

CHANGING POLICY TO REDUCE CHILDHOOD BULLYING: A DUTY TO RECORD

A BRIEFING FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS - AUGUST 2025



This briefing has been written by the Anti-Bullying Alliance to provide information for parliamentarians and policy makers about our agreed key policy recommendations. We believe this policy change could help us to prevent childhood bullying which affects millions of children each year.

Policy recommendation:

The Government should consider a duty on all schools and academies to record, monitor and review all bullying issues including whether there is a prejudice-related aspect and assess the impact of the effectiveness of responses.

Why is this important?

Over 1 in 5 children report being bullied each year, affecting their mental health, education, and costing an estimated £11bn annually. This issue has lasting effects into adulthood disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups including children with SEND, those in poverty, and young carers.

No school can have an effective anti-bullying approach without recording levels of bullying and using that data to influence it. This data could be used cumulatively to understand levels of bullying in schools across England. A duty to record bullying was recently brought into law in Northern Ireland [1].

Debunking the myths

Myth 1. "Recording bullying incidents is too time-consuming"

The vast majority of schools record reports of bullying and this is best practice to help inform your strategy. While documenting incidents requires time, the process can be streamlined with digital tools and standardised reporting forms. The benefits of having accurate records, such as identifying patterns and implementing effective interventions, far outweigh the time investment.

Myth 2. "It will create a negative school atmosphere"

On the contrary, systematic recording and addressing bullying incidents demonstrate a school's commitment to pupil safety and well-being. Transparent handling of bullying can foster a more positive and trusting school environment.

Myth 3. "Schools lack the resources to implement such a system"

As stated above, the majority of schools are already recording this to help their anti-bullying strategy. Schools tell us that using data appropriately helps in the long-run. A recording system can lead to long-term savings by reducing the prevalence and impact of bullying.



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Myth 4. "It will create a league table of schools"

This duty already exists in Northern Ireland and we would not recommend the Department for Education releases all school records but instead provides a national picture of schools as it does with absence data and other types of data. This will help to provide us with knowledge about levels of bullying, hold schools to account where necessary and help us understand when intervention are effective.

How you can get involved

We hope this briefing has convinced you of our policy recommendation that Initial Teacher Training should include how to prevent and respond to bullying as a core element. Please do get involved in our work in our work in the following ways:

- **APPG for Childhood Bullying:** The Anti-Bullying Alliance are hoping to support the process of re-establishing an APPG for Childhood Bullying. We'd greatly appreciate if you would be able to get involved. If you are interested, please contact us at: aba@ncb.org.uk
- **Table debates/questions:** Why not consider tabling a debate/questions about one of our aforementioned recommendations?
- **Get involved in Anti-Bullying Week 2025: Power for Good:** Engage via your social channels. You could post a video in support of the week, or perhaps post a story about using your power for good/people who use their power for good in your constituency. You can find out more how to get involved [here](#).



About the Anti-Bullying Alliance

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) is a unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve our vision to: stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn. ABA is hosted by the National Children's Bureau (NCB)

Anti-Bullying Week: Our campaign reaches

8 million children in 80% of schools,

supported by celebs inc. Victoria Beckham & Anthony Joshua.

Odd Socks Day:



Over 5 million children and countless adults,

celebrating uniqueness & raising awareness by wearing odd socks.

Direct School Support: Tailored anti-bullying plans for



over 400 schools annually.

Training: Providing CPD to



20,000+ participants annually

equipping them with anti-bullying skills.

Your support will help us expand our reach & protect more young lives. Together, let's bring an end childhood bullying.

anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk



Contact us

Please contact Martha Evans, Director of the Anti-Bullying Alliance aba@ncb.org.uk