



Anti-Bullying Policy

Written: February 2024
Author: Austin Bowers
To be revised: January 2025

Policy Statement

At Ysgol Y Rhos we adopt a whole-school approach for promoting positive, respectful behaviour between staff and learners as part of their whole school approach to well-being. This approach is woven through all school activity. Creating an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root cause of unacceptable behaviour will help create an inclusive and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn.

1. AIM OF THE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to give clear advice and guidance on how to deal with bullying at Ysgol Y Rhos in line with the Welsh Government's Guidance.

2. DEFINITION OF BULLYING

There is no legal definition of bullying. Welsh Government guidance defines bullying as:

Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, which intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.

Tackling Bullying in Schools: A Survey of Effective Practice, Estyn 2006:

“Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time that intentionally hurts or harms”.

Although there are many definitions of bullying, we consider it to be deliberately hurtful behaviour, targeting an individual or group that is often repeated over a period (although we recognise that a one-off incident which leaves a victim traumatised could be categorised as bullying).

There are a number of distinctive elements associated with bullying. These include but are not limited to the following.

- **Intention to harm:** bullying is deliberate with the intention to cause harm. Those who bully others are often skilled at knowing exactly how to humiliate or hurt their target: picking on key aspects of their appearance, personality or identity that produces the effect wanted. They seek out the area in which they have power over their target.
- **Harmful outcome:** someone or a group is hurt physically or emotionally. They can be isolated, humiliated or made fearful. Their sense of self-worth is reduced.
- **Direct or indirect acts:** bullying can involve direct aggression, such as hitting, as well as indirect acts such as spreading rumours, revealing private information about someone or sharing intimate images with people for whom the information/ images were not intended.

- **Repetition:** bullying usually involves repeated acts of aggression. An isolated aggressive act, such as a fight, is not usually considered bullying. Yet any incident can be the start of a pattern of bullying behaviour which develops subsequently. That is why incident records are so valuable.
- **Unequal power:** bullying involves the abuse of power by one person or a group who are (perceived as) more powerful, often due to their age, physical strength, popularity or psychological resilience.

Bullying can take many forms:

- **Physical** – kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone or 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 (see Appendix 1.0)
- **Relational aggression** – is bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, exploiting a person's special educational needs 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. This can also include sextortion, so called 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the person targeted.
- **Prejudice-related** – bullying of a person or a group because of prejudice. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about their identity: race, religion, gender, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or background.

There are specific types of bullying relating to characteristics. These can broadly be categorised into the following groups:

- Bullying involving learners with **special educational needs and/or disabilities.**
- **Homophobic** bullying.
- **Sexist, sexual and transphobic** bullying.
- Bullying connected with **race, religion and culture.**

What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable is not considered bullying. These instances, if appropriate, should be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. Some cases might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. A young person may be in need of multi-agency support or therapeutic intervention.

The following examples are cases which would not normally be considered bullying.

- **Friendship fallouts** are not generally regarded as bullying. A friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour that is enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of one another. Pupils who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group.
- **A one-off fight** is not regarded as bullying. It should be addressed according to the school's behaviour policy unless it is part of a pattern of behaviour that indicates intentional targeting of another person.
- **An argument or disagreement** between two pupils is not generally regarded as bullying. Nevertheless, they may require assistance to learn to respect other people's views.
- **Physical assaults** should be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate.
- **Insults and banter** pupils will often protest that an incident was a joke or banter. If two friends of equal power are in the habit of bantering with one another it is not seen as bullying. If one person uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is powerless to stop it and made fearful by the act the border between banter and bullying may be crossed.
- **A one-off instance of hate crime** can include one or more of the following traits: verbal abuse; intimidation; threats; harassment; assault; damage to property; targeting someone for financial gain or for some other criminal purpose. Unless this behaviour is repeated it would not usually be regarded as bullying.

Whole School Prevention Measures

All preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which the individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help pupils learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff will always treat each other and pupils, parents and carers with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour. We strongly believe that to tackle bullying effectively we need a consistent whole school approach, working with appropriate outside agencies.

