

Flourishing for All: Anti-Bullying Guidance for Church Schools

September 2024

Flourishing For All



Every child deserves
to learn in an
environment where
they are loved
supported and
respected.
Bishop Jonathan Frost

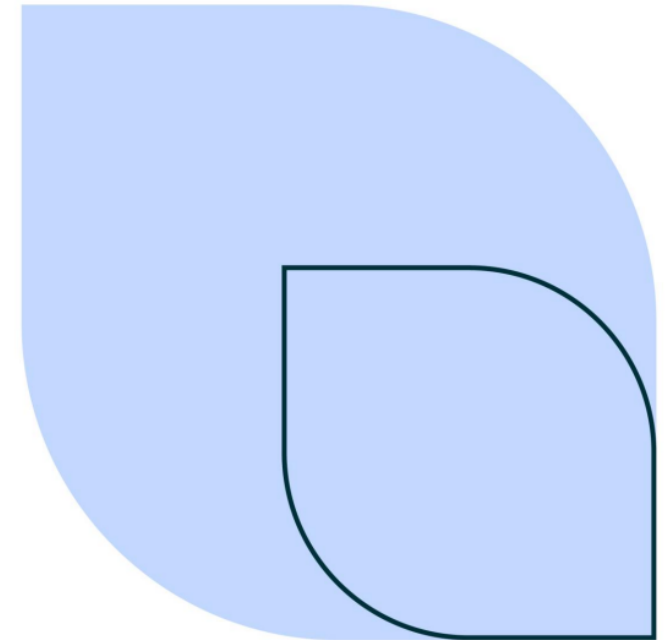


Flourishing For All: Anti-bullying Guidance for Church of England Schools



 National Society
for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Flourishing for All:
Anti-bullying Guidance for
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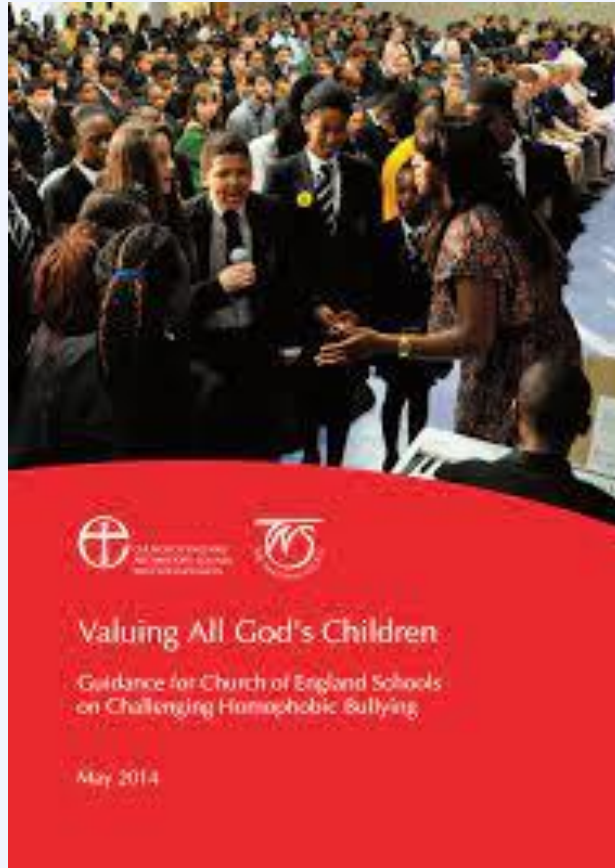


What pupils say: reasons for being bullied

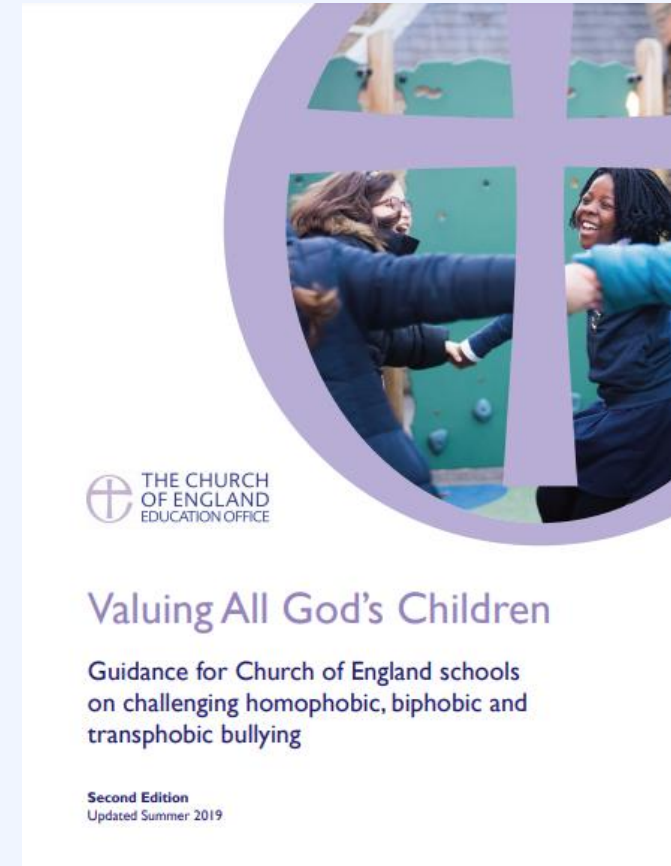
'just for being themselves'	'for being Asian; people make fun as a joke but sometimes it is racist and rude'	'fat shaming', 'for their weight'
'for literally anything and everything'	'for not speaking English and for their skin'	'because of their hobbies or what they do outside school'
'for being different'	'for being a lesbian'	'Because the persecutors might have problems at home - this isn't a justifiable reason though.'
'for their appearance', 'for their hair colour', 'for their looks'	'because they are gay'	'People will make fun of things like an ill parent or something along those lines.'
'for their intelligence', 'being smart or a 'nerd''	'medical conditions'	'judged for looking or acting slightly different to the norm'
'poverty'	'disabilities'	'sometimes for no reason at all'
'for being quiet, for being shy'	'their names, their passions and the things they like'	'yes, for existing'



