



# **CLD Standards Council Scotland**

Submitted Response  
to  
Scottish Government

## **Respect For All: National Approach to Anti-bullying Guidance Consultation**

29<sup>th</sup> July 2024

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## About Us

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The CLD Standards Council Scotland is the professional body for people who work or volunteer in community learning and development (CLD) across Scotland. As member led organisation we have a growing membership of over 2850 members, an executive committee and 3 functional committees which are made up of members from across the sector in Scotland. Our approach and work plan to deliver our core responsibilities are defined by our member committees and based on feedback from the wider membership.

Our core responsibilities are:

- Deliver a professional approvals structure for qualifications, courses, and development opportunities for everyone involved in CLD.
- Maintain a registration system available to practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice.
- Develop and establish a model of supported induction, professional learning, and training opportunities.

## Vision

“Our vision is that the communities and people of Scotland are served by CLD practitioners that are recognised as competent, confident and committed to equality, empowerment and life-wide learning for all.”

## Mission

“Our mission is to drive high standards of professional practice in the CLD sector by the approval of professional learning, the registration of practitioners and the enabling of professional development, working with our members to be a voice for the profession.”

For further information on the CLD Standards Council please visit our [website](#). If you would like to discuss this response further, please contact us via email on [contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk](mailto:contact@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk)

## Introduction

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The Community Learning and Development sector is an integral part of Scottish education, as recently reported in [Learning: For All. For Life. A report from the Independent Review of Community Learning and Development \(CLD\)](#), which was undertaken by Ms Kate Still, as part of Education Reform, and commissioned by Mr Graeme Dey MSP, the Minister for Higher and Further Education, and Veterans. As clearly depicted throughout this report, CLD plays a central role in ensuring individuals, families and communities across Scotland reach their potential through lifelong learning, mutual self-help, and community organisation. The CLD Standards Council recognise that there is common ground as well as robust partnerships between traditional education establishments such as Schools, Colleges, Universities, and CLD in terms of values, outcomes, and practice methods. It strongly believes that it should not just be traditional educational bodies informing decisions on education issues such as qualifications, assessments, inspections and learning opportunities for all of Scotland's learners. It is critical that Scottish education is a leading educational system which at its core recognises and supports the needs of learners at all ages and stages in life, emotionally, physically, and academically, driving forward life wide and lifelong skills and learning for all of Scotland's learners.

The purpose of CLD is to empower people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, through learning. CLD works collaboratively to make all of Scotland's National Outcomes a reality however it is not recognised or acknowledged for its critical role across Scotland and this we would like to see changed. The Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic objectives for all public services, including those delivering CLD. We would like to make the most of this opportunity to raise and promote the lifelong learning, empowerment and inclusion principles surrounding community-based learning including Adult, ESOL, Family Learning and Youth Work. We also would like to highlight the role and agility of Community Learning and Development practitioners and organisations who support and offer learning opportunities to Scotland's most vulnerable learners and communities throughout the year. As you will clearly see from the report mentioned above and through the information offered in this response, CLD practitioners are at the forefront regarding the delivery of critical learning, support and guidance that is described throughout this anti-bullying guidance. CLD practitioners work within the CLD [competences](#), [values](#) and [ethics](#) to support change for others.

CLD's specific focus:

1. Improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development, and active citizenship.
2. Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential, and inclusive communities.

CLD is delivered in diverse settings and sectors, by practitioners with a wide variety of job titles and volunteer roles, working with people of all ages. This includes (but is not necessarily limited to) –

- Community Development (building the capacity of communities to meet their own needs, engaging with, and influencing decision makers).
- Youth Work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people, and families.

- Community-based Adult Learning, including adult literacies and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).
- Learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community, for example, people with disabilities, care leavers or offenders.
- Working with individuals and communities to improve their health and wellbeing.
- Volunteer support and development.
- Learning support and guidance in the community.

As a field of professional practice, CLD is critical in the achievement of any policy or legislation that requires individual and community engagement, partnership working across educational organisations, and development and learning. It supports the learning, growth and empowerment of individuals and communities, as well as supporting the delivery of other services. CLD practitioners work in partnership with teachers, schools, colleges, and universities to support each learner's journey to increase their opportunities and support the realisation and release of potential. CLD practice includes examples such as improving opportunities for learning, accreditation and skills development in rural areas, supporting learners of all ages to develop confidence, autonomy and skills, literacy and numeracy, employability, as well as support and skills development through community art projects, citizen assemblies, youth groups, intergenerational projects, community participatory budgeting initiatives and supporting capacity building of community developments such as foodbanks and credit unions. All of these learning opportunities and project initiatives often support the achievement of an accredited qualification at all levels of the SCQF framework.