The school will work closely with carers, social workers and parents to ensure that pupils are kept away from potential bullying behaviour.

School Council meetings at the start of the academic year will explore pupils' views on bullying. All pupils will be asked to sign a bullying contract.

The focus will be on raising awareness of bullying and the effects maintaining personal safety and continuing to develop the personal and social skills necessary to build positive relationships. Anti – bullying work is embedded in the curriculum, through Achieve and Schools Council sessions and the thematic projects throughout the school anti-bullying is delivered and is highlighted around the school to promote a positive environment. Staff will support each other in the delivery of anti-bullying and pupils will be responsible for presenting assemblies on anti-bullying and bullying behaviour.

All staff will support the pupils when using the internet and specific group work sessions run by the therapy team also address these issues.

Bullying will also be raised at several levels including:

- **At Whole School level** – whole school assemblies, Anti-Bullying Week, school rules developed by pupils, School Council work.
- **At Classroom level** – Post box, Calm Room, pupil posters, class rules developed by pupils, class discussions and cross-curricular activities
- **At an Individual Pupil level** – pupils who are felt to be at risk of bullying will be offered support and therapy to ensure they feel safe at school
- **At Teacher level** – In-house training for staff, strong communication between staff teams within school and residential staff.

3. REACTION – RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY TO REPORTED INCIDENTS

Clarification of Roles

The role of SMT/Headteacher

The SMT supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from Ysgol Y Rhos. This policy statement makes it very clear that SMT does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The SMT monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and review the effectiveness of the school policy. The SMT requires the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the SMT on a regular basis about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the SMT about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy and ensures that all staff receive enough training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The headteacher ensures that all pupils know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of pupils

to this when appropriate e.g. if an incident occurs, the headteacher may use an assembly as a forum in which to raise bullying and reinforce key messages.

The headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When pupils feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

There is a bullying record that is kept in the administrator's/headteachers office. This is a central log for all reported incidents of bullying.

The role of the Teachers

All staff involved in the education and supervision of pupils at Ysgol Y Rhos are made aware of the issue of bullying and will apply the school's policy consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will undertake appropriate training in order to tackle bullying and will reinforce the message that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

All staff at Ysgol Y Rhos take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They record incidents that happen in their own class or to pupils from their class or those incidents that they become aware of in the school in general.

Teachers will support all pupils in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all pupils, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

The role of Parents/Carers

We at Ysgol Y Rhos are firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believe that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents can work together when bullying occurs.

Parents/carers who believe their pupil is the target of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

If a pupil is involved in a single serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same pupil is involved repeatedly in less serious incidents (either as a targeted individual or a perpetrator) the school will inform parents/carers and invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Isolated and less serious incidents will be managed by school staff and parents/carers informed.

In the event where parents/carers are unhappy with the way the school has investigated an alleged incident of bullying, then they have the right to complain to the headteacher/ SMT, in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their pupil to be a positive member of the school.

4. SIGNS THAT A PUPIL IS BEING BULLIED

Indicators that a pupil is being bullied could include:

- Reluctance to go to school
- Appearing frightened of / during the journey to and from school
- Changing their usual route
- Being anxious, moody, withdrawn, quiet
- Complaining of illnesses such as stomach aches and headaches
- Bed-wetting in a previously dry pupil or young person
- Having nightmares or sleeping difficulties
- Coming home regularly with missing or damaged possessions
- Arriving home hungry
- Asking for extra money or stealing money
- Truancy
- Deterioration in their work / handwriting
- Not eating
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Being aggressive and bullying others
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above.

5. MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING RELATED INCIDENTS

Ysgol Y Rhos is committed to creating a safe environment and will ensure that this policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and supervision will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the target receives support. All incidents will be recorded on appropriate forms and referred to relevant staff.

All pupils need to be aware that they need to tell staff of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported. The exact course of action will vary with each situation, but the main objectives should be that bullying incidents are brought into the open, discussed and strategies agreed to help resolve the problem.

