Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gorslas

Anti Bullying Policy

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Llofnod y Pennaeth:	E A Vaughan-Owen
Llofnod Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr:	Shan Thomas



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Foreword:

This policy is based upon the Welsh Government '*Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools' (2019)*

https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-statutory-guidance-for-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools.pdf

Challenging bullying is a key priority for our School. We are committed to ensuring all our learners feel safe, secure and are supported to achieve their full potential. All young people have a right to an education and to be treated equally.

The school is committed to challenging bullying holistically, by addressing the root causes of unacceptable behaviour and creating an inclusive and engaging environment. The school prioritises well-being so that learners feel safe and are ready to learn. It is vital that children and young people are taught about building and maintaining respectful relationships; this is the cornerstone on which positive behaviour is based.

We all need to ensure the values of respect, tolerance and kindness form part of our school community and culture.

Vision and Aims of Our School:

Ysgol Gorslas adopts a whole-school approach to promote positive, respectful behaviour between staff and pupils and aims to ensure that all members of the school community feel welcome, safe and happy and so are able to learn and make progress. Bullying of any kind (whether it takes place in school or at home) prevents this from happening. We believe in creating an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour which will help an inclusive and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn.

Our vision is:

- To build and maintain an anti-bullying ethos within the school community
- To ensure all staff, pupils and parents and carers have a clear understanding of what bullying behaviour is both in and out of school bounds and hours
- To ensure all governors and staff know and understand the school policy on bullying and follow it when bullying is suspected or reported
- To ensure that all pupils, parents and carers know the school policy on bullying and feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems
- To challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour
- To increase understanding for pupils who are victims of bullying

Our Values and Ethos

Our school has a zero-tolerance stance on bullying. Bullying is identified as repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically. Bullying, of any kind, has no place at Ysgol Gorslas.

We believe in celebrating individual differences and understand that our pupils learn best when they are accepted, valued, where their strengths are recognised, and opportunities are provided to enable them to succeed. We have a restorative approach to build, maintain and repair healthy relationships and ensure that all members of the school community feel safe and valued.

Definition of what is meant by 'bullying':

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or in Great Britain. Therefore, the definition of bullying used in this policy is as defined by Welsh Government:

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

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

- **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 negative behaviour or 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. 'One-Off Bullying' incidences can still have a detrimental impact on the well-being of learners. 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, including:

- **Physical** – punching, kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone, damaging or stealing 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. More information on Online Bullying can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- **Relational** – bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, spreading false rumours or gossip, exploiting a person's additional learning needs (ALN) 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. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics. Prejudice can and does also extend beyond the protected characteristics and can lead to bullying for a variety of other reasons such as social status and background

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for more information on specific types of bullying.

What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable is not considered bullying. The Welsh Government expects these instances to be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy to prevent an incident potentially escalating to become bullying.

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

- **Friendship fallouts** – 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. Children and young people who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group
- **A one-off fight** – the Welsh Government expects it to be addressed according to the school's behaviour policy unless it is part of a pattern of behaviour that indicates intentional targeting of another individual

- **An argument or disagreement** – between two children or young people is not generally regarded as bullying. Nevertheless, they may require assistance to learn to respect others' views
- **A one-off physical assault** – the Welsh Government expects it to be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate
- **Insults and banter** – children and young people 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 deemed to be bullying. If one learner 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 is likely to be crossed
- **A one-off instance of hate crime** – unless this behaviour is repeated it would not usually be regarded as bullying, but it would be criminal behaviour, which the Welsh Government would expect to be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and other relevant policies, such as the school's 'Prevent' policy. If considered necessary, the school would also need to involve the police.

The Welsh Government expects all hate incidents to be accurately recorded to enable schools to monitor patterns and prevent discrimination. Local authorities frequently monitor hate incidents and may require schools to report these to evidence how they are complying with the public sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010.

The power of language:

When referring to the roles played in bullying incidents, it is preferable not to label young people as 'victim' or 'bully' because these labels can impede young people in changing their behaviours. Learners are often encouraged to 'hate bullying', which can translate into hating individuals who bully. By not labelling someone a bully, space opens to help them change their unacceptable behaviour and use their power or leadership in other ways. It is helpful to separate the person from the behaviour to allow the person to change.

Labelling young people as 'victims' can also compound the perception of this person as being weak and many children and young people avoid them for fear of being seen in the same way. Some targeted children or young people begin to believe it is their fault they are bullied and see themselves as a victim.

To reflect this, the terms 'target' and 'perpetrator' are used in this policy, as well as the term 'bystander'.

How awareness of bullying will be raised:

Successful implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy to challenge and prevent bullying in schools must involve the whole school community. The Local Authority, in line with the implementation of the Four Phase Model of Behaviour and Wellbeing Support, is

promoting whole-school restorative approaches as the basis of supporting healthy and respectful relationships.

The most effective interventions are sustained over the long term, developed with staff, learners, parents/carers, and partners in the community. These are monitored, evaluated, and revised regularly to reflect changes in circumstances or context.

