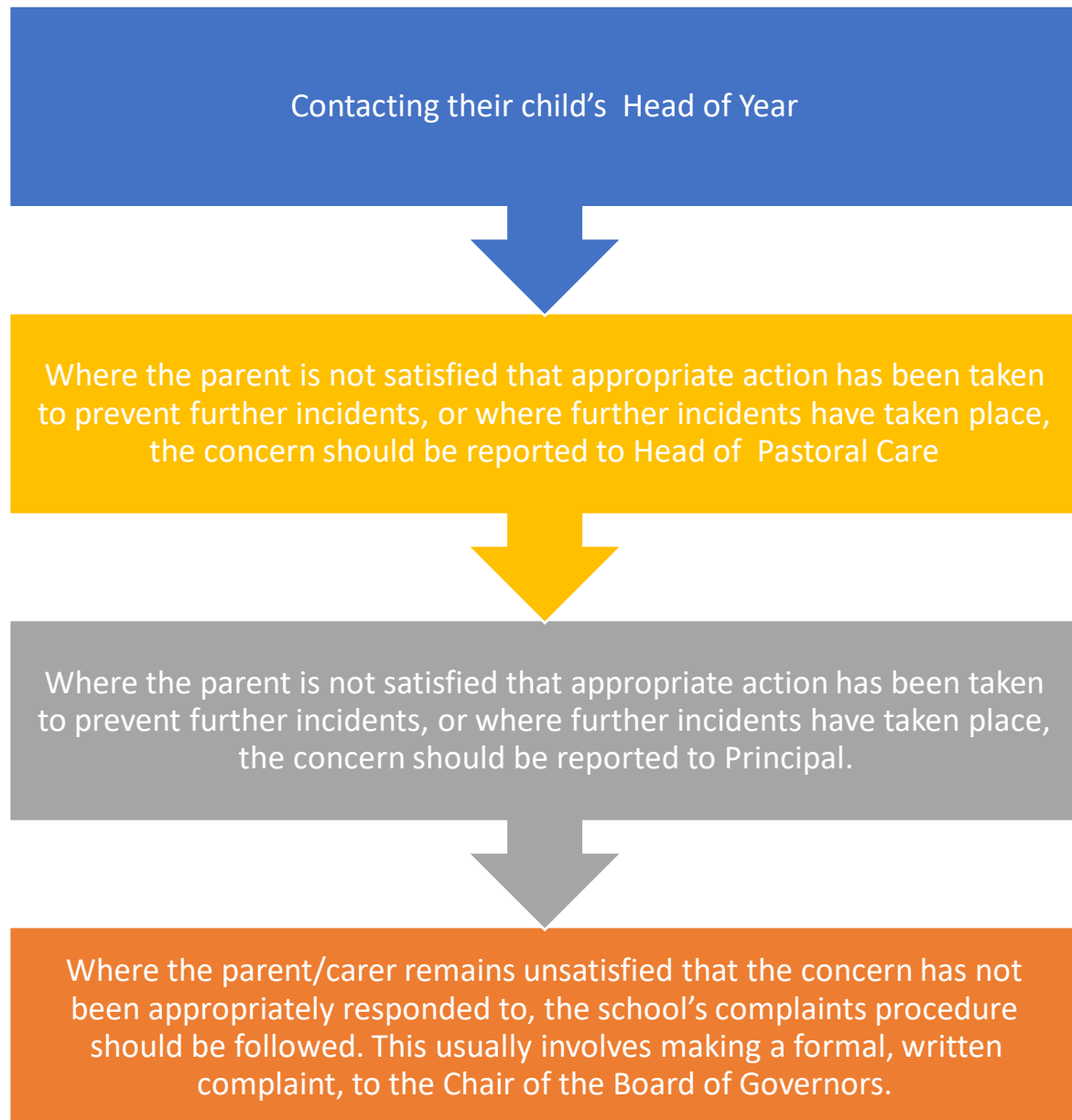
Whilst there are key pastoral staff in school with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour, we encourage pupils to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff.



[6.2] Parents/Carers Reporting a Bullying Concern

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers need to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

Parents can raise a concern about alleged bullying behaviour by:



The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) have created a parent toolkit, which is a helpful resource for parents. It can be found here: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/NIABF-Parent-Carer-Toolkit.pdf>

[6.3] Responding to a Bullying Concern

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall...

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS)
- Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour
- Identify any themes or motivating factors
- Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
- Identify intervention level
- Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences and sanctions not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- Review outcome of interventions
- Select and implement further intentions as necessary

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

[6.4] Recording

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)
- the motivation for the behaviour
- how each incident was addressed by the school
- the outcome of the interventions employed.

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be

restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

Section [7] Professional Development of Staff

St Benedict's College recognise the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff.

This includes:

- ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
- noting the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
- ensuring that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
- stating that CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

Section [8] Monitoring and Review of Policy

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, in liaison with the Principal, to monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

- maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incidents of bullying will be noted
- identify trends and priorities for action

- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour

It is a legal requirement that the Anti-Bullying Policy be reviewed at intervals of no more than four years. This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers every 2 years from initial ratification by the Board of Governors.

However, the policy will also be reviewed:

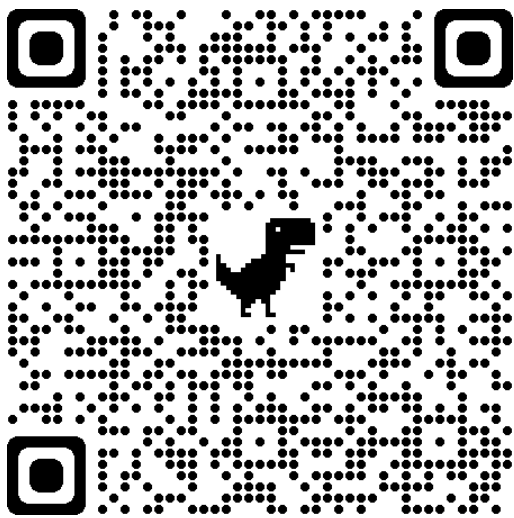
- following any incident which highlights the need for such a review.
- when directed to by the Department of Education and in light of new guidance. As such, the policy should indicate a timeline for the review of policy, for example:

Appendix 1 - Bullying Concern Flowchart

Process to follow when supporting young people who are experiencing or displaying bullying type behaviours

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-05/Bullying%20flow%20chart%20final.pdf>

QR Code



Appendix 2 – Support Services

There are organisations that provide support to children who are being bullied and their families

Some organisations offer support and training for parents and young people.

NIABF – Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: 028 90875006

www.endbullying.org.uk

Childline Helpline: 0800 1111 (24 hours) www.childline.org.uk

Thinkuknow: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) online safety site

UK Safer Internet Centre Helpline: 0844 381 4772 www.saferinternet.org.uk

NSPCC Helpline: 080880050 www.nspcc.org.uk

Kidscape: 0207730330 www.kidscape.org.uk

Parents Advice Centre: 029023880

Police Service of Northern Ireland: 101 www.psni.police.uk

Kidsmart www.kidsmart.org.uk

Mencap Helpline: 0808 808 1111 www.dontstickit.org.uk

www.mencap.org.uk ‘Don’t Stick It, Stop It!’ is a campaign against bullying for young people with learning disabilities and their families.

National Autistic Society Helpline: 0845 070 4004 www.nas.org.uk

Offers support for people with autism and their families and has resources for parent carers, school staff and young people on preventing bullying.

Appendix 3 – Bullying Concern Assessment Form