It is always important to make clear that:

- The bully's behaviour is unacceptable, and the bullying must stop
- Everything that happens is carefully recorded
- The application of sanctions will depend on the individual circumstances of each incident
- Revenge is not appropriate for the victim
- The school will work with the parents of both the victim and the bully.
- Support will be available for the victim
- Support will be available for the bully to help change his/her behaviour

6. SUPPORT FOR THE TARGETED INDIVIDUAL

Ysgol Y Rhos will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to pupils who are the targeted individuals of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the pupil's individual needs and may include:

- Immediate action to stop the incident and secure the pupil's safety
- Positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- Reassurance that the targeted individual is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- Strategies to prevent further incidents
- Empathy
- Therapy
- Befriending
- Assertiveness training/raising self esteem
- Extra supervision/monitoring
- Creation of a support group
- Peer meditation/peer mentoring
- Informing/involving parents/carers
- Adult mediation between the perpetrator and the targeted individual (provided this does not increase the targeted individual's vulnerability)
- Arrangements to review progress.

7. SUPPORT FOR THE BULLY

Ysgol Y Rhos takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to modify their behaviour, which may include:

- Make it very clear to the
- Immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress
- Engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is unacceptable. They may not realise what they are doing is bullying.
- Positive reinforcement for the pupil in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control
- Explain how bullying can make people feel

8. RECORDING OF INCIDENTS

Records will be maintained for ALL bullying related incidents in the pupil's folders at school. We will utilise the forms to record incidents of disrespect or bullying and to review any outcomes of the support given to pupils and young people. Pupils and young people are likely to report incidents to a teacher or adult they trust. Therefore, all staff are informed of their purpose.

At Ysgol Y Rhos we will:

- Implement an ongoing cycle of school -level data, recording, monitoring and analysis of anti-bullying information
- Use data to identify priority areas for implementing whole school improvement.
- Take action to implement those improvements.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND SAFEGUARDING

It may be necessary to involve local Pupil Protection Procedures if a pupil's safety or welfare (or that of another pupil) is under threat. **A duty is placed upon those professionals involved to exchange information in order to safeguard a "child" adhering to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures according to the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014** Teachers and professionals cannot offer unconditional confidentiality to pupils in bullying incidents and this should always be made clear at the outset.

If a pupil discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known and which the pupil asks not to be passed on, it will be discussed with the head teacher/safeguarding DSL. The request will be honoured; however, confidentiality will be broken against the wishes of a pupil when:

- there is a safeguarding issue
- the life of a person is at risk of serious harm to others
- criminal offences are disclosed.

However, we will make every effort to inform the pupil first, explain why this needs to happen and secure the pupil's agreement to the way in which the school intends to use any sensitive information.

10. REFERENCES

This policy has been developed with reference to the following Welsh Government documents:

- Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance Series (2011):
 - Bullying around race, religion and culture
 - Bullying around special educational needs and disabilities
 - Homophobic bullying
 - Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying
 - Cyber bullying
- Personal and Social Education Framework (2008)
- School Crime Beat Policy – A Protocol for Police Supporting Schools with Incidents for Crime and Disorder. A Reference Document for School Staff (2012)
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- Working together to Safeguard people 2012 (Updated September 2023).
- Keeping Learners Safe 2016 (Updated April 2022)

11. DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis,
- The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing anti-bullying education regularly to ensure that programmes are responsive to the needs of pupils and that a supportive learning environment is maintained for all
- The headteacher, SMT are responsible for monitoring incidents (e.g. the number, nature, outcomes of incidents and how many referrals were made to outside agencies) and reviewing incident management procedures

- The Headteacher will ensure that the findings from staff, parent/carer and pupil evaluations contribute to our school's self-evaluation process and to the policy review process
- The policy will be discussed in a whole school staff meeting at the beginning of each new school year.
- New staff will read this policy as part of their induction.

Appendix 1.0

Types of Bullying

Conditional Friendship

In these cases, a group will allow a target to believe they are accepted into the friendship group. The group may however be using the target or place condition on them in order to be part of the group. They might make the target the subject of their jokes, use them to run errands or even engage in criminal activity for them.