Creating an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour will help create an inclusive and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn. Anti-bullying work will be embedded across the curriculum rather than an isolated annual event (such as during anti-bullying week) in line with the restorative ethos of the school.

At our School, we will*:

- Ensure that staff and governors receive regular training on the anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Ensure that, on induction, all new staff are made aware of the policy, the approach taken by the school and how the procedures are administered
- Ensure that playground, lunch time and school transport supervisors and school administrators are fully aware of the policy and the procedures they should follow
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of Bullying, involving pupils in the development of a pupil friendly Anti-Bullying Policy
- Ensure that pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure pupils know how to report incidences of bullying and who they can report to
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools
- Publish the anti-bullying policy and pupil friendly policy on the school website
- Publicise details of useful helplines and websites
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied.
- Work with pupils who have been bullying to address the problems they have
- Engage with relevant programmes such as the All-Wales Police Liaison Programme and Organisation such as ChildLine to enrich the school's curriculum in relation to Anti-bullying issues

<u>Signs that a child or young person might be experiencing bullying</u>

A child may tell the school directly that they are being bullied. In cases where they do not, there are several indicators that a child is being bullied, and they could include:

- Reluctance to go to school / group activities they previously showed an interest in
- Appearing frightened of / during the journey to and from school
- Changing their usual route
- Changes in mood - being anxious, moody, withdrawn, quiet, upset

- Complaining of illnesses such as stomach aches and headaches
- Bed-wetting in a previously dry child 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
- Truanting
- Deterioration in their work / handwriting
- Not eating
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Being aggressive and bullying others
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above

Bullying and Safeguarding

Some cases might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. A young person may need multi-agency support or therapeutic intervention. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child (or young person) is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school must report their concerns to their local authority's social services department.

How bullying will be prevented at our School

Effective schools take a proactive approach to preventing all bullying and to mitigate its effects when it occurs.

At our School, we will:

- Adopt a whole-school approach for promoting positive, respectful behaviour between staff and learners as part of our whole school approach to well-being - this approach will be woven through all school activity (a relational approach using restorative practice)

- Create an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour – this will help create an inclusive and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn

- Educate children and train staff about respect, positive behaviour, stereotypes and addressing prejudice

- Build confidence to enable unacceptable language to be challenged and addressed by the whole school community

- Ensure effective supervision between lessons with safe places provided for vulnerable learners during these times

- Communicate a clear message of kindness, empathy, and the importance of positive healthy relationships

How will we do it?

- **Effective Communication** – at our School we focus on positive behaviour and action, emphasising what learners should be doing rather than not doing. Class time and PSE/Wellbeing sessions, as well as the use of wider communication tools enable pupils to communicate their thoughts and concerns

- **Intervention** – at our School we use restorative work and teaching and learning to explore why some words and behaviours are unacceptable and should not be used in school. The school includes parents/carers in meetings to share them with the ethos and values of our School and to support our anti-bullying strategy

- **Curriculum** – at our school, in addition to embedding a restorative ethos, we use Health and Wellbeing Sessions to embed lessons around relationships, positive behaviour, and resilience. Our School will implement the new Curriculum for Wales and the four key purposes to support all learners to become ethical, informed, healthy and confident individuals who are ready to learn.

Our School is **supported** by visitors such as colleagues within the Local Authority, local Police Liaison Officers, ChildLine practitioners and the Samaritans, who educate our pupils on the effects of bullying and where help can be sought.

<u>Bullying outside the School</u>

Our School takes action and follows the anti-bullying procedure for incidents that happen whilst pupils are at school and on their journey to and from school.

When bullying happens outside of school and could impact on pupils' wellbeing at school, we endeavour to listen and mediate in order for the target and perpetrator to discuss the issue and agree on a solution. Bullying outside school can include online bullying. Information on this can be found in **Appendix 2**.

At our School, we will:

- Investigate the situation

- Work with both parties and parents to sensitively make sense of the situation
- Use restorative practices to endeavour to repair the situation

Our School employs a restorative approach which separates the person from the behaviour, to promote accountability and seek to repair any harm caused. If this does not resolve the bullying outside of school, we recommend that families report incidents to Police 101 to seek their support in resolving the matter.

How the school will respond to incidents

Headteachers should ensure that all teachers and administrative staff, are aware of the procedures to follow if a learner reports being bullied.

Staff should be mindful that a learner may approach any member of staff they trust. Staff training and regular updates will increase their readiness and confidence to notice and respond when issues of bullying present.

The most effective interventions are sustained over the long-term, developed with staff, learners, parents and partners in the community. These are monitored, evaluated and revised to reflect changes in circumstances or context. Interventions are supported by a school ethos which inhibits bullying and promotes empathy and respect for diversity. A single strategy or initiative is unlikely to provide a solution to bullying and the most effective anti-bullying strategy will usually include a range of tools which can be adapted to suit particular incidents and form part of the school's wider whole school approach to well-being.

