



# ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

**Chair of Governors:**

**Date:**

**Review date:** **October 2026**

# Anti-Bullying Policy

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## Introduction

- This document is a statement of the aims, principles, and strategies for dealing with incidents of bullying at school.
- It was drawn up following the Respecting Others: Anti-bullying Guidance from the National Assembly for Wales document.
- The policy will be shared with staff and a discussion around the problem of bullying will take place- staff will review the policy annually to agree on good and bad practice.
- Policy will be available online for parents and carers to ensure correct procedures are followed at all times.
- The policy will be amended and adapted when appropriate.

At Ysgol Bryn Derw we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they may learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying occurs, all pupils and parents/carers should be able to tell an adult at school and feel assured that incidents will be dealt with appropriately.

The nature and needs of the pupils in an ASD Special School means that the approaches taken will need to be highly bespoke and individualised to the communication levels, behavioural needs and the emotional and inter-personal skills of each pupil. This policy sets out a set of approaches that will be adapted to each pupil and situation

We define bullying as action taken by one or more children with the deliberate intention of hurting another child, either physically or emotionally, on a regular basis.

## Aims

- We teach that bullying is wrong and damaging. We do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable
- We seek to promote a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety. We promote a kind, caring and nurturing ethos in school where pupils are taught to value and respect others.
- This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur
- We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.
- We raise the awareness of staff and pupils so that they understand the various forms of bullying.
- We aim to eradicate incidents of bullying through the implementation of the whole school Behaviour Policy.
- We have clear procedures for reporting bullying which are adapted to the learning and communication level of each pupil and our procedures seek to ensure that these are understood and followed.

## Objectives

In order to fulfil these specific anti-bullying aims Ysgol Bryn Derw will:

- Reinforce the anti-bullying message with the whole staff community through regular general and specific INSET, staff meetings and individual communications between staff members.
- Ensure that the whole community of parents, pupils and staff understand what bullying is.
- Equip pupils with strategies which enable them to respond to bullying behaviour.
- Reinforces the anti-bullying message with pupils specifically through SEAL, Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity, class time, assemblies; and in general through the curriculum, using projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events, current affairs and the daily interactions between staff and pupils.
- Reinforce the anti-bullying message with parents through the school website, regular formal parent communications and informal communications which reinforce the school's aims and quick response to concerns as they are aired.
- Collate and listen to pupil opinions on incidents of bullying, in order to improve school policy and procedures.
- Ensure that parents, staff and pupils are aware of the procedures to follow if they are the victim of alleged bullying or if they feel that they might be acting in bullying ways.
- Ensure that parents, staff and pupils understand the signs of bullying.
- Provide support to those who are the victims of bullying and those who are perpetrating bullying behaviours.
- Provide restorative justice conferences facilitated by school staff.
- Ensure that all pupils understand (at a level appropriate to each individual) the school's Behaviour Policy and the sanctions which may be put in place in response to substantiated incidences of bullying.

## What is Bullying?

### **Understanding Bullying - A definition:**

It is important to recognise what, in law, is defined as bullying. Bullying can be defined as:

A range of harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological. All bullying behaviour usually has the following four features:

- It is usually **repetitive** and **persistent**
- It is **intentionally harmful**
- It involves an **imbalance of power**, leaving someone feeling **helpless** to prevent it or put a stop to it
- It causes feelings of **distress, fear, loneliness** and **lack of confidence** in those who are at the receiving end.

Which can take one of the following forms;

**Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any use of violence

**Verbal/ written** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

**Emotional:** exclusion, tormenting (i.e. hiding books, threatening gestures), racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

**Sexual:** unwanted physical contact or abusive comments

**Racial Harassment:** (all incidents of racial harassment are recorded and Monitored)

**Cyber:** all forms of abuse involving the internet, social websites, chat rooms, mobile phones, email, text messages, photographs

Some of the reasons why people may be bullied include:

- Sexual and sexist (unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments related to appearance or sexual activity, cyber-bullying, exclusion)
- Racial (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions which is done in the name of the victim's perceived racial differences)
- Religious (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions) which is done in the name of the victim's perceived religious differences
- Cultural (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions) which is done in the name of the victim's perceived cultural differences
- Special educational needs and/ or disability (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions) which is done in the name of the victim's perceived differences in terms of their special educational needs and/ or disability)
- Homophobic (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions) which is done in the name of the victim's perceived differences in sexuality. Research evidences that pupils may also experience homophobic bullying related to gender stereotyping, e.g. sensitive boys, academic boys, sporty girls, boisterous girls.
- Appearance (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions) which is done in the name of the victim's perceived differences/personal choices in terms of their appearance.
- Personal Hygiene (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, cyber, exclusion, interference with possessions) which is done in the name of the victim's differences in terms of their personal hygiene.

