



Whitchurch High School - Ysgol Uwchradd Yr Eglwys Newydd

POLICY STATEMENT - BULLYING

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Reviewed by Governors: 19th June 2023

Signed by: 
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(Headteacher)

Date:22.6.23.....

Definition of bullying

Welsh Government advises that there is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or indeed Great Britain. Welsh Government guidance defines bullying as, behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take place face to face or online.

Bullying is a form of unacceptable behaviour, but not all unacceptable behaviour is bullying. Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or friendship fallout in that it:

- is deliberate or intentional hurtful behaviour.
- is repeated behaviour that usually happens over a period of time.
- causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, humiliation, and powerlessness.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- physical – kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone, damaging their belongings or gestures of intimidation.
- verbal – taunts and name-calling, insults, threats, humiliation, or intimidation.
- emotional – behaviour intended to isolate, hurt, or humiliate someone.
- indirect – sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back or rumour-spreading.
- online – using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums, or apps to bully via text, messaging, images, or video.
- relational aggression – bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, exploiting a person's special educational needs (SEN) or long-term illness, targeting their family's social status, isolating, or humiliating someone or deliberately getting someone into trouble.
- sexual – unwanted touching, threats, suggestions, comments and jokes or innuendo.
- prejudice-related – bullying of a learner or a group of learners because of prejudice.

Prejudice-related bullying involves aspects of a person's identity such as:

- race
- religion or beliefs
- culture or family background
- disability
- gender identity – the way someone looks or acts
- sexual orientation
- sex – because of someone's gender (often in a form of harassment).

When it is not bullying

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. The following examples are cases which would not normally be considered bullying:

- friendship.
- a one-off fight.
- a one-off physical assault.
- insults and perceived banter.
- a one-off instance of hate crime.

Procedures for reporting an incident of bullying behaviour.

The prevention of bullying should be a whole school approach and the following all have a role to play in the prevention of bullying:

- Pupils
- Parents
- Wellbeing Tutors
- Class Teachers
- Support staff
- Progress Leaders and Progress/Pastoral Teams
- Wellbeing Officers
- Senior Leadership Team
- Governors

It is important that all reports of bullying are investigated and dealt with to promote an ethos of trust. A pupil should report bullying to a parent, teacher, or any member of school staff. Depending on the nature of the reported incident, the wellbeing tutor or class teacher may deal with the incident, with any action taken recorded on SIMS (Schools Information Management System) and emailed to the Progress Team. Members of school staff without access to the SIMS should report all incidents to the relevant Progress Leader or Progress/Pastoral Team immediately.

If a member of staff is unable to resolve the bullying issue the incident must be referred to the Progress/Pastoral office. The Progress Assistant will follow up the incident and record the action taken. The Progress Assistant will then inform the Wellbeing Tutor and the member of staff who made the referral, of the action taken. The Progress Assistant will inform the Progress Leader of any further incidents that occur if the initial issue is unresolved. The Progress Assistant may also refer more serious incidents to the relevant Progress Leader and in turn the Assistant Head Teacher for Years 7-9 or 10-11.

Parents/carers of victims and bullies will be informed of any serious incidents or persistent bullying.

Some serious incidents may be linked to safeguarding and child protection and child protection procedures will be followed.

The following data should always be recorded when an incident of bullying has been reported:

- Names and ages of perpetrators/victims/witnesses.
- Location/date/time incident occurred.
- When incident was reported and to whom it was reported.
- Details of incident.
- Type of incident.
- Ethnicity/gender of victim/perpetrator.
- Action taken.
- Support offered.
- Pattern of behaviour.
- Has incident been reported to an external agency (i.e. police, counselling service, anti-bullying team).
- Has incident been resolved.

Strategies for investigating and dealing with bullying

It is important that all members of staff are aware that if a pupil reports an incident of bullying, they should be impartial and listen to both sides of the argument. Staff should not ask leading questions to pupils regarding the incident and all reported incidents need to be taken seriously.

The following strategies are in place:

- Raising awareness to establish a school where bullying is not tolerated by using posters, leaflets, wellbeing tutor time and assemblies.
- The wellbeing section on the school website provides information regarding sources of support.
- The Year 7 Progress Leader and Wellbeing and Transition co-ordinator visit Year 6 pupils and discuss the school's anti bullying policy with pupils to allay fears around transition.
- A staggered start at the beginning of the academic year for pupils in Years 7 helps students to settle into school.
- Issues related to bullying are addressed with the Wellbeing Tutor, Progress Assistant and Progress Leader as part of the induction programme.
- Pupils who join the school part way through year 7 or in years 8-11, are allocated a buddy to support in the induction process.
- The school will work with external agencies to survey pupils and assess the school's anti bullying strategies.
- The school will work with specialist external agencies to offer a range of support and guidance to any individual affected by or involved in bullying.
- Restorative justice approaches are implemented that hold pupils to account for their behaviour and engage with them to agree the actions to be taken to repair the harm caused.
- Mediation sessions are held with our progress team. The mediator works with pupils to try to put an end to the bullying and find a way to move forward.
- The school will produce information to help pupils to cope with bullying, how to react to it if it occurs and how to avoid future incidents.
- If it is determined that bullying behaviour is serious or persistent, sanctions will be applied, including exclusion (as outlined in the Behaviour Policy). Sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably, taking into account any additional educational needs or disabilities that pupils may have and taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable children.

- The school engages with parents promptly when issues of serious or persistent bullying come to light, whether their child is the victim or perpetrator.
- Any incident and action taken must be recorded on SIMS and followed up.
- Bullying Incidents will be monitored by the Assistant Head Teacher for the relevant key stage, Progress Leader, and Progress/Pastoral Team.
- Changes of class or form may be considered in serious cases of bullying.
- If following investigation, no evidence of bullying was found by the school, but the pupil continues to present with worries and anxieties, then it is recommended that further investigations into pupil wellbeing is carried out.

