

Dealing with Prejudice:

Best Practice Guide for Nottinghamshire Schools and Academies

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Introduction

This guide has been created by to support schools and educational institutions in dealing with prejudice-based incidents. Tackling prejudice is central to the successful promotion of fundamental British values, especially in relation to the values of respect and tolerance and the rule of law. Schools need to work proactively to address all forms of prejudice and discrimination and this guide should serve to support this work. It has been written to reflect the most recent [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSiE\) Statutory Guidance \(1 September 2026\)](#). Prejudice-based and discriminatory incidents should always be considered through a safeguarding lens. In some circumstances they may constitute child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, hate incidents or hate crime. Please refer to NCC's Child-on-child Abuse Guidance and Policy Template for further details.

Definitions

Prejudice-related incidents/bullying – derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disablist in nature. This language and behaviour may be directed towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability or other protected characteristic; or because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, one or more protected characteristics.

It may include misogyny or misandry and be sexist in nature. Such language and behaviour are generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. Prejudice-related incidents may occur in person, online or through digital technologies. They may include the use of edited, manipulated or AI-generated content, including images, audio or video intended to humiliate, threaten, intimidate or target individuals or groups because of a protected characteristic.

Emerging Risks

Schools should be alert to new and emerging risks associated with prejudice-based incidents and hate crime, including how these affect individuals and their families, as well as the cohesion of the wider school community. These include for example:

- 📌 Online hate incidents
- 📌 Anonymous social media abuse
- 📌 AI-generated imagery
- 📌 Deepfakes
- 📌 Image-based abuse
- 📌 Misogyny and gender-based harassment
- 📌 Radicalisation linked to hate narratives
- 📌 Misinformation and disinformation

Staff

[KCSiE 2026](#) states that: “All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of a staff induction. This should include *measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying*”.

School staff should be fully trained to recognise and challenge prejudice based on: ethnicity, nationality, skin colour, religion/ belief, disability including mental health, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment, as well as misogyny and prejudice based on alternative subculture and other protected or vulnerable groups.

Staff members should feel confident in challenging prejudice and prejudiced language in a constructive way. Staff should understand the indicators of misogyny, gender-based harassment, sexualised language, inappropriate sexual behaviour and harmful online content and recognise that these behaviours can escalate into more serious safeguarding concerns if left unchallenged.

Prejudice and hate crime should be a discussion point for staff meetings and be regularly discussed in the school.

Staff should be fully trained on the school’s policy and recording methods. Policies and procedures should be clearly communicated and understood. If incidents do occur, staff should respond quickly and effectively, ensuring that the individual reporting the incident feels listened to, and supported.

Communication

The school should have information about hate crime and bullying on its website with directions on how to report hate crime.

Secondary and special schools should have available the contact details of the Police Schools and Early Intervention Officers in a visible location accessible by all staff members. Primary Schools should know how to contact their linked PCSO in their Neighbourhood Policing Team.

The school should have a list of signposting resources relating to prejudice, which is easily accessible by all staff.

The school should have a parent/carer-friendly version of its policy, which is given to parents at the start of the academic year.

Information about the school’s policy on prejudice should be available online. Policies and procedures should be clearly communicated and understood by pupils, parents/carers, all staff, and visitors.

Prevention

Diversity should be embedded within the curriculum across all subjects. Schools should educate pupils about online hate, discriminatory online behaviour, misinformation, disinformation, harmful stereotypes, AI-generated content and image-based abuse as part of their wider safeguarding and RSHE curriculum. Prevention methods should be considered, including holding assemblies and lessons to discuss prejudice.

Pupils should be actively involved in drawing up and agreeing principles and codes of practice relating to prejudice.

The school should consider using an ambassador scheme or peer mentoring regarding prejudice. For advice and support about setting up such schemes, county schools can contact the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator, ESHAWH Team.

Staff should understand all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and recognise that prejudice may also be experienced by people associated with someone who has a protected characteristic or because of a perceived protected characteristic.

Reporting

All children and young people, staff, parents/carers, governors/trustees, and visitors to the school, should know where and how to report a prejudice-related incident.

Schools should have a named member of senior management staff responsible for dealing with prejudice-based incidents and hate crime.

Schools should consider having a safe place and a nominated member of staff for pupils to report prejudice incidents to.

In the case of adults needing to make a report about an incident which directly involves them rather than a pupil, consideration should also be given to the support they may need immediately following an incident- for example, they may need someone to cover their duties/ a debrief.

Pupils should be aware they can report any crime anonymously to [Fearless](#) or in the case of primary-aged children [Childline](#)

Recording

The school should have a separate log for recording prejudice-based incidents.

Every prejudice-related incident should be recorded accurately.

Schools should record whether incidents occurred:

- face-to-face
- online
- using social media
- using gaming platforms
- using AI-generated or digitally manipulated content

The school should have a way of identifying repeat targets and perpetrators.

School recording methods should let any prejudice-based incidents be recorded fully with target and alleged perpetrator details, type of prejudice, and actions taken, and any witnesses to the incident.

