

**Addressing Bullying In Schools- Consultation Document**

# **Addressing Bullying in Schools**

## **Consultation Booklet**

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### Introduction

The Department of Education is inviting comments on proposed anti-bullying legislation.

In June 2014, the Minister for Education, John O'Dowd, announced his intention to bring forward new legislation, within the remaining Assembly mandate, to help tackle the problem of bullying in our schools.

The proposed legislation will

- Provide a common definition of bullying;
- Introduce a requirement for all grant-aided schools to centrally record complaints of bullying, motivating factors behind the bullying behaviour and the actions taken by the school in addressing each complaint; and
- Introduce a requirement for each Board of Governors (**BoG**) to identify and designate one or more members, with responsibility for the development of its anti-bullying policies and for their proper implementation within the school.

The Department would welcome your views on these proposals and all interested parties are encouraged to make their responses as soon as possible before the consultation closing date of **27 February 2015**

Name (Optional)

Please tick the box that best describes you as a respondent

Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of the public	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade Union rep	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

If 'Other' please specify

Name of School (if applicable)

School Reference Number (if applicable)

The Department may make responses available on the website [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk), although contact names and addresses would be removed.

Please note that under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (Annex A) your response may be made available, on request, to the public.

If you would prefer your response to remain confidential, please tick this box

Comments and responses should be submitted by 27 February 2015 to:

Pbmt.addressingbullyinginschools@deni.gov.uk

or

Pupil Behaviour Management Team

Room F17

Department of Education

Rathgael House

43 Balloo Road

Rathgill

BANGOR

BT19 7PR

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**Q1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to define ‘bullying’ in legislation as;**

*“Bullying is the repeated and intentional use of physical, verbal, electronic, written or psychological acts or omissions, or any combination thereof, by one or more pupils against another pupil or group of pupils with the intention of causing hurt, harm, fear, distress or adversely affecting the rights or needs of that pupil or group of pupils”?* (Please select only one)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

**Q2: To what extent do you believe that ‘bullying’ should not be legally defined but retain its dictionary definition contained within the Shorter Oxford Dictionary as meaning- “using superior strength or influence to intimidate a person to force them to do something”?** (Please select only one)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

**Q3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the Department should issue schools with guidance to supplement any legal definition of bullying?** (Please select only one)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

**Q4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to include a reference to Section 75 groups in a schedule to the legislation?** (Please select only one)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

**Q5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that bullying behaviour is repetitive and therefore a single incident between pupils should be regarded as a breach of discipline and not as bullying unless repeated? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that legislation should only apply to interaction between pupils and not include teachers and staff? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the Department should issue schools with greater guidance regarding the core content which should be included in their anti-bullying policy? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that schools should be required to record the motivation, response and outcomes of all bullying incidents inside schools? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that all schools should use a common IT system to collect data on bullying incidents? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q10: To what extent do you agree that uniform recording of incidents of bullying, their motivating factors and the actions taken will be beneficial to schools in monitoring the success of their anti-bullying policies and processes? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q11: To what extent do you agree that uniform recording of incidents of bullying, their motivating factors and the actions taken by schools will help the Department and new Education Authority to monitor the overall scale and nature of bullying in schools more effectively? (Please select only one)**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

**Q12: Do you agree that schools should be responsible for disciplining of pupils who engage in incidents of 'Cyber bullying' in the following circumstances;**

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
When it occurs during school hours		
When it occurs using school equipment		
When it occurs on school property		
In all instances between pupils occurring during term time (even outside school hours)		

**Q13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that Boards of Governors should appoint one or more Governors to have responsibility for school bullying policies and their implementation? (Please select only one)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

**Q14: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Department should include best practice models and templates in the guidance provided to schools? (Please select only one)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