CLD enables learners across Scotland to identify their own individual and collective goals, to take action to bring about change and through this to achieve these goals. Using a range of formal and informal methods of learning and social development, CLD programmes and activities are developed in dialogue with communities and participants, working particularly with those excluded from participation in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. Through working in these ways, and in partnership with the more traditional educational establishments, CLD practice extends the reach of education, of democracy and of economic growth.

CLD offers the learning and development opportunities to ensure individuals can thrive in vibrant communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe, to tackling poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth, and power more equally, working collaboratively to make individual's needs, goals, and aspirations reality.

The following diagram was used in the 2012 Strategic Guidance on CLD for Community Planning Partnerships to illustrate the policy context for CLD in Scotland. A number of specific policies have been replaced or amended, but it continues to provide a useful picture of the pivotal role of CLD.



This report provides analysis of the feedback received from CLD workers and volunteers across the sector. The CLD Standards Council consulted with a selection of its CLD practitioner members as well as its full staff team to form this response, using a number of differing engagement opportunities to capture key discussion points. Specifically, feedback was gathered to explore how CLD Standards Council members can input and support the development of this Scottish Government guidance for the benefit of CLD practitioners, our communities and of the individual learners CLD supports and works with.

**Assumptions:**

It is important to recognise that this CLD Standards Council response provides an insight into the views and experiences based on the those mentioned above. The data gathered has provided a valuable insight into the experiences based on the views of the member participants. This response is not representative of the entire CLD sector across Scotland or the full CLD Standards Council membership.

# Response from the CLD Standards Council to Scottish Governments consultation on Respect For All: National Approach to Anti-bullying Guidance

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## 1. Definition

The proposed updated definition of bullying in Scotland is:

*“Bullying can be face to face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves and respond effectively to the situation they are in. The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional, or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened, and left out.”*

It was felt that overall, this definition was clear and offered an accurate description covering the key aspects required. Suggestions were made to consider the following, either in the definition itself or in greater detail within the introduction.

- Inclusion of bullying which impacts financial and personal belongings (possessions taken without permission).
- Recognition of impact on self-esteem and confidence.
- Inclusion of references to “banter and jokes,” exploring how they become bullying due to the negative impact on the person or context of delivery.
- Safety: Importance of young people and adults alike feeling safe in their communities and spaces they attend, such as school and community learning settings.
- Clarity about difference and links between abuse and bullying, definitions are very similar especially relating to online, so detailed guidance defining the difference would be beneficial.
- Detailed guidance on difference between bullying and discrimination
- Inclusion of being powerless or loss of capacities.

Key comments offered:

*“I know it says feel left out, but that kind of ostracization of certain individuals by groups is I think a kind of key part of bullying, which maybe isn't entirely kind of identified in the definitions as it runs.”*

*“Unpleasant impactful behaviour ONLY becomes bullying if repeated and intended. If you don't have these two categories, you will create accidental bullies. This is both unfair and diminishes the act.”*

*“I've always believed that people who bully intend to cause others hurt or harm but thinking about the definition above I can see how behaviours of others may have an unintended impact.”*

*“Maybe use the word ability rather than capacity? Not everyone understands what that means.”*

## 2. Support and Communication

### 2.1 Support needed for CLD practitioner to successfully prevent and manage bullying.

It is essential to acknowledge that CLD practitioners already play a crucial role in supporting community groups and vulnerable people to gain and access the information, skills and learning needed to respond to emerging and often challenging need. This was highly evident during the [Covid 19 Pandemic](#), [Community, COVID-19, challenge and change – Policy Scotland](#), [Engage, Educate, Connect, Empower: CLD, Resilience and Recovery - July 2020](#) and most recently evidenced in the Scottish Governments Independent Review of CLD by Kate Still: [Learning: For All. For Life.](#)

The CLD profession must be recognised as equal partners in challenging and changing young people’s and adult learner’s thoughts, ideas, and behaviours in partnership with schools and community settings. CLD practitioners are specialists in tackling inequalities and championing human rights and there needs to be increased influence for CLD in the learning environment, and the workforce needs to be recognised and resourced. We suggest that there are opportunities for bringing in extra resource for third sector organisations and local authorities to increase CLD workforce and resource, and therefore capacity, which would enable exciting and innovative learning opportunities and engagement to be developed in Scotland, working towards zero tolerance through educative CLD anti bullying interventions, including research and understanding into root, reason and effect.

More information and training about effective practice in tackling bullying and how to support both victim and perpetrator is critical for this guidance to work. Joint mandatory training should accompany this guidance on anti-bullying for all educators, not just teachers, including sections on:

- How to tackle bullying when it happens
- How to approach the subject of zero tolerance up at the start of course to make people aware that it is unacceptable.
- Guidance on the benefits of comprehensive approach, not just perpetrator and victim, but the wider family and communities to support sustainable culture change.
- Organisations anti bullying policy and understanding legislation and how to implement it.
- Reporting structures and safeguarding
- Understanding privilege and power bias
- Local and national signposting, and guidance on expectations to work with other agencies and partners (including schools, CLD, parents, communities) to ensure the approach is being used in every part of a young persons lived experience.
- How to prepare and adopt appropriate policies and procedures.
- How to meaningfully include young people in the development of a bullying policy.

