

Hate Crime

Northern Ireland



Hate crime

Northern Ireland Government guidance states that **Hate crime** is '*a crime against a person because of their race, religious belief, sexual orientation, political opinion, gender identity or disability.*' **Hate crime** takes many forms, from bullying and name-calling to damage to property, violent attacks and even hate mail or hate email.

Hate crime recognised in Northern Ireland takes the form of:

- racist hate crime;
- homophobic hate crime;
- religious hate crime;
- sectarian hate crime;
- transgender hate crime;
- disability hate crime.

In 2017/18 there were 335 recorded cases of hate crime reported to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS).

Being a victim of hate crime can leave a person fearful, isolated and vulnerable and can severely undermine their sense of safety in their school/college and or community. It impacts greatly on self-confidence and self-worth and can lead to depression, anxiety and, in extreme cases, suicide.

The NASUWT believes that all children and young people and staff in schools and colleges have a right to learn and work in a safe and secure environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, abuse and fear, and where they feel valued and respected.

Tackling hate crime

Schools and colleges can contribute to tackling hate crime by ensuring that:

- the school/college promotes a climate of respect;
- every student, staff member and parent/carer within the school/college community feels valued and secure;
- the curriculum reflects and represents accurately the diverse nature of Northern Ireland and the world and addresses issues of diversity in ways that counter prejudiced assumptions;
- false assumptions and stereotypes are challenged with sound factual information;
- they are vigilant for any signs of name-calling, abuse or bullying involving any member of the school/college community;

- all incidents of name-calling, abuse and bullying are reported, recorded and dealt with promptly and sensitively;
- all staff are given appropriate training and support to enable them to tackle discrimination, bullying and harassment and promote equality of opportunity.

Legislation addressing hate crime

Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75, 76)

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a duty on designated public authorities in Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across a range of different groups, including disabled and non-disabled people.

Schools are currently exempt from Section 75 but the Education Authority, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Department of Education are all covered by the legislation:

- Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Schedule 9);
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO);
- Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (SENDO) and the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 prohibit disability-related discrimination in Northern Ireland. Schools, education and library boards, universities and colleges, including teacher-training colleges, cannot discriminate against a disabled person or a person who has had a disability in the past for an unjustified disability-related reason.

The types of conduct made unlawful or prohibited by the Act are: direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; disability-related discrimination; failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments; harassment; and victimisation.

What do I do if I am a victim of hate crime?

- keep a log of all incidents, including copies of memos and letters;
- speak to someone about the incidents, such as a family member, a counsellor or a trusted work colleague;
- where the behaviour is having a detrimental effect on health, contact a GP;
- consider reporting it to the police.

Further Help and Support

- Visit the NASUWT website at www.nasuwt.org.uk.
- Contact the NASUWT:
 - NASUWT Northern Ireland
Ben Madigan House, Edgewater Office Park, Edgewater Road,
Belfast BT3 9JQ.
 - Tel: 028 9078 4480.
 - E-mail: rc-nireland@mail.nasuwt.org.uk.
- Victim Support Northern Ireland Tel: 028 90 244039.
- Victim support line: 0845 3030900 Email: info@victimsupportni.co.uk.
- Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.
- www.psnipolice.uk.

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JUSTICE**