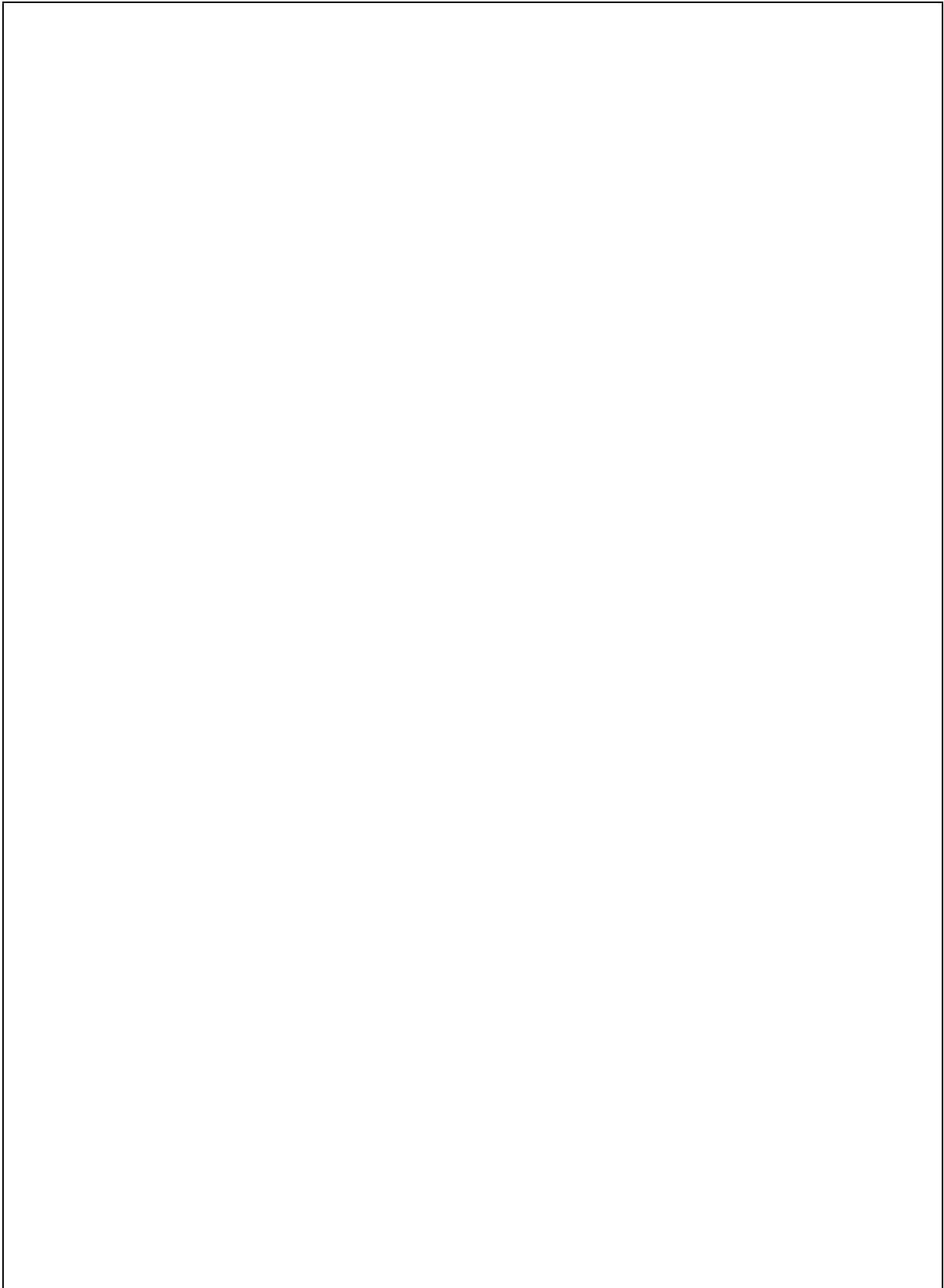
**Q15: To what extent do you agree that schools should have a separate Discipline and Anti-Bullying Policy? (Please select only one)**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know

**Q16: Section 75 impact- Are there any particular groups/individuals that you believe are likely to be affected by these proposals? (Please tick as appropriate)**

Category	(Y/N)
1. Persons of different religious belief	
2. Persons of different political opinion	
3. Persons of different racial group	
4. Persons of different age	
5. Persons of different marital status	
6. Persons of different sexual orientation	
7. Men and women generally	
8. Persons with a disability and persons without	
9. Persons with dependants and persons without	

**Q17: Overall-Any other comments?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide their overall comments or feedback.



## **ANNEX A- FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF CONSULTATIONS**

The Department will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The Department can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Department in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The Department cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential. This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The Department should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the Department's functions and it would not otherwise be provided;
- The Department should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence" which is not confidential in nature;
- Acceptance by the Department of confidentiality provisions must be for good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office (or see web site at: <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>).