CofE Anti-Bullying Guidance - History



'Valuing All God's Children' was first published in 2014 in response to research showing homophobic bullying was something which needed particular attention in Church schools. It was re-written in 2017 in the light of the Church of England Vision for Education and then updated again in 2019.



Anti-bullying suite overview

Part A Flourishing for All: anti-bullying guidance for Church of England schools

B: Tackling HBT bullying

C: Tackling bullying on the basis of race

D: Tackling bullying on the basis of SEN or Disability

E: Tackling bullying on the basis of religion or belief

F: Tackling sexist bullying and sexual harassment

G: Tackling bullying on the basis of socio-economic disadvantage

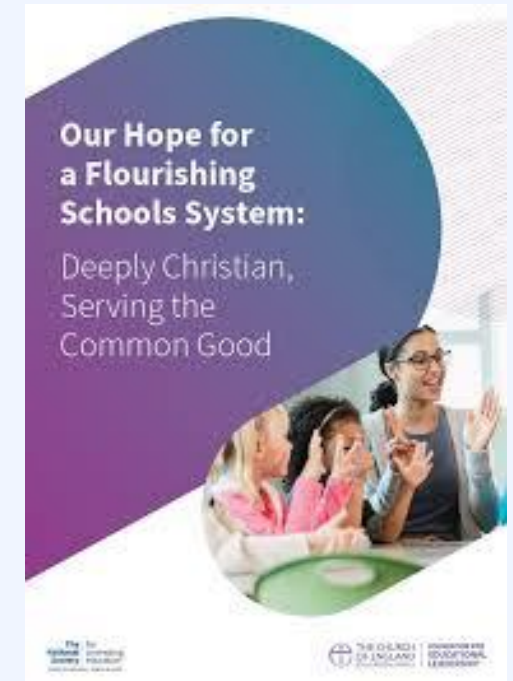
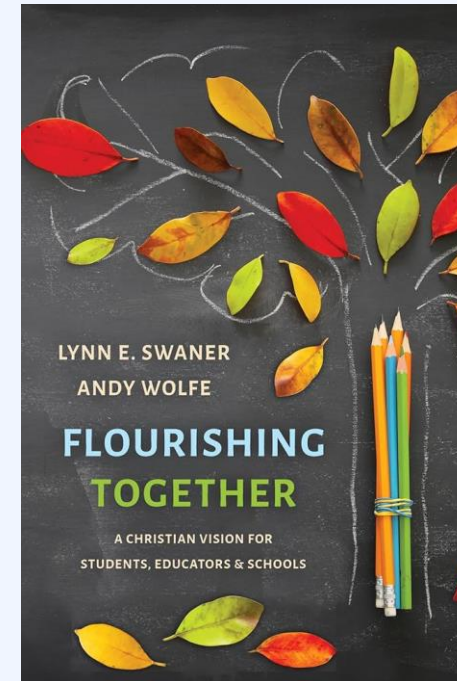
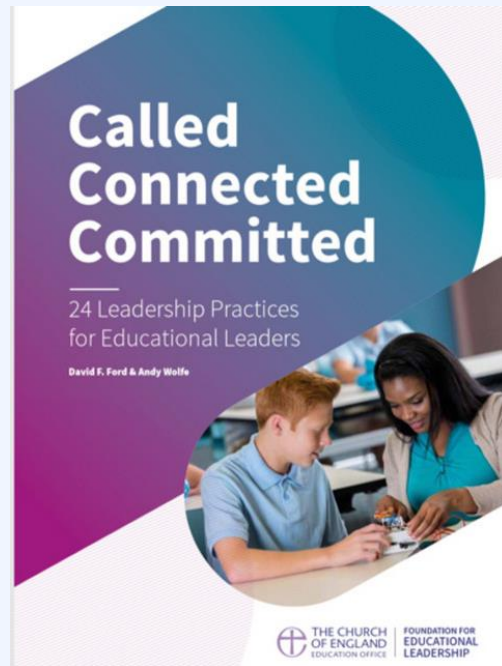
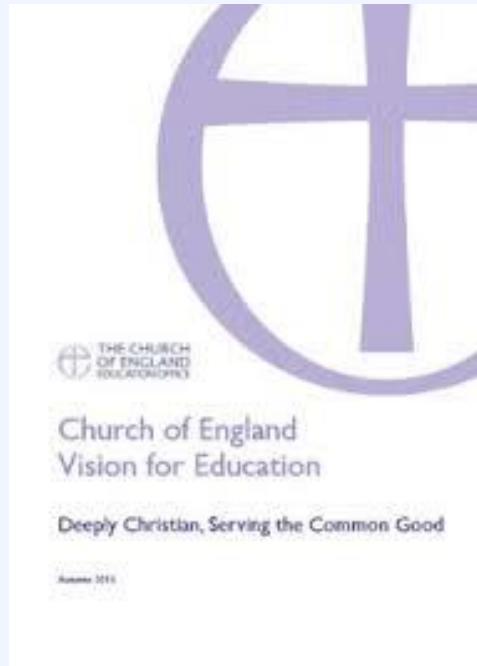