Detailed guidance at strategic and practice level would also be welcomed in areas such as challenges faced when supporting the person being bullied and the perpetrator, when both attending the same setting such as school, community-based learning, or community group work. Examples of challenges may be when one may be excluded from the building but the community campus has the community element, so they still share a building, or when a young person self excludes or is excluded but there is only one building in an area – in CLD we see this regularly and causes specific problems for rural, highland and island locations.

For consistency of approach to anti bullying across all educational settings, as well as ensuring all educators are supported by robust local policies relating to organisational antibullying procedures we would recommend that research was undertaken to enquire to the standard of

anti-bullying policies across all Scottish educational settings, on the release of this updated guidance. This would ensure local policy is current, relates to this guidance, is available for all educators, and is accessible across Schools, Community Centres, Youth Centres, and Third Sector Youth and Adult learning organisations where lifelong learning takes place for all aged learners.

Key comments offered:

*“There is a rise in prejudice, bullying, which might not be recognised by the bully or the wider community up here.”*

*“The thing is that these issues are flagged up, but then they are not resourced sufficiently and it's just like there's no money. While there is plenty of money, we just don't effectively utilise it as we're just not prioritising it to support young people's health and well-being or to support the kind of teaching of CLD workforce.”*

*“why bullying is still such an issue in the 21st century in Scotland?”*

*“CLD are specialists in tackling inequalities and championing human rights. There needs to be increased influence for CLD in the learning environment, and the work needs to be resourced.”*

*“People, some of them volunteers or part time workers who are dealing with some of the most challenging communities and challenging families within those communities regularly. And so, this guidance is going to be really useful for people who are doing that work.”*

*“CLD is well placed to support the development and adoption of new policies and procedures - we need to be recognised as able to lead / carry out some of this work in partnership with others.”*

## **2.2 Key things that CLD practitioners should communicate to parents and carers.**

A critical aspect of communication and support needed is parent and caregiver training, which covers key aspects such as:

- Pointers to look out for in your child (Bully or Bullied)
- Approaches to effective parental support: empathy, learn together, understanding, non-judgemental, focus on behaviours do not bully, listening and effective communication.
- UNCRC and understanding rights.
- Understanding of parental/adult/peer role models, and harmful attitudes.
- Understanding of cultures and differences
- Signposting and support available to parents and families (Bully and Bullied)
- Trusting professionals and developing relationships
- Zero tolerance, what that actually means and the rights underpinning it. Bullying is not inevitable and young people have the right to safety and dignity in their lives needs to be restated.

CLD practitioners are best placed to lead and deliver this training and support to parents, carers, and families, whilst working in partnership with school staff to ensure the right level of care is offered to each individual case. CLD practitioners are professionally qualified educators and already offer universal and targeted programmes of community learning, which if funded and resourced correctly can be a platform to discreetly encourage identified families to attend relevant training courses, without prejudice or stigma.



Key comments offered:

*“Can we get guidance on how it is addressed through the family situation because my experience was that depending on cultures and family ethos it needs to be a family learning and not just focusing on the young person, the bully or the persons being bullied.”*

*“UNCRC - children and young people’s rights. Working effectively to hear and understand the experiences of all young people.”*

*“That this is everyone’s responsibility.”*

*“Listen to your child, take action, and involve other professionals. Support your child to take part in other activities away from the people who bully to help build confidence and positive relationships with other peer groups....DO NOT retaliate.”*

*“Build Trust.... That by placing their trust in us (CLD) to look after their children they trust our judgement as individual professionals.”*

### **2.3 Key things that CLD practitioners should communicate to children and young people.**

Young people and children need to feel safe & secure with the person they report to and have an understanding of those trained to offer support in school and community settings.

As above, a critical aspect of the needed for children and young people is training which covers key aspects such as:

- Guidance with clear information on how to report cases of bullying and to whom to report.
- UNCRC – education on rights that informs them that their voice, every voice, matters.
- Equality and Diversity: Everyone is different but equal, dignity and respect for each other is expected and how we should celebrate diversity.
- Cultural differences.
- Inclusion not exclusion.
- Effective Communication: Ensuring voice is heard and resolutions are accessible.
- Defining Bullying: What it is and what it is not. The differences between bullying, discrimination, harassment etc.
- Signposting to support.
- Zero Tolerance: What it means and strategies/action on how to cope without retaliation.
- How to keep safe and appropriate actions when bullied.