Interventions may be at class level, year group level or only with the perpetrator/s.

Responding to the Perpetrator

At our School, we will:

- Work with the alleged perpetrator/s to find out if they have acted inappropriately using an empathic and compassionate approach, in line with restorative approaches and ethos
- Determine the most appropriate way to help the perpetrator reflect on the implications of their actions
- Aim to address the root causes for the bullying happening in the first instance - this is likely to have the greatest impact in preventing the issue from continuing
- Repair the relationship between the pupils involved through restorative practices

How learners can report bullying incidents

All members of staff are responsible for reporting and dealing with incidents of bullying.

At our School, there are several ways in which pupils can report bullying. These include*:

- To trained peer supporters or buddies

- To a member of staff

<u>Supporting the pupil who has reported that they have been bullied</u>

Effective listening

Those who are targets of bullying tend to feel powerless. One of the first steps when responding to incidents is to work to restore their capacity to make choices for themselves. Using effective listening techniques, staff (or a peer supporter where these are used) can help the targeted learner to feel they are doing something about the problem.

We will:

- Acknowledge calmly the anger or distress of the targeted child or young person speaking
- Try not to rush them if they need time to process their thoughts
- Be mindful that it may have required considerable courage to come and report what is happening
- Thank the learner for reporting the problem
- Support the young person with empowered anger/assertiveness techniques, where appropriate
- Explain to them the next steps of how their concerns will be taken forward
- Seek to repair the relationship through restorative practices

Consider the Setting

We will:

- Sit at the same level as the learner reporting their experience of bullying
- Be mindful of each different learner's experience
- Ensure privacy to avoid other learners overhearing what is said or seeing a meeting taking place

Saving evidence

Learners who are bullied should be encouraged, where possible, to keep evidence of the activity. Evidence may include:

- Threats or images sent on or offline by messaging, conversations, notes or images
- Witness statements or additional evidence from bystanders
- Dates and times when things happened
- Screenshots
- Damaged clothing or other belongings

Next steps

When deciding on next steps, to increase the self-efficacy of the learner who reports being bullied, staff should where possible give pupils an element of choice.

Choices offered to the targeted learner may include:

- How the incident will be handled
- Whether changes to the learner's current journey to or from school should be considered in more detail
- Whether the learner would like peer help and support

What Learners Can Expect

The Welsh Government has produced helpful guidance for children and young people:

- Rights, respect, equality: guide for children | GOV.WALES
- Rights, respect, equality: guide for young people | GOV.WALES

Schools should ensure that this information is readily available to all pupils.

At our School, we will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying
- Ensure that pupils know how to express, and report worries and anxieties about bullying
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the impact of bullying, and we will challenge all incidents
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have
- Encourage pupils to discuss anti-bullying, for example through the school council
- Put posters around the school, in language that can be clearly understood by all pupils

What Parents/Carers can expect

The Welsh Government has produced helpful guidance for parents and carers:

- Rights, respect, equality: guidance for parents and carers | GOV.WALES

At our School, we will:

- Ensure that parents / carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying
- Ensure that parents know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively

- Ensure that parents / carers know where to access independent advice about bullying
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying

Having reported an issue regarding bullying to the school, if a learner or their parent/carer does not feel that the school has taken it seriously or has not addressed their concern to a satisfactory standard, they can make a formal complaint.

The school complaints policy is available on the school website and made available on request from the school or clerk to the governing body.

How Incidents will be Recorded and Monitored

The Welsh Government expects schools to have in place mechanisms for reporting and recording bullying which are clearly communicated to the whole school community. The Welsh Government expects the information schools record and monitor to relate directly to their school's definition of bullying and broader provisions outlined in their school's anti-bullying strategy and policy.

The Welsh Government expects schools to record all incidents of bullying, outlining the specific types of bullying, including bullying around the protected characteristics. The Welsh Government expects schools to monitor processes regularly. This will enable schools to modify their bullying policies to respond to specific trends and emerging issues in a swift and effective manner. Schools are likely to find this helpful in the context of their PSED under the Equality Act 2010. This information could also be used by schools when reviewing their equality objectives and monitoring the impact of their anti-bullying policies.

It is for individual schools to determine what data and information they collect in the context of the specific issues within their school. However, Carmarthenshire County Council will require schools to provide certain information about specific types of incidents and these will be collected via the Local Authority's incident reporting form.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ug4_TzS3ZEGUCRtgHRR5k2DcaKLDgIhIpkwtANjIaWhUNzM5NDJGRUpDU0RMNFE0MzlRQUJVSE9JQi4u

If there is a good level of awareness in the whole school community about unacceptable behaviour it is likely more learners will come forward to report it. A high number of incidents alone is not therefore an indicator that the school is ineffective. It could be the result of recent awareness raising work or anti-bullying activities.