‘Our hope and prayer is that these resources will be used by schools across the country to enable flourishing and ensure that each and every child, knowing they are unique and made in the image of God, will find in our schools a safe environment where bullying of any kind is not tolerated. They should all know themselves to be loved, supported and championed, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, academic ability, disability, age or sexual orientation.’

Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Frost, Lead Bishop for Education



Part A: Flourishing for All



The Difference Habits



<https://difference.rln.global/>



'Life in All its Fullness'

Full flourishing is only possible when each and every member of our school communities:



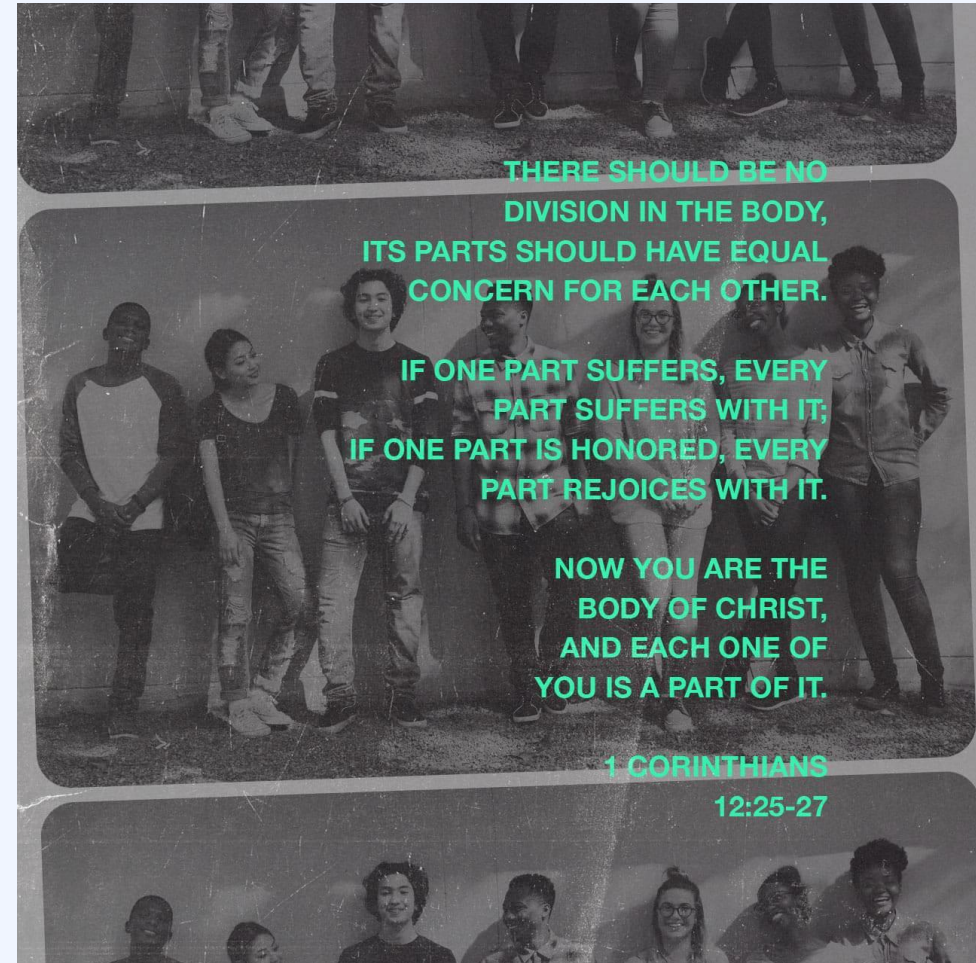
- Experiences true **belonging** – knowing they are welcome, completely included, valued and celebrated
- Finds every possible avenue of academic and vocational **progress and success** open to them, without needing to overcome institutional barriers
- Feels totally **safe and secure** wherever they are, and fully connected with others
- Is able to meaningfully **participate** in the life of their school – with their voice heard and their ideas acted upon
- Believes that a **hope-filled future** *can and will* be theirs, because they see themselves represented in all aspects of school life, particularly in leadership



