

Gloucestershire Guidelines for including Hate Incidents/Crimes in existing Anti-Bullying Policies

Introduction and Context

Gloucestershire has a strategy for improving: awareness of Hate Incidents and Crimes; their impact; the reporting of them; and the responses to both the victim and the perpetrator. The importance for schools is that hate incidents/crimes is bullying directed towards an individual or group because of their identity or perceived identity.

The county strategy is wanting to gather real time hate crimes/incidents whenever they occur. It is important that schools are part of this process - recognising a Hate Incident/Crime and reporting it when it occurs.

Your policy will already include many of the elements that relate to Hate Incidents/Crimes. For example, it may already identify different forms of bullying and to whom it may be directed; and it may cover an understanding of the impact on the victim.

These brief Guidelines have been put together to help you include Hate Incidents/Crimes within your Anti-Bullying Policy and Safeguarding responsibilities.

In your policy ensure that:

1. Hate Incident/Crime is clearly included within all references to bullying. There is a statement of commitment to taking prejudice-based incidents seriously, ensuring that all incidents are accurately recorded, monitored and reported, in order to prevent prejudice-based bullying and inform targeted anti-bullying work.
2. Hate Incident/Crime is defined:

A hate incident is defined as: "Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by hostility or prejudice." (College of Policing 2014)

If a criminal offence has been committed the Incident becomes a Hate Crime.
3. Protected characteristics under current (2019) hate crime legislation are named: disability; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation; and transgender identity.

Gloucestershire also includes: age; gender (sex); and alternative subcultures, eg homeless.
4. It is recognised that Hate Incidents/Crimes can be more impactful on the victim than standard bullying because they have been attacked on account of 'who they are', an element of their core identity. There is also wider invisible impact on those that share that identity who may not themselves have been targeted. For example: If a young person with a disability witnesses disability bullying towards a peer, he/she may become fearful and anxious about also being at risk, despite never having been directly targeted themselves.
5. You have clear guidelines and procedures for recording and reporting of hate incidents/crimes to be included in the countywide data (through the Gloucestershire County Council). This should be included in your Safeguarding procedures and will be part of Ofsted Inspections and Section 175 Audit.
6. If there is a potential for the incident to be a criminal offence, the procedure notes that Gloucestershire Constabulary should be contacted (eg School Beat Officer or your local policing team).
7. There is a commitment to: Name it!
8. Support is available from Victim Support for school guidance, and/or one-to-one support and advocacy with pupils and their families (0808 281 0112 www.victimsupport.org.uk). Restorative Gloucestershire can provide support with embedding restorative practice into schools, to tackle harmful bullying behaviours, reduce exclusion levels and/or prevent unnecessary criminalisation (01452 754 542 www.restorativegloucestershire.co.uk)

If a hate incident/crime has happened – use the terms both in recording and dealing with issue. The school may deem it appropriate to take a restorative approach when dealing with Hate Crime incidents to modify behaviours and support both the victims and perpetrators.