The intention of all of the above is to harm or cause distress

## **Equality Act 2010**

Bullying on the Basis of the Protected Characteristics referenced in The Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion

and belief, sex and sexual orientation, Welsh Language) will be addressed in the same way as other forms of bullying. However, it will be seen in the context of the school's commitment to promoting an environment where all members of its community are respected, valued and celebrated equally for their differences. This aspect of the anti-bullying policy has a direct link to the school's Equality Policy and Equality Action Plan. All incidents of bullying related to the protected characteristics will be recorded and reported on electronically through the SIMS Behaviour Management system.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Cyberbullying can be defined as the use of information and communication technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet to deliberately upset someone else. Cyberbullying is different to other forms of bullying. In cyberbullying, the audience for the bullying can be very large and reached rapidly. This means that the degree and seriousness, as well as the possible risks and repercussions can be harder to control and curtail.

Cyberbullying can take many forms such as:

- Threats and intimidation;
- Harassment or stalking;
- Vilification and defamation;
- Peer rejection and exclusion;
- Identity theft;
- Unauthorised access and impersonation;
- Publicly posting, sending or forwarding personal or private information or images;
- Manipulation

The reasons why people may be a victim of cyberbullying are the same and the reasons for other types of bullying (noted above), for example for reasons related to their protected characteristic, their appearance or their personal hygiene.

The following technologies can be used as vehicles for cyberbullying:

- Mobile phones;
- Instant messenger and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)
- Chatrooms and message boards
- E-mail
- Webcams
- Social network sites
- Video-hosting sites
- Virtual learning environments (VLEs)
- Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds

It is recognised that in the case of cyberbullying, the victim and aggressor may not be on the school premises at the time when the incidents occur. However, the school recognises its responsibility to address the problem where possible and will take action to prevent incidents of this kind. It is also recognised that 'bystanders' can easily become perpetrators – by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, for example or by taking part in online polls or discussions. Pupils, parents and staff should also refer to the School's E-learning/ I.T. policy for further information and details on how cyberbullying is discouraged.

## **Potential signs of bullying**

Bullying can cause serious psychological damage. A pupil who is being bullied may display some of the following signs:

- Becomes frightened of coming to school, or frightened to attend specific lessons or go into specific areas of the school
- Changes to their usual routine
- Becomes more withdrawn or anxious than previously
- Begins stammering
- Threatens to run away or runs away
- Threatens suicide
- Begins to perform poorly at school
- Frequently has missing or damaged possessions
- Is always asking for extra money or never has money
- Has unexplained injuries
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Begins to bully others
- Stops eating or attending meals
- Is afraid to use the internet or a mobile phone
- Becomes nervous when a cyber-message is received
- Is reluctant to discuss reasons for any of the above

## **Prevention of Bullying**

The school aims to prevent bullying from becoming established. This is achieved by establishing a culture in which bullying is not tolerated and where it is seen as the responsibility of all members of the school community to report any instances of bullying.

- School Council will provide a forum where children and young people can raise general issues of concern.
- The curriculum is used as a vital means of teaching children and young people how to manage these feelings and specific issues are addressed in Health and Wellbeing AOLE, Assemblies and class time. Children will be made aware of what type of behaviour constitutes bullying. Stories, role play, worksheets may be used to address the problem of actions which give rise to bully versus victim.
- The School Based Counselling Service, ELSA and Restorative Justice system exists to support individuals in need.
- There are high ratios of staff support at all times throughout the school day- this includes break times and lunch times
- Children are supervised in all areas around the school.
- Staff and school council members watch for the isolated child, making sure that the child is not isolated due to bullying. Other children are encouraged to play with such children.  
It is important to note that due to the nature of our pupils at Ysgol Bryn Derw, children and young people may choose to play or be alone at times - it is then reliant on the staff member to know each child individually to recognise behaviour that is not usual for that child.
- Children are made aware that bullying should be reported to an adult. Staff are trained to communicate with pupils in a range of ways and concerns can be reported in a range of ways
- Through Personal and Social Education (PSE)

## **Procedures for investigating a case of suspected bullying**

Bullying events may be identified in several ways:

- Disclosure to a member of staff by the individual being bullied
- Disclosure to another pupil by the individual being bullied
- Witnesses to specific bullying events
- Suspicion of bullying based upon the indicators listed above.

In all cases an allegation of bullying should be treated seriously, open, fairly and investigated thoroughly.

All members of staff have a duty to respond straight away if they suspect, or are made aware of, a case of discrimination and/or bullying. It may be possible for the staff involved to carry out an initial investigation; however, the preferred route is for staff to make a note of the date, time and nature of the incident and pass evidence onto the relevant class teacher for investigation of the matter, in conjunction with a Senior Member of Staff.