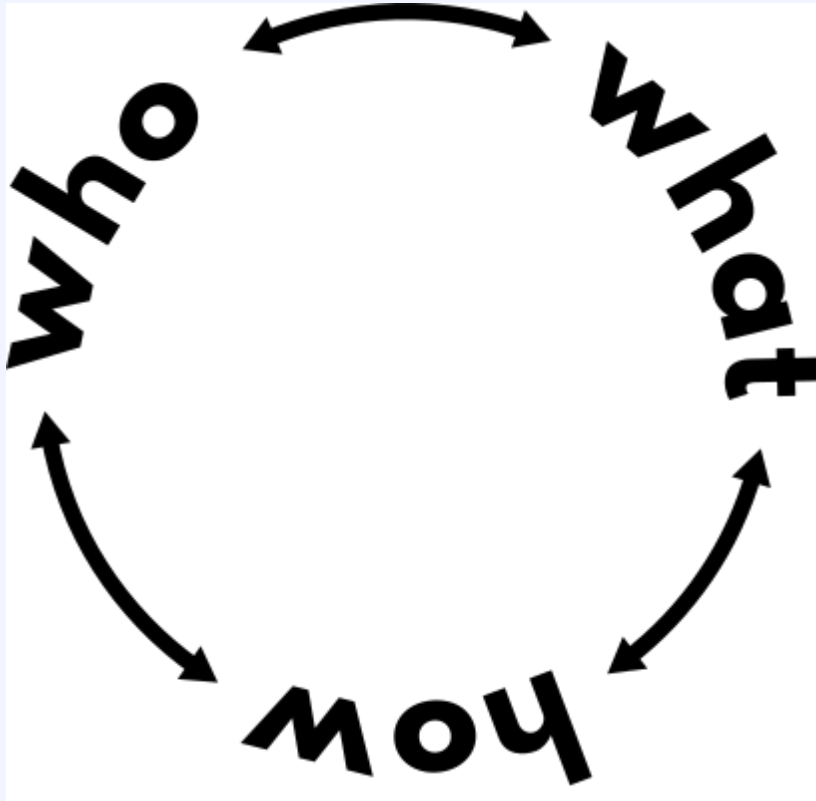
Why anti-bullying is central to flourishing

'Ensuring our children are kept safely from harm and educated in an environment where all God's children are valued is of the highest priority.'

Vision for Education (2016)



Why anti-bullying is central to flourishing



The members of our school communities need to know and feel that **who** they are is valued, **what** they have experienced in life is understood, and **how** they live and practice what they believe is respected.



What do we mean by ‘bullying’?

The Department for Education defines bullying as ‘behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation



Which forms of bullying do schools have the power to deal with?



In-school bullying
(anywhere on the
premises)



Out-of-school
bullying (on the
journey, outside of
school, involving
school pupils)



Online/ Cyber-
bullying
(using smartphones,
social media, online
games etc)