Key comments offered:

*“Speak up , know where to go for help, Understand what bullying looks like in subtle forms”?*

*“Young people need to know our expectations for good respectful behaviour, and the sanctions for not abiding by these.”*

*“Mechanisms for exploration, and reflective tools to address issues at earliest stage.”*

*“really engaging young people, so youth voice is another thing which is can be a bit tick box and various different settings. But if we really strengthened the use voice around issues like gender violence and bullying, then we could make transformational progress.”*

### **3. Approaches and Practice**

#### **3.1 CLD experience: effective approaches to preventing and responding to bullying.**

Informal interactive educative antibullying programmes which offer support for those impacted, as previously mentioned, is critical. Support for the individual needs to be integral and person centred, and from CLD experience , caution is needed around the offers given to those in need of support. It is vital to ensure everyone is heard, helped and solutions found for all parties, families, and communities. Often a plethora of warm words and even potential police involvement prevails but then no follow on or concrete action taken. Whilst we have also experienced that solutions can be perceived as the perpetrator is being rewarded for the behaviour when they are moved to an extended learning resource or accelerated curriculum for excellence programme. Often this is down to lack of transparency and continuous communication between all involved.

Effective partnership working and training between CLD practitioners, formal educators and learners has proven to work well, particularly with CLD practitioners who are situated in, or assigned to, working with designated schools. This enables CLD practitioners to build trust with the young people, and school staff, as well as offer consistent alternative youth programmes that offer the time needed to engage with the most vulnerable young people and their families. Using the strength of CLD workers in this way also ensures a more youth led approach to tackling bullying and leading anti-bullying campaigns. CLD practitioners also are best placed to support inclusion learning opportunities like LGBTQIA+ and Anti Racist clubs in schools, all of which support the creation of positive communities, as well as learning and living environments, which is critical to support lasting and significant cultural and behavioural change.

Working with younger aged primary children, highlighting what bullying is, how to speak up and how they can prevent it through continuous campaigns and highlighted on social media and communication channels that children and young people use. This approach has also worked well with CLD facilitating “peer” learning with primary and senior aged learners.

Key comments offered:

*“Listening carefully to the children, being non-judgemental and ensuring the child feels safe.”*

*“Taking a restorative justice approach though conversations and actions.”*

*“Include young people in setting and agreeing clear group agreements. Review these regularly. Draw attention when something goes wrong - try and understand from all sides what has happened.”*

*“Do not be afraid of talking about and celebrating diversity ..... Celebrate individuality and difference. Reiterate that we all share similar lived experiences. Make space for young people to express themselves. Mark important dates and events celebrating identity and difference.”*

*“critical message: do not keep bullying a secret.”*

*“Trying to get to the root cause of the bullying behaviours as all behaviours is communication. A zero tolerance of bullying behaviour - using case studies and role play to explore issues and resolution.”*

### **3.2 What CLD can do to support children and young people when bullying takes place online/ out with school.**

Inclusion, communication, and time are three key things needed to support these situations. CLD practitioners have the skills to build relationships with young people and adult learners, they offer an alternative ear from more traditional “authoritative” figures and are professionally qualified to safeguard, support and listen to get the facts.

Many CLD services offer learning opportunities to support young people, adult learners, families, and communities to safeguard themselves online. These skills development programmes range from educating about safety systems integrated into online devices, through to developing cognitive behaviour strategies often needed to cope with the psychological impact of bullying.

Experienced in challenging the practice in a non-confrontational manner, CLD supports children, young people, and adults to make a decision on what they want to do about it. Through signposting to further support, to understanding everyone’s role, they support learning regarding options and let them make the choice.

Key comments offered:

*“Be a supportive trusted adult. Listen. Be an advocate for the young people - talk to other adults / organisations who hold responsibility. Develop new projects and programmes in partnership with others to help tackle the problem.”*

*“Provide alternative resources and approaches to tackling bullying / discrimination amongst young people. Bring in partners with specialisms to help respond to the problem if / when appropriate.”*

*“Contact school/possibly police Provide comfort and signpost person to other youth activities which will help them build confidence and learn strategies to overcome. Have (CLD) practitioners who are trained in how to approach and support people who are being bullied.”*

*“Open and honest discussions and advice with YP (need to have a relationship first though)”*

*“.... able to break that silence, speak to the children and their families and provide appropriate support and this should not be ignored. Parents should also be able to keep their eyes open and watch their children’s behaviour. Practitioners can speak to their close friends to find out, sometimes it can be difficult. we need to encourage young people to speak out.”*

*“Contextualise the events. Don’t assume an essential vulnerability. Don’t overstep boundaries.”*

### 3.3 Local anti-bullying practice provision.

**Resources:** Whilst CLD has the skills to respond to bullying, racism, and the rise in misogynistic behaviour, it is clear from the recent Independent Review of CLD that the sector does not have the workforce, funding and resources required to do that meaningfully across Scotland. Some local authority and third sector organisations do have the opportunity to bid for and access external funding, but this is often short-term funding and paperwork heavy, therefore not offering the consistency to build programmes, relations, and the change required to embed meaningful and lasting change. There is a growing demand for qualified CLD practitioners to deliver youth programmes on discrimination and inclusion, especially concerning gender, sexuality, race, and misogyny.