Exploitative

In these cases, the bullying takes the form of deliberately subjecting a target to something they cannot tolerate. For example, if a target is especially sensitive to sounds or smell, exploitative bullying might be where the perpetrator repeatedly spreads food over their work or makes loud noises to startle them. The eventual aim is to get the target pupil into trouble because they will gradually become more stressed until they have an outburst of anger or retaliate.

Manipulative

In these cases, the perpetrator manipulates the target who at first may not realise what is happening. They might believe the other pupil or group of pupils like them and that they are friends. The target however might be manipulated into relationships that are high risk and the bullying becomes very controlled.

Homophobic Bullying

Homophobic bullying is a specific form of bullying motivated by prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people (including those questioning their sexuality). It is not characterised by specific acts but by the negative attitudes and beliefs towards lesbian, gay and/or bisexual people that underlie these.

Sexist Bullying

This is bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in ways that demean intimidate and/or harm another person because of their sex or gender.

Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by repeatedly inappropriate sexual behaviours including harassment, groping, 'up skirting', 'down shirting', and use of humiliating sexist language. In rare cases violence may be used.

Boys can suffer sexist bullying and humiliation. For example, by a group of girls or former girlfriend. When this happens, schools should not treat these cases any differently or less seriously than those involving girls.

Sexual Bullying

This is bullying behaviour of a repeated nature that has a specific sexual dimension. It may be physical, verbal or psychological.

Behaviours may involve suggestive sexual comments or innuendo including offensive comments about sexual reputation or using sexual language that is designed to subordinate, humiliate or intimidate.

It may involve sharing of explicit images online, sometimes by multiple people, coercion, or unwanted sexual touching.

Transphobic Bullying

Transphobic bullying is a specific form of bullying motivated by prejudice against trans people, those perceived to be trans, someone with a trans relative or simply because a learner is in some way different. It is not characterised by specific acts but by the negative attitudes and beliefs towards trans people that underlie these.

Bullying linked to race, religion and culture

This form of bullying describes a range of hurtful behaviour both physical and psychological that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded or powerless because of their colour, ethnicity, faith, community, national origin or national status.

Online Bullying

While technology facilitates traditional bullying behaviours such as insults or rumour spreading it also provides additional ways to bully to humiliate others such as the misuse of images or videos, live streaming, by using anonymous messaging apps or harassing someone online. Online bullying often occurs at the same time or follows on from traditional bullying.

The perception of being able to act anonymously online often leads to disinhibited and cruel behaviour that would less likely be face to face. Technology may help those who lack power or popularity offline to have power over others or bully online. In this way, learners who find themselves targeted offline may retaliate anonymously online.

Online bullying behaviour can take different forms including:

- profile: people do not have to be physically stronger, older, or more popular than the person they are bullying online.
- location: online bullying is not confined to a physical location, and it can take place at any time. Incidents can take place in their own home, intruding into spaces previously regarded as safe and private.
- audience: online content can be hard to remove and can be recirculated and reposted. the potential numbers of people who can see content posted online is very large. Single incidents of online abuse can quickly escalate into bullying, for example, by reposting, sharing and comments.
- anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know the identity of the person or people bullying them. They also will not know who has seen the abusive comment.
- motivation: online bullying is typically carried out on purpose. However, initial incidents may have unintended consequences and can escalate through the involvement of others. an individual may not feel that by endorsing or reposted someone else's post that they are participating in bullying. The instigator may not have intended an offensive or hurtful comment to be repeated. A single incident- one upsetting post or message – may escalate into bullying involving a number of people over time.
- evidence: online and mobile communications leave a digital trail.

Policy Reviewed By Name: Integrated Education, Care and Therapist Position:	Signature	Date
Comments:		
Next Review Date:		
Policy Reviewed By Name: Position: Headteacher	Signature	Date
Comments: Include Appendix with types of bullying		
Next Review Date:		
Policy Reviewed By Name: Position: Headteacher	Signature	Date
Comments: Inclusion of School Council and bullying contract		
Next Review Date:		