School should be able to analyse and learn from previous responses to prejudice-based incidents. The school should share any concerns or concerning trends with Police Schools and Early Intervention Officers, local PCSO'S, or local authority for support and further interventions.

Schools should extract data about the volume and type of prejudice-based incidents at least termly and annually and use that data to plan prevention activities and engagement. This data should be included in the Head teacher's report to governors/trustees. Schools should analyse data by protected characteristic, age, year group, location, time and recurrence to identify patterns and inform preventative strategies.

Governance and Oversight

Governors/trustees should receive regular information regarding prejudice-related incidents, trends and actions taken.

Schools should use this information to review safeguarding arrangements, behaviour systems, curriculum content and equality objectives.

Significant incidents and emerging themes should be considered within safeguarding reporting processes.

Policy and dealing with incidents

The school should have a robust policy on dealing with prejudice-based incidents

Parents of both target and offender should be made aware in a sensitive and personal manner.

Schools should recognise the possible effect of prejudice-based incidents and bullying and should take it seriously.

Schools should have potential interventions in place for those perpetrating such behaviours, both in terms of education and when needed, sanctions.

The policy should clearly state the course of action when an incident that occurred outside of school or online is disclosed to the school.

The school should have a procedure in place to note and analyse any concerning trends in prejudice-based incidents and should be able to involve partners if any support is needed.

The school should have a clear policy on sharing information with local authority and police in cases of concerning incidents or trends.

Schools should be fully accountable and be able to audit their own processes.

Schools should have a process in place in case of a complaint or enquiry from parents/carers.

There should be support available for the targets of prejudice-related incidents. The wishes, feelings and lived experience of the target should be central to the school's response.

Schools should seek feedback from targets regarding whether the interventions implemented have helped them feel safe, supported and included.

The school should have a safety planning procedure in place.

There should be a process in place for incidents involving adults. Allegations of prejudice, discrimination, harassment or hate-related conduct involving staff, governors, volunteers, contractors or visitors should be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures, staff conduct procedures, complaints procedures and employment policies as appropriate.

The school should consult with key stakeholders annually to gather feedback and ensure their procedures are fit for purpose.

Safety Planning

The impact of an incident can sometimes be underestimated, and it is therefore recommended that the target is given an opportunity to reflect on what might make them feel safer within the school environment and beyond post-incident. This should be recorded

in writing in an individual safety plan. We recommend that there be consideration of at least the following questions:

- ☐ Is the target safe now? Will the target be safe when leaving school premises? (If not, consider immediate response)
- ☐ Is the target vulnerable or especially upset? Is there a likelihood of a repeat incident within the next 24 hours?
- ☐ Has the incident occurred online and, if so, does harmful content remain accessible, shared or likely to be redistributed?
- ☐ Has the target experienced this prejudice-based incident or prejudice-based bullying before?
- ☐ Is the offender a repeat offender? What interventions are needed if this is the case?
- ☐ Has the reported incident(s) had an impact on the wellbeing of the target? Or on a group of individuals such as a family or the target's community?
- ☐ Does the target need safeguarding from retaliation or escalation?
- ☐ What measures need to be put in place to ensure the target feels safe? E.g. Consider seating arrangements/groupings/ unstructured times etc.

Training

There should be training available for school staff which is regularly refreshed. This training should ensure staff are aware of their legal duties and that they have an understanding of the impact of prejudiced-based and discriminatory incidents on the target and their wider family.

Nottinghamshire County Council has a range of training available for school staff. For further information and bookings in the county, please contact sarah.lee@nottscc.gov.uk or deepa.vasudevan@nottscc.gov.uk

Some key skills and tips for challenging prejudice

Ensure you are aware of school policy and that you follow school policy and legal requirements such as reporting prejudice-based incidents etc.

Challenge all incidents, behaviour and language and **be seen** to be doing this

Be calm and constructive (responding and helping to build skills). Take time, remain silent if you are upset or angry until you regain control

If appropriate remove the offender from an audience or the scene of the incident, although be clear with the whole group that the language / behaviour was unacceptable

Role model how to challenge/how to take a stand in a non-aggressive way so that the group can be effective without you

Be mindful of what happens next with friendships and other spin-offs

Show that you are delaying judgement (in some cases) by asking questions

Allow the offender space to reflect on what they have just said or done

Give the offender a chance to back-track: self-justify, own or modify their behaviour

Be critical of behaviour and language, but not of individuals and so allowing the challenged child/person to still feel OK and able to move on

Build a sense of empathy, co-operation and shared rules “we all agreed...” “how would you feel if...” Linking back to ground rules at all times

Be firm and clear about diversity and rights – and what is not acceptable. This should be supported by policy

Show you are upset and hurt if appropriate

Search for the personal, individual concerns which may lie behind their words or reflect

Use stories/scenarios as distancing techniques – to help find solutions to issues that have arisen within the group

If required by school policy / the law, record the incident for monitoring purposes and report to relevant school personnel.