Where schools report that they have no bullying, this may be as a result of the reporting mechanisms being ineffective whereby learners do not feel safe in raising their concerns. Schools reporting zero cases of bullying may be challenged through the inspection process to clarify what mechanisms the school employs to ensure learner wellbeing and inclusivity.

Where schools have recorded incidents of bullying, they should demonstrate that they are taking action to challenge bullying, address unacceptable behaviour and improve learner wellbeing.

At our school, we will:

- Complete a '**Bullying Incident Recording Form' Appendix 4** for each reported incident. This is to be completed with the pupil and a copy kept on file
- Use effective **listening strategies** to help the targeted learner to feel that they are doing something about their problem. The learner who has been targeted will be supported in deciding what they want to happen. Very often this involves the member of staff talking to the perpetrator(s) and bystander(s)
- Provide the targeted learner with a '**Supporting Conversations'** document **Appendix 5** for them to complete. This tool helps the learner to think through what has been happening and how they are feeling and supports their conversation with their teacher about bullying
- Offer restorative approaches to resolve bullying incidents. The school will work with the target and perpetrator to agree a solution
- Adopt a 'No Blame Approach' to help defuse the situation and to educate the perpetrator around the consequences of their behaviour. Our school listens to both sides
- Following intervention where a resolution has been agreed, further incidents of bullying will be addressed by the School's Behaviour Policy*. sanctions will reflect the seriousness of the incident, to emphasise that bullying is unacceptable at our school. *(*insert name of school behaviour policy)*
- Incidents of bullying will be reported to the Local Authority in line with their policy **Appendix 6**

How learners and/or parents/carers can appropriately escalate the matter

Having reported an issue regarding bullying to the school, if a learner or their parent/carer does not feel that the school has taken it seriously or has not addressed their concern to a satisfactory standard, they can make a formal complaint.

Under section 29 of the Education Act 2002, school governors are required to have and publicise a complaints procedure ensuring anyone with an interest in the school can raise a complaint, confident it will be considered properly and without delay.

The school complaints policy is available on the school website and made available on request from the school or clerk to the governing body.

Further information on complaint procedures can be found in the Welsh Government's guidance on complaint procedures for school governing bodies in Wales.

complaints-procedures-for-school-governing-bodies-in-wales-guidance.pdf

How the school will evaluate and review its policy and strategy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where required.

In reviewing the policy, all members of the school community, including members of the governing body will be consulted.

Effective schools will use surveys of learners' experiences asking whether a learner, if bullied, reported it and the subsequent outcome. This gathering of feedback to learn lessons and continuously improve is of the utmost importance to establish trust among learners. Learners need to believe it is worthwhile to report being bullied and trust that action will be taken on an individual and whole school level.

At our School, we will:

- Use surveys and group discussions to identify which aspects of the school's current policy and strategy work well and any areas for improvement
- Regularly seek the views of learners, parents/carers and staff, through surveys and discussions, to measure the extent of any bullying behaviour present
- Monitor incidents of bullying and identify patterns of behaviour and the extent of bullying. This will enable us to modify our anti-bullying policy if required to respond to specific trends and issues
- Update the policy accordingly, should further guidance or documentation be issued by Welsh Government

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Specific Types of Bullying

Specific types of bullying linked to protected characteristics

There are specific types of bullying related to protected characteristics. These can broadly be categorised into:

- Bullying connected with age
- Bullying involving learners with disabilities, which can include SEN
- Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying
- Bullying connected with race, religion and/or culture
- Sexist and/or sexual bullying

Bullying involving learners with disabilities and/or ALN – defining disability and ALN

The definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is not the same as the definition of special educational needs (SEN) under the Education Act 1996 or the definition of additional learning needs (ALN) under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018. There will be some children and young people who are covered by the Equality Act but not by the Education Act or Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act and vice versa, although a significant number of children and young people are likely to be covered by all these acts.

Key issues for learners with disabilities and/or ALN experiencing bullying

Reports from Mencap and the Anti-Bullying Alliance show that children and young people with disabilities and/or ALN are more likely to experience bullying than their peers. A study by the Institute of Education in 2014 found that even after controlling other factors that might influence the likelihood of a child being bullied, at age seven a child with ALN is twice as likely to be bullied as a child with no ALN. The Welsh Government expects schools to be proactive in countering this trend.

Learners with a disability and/or ALN learners may be more vulnerable to bullying because:

- Of negative attitudes towards disability or perceived disability
- Of a lack of understanding of different disabilities and conditions
- They may not recognise they are being bullied
- They may be doing different work or have additional support at school
- They may be more isolated than others due to their disability or condition
- They may find it harder to make friends as a result of their disability or condition
- They may exhibit perceived bullying behaviour due to their disability or condition, e.g. autistic learners may not be aware of other people's personal space, or learners with

attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may interrupt conversations or talk over other learners

- They may experience lots of change, e.g. moving from a mainstream to a special school or pupil referral unit, or spending periods of time in hospital.

Disabled and/or ALN learners may also find it more difficult to resist perpetrators because they have fewer friends to defend them and have difficulties telling someone if it occurs. They can be extremely adversely affected by bullying. In addition to being distressing, it can isolate them further and set back their social and educational development.