Bullying outside the school premises

The law empowers Head Teachers, to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off school site and provides members of school staff with the opportunity to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour in line with the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies. The school can deal with any behaviour in school, which may arise as a result of cyber bullying, but cannot be expected to investigate every online communication.

The school is not directly responsible for bullying off-site. However, the school will aim to support parents/carers, as well as victims, as much as possible. Where a pupil reports offsite bullying the school may:

- Talk to the local police, PCSO or police liaison officer.
- Talk to the transport companies about bullying on public vehicles.
- Talk to other Head Teachers if their pupils are involved.
- Talk to BulliesOut.
- Invite parents to discuss the situation in school.

Bullying behaviour outside of school is a criminal offence and the police may take action.

Guidance for members of staff

All members of staff have a duty to ensure that the anti-bullying policy is carried out and that the school is a safe place for our pupils and staff. All members of staff will:

- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
- Foster in our pupil's self-esteem, self-respect, and respect of others.
- Instil in our pupils that they should not suffer in silence but have the courage to speak out about bullying behaviour to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying. Parents and teachers are the first to notice changes in behaviour, mood, or study patterns. Some of the following may be early signs:
 - Late to lessons.
 - Poor school attendance.
 - Selective truancy.
 - Change in standard of work.
 - Change of friendship groups.
 - Lack of friends or withdrawal/sudden lack of confidence.
 - Depression/ Anxiety.
 - Unexplainable injuries / faking illness.
 - Changes in eating habits.
 - Difficulty with sleeping or frequent nightmares.
 - Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics or jewellery.
 - Evidence of inappropriate graffiti, text or e-mail messages (cyber bullying).

If a pupil is being bullied, or an incident is reported to you, you should:

- Deal with observed incidents of bullying promptly and fairly in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Listen to a child who reports an incident of bullying or who has been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Remain impartial and listen to the pupil, do not ask leading questions regarding the incident, simply listen to their concerns.
- Offer support by making clear to the victim that the school will take their concerns seriously and the matter will be investigated.
- Where possible, you should empower the victim by asking them how they would like the incident dealt with.
- Report the incident by email to the Progress Leader or Progress/Pastoral Team and log on SIMS/ My Concern.
- In a serious case of bullying the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also be informed.

The Progress Team will:

- Take all incidents of bullying seriously.
- Provide the victim with the opportunity to give information about the incident seeking their view about the action to take to resolve the situation.
- Provide the perpetrator with an opportunity to talk about the experience and to have a say in any further support they require e.g. conflict avoidance support.
- Use a restorative justice response in some cases which may be the most effective approach to resolve bullying incidents, which empowers the victim.
- Seek the victim's view on preferred action when it is appropriate.
- Keep a record of the pupil interviews and record the incident on the Behaviour Management System on SIMS
- Where bullying has taken place, reassure the victim that it is not his/her fault, they were right to report it, that all bullies are responsible for their own actions and the consequences that follow.
- Inform parents of both parties.
- Use SIMS to generate a bullying report to identify previous incidents - victim and perpetrator.
- Give support to victims such as the development of assertive behaviour to avoid further problem.
- Support the perpetrators to address personal issues that may have led to the bullying behaviour.
- Recognise that further monitoring may be required to reduce the incidents of bullying.
- Impose sanctions that are appropriate to the incident and previous record of the perpetrator.
- Use school sanctions in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying and report back promptly and fully on the action, which has been taken.
- Follow Child Protection (CP) guidelines where necessary (in line with the CP policy).

Guidance for pupils

Every individual has a duty of care for themselves and a responsibility to take action to safeguard themselves from bullying opportunities. Remember:

- No one has the right to make you feel unhappy within the school.
- The school values you and you must value yourself.
- Tell someone about the problems you are having.

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour.
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so, seeking the support of a member of staff if necessary.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying to promote the ethos that bullying will not be tolerated and should be reported and to help prevent further instances.
- Provide a written account as a witness to an incident of bullying with the understanding that their account will be treated sensitively providing them with any necessary support.

If you feel you are being bullied, in school, you can tell any member of staff you feel confident with. For example, your:

- Wellbeing Tutor
- Class Teachers
- Support Staff
- Progress Leader and/or Progress/Pastoral Team
- Wellbeing Officer
- Senior Leadership Team.

The school will do all it can to support victims and deal effectively with the behaviour of the bullies. Remember, if you do not report incidents, you only increase the power of the bully. Maybe they need help too.

BULLYING FLOWCHART

1. INCIDENTS

REPORTED

Information passed onto relevant progress/pastoral team.

INTERVIEW

Both the perpetrator and the victim will be given the opportunity to provide accounts of the alleged bullying.
All information will be recorded on SIMS.

INFORM

Parents/carers of both parties will be informed of the bullying behaviour reported and will be provided with prompt information on the action taken.

2. IF INCIDENTS CONTINUE

Progress Leader for the relevant year group will arrange a meeting for the parents/carers of the perpetrator and the victim.

A strategy will be formulated between school, parents and the pupil which allows all parties to move forward and reconcile.

If pupil continues to present with worries and anxieties but no evidence of bullying can be found, further investigation into pupil wellbeing is recommended.

3. IF INCIDENTS STILL CONTINUE

Assistant Headteacher for years 7-9, 10-11 or 12-13
convene meeting with parents of the perpetrator and the
victim.

The perpetrator and the victim will be referred to external agencies which can support the school and the families with the incident.

4. IF INCIDENTS STILL CONTINUE

The school will initiate the exclusion process.