**Systems:** In some areas it was felt that children's panels and access to the justice system is not geared towards restorative justice and support for the individuals. Often community police are also over stretched and under resourced, and with a lack of CLD workforce both in community settings and schools to support both the victim and perpetrator, meaningful engagement to show that their voice is being heard just does not happen, leading to the feeling and perception is that there is no action being taken and that they are all alone with nothing changing.

**Training:** Training for anti-bullying as well as dealing with bullying behaviours is lacking across Scotland, and it is vital if Scotland wants to move towards zero tolerance and fostering an anti-bullying culture. Across schools and community settings there can be a poor understanding of how to tackle bullying, often stemming from teachers and schools having restricted time to address issues alongside a low confidence in tackling prejudice. We see this leading to organisations and educational settings that do not tackle bullying behaviours which in turn is increasing bullying in all places and aspects of life. Young people often tell us of being told bullying is inevitable and something to learn to live with. We cannot continue to allow our communities to develop a culture where bullying is being seen as 'normal' and 'accepted' and 'inevitable'. Immediate change is required at a strategic level across Education, with support for all educators to access the suite of training needed, as well as the time and resource to embed change within our schools and community learning settings.

We believe there is a lack of understanding regarding what bullying is, with so much cross over between gender-based violence, anti-bullying, racism, racist incidents and other forms of discrimination and violence. Whilst there are often links, it is something that's been coming out strongly from a growth in racism and racist incidents in schools, communities, and places of work however it needs to be clear that bullying is not racism, and that racism is something separate. This guidance needs to be crystal clear about what bullying is and is not. We ask for detailed additional definitions and further support offered within the guidance. There also needs to be an acknowledgment of the difficulty in differentiation between bullying, racism and hate crime.

It was also felt that there is evidence within schools regarding the continued biases in approaches to learning and activities, with allowances made for males to show aggressive behaviour under the heading of boys will be boys, guidance on career choices being bound by "traditional" gender roles. Young people also tell us that female to female non-violent abuse is often ignored as not deemed serious enough or it is viewed as a behaviour "usual" for girls. These continuing gender biases need to be addressed through training for educators and the wider school staff.

Key comments offered:

*“Prejudice immediately puts some people in an almost a position where bullying is inevitable. ... and I think what I'm seeing at the moment is people in positions of influence who should be tackling that saying it's inevitable.”*

*“Perhaps with this bullying guidance, its essential to include putting that level in support about if your voice isn't being heard, if you're feel that you're being bullied and nothing is being done, then what are your rights and how do you deal with that? It's a tricky thing for young people to manoeuvre around, but they don't feel they're being heard, or they don't feel that any actions coming from being listened to.”*

*“ Real need for joined up training across teachers and CLD, collaboration in approaches and in access to training and resources, so all working together and using the same vehicles to support people.... for educators, whether that's CLD workers or teachers, and (training) together is actually going to be really powerful because I think that there is probably a need for better understanding of one of those practises and strengths. So actually, physically bringing bring in practitioners together and training.”*

*“... there certainly needs to be work, maybe that training is around not only understanding kind of bullying prejudice and the new guidance, but also around how to work alongside and with young people to tackle that to make a sustainable difference in terms of culture.”*

*“Yes. We are being asked to support the delivery of youth led programmes tackling different kinds of discrimination - particularly gender / sexuality / race.”*

*“But what's really interesting is that it is schools that are coming to us asking us to help them. So, there is a capacity issue within schools, but there is also a confidence and skills issue..... think CLD workforce are well placed and well skilled to understand how to deliver that. So that's what I would like to see in the guidance because I think teachers are struggling with that and some of the conversations, I've had with teachers who are high up in their schools is a real lack of understanding around language and power.”*

*“I don't think bullying is always taken seriously in schools. If a member of school staff doesn't feel something is considered 'bullying' to them then they can sometimes be very dismissive of the child or YP, often labelling them as being 'sensitive'. The focus is then to support the victim to become more resilient rather than supporting the perpetrator to alter their behaviour.”*

*“I feel schools don't take it seriously enough and whilst many have anti bullying policies they are rarely implemented.”*

### **3.4 Do you feel children and young people are taught enough about respectful relationships and kindness?**

Overall, the members felt that this area of learning is often lacking or deemed not important within schools, with often a traditional view that this learning comes from home. It was felt that a collaborative approach including parents, carers and the wider communities would be

beneficial. It was also suggested that developing mentoring/buddying programmes and rewarding behaviours would support relationship learning and strengthen individuals understanding.