Challenging prejudiced based (including sexist/misogynistic) language: a ‘palette’ of responses

It is important that all prejudice-based language is challenged, but the challenge or response will depend on a variety of factors including the age and understanding of the person using the language and their intention. This section offers a variety of responses for different situations and for different age groups (Key Stages 1-4). This script can be adapted for use in challenging all forms of prejudice.

Institutional response

In our school we always try to be kind to each other and when you make comments like that it is unkind.

The ground-rules we agreed at the beginning of the session said we would show respect to each other.

The anti-bullying policy says that xxxx language is not tolerated.

The school/youth centre policy says that we are all responsible for making this a safe place for everyone. That kind of language is xxx and makes people feel unsafe. Therefore, it is unacceptable.

Question

What do you think that word means?

What makes you think that?

Do you mean that as a compliment or an insult?

Do you realise that what you said is xxxx?

Would you be happy if someone talked like that about your sister/brother?

Can you explain what you mean by that?

How would you feel if someone spoke about you in that way?

Confront

Language like that is not acceptable.

You might not think that remark's offensive, but many would.

Let's talk about why people think like that.

Personal response

I'm not happy with what you said.

xxxx language offends me. I don't want to hear it again.

What you've said really disturbs/upsets/angers me.

I'm really surprised and disappointed to hear you say that. I hoped you would recognise that it is important to treat everyone with respect and that it is therefore wrong to use such xxxxxx language.

Further signposting, partner organisations, and interventions

Support services		
Victim Care	Victim Care can provide free and independent support and advocacy to anyone impacted by crime even if they don't report to the police.	0800 304 7575 https://www.nottsvictimcare.org.uk/nottinghamshire-victim-care/ https://www.catch-22.org.uk/what-we-do/criminal-justice/victim-services/
Stop Hate UK	Hate Crime helpline to provide a confidential 24-hr support service for young people, under the age of 18, experiencing or witnessing Hate Crime.	Call: 0808 801 0576 Text: 07717 989 025 https://www.stophateuk.org/report-hate-crime/
Childline	Free 24-hour helpline for children and young people.	0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

	Offer confidential emotional support and advice for young people on a variety of issues.	
Breaking the cycle	Learning programme that is designed for those aged 9 to 17 and is aimed at addressing prejudicial behaviours. Free for Nottinghamshire residents.	https://www.holocaust.org.uk/breakingthecycle
GRIT	Mansfield and Bassetlaw only: 12-week programme for 13–18-year-olds who are vulnerable to extremist views or have been involved in hate crime. Use emotional resilience to tackle hate crime and extremism	www.transformtraining.org.uk
Mencap	Mencap can organise visits to schools to talk to pupils about learning disability.	https://www.nottinghammencap.org.uk/
National Holocaust Centre	Schools can organise trips to the Holocaust Centre. They also organise No to Hate conferences, which can be attended by school staff.	https://www.holocaust.org.uk/
Life Skills	10-week programme aimed at primary schools, focusing on drugs and alcohol, knife crime, and hate crime.	https://lifeskills-education.co.uk/
Nottingham Immigration Education	Student volunteers deliver several workshops in schools. Have 3 sessions: on islamophobia, on myth busting of immigration myths, and one on critical reading around detention and deportation.	studentsofien@gmail.com
One Conversation	A team of individuals, who have intellectual and developmental disabilities, which go into schools to run 2-hour workshops using honest, candid, and fun conversations to challenge prejudice.	office.onewalk@gmail.com

National Awareness Days

Preventative and proactive work can be done with pupils, tying into national and international awareness days and other important events. Here is a list of important days:

Date	Name	Website
27-Jan	Holocaust Memorial Day	https://www.hmd.org.uk/
February	LGBT+ History month	https://lgbtplushistorymonth.co.uk/
08-Mar	International Women's Day	https://www.internationalwomensday.com/
13-Mar	National Bystander Awareness Day	https://communitiesinc.org.uk/international-bystander-awareness-day-march-13th/
22-Apr	Stephen Lawrence day	https://stephenlawrenceday.org/
June	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller History month	https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/heritage/celebrating-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history-month/
June (Week changes every year)	Learning Disability Awareness Week	https://www.mencap.org.uk/learningdisabilityweek
20-Jun	World Refugee Day	https://www.unhcr.org/get-involved/take-action/world-refugee-day
11-July	Srebrenica holocaust Memorial Day	https://www.srebrenica.org.uk/
July (local PRIDE event dates change)	PRIDE	https://nottspride.co.uk/
23-Sep	Bi Visibility Day	http://www.bivisibilityday.com/
October	Black History month	https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/
12-19 October (week changes)	Hate Crime Awareness Week	https://nationalhcaw.uk/
November	Islamophobia Awareness Month	http://islamophobia-awareness.org/
Begins on Remembrance Sunday	Interfaith week	https://www.interfaithweek.org/
22-Nov to 22-Dec	Disability History Month	https://ukdhm.org/
25-Nov to 10-Dec	16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence	https://www.who.int/campaigns/16-days-of-activism-against-gender-based-violence/2025
01-Dec	World Aids Day	https://www.worldaidsday.org/
03-Dec	International Day for People with Disabilities	https://www.unesco.org/en/days/international-day-persons-disabilities