An investigation of bullying will take time: there are no instant solutions. However, the member of staff investigating should take the following steps:

- Victim(s), Aggressor(s) and Witness(es) will be interviewed by the member of staff investigating. All parties will be reassured of the discretion of the school in dealing with such matters within the limits of our confidentiality policy. The victim(s) in particular should be reassured that the matter will be dealt with and is being treated seriously.
- If the victim reports the matter, they should be spoken to first. If not, any witnesses should be interviewed, followed by the accused pupil and finally the victim.
- All pupils involved in the situation should be given a fair hearing and be permitted to tell their version of events without comment upon the nature of the behaviour described.
- A written summary of the information gathered should be made, and agreed by the individuals involved. This is important as it will enable the victim and witnesses to feel reassured that action is being taken, and for the accused party to feel that they have had a fair hearing.
- Remember that it can be hard to establish the facts.
- A problem solving approach which avoids blame can be more effective in clarifying the situation and achieving change.
- All incidents of discrimination and bullying related to the protected characteristics, SEN, appearance and personal hygiene will be recorded and reported on using the SIMS behaviour management system.

The specific nature of the approaches above will vary according to the age and communication levels of the individuals involved.

### **Investigation of more serious incidents**

The following represents an agreed staged response towards serious incidents of bullying, and to other serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

1. The Head Teacher will discuss the incident with bully(ies) and victim(s), individually and then together. He will take notes of what is said, using, when appropriate, the children's own words. Class teacher and parents/carers will be informed of the outcome.

2. Bully(ies) will be made aware of how serious incidents such as these are. Pupils will have time to reflect on situations with a familiar adult who knows that child and the correct individual approach to

take for a positive reflection. Parents will be contacted by phone to share details and discuss reflections and ways forward.

3. If similar behaviour is subsequently reported, parents will be contacted to visit the school to arrange of person centred meeting to discuss positive ways forward and support options.

4. Parents and teacher or Head Teacher will discuss ways forward of dealing with the situation. This may involve investigating other options to ensure that the child/ young person is safe and able to access the curriculum- however maybe in a smaller group, a 1:1 teaching room, with different peers for a short amount of time. Sign-posting to certain interventions in school such as ELSA, LEGO Club etc adding new targets to support ways forward or referral to agencies outside of school.

### **Action by the school**

If it is felt that bullying has taken place, the victim will be told that action will be taken to prevent bullying from continuing in line with the School's Behaviour Policy. The school may respond to incidents of bullying which take place outside of the immediate authority of the school. The bully needs to understand the effects of their actions upon the victim, and will be given support in order to modify their behaviour, including, if appropriate, counselling. If, in spite of support, the bullying behaviour continues, there are a number of possible sanctions available to the school. These may include:

- A verbal warning, recorded in the perpetrator's file
- A letter of apology to the victim, with a copy to be kept on file. A verbal apology would be appropriate for children depending on their level of understanding and communication.
- Referral to the Head teacher for action in the case of persistent or severe bullying.

The victim of the bullying will receive support from the School Counsellor or other supportive adults as required and their recovery will be closely monitored by a nominated adult who works closely in partnership with the victim's parents.

### **The Role of Governors**

The Governing Body supports the Head Teacher in implementing this policy. Governors do all that they can to eliminate bullying from our school, and to ensure that incidents of bullying are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

### **The Role of the Head Teacher**

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school anti-bullying policy and to ensure that all staff are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in our school. The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments during the school week, often in assembly. The Head Teacher works with staff to set the school climate of mutual respect, support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

### **The Role of Staff/Teachers**



It is important to note that at Ysgol Bryn Derw certain behaviours and exchanges need to be taught and repeated over a period of time to ensure children/young person is aware of the appropriate way to behaviour in social situations. The PCP approach will ensure that all pupils are provided the opportunity to learn social norms and appropriate behaviours to build positive relationships with their peers. This in turn will establish a climate of trust and mutual respect for all. By supporting, praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

We spend time talking to the children/young person who are involved. We explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. In order to create an environment which encourages positive, respectful and non- aggressive and threatening relationships, all staff at school are committed to the following;

- All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. If teachers/staff witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.
- They keep records of all serious incidents that happen to children in their class in their class books, these are regularly monitored by members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- They refer to bullying during Circle Time and discuss issues relating to this.
- The teaching of strategies for dealing with bullying is a part of the Health and Wellbeing AOLE and is referenced annually through the SEAL program studied by the whole school.
- Using the whole School Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- Encouraging an open atmosphere in school
- Taking every allegation seriously
- Always listening to the child/ young person
- As and when appropriate reflect and discuss incidents with the children/ young people.
- If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head Teacher, either the teacher or the Head Teacher informs the child's parents.
- If staff become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying and, where appropriate for the person who has carried out the bullying.

## **Parents' guide to bullying behaviours**

Whenever a serious case of bullying is uncovered the parents or guardian of both the victim and the bully would normally be informed usually by personal contact.