Bullying of learners with disability and/or ALN can take the form of any of the traditional forms of bullying. However, there are additional forms of bullying that ALN/disabled learners may experience.

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 conditions 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 child or young person into trouble because they will gradually become more stressed until they have an outburst of anger and/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 child/young person or group of children/young people like them, and they are friends. However, the perpetrator might manipulate the target into high-risk relationships where the bullying becomes very controlling.

Positive Action

While research suggests children and young people with disabilities and/or ALN are more likely to experience bullying than their peers, it is important to remember that not all disabled and/or ALN children and young people are bullied.

The Welsh Government expects schools to address bullying holistically while also taking into

account the individual needs and circumstances of learners with disabilities and/or SEN; under the PSED, schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to their disabilities or SEN.

Social model

In 2002 the Welsh Assembly Government adopted the social model of disability as the foundation of its work on disability in Wales.
The social model of disability offers a different perspective on disability, whereby disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. The social model of disability looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for people with impairments or differences. When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

The social model of disability makes the important difference between impairment and disability. It recognises that people with impairments are disabled by barriers that commonly exist in society.

It is not the inability to walk that prevents a person entering a building unaided, but the existence of stairs that are inaccessible to a wheelchair user. Disability is socially constructed, and the social model of disability requires society to remove the barriers so all people have equality. In schools this ethos is a key element of developing a truly inclusive environment and an effective disability equality scheme and anti-bullying policy.

Homophobic, Bi-phobic and Transphobic Bullying

Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying are specific forms of bullying motivated by prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) people (including those questioning their sexuality), someone with a LGBT relative or simply because a learner is different in some way. It is not characterised by specific acts but by the negative attitudes and beliefs towards LGBT people that underlie these.

When a perpetrator identifies someone as 'different' this can be because the target does not conform to the 'expected' or 'gender appropriate' behaviour expected of someone. It is the learner's identity which is attacked. Homophobic, bi-phobic and/or transphobic bullying can therefore be experienced by a child or young person regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

Key Issues for LGBT Learners Experiencing Bullying

A 2017 Stonewall report found that nearly three in five LGBT learners in Welsh schools who took part in a survey reported that their schools say homophobic and bi-phobic bullying is wrong, while just one in three report that their schools say transphobic bullying is wrong. The

report also found that more than four in five LGBT learners report that they have never learned about or discussed bisexuality at school, making bisexual children and young people feel even more isolated, especially where sexual orientation can sometimes wrongly be conceived as a binary of being straight or gay/lesbian, and bisexual people's identity and experiences sometimes dismissed.

The Welsh Government expects schools to incorporate anti-bullying work in the wider context of an equalities and social justice approach to respectful and healthy relationships and violence prevention. This should be done as part of a whole-school approach to celebrating difference, including embedding LGBT issues across the curriculum.

Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic insults used in place of other insults or indirectly. In schools where learners believe they will not be challenged when using homophobic insults and/or actions, they may use such language or actions towards others they are targeting for other reasons, such as ALN or race, religion or culture. The homophobic insults are being used as a proxy for the language and/or actions they know they are likely to be challenged for using, such as racist insults. This behaviour can be observed through incident records or learner surveys, e.g. if learners with SEN report higher than average incidents of homophobic bullying.

In schools, homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic language and actions can be wide-ranging and used directly or indirectly to:

- Deride or disparage someone considered inferior or risible
- Insult a learner with a lesbian, gay or bisexual parent/carer or relative
- Use sexual orientation to denigrate the actions of another
- Imply something is unacceptable
- Intimidate someone or make them feel uncomfortable through insinuation
- Undermine and bully a learner by suggesting that they are lesbian, gay or bisexual, including by spreading rumours and malicious gossip
- Bully a male or female learner considered effeminate or masculine respectively
- Put down a learner with a gender non-conforming friend or family member
- Imply gender variance is unacceptable
- Verbally bully a target considered gender-fluid

Positive Action

Homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic bullying cases require very sensitive responses. The family of the target may respond in ways that distress the child or young person further due to community pressure, homophobic, bi-phobic and/or transphobic views, or possibly through being unaware of their child's sexual orientation.

The Welsh Government expects schools to work with families to ensure the right support, at the right time, is provided for the learner to ensure the best outcomes for that child or young

person. Under the PSED schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to their having protected characteristics.

Sexist and Sexual Bullying

In 2015 Girlguiding UK found that 75 per cent of girls and young women said anxiety about potentially experiencing sexual harassment affects their lives in some way. The same survey found that 90 per cent of young women aged 13–21 agreed that the UK Government should make sure all schools are addressing sexual harassment and bullying in schools.

Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes repeatedly expressed in ways that demean, intimidate and/or harm another person because of their sex or gender. It may sometimes be characterised by repeated inappropriate sexual behaviours including harassment, groping, 'up skirting', 'down shirting' and use of humiliating sexist language. In rare cases violence may be used.