What the law says: Equality Act 2010



Age



Disability



Gender reassignment



Marriage & civil partnership



Pregnancy & maternity



Race



Religious belief & non-belief



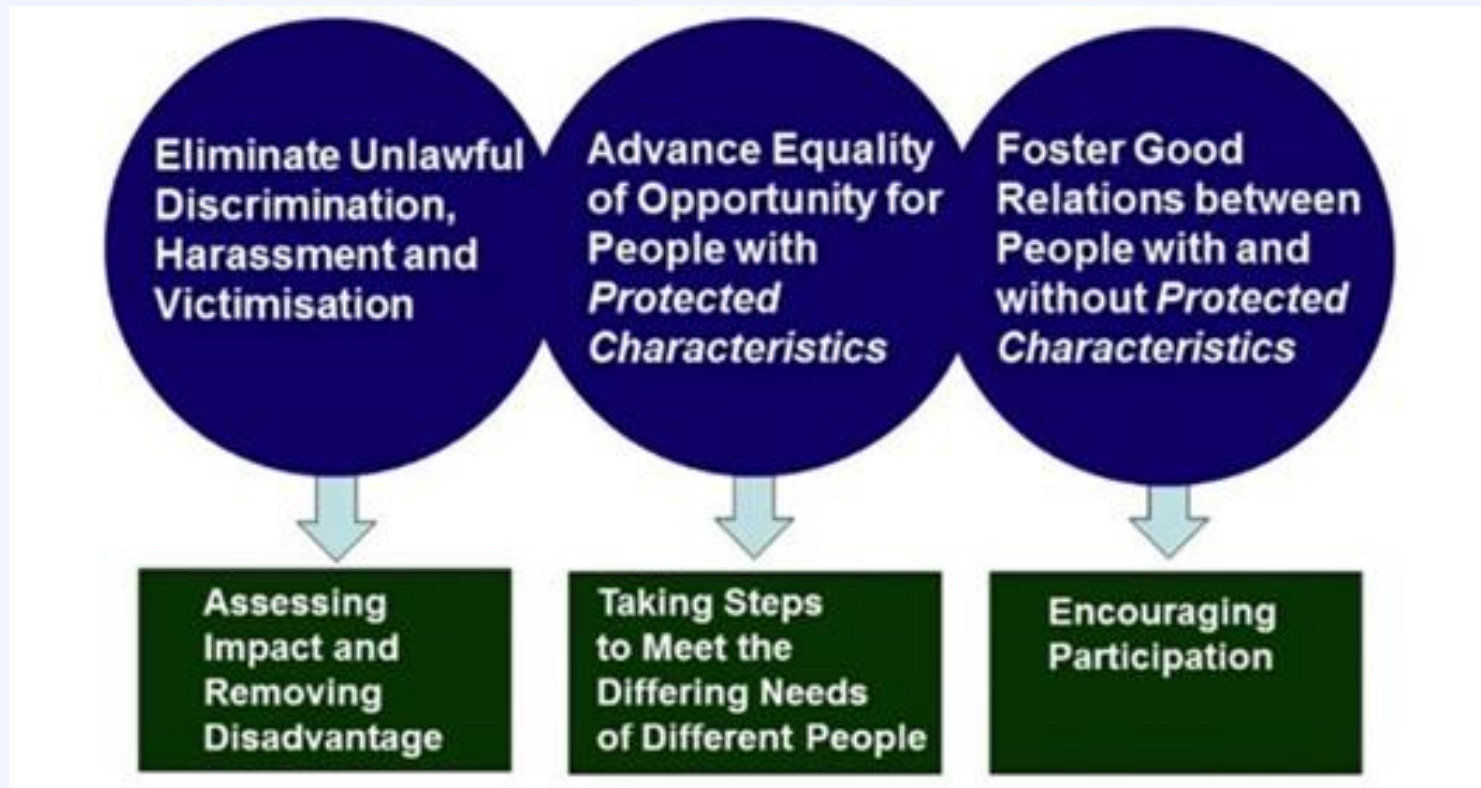
Sex



Sexual orientation



What the law says: Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)



Therefore, schools need to:

- Proactively PREVENT bullying
- TACKLE any bullying which occurs, especially on the basis of protected characteristics



What the law says: Keeping Children Safe in Education

Bullying towards pupils who have SEN or a disability, towards those who are (or perceived to be) LGB/GQ, racial discrimination and sexualised bullying as part of sexual harassment are all specifically outlined within KCSiE (2024). There are particular considerations for the online world, and the prominence of cyberbullying.

Keeping children safe in education 2024

**Statutory guidance for schools
and colleges**



Inspection of Anti-bullying

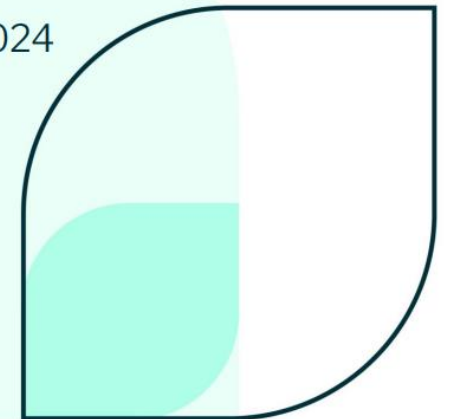


 Statutory Inspection of
Anglican & Methodist Schools
National Society for Education