### **If your child is being bullied:**

Parents along with peers will probably be the first to hear of a bullying incident. Parents should contact their child's class teacher if they are worried. It is essential to stay calm, supportive and find out the facts of the situation; bullying can be complex to understand as it is possible that the parties involved will have varying perceptions of the events under investigation. Reassurance will be needed in order to persuade your child that they have done the right thing by telling you. You may find it helpful to have the following checklist at your side to ensure that correct information is passed to the school.

- Who was involved?
- Where did it take place, when and how often?
- Why did it take place?
- What form did the bullying take?

When you inform the school of these details, you will be told how the school will proceed; this will normally begin with an investigation into the allegations (see below for details). Be reassured that this will be managed sensitively with the needs of all the pupils involved carefully considered. You will want to ask what you can do to support the school's actions to support your child. You will also want to make a note of the suggested strategy the school intends to take. Stay in touch with the school and inform the school of how things are improving. Establish further contact if necessary.

**If your child is involved in the bullying:**

It is important to work with the school to modify the patterns of behaviour which are causing your son/daughter to bully. Do not panic and blame yourself. Acknowledge that these things do happen and the school has mechanisms in place to deal with this issue. It is helpful to recognise some of the reasons why pupils behave in this way from time to time. Children sometimes bully others because:

- They have not yet learnt satisfactory ways for making firm relationships
- They are not aware of how hurtful it is
- They are copying the behaviour of older siblings or people they admire
- They have a temporary difficulty integrating in their peer group
- They are bullying others because of encouragement from others
- They are going through a difficult time personally and need help

**To stop your child from being involved in bullying behaviour:**

- Talk with your son/daughter and help him or her to understand that what he or she is doing is unacceptable as it makes other pupils unhappy - Use social stories to support this.
- Model and praise appropriate behaviour and discourage aggressive behaviour in order to get what they want
- Suggest ways of joining in activities with other pupils without bullying
- Liaise with the school
- Make time to have regular chats about how things are going at school
- Check that your child has identified an adult at school to whom he or she can go to if she or he has a problem or a worry of any kind

Please note that the School will want to and need to take action if bullying behaviour occurs. The matter will be sensitively handled but it needs to be effective.

## **Guidance for Pupils**

**Pupil's guide to how to respond if you are being bullied (dependent upon pupil age and level):**

If you are being bullied the following responses should help:

1. Be proud of the ways in which you are different – everyone is unique so everyone is different from everyone else.
2. If you are being bullied, try to stay with friends as much as possible.
3. When the bullying starts, try to stay calm. People who bully often like the fact that they can 'wind you up'. They like the feeling of power that they have and they want you to react.
4. Breathe deeply or count to 10 in your head. Remind yourself that you don't deserve this treatment.
5. You may want to walk away from the situation. Sometimes this will help as the bully is not getting the reaction he/she wants. (Remember that you should always tell someone what has happened).
6. Try explaining to the bully that his/her words/actions are upsetting; he or she may not be aware of this. 'I don't like what you are saying about me. I want you to stop.'

7. If the bullying continues- Walk away quickly, quietly and confidently, even if you don't feel that way inside.
8. The bully will not stop if he/she thinks he/she can get away with such behaviour. Discuss the problem with your friends and/or a family member.
9. Tell a member of staff or ask your friends to tell a member of staff on your behalf. Don't forget to use your school council members.
10. Keep a diary of the words or behaviour the bullies use to hurt you. Try to write the date, the time, what happened and who was involved. This is useful to your parents/guardians and teachers when they are trying to stop the bullying.

### **Pupil's guide to how to respond if you think someone is being bullied and how to prevent bullying**

1. If the pupil being bullied is in any danger, get help. If he or she is not in danger, your presence may ease the situation so remain together. Let an adult know.
2. Show that you and your friends disapprove
3. Give sympathy and support to other pupil/s who may be bullied.
4. Be careful about teasing or making personal remarks. If you think individuals might not find your comments funny don't say them
5. If you know of bullying, tell someone. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell.

Remember it is helpful if allegations of bullying are supported with evidence. If bullying occurs via social networking sites or mobile technologies, copies should be printed and given to or information forwarded electronically to a member of staff.

## **Links with other policies**

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Complaints
- Equality
- Inclusion
- Health and Wellbeing AOLE

### **Welsh Government: Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance 2011**

This series of guidance materials offers further information and advice around developing anti-bullying policies and strategies and for responding to incidents of bullying. The guidance materials cover bullying around race, religion and culture; bullying around special education needs and disabilities; homophobic bullying; sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying; and cyberbullying  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/circulars/antibullying>

## **Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored by the Head Teacher, who reports to Governors about its effectiveness, on request.

**This policy will be reviewed within a 3 year period, or sooner if necessary**