Sexual bullying 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.

It is also commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes. Sexual bullying and sexual harassment are terms which are often used interchangeably in schools, with sexual bullying often regarded as a type of sexual harassment. Whether the incident is considered sexual bullying or sexual harassment, the Welsh Government expects schools to address the issue through their anti-bullying, behaviour, or safeguarding policy (whichever is deemed most appropriate). Sexual bullying can affect boys and girls.

Positive Action

Girls and young women are most frequently harmed by sexist and sexual bullying; however, boys and young men can also suffer sexist and sexual bullying and humiliation, e.g. by a group of girls/young women or a former girlfriend. Where this happens, the Welsh Government expects that schools will not treat these cases any differently or less seriously than those involving girls and young women.

The Welsh Government expects schools to consider all learners as potentially at risk of sexist of sexual bullying, particularly where they are perceived by others to not conform to dominant or stereotypical gender roles. Under the PSED, schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners owing to their having protected characteristics.

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, culture, faith (including lack of faith), national origin or national status.

Most public bodies in the UK, including schools, use the working definitions of 'racism' and a 'racist incident' that were proposed in the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry in 1999.

The report defined racism as:

- Conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin.

And a racist incident as:

- Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Forms of Racism

Historically, the term 'racism' has been used in situations where colour and physical appearance are considered to be significant markers of difference. However, there has almost always been a cultural element as well.

Racism around skin colour continues to be prevalent, and schools must continue to be alert to it and to challenge it. But also, there are forms of racism which are primarily to do with culture, customs, religion, and heritage. These too must be addressed and countered by schools.

The Welsh Government expects schools to consider, for example, the following:

- **Anti-Gypsyism** – Gypsies and Travellers are the target of a number of misleading and harmful stereotypes, many of which are deep-rooted in the public consciousness in the UK. Negative representations in the media further exacerbate the prejudice experienced by these individuals. It has even been suggested that discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers remains 'permissible' in the UK. A consequence of this environment is that the task of winning the trust of children and young people of Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds is rendered even more difficult and sensitive

- **Anti-refugee prejudice** – The political discourse and media reporting around immigration has heightened tensions between communities and created a challenging climate for refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. There is a trend of using dehumanising language when discussing immigration, e.g. words such as 'swarming' and 'invasive'. Refugees and asylum seekers are often represented as a threat or a drain to

public funds, and their motives for settling in the UK are regularly questioned. Schools must be alert to these influences and ready to counter negative narratives around refugees and asylum seekers. Schools should also be aware that some refugee and asylum-seeking children and young people may have endured traumatic experiences in their country of origin or during their journey to the UK, and of the further harm that could be caused by incidents of bullying

- **Anti-Semitism** – Hostility, dislike or fear of Jews and Jewish things, manifested in discriminatory attitudes and actions. As is also the case with Islamophobia, it is frequently exacerbated in Britain by events and underlying conflicts elsewhere in the world, particularly the Middle East

- **Islamophobia** – Hostility towards Islam which results in discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities and excludes Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs. The term itself is not ideal, but undoubtedly the Welsh Government expects schools to play a part in countering anti-Muslim prejudice and hostility within their own spheres of influence. Islamophobia is not necessarily to do with hostility to Islamic religious beliefs, but with denying equal rights and respect to people of Islamic heritage

The Welsh Government expects schools to consider, when recording incidents of racist bullying, that there should be distinct and separate categories for noting the basis of the racist bullying, e.g. on the basis of religious heritage or on the basis that they are Gypsies and Travellers or refugees.

We know bullying is very often motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived race, religion or culture. At the root of such bullying is a view that some people are different or 'other'. By 'othering' them through remarks and insults it becomes easier to see any group as set apart and to dehumanise them. This can remove all compassion. The role of schools in helping every learner feel they belong is of immense value in building a cohesive society. Very young children do not see difference until they learn or adopt attitudes and prejudices which may be present around them.

Positive Action

The Welsh Government expects schools to work with learners, their families and communities to ensure the right support, at the right time, is provided to learners to ensure the best outcomes for that child or young person. Under the PSED, schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners owing to their having protected characteristics.

Appendix 2 – Online Bullying and Aggression

Understanding children and young people's lives in a digital age is a complex task and considering the implications for education is often a fine balance. On one hand there are calls to recognise the sophistication of children and young people's everyday uses of digital media, and for much greater integration of technology in education to equip learners effectively for their current and future lives. On the other hand, there are anxieties about the implications of extensive screen time and online harms that are hard to regulate and difficult to confine. Moreover, while many children and young people gain understanding and experience of digital environments from birth, their access to devices and experience of using technologies varies considerably. This disparity is not just linked to economic circumstances but to the different ways in which digital toys and resources are taken up within different families.

Often digital technologies simply provide new ways of doing the same kinds of things people were doing already, e.g. socialising online rather than through face-to-face engagement.