Statutory Inspection of
Anglican and Methodist
Schools

SIAMS Framework

Revised September 2024



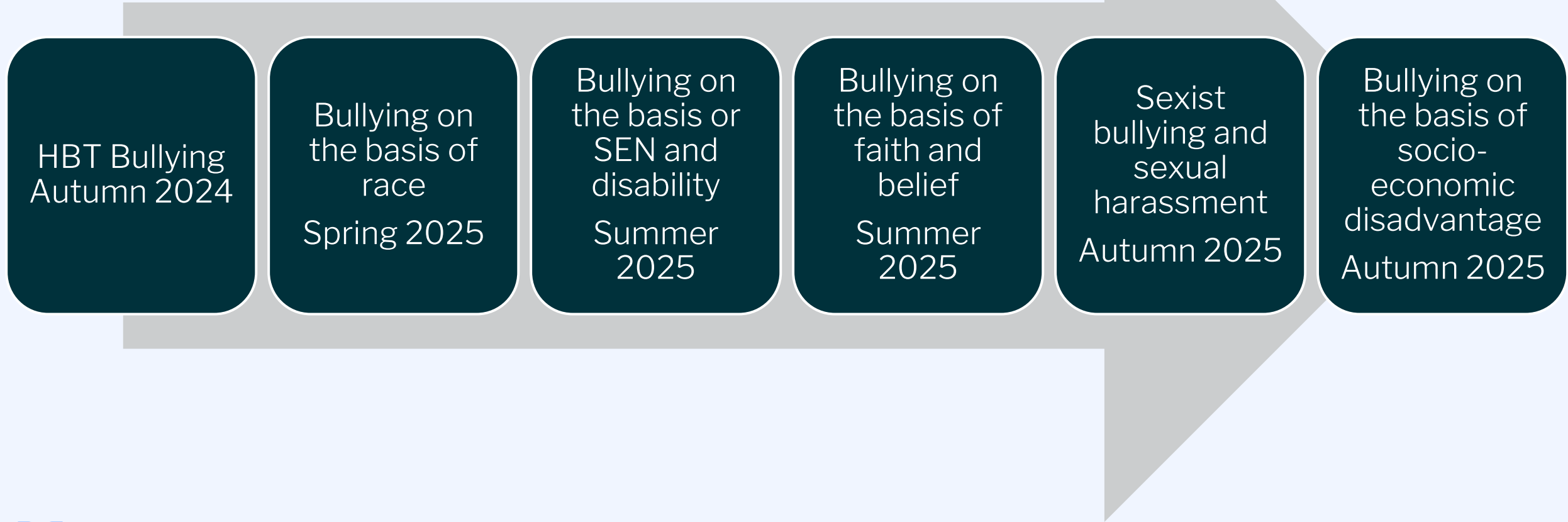
Cumulative Impact

Schools must be aware of and adjust their strategies to take account of the **cumulative impact** on children, young people and adults who experience multiple forms of discrimination.

Schools must be proactive in creating an environment where those who are most likely to be disempowered via intersectionality are given special attention and are proactively protected from bullying.



Flourishing for All: Projected Timeline for Publication



What pupils say: what schools can do about it

Safe spaces/
listening

Support groups/
pastoral care

Anti-bullying
ambassadors

Teaching about
bullying, e.g. in
CW and through
the curriculum

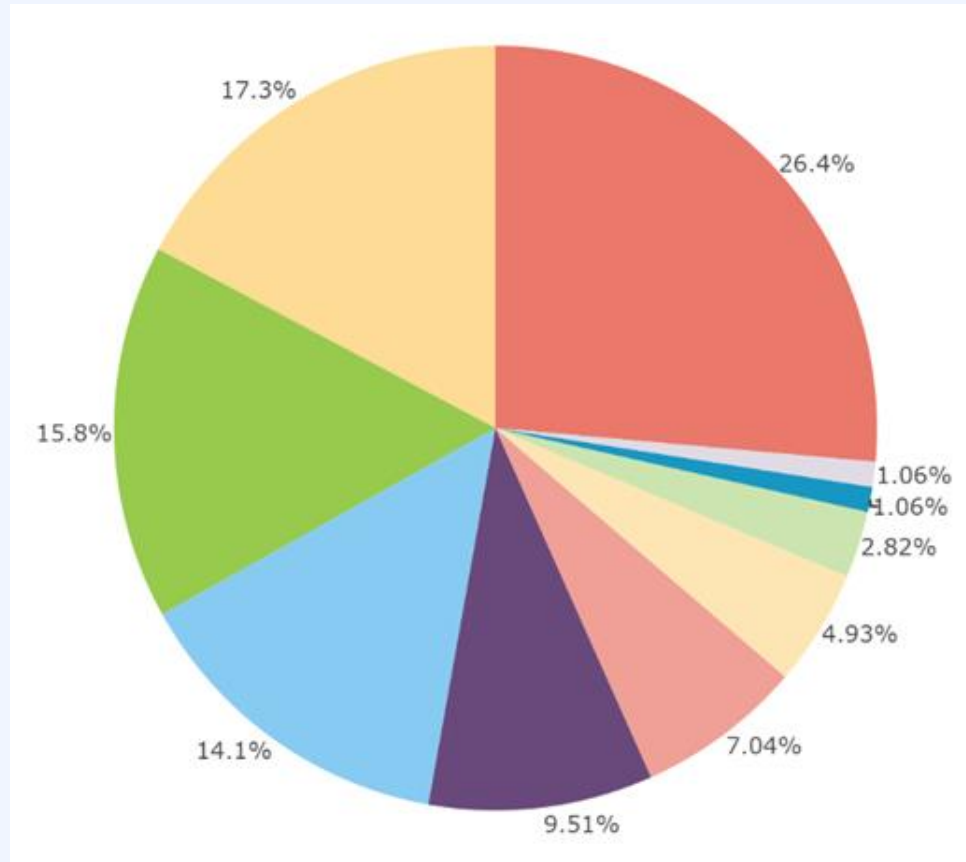
Anonymous
reporting

Relatable
examples

Involving parents



What pupils say: reasons for being bullied



- 26% for being gay (or being perceived to be gay)
- 16% for a disability
- 14% for skin colour
- 10% for questioning their gender (or appearing to)



Part B: Preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying

Executive Summary

- Every LGB/GQ pupil and LGBT+ adult has innate worth as made in the image of God and must therefore be treated with the same dignity and respect as their peers.
- Pupils who are (or perceived to be) LGB/GQ are at higher risk of being bullied at their schools. This includes Church schools.
- Gender questioning children and transgender adults are at the highest risk of bullying and therefore need particular pastoral support and protection.

