

DL11: Schools with a religious character (faith schools) and homophobic bullying

In any school there will be pupils and staff with a religious faith. In addition there are schools designated with a religious character. All the faith communities supporting this guidance are clear that homophobic bullying is unacceptable. Schools should develop clear tactics which challenge any homophobic bullying based on misunderstanding of religious teachings or practice.

Issue	Tactics
Vision statement of the school	Ensure that the school vision statement rejects all forms of bullying.
Curriculum	All schools should review teaching within their religious education curriculum, PSHE, SEAL programme or related programmes to ensure that the anti bullying stance of the school is clear.
Assemblies and collective worship	These provide opportunities to make clear the anti bullying stance of the school.
Use of faith community representatives	Headteachers and Governors should ensure that representatives of faith communities are clear about the legal and school stance on homophobic bullying. Headteachers should monitor the contribution by faith community representatives into the school to ensure the school vision is being met.
Pupil support systems	A pupil using a faith-based reason to validate homophobic bullying should be challenged in the same way as for any other pupil – stating the school stance and developing empathetic understanding. Specific religious teaching may also be used to supplement this approach and faith community representatives may have a key role in challenging the pupil's understanding and actions.