Where a technological future is inevitable, schools need to consider the digital impacts from which children and young people need to be protected while gaining digital competence, preparing them for the world ahead.

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

The perception of being able to act anonymously online often leads to disinhibited and cruel behaviour that would be less likely 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 a learner's 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, e.g. by reposting, sharing and through comments

- **Anonymity** – the person being targeted by bullying may not necessarily know the identity of the perpetrator(s) of the bullying behaviour. The target also will not know who has seen the abusive content. If the perpetrator actively hides their identity from the target this may be considered a form of passive aggression and, if repeated, this could constitute bullying

- **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 reposting someone else's post that they are actively 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

Why Online Bullying is Uniquely Distressing

Although offline bullying remains more common than online bullying learners report that the features of online bullying, stated below, make the experience uniquely distressing**.**

- The audience can be unlimited
- It can occur anywhere and at any time, there is no respite from it
- It can involve unknown people, although most cases involve known peers
- Technology facilitates the storage of images and messages for repeat viewing

What is the Role of Schools?

Digital competence will be a cross-curricular responsibility, together with literacy and numeracy, within Curriculum for Wales 2022. The Digital Competence Framework (DCF) is the first element of Curriculum for Wales 2022 and was made available in September 2016. The DCF has four strands of equal importance ('Citizenship', 'Interacting and Collaborating', 'Producing', and 'Data and Computational Thinking').

The focus of the 'Citizenship' strand is on learners developing the skills and behaviours to contribute positively to the digital world around them, which includes protecting themselves online. The strand includes the elements of 'Identity, image and reputation', 'Health and wellbeing', 'Digital rights, licensing and ownership', and 'Online behaviour and cyberbullying' (online bullying). These skills will help learners to critically evaluate their place within the digital world, so that they are prepared to encounter the positive and negative aspects of being a digital citizen.

The 'Interacting and collaborating' strand also allows learners to explore both formal and informal methods of communication, including social media and instant messaging. Learners will not only look at how to store data, they will also consider the implications of data laws and how to share information appropriately.

The fast-changing digital environment offers boundless positive opportunities for children and young people. At the same time there are added risks and new forms of bullying and aggression. To stay up to date, schools should regularly check the Online SafetyZone (hwb.gov.wales/zones/online-safety) within the Hwb digital learning platform.

Schools have powers to discipline learners for incidents taking place off the premises and powers to search or confiscate mobiles as a disciplinary penalty where learners have contravened the school behavioural policy and/or anti-bullying policy.

Positive Action

The Welsh Government expects schools to address online bullying where it has an impact on the well-being of learners at the school. Where necessary, the Welsh Government expects schools to refer a case to the appropriate agency or service. Schools must act in cases that involve a safeguarding concern. All staff should receive regular training in safeguarding and online safety.

Online and mobile communications leave a digital trail. Keeping evidence is essential. Schools should be mindful that evidence can be taken down or disappear from viewer online platforms at any time, whether removed by individuals or at the request of corporate administrators of social media platforms. Screen-grabbing is a useful route to preserve evidence. The Welsh Government expects schools to log and record incidents as part of their wider safeguarding monitoring practice and impact evidence. In some cases, further evidence may come to light at a later point and it may become necessary to review the entire history of the case again.

Appendix 3 – The Law Relating to Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying, but broader legislation can be applied to address certain acts of bullying.

Legislation applies in Wales, the UK and internationally that aims to protect the rights of children and young people to a life free from abuse and harm, including bullying. Existing legislation and international conventions with relevance to bullying in Wales, set out in chronological order, include the following:

- Protection of Children Act 1978 (as amended)
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Criminal Justice Act 1988
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (as amended)
- Children Act 2004
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons (UNCRPD)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008
- Equalities Act 2010
- Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- Social Service and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Further information on this legislation can be found in section 5 of '**Rights, respect, equality: guidance for schools'**

rights-respect-equality-statutory-guidance-for-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools.pdf

Appendix 4 – Bullying Incident Recording Form

This form is for internal use at the school and should not be sent to the Local Authority. Please see **Appendix 6** for the 'School Incident Reporting Form' for CCC.

Bullying Incident Recording Form

Name of person reporting incident (please note anonymous if this is an anonymous report)	
Name of person recording incident	
Date of report	

Type of bullying incident (please tick all that apply):			
Physical	☐	Relational	☐
Verbal	☐	Prejudice-related	☐
Indirect	☐	Exclusion and isolation	☐
Online or via mobile	☐	Face to face	☐
Other (please state):			

For prejudice-related incidents please select the category which best describes the prejudice involved:			
Racist (focused on race, religion or culture)	☐	Related to gender identity	☐
Homophobic (LGBT+)	☐	Related to SEN or disability	☐
Sexual	☐	Related to family status or child looked after (CLA) status	☐
Transphobic	☐	Related to disadvantage	☐
Sexist	☐	Focused on appearance	☐
Other (please state):			