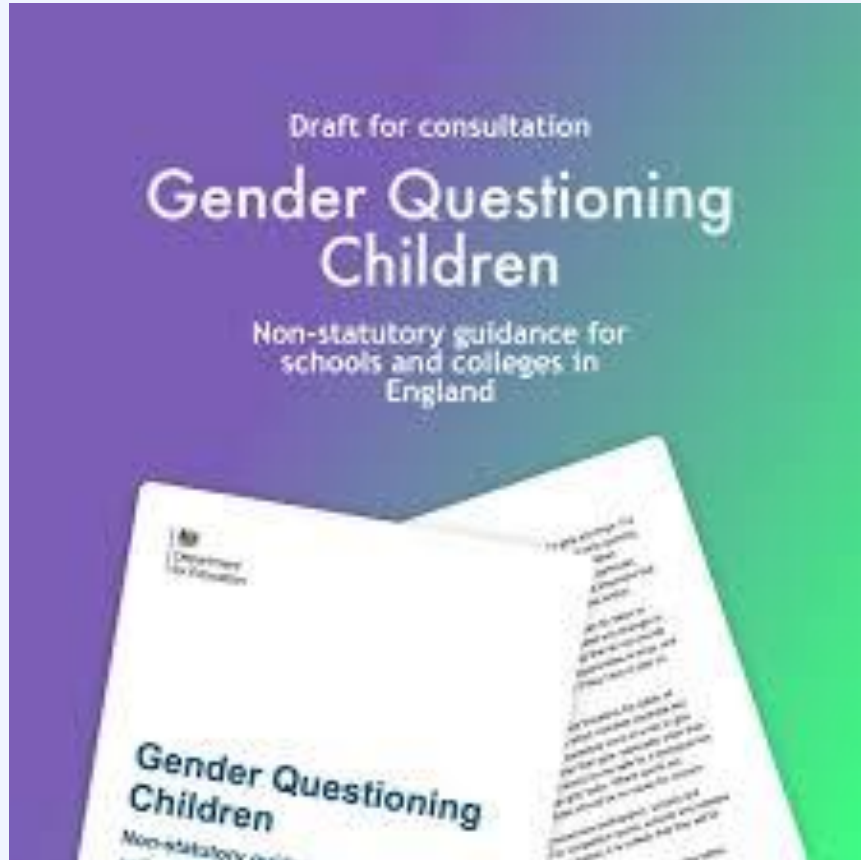


Importance of tackling HBT bullying

‘The way forward needs to be about love, joy and celebration of our humanity; of our **creation in the image of God**, of our belonging to Christ – all of us, without exception, without exclusion.’
Archbishop of Canterbury



Flourishing for All and Gender Questioning Children



Preventing and dealing with transphobic bullying

‘Church schools should ensure their classrooms are places of constant nurture and compassion: where all are treated with dignity, where differences are appreciated and respected, and where all are provided with the utmost standard of care and protection. This includes gender questioning children and transgender adults.’

Schools must challenge:

- Discriminatory and dehumanising language
- Repeated mis-naming intended to cause harm
- Any physical harm or sexual harassment
- Cyberbullying



Part B: Preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying

Executive Summary (continued)

- Churches and their clergy, governors, parents/ carers and faith communities have an important role to play in working with the school to ensure pupils who are (or perceived to be) LGB/GQ are protected from harm.
- Although there are different viewpoints on human sexuality and gender identity within the Church of England, as well as in other faith communities and society at large, it is never acceptable for LGB/GQ pupils or LGBT+ adults to be bullied at school.



Dealing with Difference



acknowledge

PREJUDICE

speak into

SILENCE

address

IGNORANCE

cast out

FEAR

admit

HYPOCRISY

pay attention to

POWER

‘A place of hospitality, welcome and respectful engagement, sacred and mutual, but not neutral to its own Christian values, whilst being genuinely open to the free expression of engagement.’



Relationships with churches & clergy, parents, faith communities



- Safeguarding and pastoral care must be prioritised
- School must fulfil its legal and statutory duties
- Community can play a vital role in tackling HBT bullying
- Appropriate contexts for any areas of difference to be raised
- Enabling faith-based viewpoints to be appropriately expressed
- Key roles to bridge (e.g. chaplains, parent governors)



Part B: Preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying

Executive Summary (continued)

- Church schools must be proactive in tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying.
- Church schools should ensure their school culture sends a clear message of welcome and inclusion to LGB/GQ pupils and LGBT+ adults, together with explicit communication about the unacceptability of HBT bullying.
- Teaching and activities designed to prevent and tackle HBT bullying need to be age appropriate.
- Church schools must deal decisively with any HBT bullying incidents, utilising the challenge, report, support framework.



