

1.10.2 Bullying, Countering of

Regulations and standards

England

- [Regulation 11: The positive relationships standard](#)
- [Guide to the positive relationships standard](#)
- [Regulation 19: Behaviour management and discipline](#)
- [Regulation 34: Policies for the protection of children](#)
- [Regulation 45: Review of the quality of care](#)

Wales

- [Regulation 15: Personal plan](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/15/made>
- [Regulation 27: Safeguarding policies and procedures](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/27/made>
- [Regulation 80: Quality of care review](#)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/80/made>

Outcome statement

Children are protected from bullying.

Related guidance

Incidents Guidance summarises what constitutes an Incident, provides guidance on recording of Incidents, notifications and management reviews.

Countering Bullying Guidance

Contents

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1. Policy

All children and young people have a right to feel confident that this is a safe and healthy environment.

We want to ensure that all children, young people and staff remain safe from discrimination, marginalisation or bullying behaviour and have the opportunity to thrive and prosper, emotionally and socially within and outside the Home.

When bullying is encountered we will ensure that the procedures are in place to allow:

- Reporting of the incident;
- Having incidents of bullying properly recorded;
- Having concerns or incidents of bullying properly monitored;
- Ensuring appropriate action is taken in response to incidents of bullying and that is followed up.

This will ensure that people feel listened to and understand that their concerns have been and will be taken seriously.

Within the home a culture of mutual respect and dignity is agreed and promoted amongst the staff, children, and any visitors into the home and a set of shared standards of what behaviour and language is acceptable across the home will be advocated.

Staff and children will receive guidance and training that encourages an understanding and appreciation of what bullying is and how it impacts on self and others. See **Employee Handbook 15.3 Identifying harassment & Bullying**

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as behaviour or actions of a person, group of people or a whole organisation designed to cause distress or to hurt a person or group of people.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, threatening gestures);
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- **Online/cyber-bullying** – e. g. using mobile phones or social networking sites to intimidate or bully others.

Further detail of what may constitute bullying is contained in **Countering Bullying Guidance**.

3. General/Prevention

Staff must be alert to the risk of bullying and should take all reasonable steps to prevent such behaviour. This includes:

- Implementing a clear policy within the home/school that bullying is not acceptable;
- Undertaking risk assessments at point of referral and at appropriate stages thereafter;
- Providing information and guidance to children;
- Providing clarity to children on acceptable behaviours;
- Drafting Individual Behavioural Support Plans (IBSP)/contracts with relevant children;
- Providing opportunities for children to explore issues of bullying e.g. writing stories; or poems or drawing pictures about bullying;
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to them;
- Making use of role-plays;
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

We all have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Everyone involved in looking after children shares responsibility for countering bullying and for creating a culture which positively encourages acceptable behaviour and reduces or prevents the likelihood of bullying.

As part of this ethos, everyone must understand what bullying means and what measures should be taken within the home and by individual staff to counter it.

Everyone should also be clear what measures they should take if they suspect bullying or it is reported to them.

In this respect, everyone should be alert to the fact that bullying may constitute **Significant Harm** and, if so, must be reported under the **Child and Adult Protection Procedure**

4. Risk Assessment and Planning

4.1 Homes/School Strategies

Each home and the school may have its own strategies for countering bullying, depending on the purpose of the home and the needs of child/children living there.

If homes have their own Strategies they should be set down in the **Statement of Purpose** or Staff Handbook. **The school's strategies should be set out in its prospectus.**

The Children's Guide should also contain information and advice on countering bullying.

4.2 Individual Plans for Children

As part of the assessment and planning process, the Manager of the home/school must ensure that a Risk Assessment is conducted on each child to ascertain whether s/he may be a victim or perpetrator of bullying.

If there is any risk, it should be addressed in the child's plan (e.g. My Life Plan/ Personal Plan or an Individual Behavioural Support Plan (IBSP)) **with details of the strategies that must be adopted to prevent or reduce the bullying.**

5. Countering Bullying Day-to-Day

Also see: **Countering Bullying Guidance**

If they have any concerns, they must discuss them with colleagues and the Home Manager; who should take what actions are necessary to reduce or prevent it.

It may be appropriate to convene a meeting, preferably with the young person/people concerned, to discuss strategies to prevent or reduce the bullying. This may include the following:

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise;
2. In serious cases (see **Section 6, Notifications, Recording and Review**), some form of sanction or exclusion from the other young person will be considered;
3. If possible, the young people will be reconciled;
4. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be continuously monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

If the bullying is persistent or serious, the social worker should be consulted and it may be necessary to conduct a **Care Plan Review** or a **Strategy Discussion** in line with Child Protection Referral Procedures.

See: **Child and Adult Protection Procedure**

If the Home Manager is unavailable, staff/carers may take what immediate actions are necessary to reduce or prevent bullying from occurring and then inform the Manager as soon as practicable.

6. Notifications and Management Review

There are different notifications procedures depending on the persistence and seriousness of the bullying.

6.1 Minor or Non Persistent Bullying

Where bullying is not persistent or not serious it should be notified to the Home Manager at the first opportunity; the manager will decide whether to inform the social worker and what further actions to take.

6.2 Persistent or Serious Bullying

If the bullying is persistent or serious, it is deemed to be an Incident which must be notified to the Home Manager and relevant Social Worker within 24 hours or as soon as practicable thereafter.

The social worker should decide whether to inform the child's parent(s) and, if so, who should do so.

The Home Manager and social worker should consider whether the bullying may constitute **Significant Harm**; if this is likely, a referral should be made under the **Child and Adult Protection Procedure**

Depending on the seriousness of the Incident, other people/agencies may have to be notified, see **Delegated Authorities and Notifiable Events**.

The Home Manager must conduct a Management Review, as described in **Section 5, Incidents Guidance**.

The home manager must consider bullying in terms of adults in the home. See Employee Handbook 15.4 What to do if you feel you are subject to harassment. If the case may be in relation to the manager, the adult must inform the home manager's line manager, usually the regional manager.

7. Recording

There are different recording procedures depending on whether matters are concluded with or without the co-operation of children. Where possible the specific category of bullying e.g. verbal, physical, cyberbullying etc. should be identified and highlighted in the report so that these different incidents of bullying can be monitored as required and any patterns identified.

7.1 Recording of Minor or Non Persistent Bullying

Where bullying is not persistent or not serious it should be noted in the relevant child's Daily Record with detail recorded in a Detail Record. It should also be noted in the Daily Log held in Children's Homes.

7.2 Recording of Persistent or Serious Bullying

Persistent or serious bullying is deemed to be an Incident, and therefore should be recorded as such.

However, the records that must be completed will depend on the actions taken by staff/carers.

Please refer to **Incidents - General Guidance**, for guidance on the records that must be completed.

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

End