Some evidence was offered from Perth and Kinross CLD practitioners that they see schools doing their best to teach respect and positive relationships but there is a critical need to provide ongoing training both to staff and to young people. It was suggested that curriculum time be ringfenced across all school settings to develop and foster learning opportunities such as discussion groups on respect and kindness, with role plays being used as a vehicle to enable young people really understand what good and bad behaviours does, with the opportunity to put the oppressor (anyone) in the victims shoes.

Key comments offered:

*"No. Managing relationships is poorly taught in formal education settings. Youth Work is well placed to support delivery of these education outcomes and it is important that the wider community context be considered when designing and delivering learning programmes. Relationships are role modelled at home and in the community, so community-based youth settings are positive places to deliver this learning practically in informal settings. Young people need to be supported to reflect and think about when they make mistakes - this is difficult and children and young people need to be supported when they make mistakes as well as when they are hurt by bullying behaviours."*

*"no. there isn't enough time and families aren't involved."*

*"Absolutely not"*

*"Yes. Lots of universal teaching in schools in PKC about respectful relationships."*

*"This is a gap that could easily be incorporated into experiences and outcomes within school. curriculum as well as youth work settings "*

*"no - the backlash to the healthy relationship curriculum would indicate that there is a preconception that young people don't need to know about certain things until they are "adults" or "old enough."*

*"No - and this is leading to some really dangerous behaviours as young people explore and find out for themselves. There is a swift uplift in misogyny / gender based and sexual / racist abuse as a result."*

*"... linking it into the UNCRC to make it you understandable.... We're trying to be in transformational spaces..... really challenging that the bullying is something that probably most parents have experience in some way or other."*

## **4. Guidance and Language**

### **4.1 Should online bullying should not be treated differently from face-to-face bullying.**

It should not be treated differently because it is online and not in person, but it should be treated individually like any case of bullying that occurs and all parties will have differing needs. Online bullying is still relatively a new phenomenon, so we need to be mindful of new learning that is out there and provide training to practitioners and young people, as well as measure trends and changes to inform future training and understanding.

Online bullying requires support for the bullied person and a focus on education around appropriate online use to support positive online habits. It can often be anonymous and follows the individual around, at home, at school, when out with friends, so there is no escape. In person bullying can provide easier opportunities to work with the often easily identified bullies to enable them to have a different world view and to tackle and change their behaviour. We ask that this guidance is supported by a strong Scotland wide campaign about individual control, what people can do to block online bullying and the support that is out there. Bring it to the forefront of conversations and stop the stigma.

Key comments offered:

*"Can the guidance show the way in which people being bullied can access support, if they can't get it at school or from home, and with practical tips on how to safeguard themselves? It links back to rights, UNCRC and Human rights Bill Scotland... will there be guidance on how to access justice if your rights are not upheld?"*

*"Both should be challenged but online bullying is more insidious and perhaps should be approached differently?"*

*"It may be harder to bring people together if bullying happens online, particularly if people do not know one another."*

*"I think it is helpful to have a clear step by step process for adults / CLD workers to go through when dealing with a bullying incident... but each incident will be different and needs to be responded to with empathy and appropriate actions. "*

*"Online bullying is a relatively new phenomenon and needs to be watched and responded to with care. It is a fast-changing landscape. We need to learn from young people and help them share their experiences and fears about the online landscape."*

*"It's more subtle sometimes and harder to identify. Seriousness is the same "*

*"Any bullying should be treated seriously whether face to face or digital."*

*"I think online bullying is more prolific as it's 24/7 and tends to impact on mental health more due to nature of content and more likely to be harmful as well as subtle and perpetrators can hide or disguise identity".*

#### **4.2 Use of Language: Online bullying or cyber bullying.**

There was much debate around the language that could be used, with some CLD practitioners stating that cyber bullying may be seen as less personal than online bullying and therefore may not be treated as seriously. Many commented that "Online" is language, which is understood by everyone, however some questioned why there is a need to differentiate, as it is all bullying.

Key comments offered:

*"Online bullying is fine and clear here I think."*

*"cyberbullying or social"*

*"Are online and cyber not the same?"*

*"Unsure "*

*"I've heard YP using both."*

*"Bullying"*

*"Online bullying as cyber bullying can be construed as something that is not real."*

*"From my experience they just use bullying rather than just online/cyber or will name the platform."*

## **5. CLD Anti Bullying: Evidence in Practice**

CLD is unique and it matters. It is a field of professional practice that enables people to identify their own individual and collective goals, to take action to bring about change and through this to achieve these goals. It is separate and distinct from school education settings and therefore needs to be clearly recognised and accounted for in the guidance.

CLD practitioners' relationships with individuals is different from formal education relationships and CLD practitioners create opportunities to use these trusting relationships with vulnerable groups in community settings to tackle problems associated with bullying. We would like further investigation regarding the opportunity for research to measure the impact of community based CLD in reducing and preventing problems with bullying in society. These small research projects could support and inform best practice moving forwards.