Safeguarding Considerations
If there is or might be a significant risk of harm, talk to your school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Under Section 89, (5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 the school has powers to discipline for incidents that occur off the premises. The Education Act 2011 gives schools powers to search and confiscate a device but please have regard for protocols on the safe handling of evidence or mobiles/devices. Do not view, store or share material that contains intimate images of a learner without consulting the DSL.
Brief summary of incident:

Name of alleged target:			
Class/form/age		Year group/ house:	
Name of alleged perpetrator(s) (if known):			
Class/form/age		Year group/ house:	
Date(s) of incident(s)		DD/MM/YYYY	
Approximate time(s)			
Is this incident linked to previous incidents of victimisation of the target?		Yes ☐	No ☐
If yes, how long has victimisation of this person being going on? Please provide details			
What occurred?			
Who was involved?			
Has any intervention been tried?		Yes ☐	No ☐
Does this case require the serious incident protocol to be activated?		Yes ☐	No ☐
Do the police need to be informed?		Yes ☐	No ☐
Does a device or evidence need to be confiscated/isolated as evidence?		Yes ☐	No ☐
Does online material need to be taken down?		Yes ☐	No ☐
Have parents/carers been informed?		Yes ☐	No ☐
Who has taken responsibility for these steps?			

Action taken:		
Follow-up required?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Case resolved? If so, please note date:	Yes ☐	No ☐
Outcome summary:		
Learning opportunities:		
Would you recommend any changes to approaches, policies or procedures as a result of this incident?		

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Carmarthenshire Education & Children's services

Alleged Bullying or Harassment Investigation Process Flowchart

An investigation will be promptly initiated for all reported incidents of bullying or harassment

A report of a bullying or harassment incident is received. Investigation begins.

Pupils involved in the incident(s) will be interviewed promptly and separately. The investigation steps for reported incidents will be followed. All interviews will be documented using the Bullying reporting form.

Parents/Guardians of all students involved are notified as soon as possible after an investigation of the incident is initiated

Bullying or harassment meets the policy criteria

All parties notified when the investigation is complete. A Pastoral Support Plan will be put in place where relevant. The school will refer to it's Behaviour Policy and WG guidance when deciding on appropriate sanctions

Allegation outside the scope of the School/LA

Bullying or harassment does not meet policy criteria

All parties notified when investigation complete. Appropriate, preventative measures will be taken to ensure pupils feel safe and secure at school. Record as an incident unsubstantiated in appropriate systems

Final investigation findings are reported to the relevant parties

If deemed a criminal act, school will refer to the Police immediately and notify parents. Document referral on the appropriate form

Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council

Appendix 5 – Supporting Conversations for Learners

Target Name:			
Date:			
Staff Name and Role:			
Do you think you are being bullied/targeted?	Yes	No	Not Sure
Who was involved?			
Tell me what is happening?			
What can the school/I do to help you?			
Any relevant historical information			

Appendix 6 – School Incident Reporting Form

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Ug4_TzS3ZEGUCRtgHRR5k2DcaKLDgIhIpkwtANjIaWhUNzM5NDJGRUpDU0RMNFE0MzlRQUJVSE9JQi4u

Appendix 7 - Where to find further help and advice:

Helplines and Support Services

Bullies Out - Anti-bullying charity based in Wales that works with individuals, schools, colleges, youth and community settings.

- e-mail: mentorsonline@bulliesout.com
- www.bulliesout.com
- e-mail: mail@bulliesout.com

Anti-Bullying Alliance - Information for schools, parents/carers and children and young people on all aspects of bullying.

- www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape - Anti-bullying charity that runs workshops for children and young people who have been bullied.

- www.kidscape.org.uk

Mencap Cymru - Advice and information about learning disabilities.

- https://wales.mencap.org.uk
- Tel: 0808 8000 300

The Diana Award - Trains young anti-bullying ambassadors to help others.

- www.antibullyingpro.com

Meic - Information advice and advocacy for young people.

- www.meiccymru.org

Childline - Provide counselling for anyone aged under 19 in the UK.

- www.childline.org.uk
- Tel: 0800 1111

Samaritans - Charity dedicated to reducing feelings of isolation and disconnection that can lead to suicide. E-mail, live chat and other services available.

- www.samaritans.org
- Tel: 116 123 (English-language line – free to call)

- Tel: 0808 164 0123 (Welsh-language line – free to call)

Young Minds – Mental Health support for young people

- www.youngminds.org.uk

Kooth – Free online mental wellbeing community

- www.kooth.com

Parent Zone – Support for parents to develop the right skills and understanding, so that their children can discover the possibilities and opportunities available to them online.

- www.parentzone.org.uk

Schoolbeat.cymru – Wider support for parents including Bullying and Online Bullying,

- www.schoolbeat.cymru

CEOP - Child Exploitation and Online Protection Safety Centre

- www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/

NSPCC – Advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from bullying.

- www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/
- www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

Welsh Government Guidance

- Anti-bullying Guidance parents and carers (gov.wales)


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