Proactive in preventing HBT bullying

‘Building a culture of prevention is not easy. While the cost of prevention had to be paid in the present, its benefits lie in the distant future. Moreover, the benefits are not tangible; they are disasters that did not happen.’
Kofi Annan (UN General Secretary),
1999



Rigorous in tackling HBT bullying



- **Challenging** unacceptable behaviour, including setting standards of acceptable behaviour and reinforcing a culture of dignity and respect.
- **Supporting** the child/young person who has been bullied (and sometimes the child/young person who has displayed bullying behaviour and any non-intervening bystanders).
- **Reporting** what has happened and monitoring those reports.



Phase specific recommendations

Primary

- Different families including those with LGBT+ parents/ carers
- Tackling HBT language & behaviour
- Awareness of LGB/GQ and LGBT+ people in the community/ society
- Learning about difference

Secondary

- RHSE which includes LGB/GQ relationships
- Planned teaching about LGB/GQ and LGBT+ people throughout the curriculum
- Specific work on cyberbullying & social media use
- Pastoral support systems (including chaplaincy)

All Phases

- Strong inclusive culture
- Clear HBT policy and procedures which all stakeholders understand
- Involvement of pupils, parents, staff and the wider community in tackling HBT bullying



Executive Summary (continued)

- Diocesan boards of education have an important role to play in supporting and advising their Church schools to navigate any challenges they face in dealing with HBT bullying.

Recommendations for DBEs

- Ensure their schools are aware of this documentation and know how to implement the recommendations
- Support governing boards to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's policies and procedures to deal with HBT bullying
- Provide or signpost training for schools in areas related to HBT bullying, such as understanding the Equality Act and PSED, working with parish churches and clergy and the expectations of the inspectorate(s)
- Set clear expectations for schools regarding the treatment of LGB/GQ pupils and LGBT+ adults generally and HBT bullying specifically



Commitments from the National Society for Education

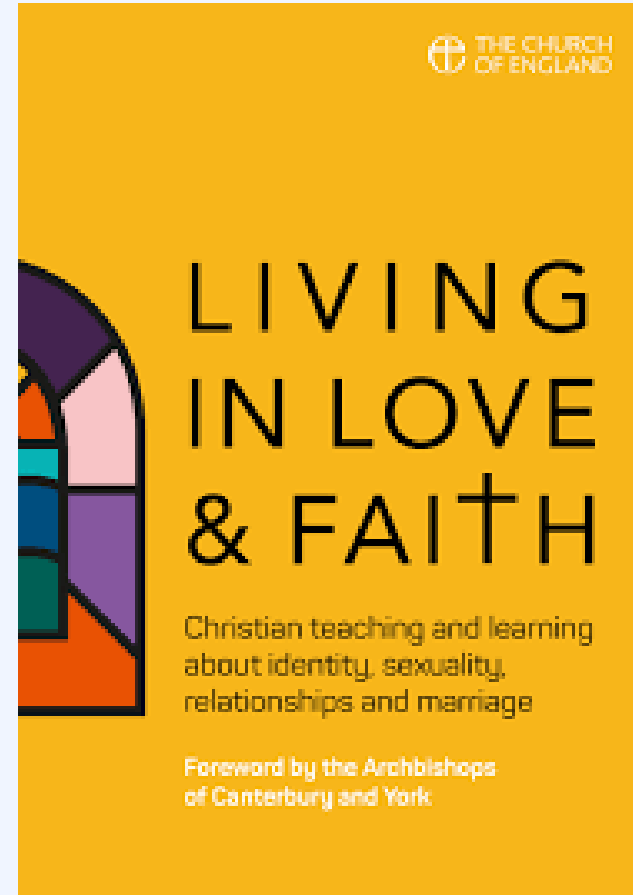
The work of the NSE is centred on the flourishing of all pupils and adults in schools, and to that end commits itself to:

1. Stating clearly that HBT bullying is unacceptable and must be taken seriously in schools
2. Modelling respectful and honouring language and behaviour towards LGB/GQ pupils and LGBT+ adults , and acting upon feedback when it falls short of this
3. Listening to the voices of children and young people who are (or perceived to be) LGB/GQ and LGBT+ adults, ensuring their experiences and views shape this work
4. Keeping this suite of documents under review so that it reflects any related decisions by the House of Bishops or General Synod, current government guidance, research and best practice
5. Delivering high-level training and resources, in partnership with dioceses and school trusts, to support schools in implementing the recommendations of this document
6. Providing ongoing anti-bullying guidance around the specific areas of work the NSE is currently engaged in (i.e. racial justice, SEND, faith and belief, VAWG, child poverty)



Part B Glossary

- Utilises terminology in current usage in both government and Church of England documentation
- Primarily drawn from ‘Living in Love and Faith’ (Church of England)
- Utilises the glossary of the Cass Review in places
- Will be regularly reviewed and updated as guidance and common usage changes



Next steps:

- Part C due by Spring 2025
- Part B to be updated in line with DfE confirmed publications

[Anti-bullying guidance for Church of England schools | The Church of England](#)