As mentioned previously, CLD needs significant funding to support the development of its workforce. This would offer an increase in CLD and traditional formal educators to work in partnership and reach out through youth work to help tackle growing issues around prejudice, racism, and misogyny. It was felt that to create the cultural shift critically needed in school and community learning based environments, the value of partnership between formal education and CLD has to be recognised, and there needs to be a shift in focus to develop the preventative and early intervention work rather than "firefighting" and being reactive to bullying as it arises.

Many CLD practitioners gave evidence of working with or being part of national organisations which focus on anti-bullying and promotion of non-violence behaviours. It was felt that further development was needed to ensure the inclusion of "authentic voice" as well as knowledge from these experienced organisations such as [White Ribbon Scotland](#), [Anti Bullying Alliance Scotland](#), [Respect Me](#), [Victim Support Scotland](#), for the development of the guidance, as well as working towards an anti-bullying culture right across Scotland. Organisations like these could be encouraged to be part of a strategic working group whose key objectives would be to support



the development of training for educators and young people, and to support a national anti-bullying campaign, as well as help inform and shape the guidance.

Youth Voice Evidence: Members of the Youth Parliament Highland (YPH) have informed the Scottish Youth Parliament that homophobic attacks are on the rise. The YPH, with support from CLD youth work are looking at research carried out a decade ago, to revise the questions as well as develop a tool kit, mental health awareness posters and a campaign to engage with the regular youth forums across Highlands and Islands. Highland Council have a new children's participation strategy and inspiring young voices. The immediate feedback from these initiatives is that young people feel they are not being heard, and that adults and supporting services are not acting on their voice. Future development to address these issues include developing the Youth Work Development group in Highland to raise the profile of young people's voices, along with youth place plans that will ensure youth voice will be taken into the CLD plan for Highland.

There is a critical need to work towards ensuring a greater understanding and impact of the CLD sector throughout this guidance, in the training needed to support it, and across Scottish education. There was a call for recognition of the profession and the place of CLD in education, to support teachers and work together, and not just youth work, but adult learning (including ESOL and family learning), and community development. The CLD profession offers educative interventions to learners of all ages, so that they can empower themselves and create a power balance, with the confidence and ability to lead on change they want for their lives as well as lead change for the communities they live in.

A large part of our informal and non-formal work that we do within youth work settings, schools, and communities, and with families with all ages of young people, is supporting learning and understanding of rights. To support individuals to a voice or understand how they can impact change for themselves, for their family, their communities, and their school. All of those other settings which all feed into this guidance.

CLD is experienced in delivering multi levelled learning opportunities, independently and in partnership with schools. These learning opportunities are for families and communities so they can grow and develop together. An example of this is the SVQ Mental Health and Wellbeing, often offered as part of a school curriculum, CLD practitioners work alongside teachers to deliver the course content creatively. CLD practitioner would be also working with the families, parents and carers by offering and delivering the same qualification, so that when the young people were trying to understand their own mental health and understand changes to their habits and they were going home to an family environment that was also going through that learning journey, therefore understanding the changes that the young people were trying to make and supporting and embedding the learning between each other. This enables the young person at school to learn and grown, whilst their support network at home or in the community also has the same learning and can support change in behaviours, understanding and relationships.

Key comments offered:

*"We use this resource, [The Decider Skills](#), with young people, it is quite effective and people realise in their own their own triggers and their own experience and their own feelings as well."*

*“recognition of the influence of CLD practise in supporting formal education and those links with the wider community, because those behaviours don't just come into young people, they (to a certain extent) are a result of generations of family behaviour.”*

*“...so, the importance of CLD practitioners in being seen as partners, I think is quite important here. Our work has always been focused on equalities and human rights, so we're well placed to do that and support formal educators so that this doesn't feel like a whole lot more work.”*

*“Young people need to feel empowered to shape and design responses to bullying. We should be sharing examples of good practice and supporting young people to lead. We are currently in the process of working with 2 schools in our area who are dealing with an upturn in the number of reports of racial abuse in school. Schools have recognised that CLD / youth work might be best placed to support them to support young people to tackle this problem.”*

*“there is extra pressure on teachers, need to change and understand the language and the ability to connect with young people at a different level. That's what CLD does. “*

*“There are opportunities for us to work alongside young people to develop learning resources and materials for young people to tackle bullying and to increase young people's awareness of bullying and discrimination and building skills to manage positive relationships as well as support this behaviour amongst their peers.”*

*“The government needs to take more control of online content.”*

*“I do think there is probably a bit more to be done around recognising CLD (youth work, adult learning, and community work), and that CLD is a critical part of this, it is a service which offers learning and working towards getting to a solution and responding.”*

*“Schools should be required to be much more active and accountable.”*

*“That parents don't feel that they have the knowledge and support to help their child. Often bullying impacts on the whole family and parents can feel helpless.”*

*“Many of the YP (young people) I work with tell me they don't feel safe in school. They believe that there will be a consequence to bullying behaviour but that adults are unable to keep them safe and prevent incidents from occurring. Some focus on how adults/school staff can help YP feel safe would be helpful to share with schools.”*

*“put theory into practice and get young people to engaged in forming the strategies.”*

*“We need to allow children to develop resilience by not intervening too easily.”*

*“ A public health approach using a wide range of media to highlight issues and consequences of bullying whether it is offline in person or online.”*

*“young people are not inherently racist, but they were tending to echo racist attitudes.”*

*“CLD has the expertise and potential to emphasise the messages that young people are hearing in schools to families and communities, with its expertise being the ability to reach the most marginalised and hard to reach, through relationships and building trust.”*

## **6. Additional**

It was felt that the guidance could further develop definitions and offer information that defines sexual bullying v sexual harassment. This should also be covered in the mandatory training as mentioned previously.

To ensure meaningful engagement from those most vulnerable, it is essential that the language used within this guidance is accessible and understandable to all who may be impacted by it and may want to use it. The [Adult learning strategy](#) was published by Scottish Government in 2022 and informs us that over 324,000 adults in Scotland have low or no qualifications, and the [National Literacy Trust](#) report that 1 in 4 adults in Scotland experience challenges due to their lack of literacy skills and Scotland has the highest percentage across all of the four nations. We suggest that the guidance should be taken to focus groups of community members who are perhaps not normally involved in these stages of legislation and policy development to check its accessibility and levels of language. This would enable Scottish Government to see how well it is understood and that there is no misinterpretation of words, phrases or intent. We all have a duty of responsibility to ensure we get it right in terms of individuals and communities’ involvement within this process, therefore we need to make sure that language being used is understandable and that people are not being overwhelmed by jargon and therefore disengaging with discussions or unable to access information on their rights.

Inclusion and equality are key to Scotland developing an anti-bullying culture; therefore, it is critical that distribution of the guidance is inclusive and immediately available to educators and learners alike. How is this guidance going to be distributed? Will there be a national anti-bullying campaign to launch it? Members felt that the launch of this guidance is a unique opportunity for Scottish Government to fully endorse the valuable roll all educators have in working towards an anti-bullying culture in our schools and educational settings, and giving recognition to CLD learning environments, by ensuring equality of distribution from the start which is fully inclusive of the wider education workforce.

There was a call for the guidance documentation and training to all recognise the importance of understanding intersectionality. The concept of intersectionality describes the ways in which systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class, and other forms of discrimination “intersect” to create unique dynamics and effects. The Oxford Dictionary defines intersectionality as “the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.” Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities across Scotland can experience bullying, prejudice or discrimination and can come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds and communities. We strongly urge that this strategy acknowledges this and draws attention to the importance of consideration of intersectionality. For inclusion and equity, it is critical all support services understands everyone has their own unique experiences of life, as well as barriers to progression, and we must consider everything that can marginalise people – gender, race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability, etc when supporting individuals to become independent, to access learning and skills

development, and when they are transitioning through important stages of life or dealing with barriers and exclusion themselves.

Key comments offered:

*“Really like it (the guidance), it is very usable, clear in what actions you should take depending on your organisation and the situation. More to be done to recognise the role of CLD and getting to a solution. Need for joined up training with CLD and teachers. This would offer the chance for all educators to understand each other’s practice, roles and strengths, support collaboration.”*

*“There’s this kind of like unknown privilege that is held by some people, and so there’s something within this guidance that offers support to people to understand their own privilege as well as to recognise bullying when it happens. People need to understand power imbalance and we suggest this could be a critical section within the prejudice bullying section.”*

*“ Society/Communities/CLD also have a responsibility to work with and understand the needs of the people who are bullying, because that’s a whole new education required, and support, CLD are qualified and experienced in helping the bullies perceive the world with different eyes as a result of the interventions and conversations we have with them. Does the guidance recognise and support that aspect as well?”*

*“But until the anti-bullying campaign and the zero tolerance in programmes for bullies... and that critical changing of our culture happens, then we will always be firefighting bullying, and offering aftermath support to those victims and bully’s that are part of that.”*

*“... transparency regards whose voice is being heard, who’s who part of these working groups and what are the kind of next areas of policy that are being developed. Because I know there’s, like, things like political literacy and social justice being looked at in in Education Scotland.”*

## **7. Appendix**

### **7.1 Responses to Online Survey**

Click on the link below to open CLD Standards Council 2024 07 “HAVE YOUR SAY” online survey responses.

[CLD Standards Council Online Responses July 2024](#)

### **7.2 Focus Group Data**

Click on the link below to open the CLD Standards Council 2024 07 Respect for all PADLET used to capture data from the online focus group.

[CLD Standards Council Padlet July 2024](#)