



**YSGOL  
AFON WEN**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Ratified by Governors	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
Signed Chair of Governors	
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Crockett
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## CONTENTS

1. What is meant by bullying? .....	
2. What is not bullying .....	
3. How awareness of bullying will be raised .....	
4. Antibullying .....	
5. Signs a child may be experiencing bullying.....	
6. Prevention.....	
7. Action .....	
8. Response .....	
9. Reporting .....	
10. Expectations .....	
11. Monitoring and review .....	



## What is meant by bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or indeed in Great Britain. Therefore, the definition used in this guidance builds upon widely used principles established in the UK since 1993. Welsh Government guidance defines bullying as:

*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 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, 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 (see appendix 2 for more information on online bullying)
- **Relational aggression** – bullying that tries to harm the target’s relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, 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. This can also include sextortion, so called ‘revenge porn’ and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the learner targeted.
- **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 (including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). 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.

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

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

## What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable is not considered bullying. It is essential that these one-off incidents are recorded by the school and that this data is regularly reviewed by the school alongside data on bullying to inform future practice. 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** - 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** – 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** – Welsh Government expects it to be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate.
- **Prejudice-related incidents** – A prejudice-related incident can be defined as  
“Any incident which is perceived to be prejudice or discriminatory by the victim or any other person hearing or witnessing the incident”.

School will act on and record such incidents to ensure that they are clearly seen as unacceptable within the school community. Whilst not meeting the definition of bullying because they may not be repeated over time, they are no less hurtful to the child or young person subject to this. These incidents could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity.

## How awareness of bullying will be raised

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.

At Ysgol Afon Wen we will:

- Ensure that all staff 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 ask for children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about one-off incidents and bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in one-off incidents and bullying
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Publish the anti-bullying policy on the school website
- Publicise details of useful helplines and websites
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied (both perceived and actual)
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have.

**How anti-bullying and work to prevent any prejudice-related incidents will be embedded in the curriculum rather than an isolated annual event (such as during anti-bullying week)**

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.

### **Successful Futures**

Successful Futures identifies 4 purposes for the curriculum. It recommends that the entirety of the school curriculum should be designed to help all children and young people to become:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world, ready to be citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience is about the physical, psychological, emotional and social aspects of our lives.

Work across the curriculum builds a supportive school culture and shared values. It can be instrumental in enabling and empowering learners to acquire and maintain the social skills that will allow them to constructively manage their relationships with others and equip them to respond to bullying in an appropriate and, if necessary, assertive way. This approach to bullying enables the issue to be introduced progressively in an age, gender and culturally appropriate way and not treated as a 'one-off' lesson.

Targeted initiatives provide an opportunity to reinforce a positive and inclusive school culture. This can include awareness days, workshops, signposting and drop-in sessions as well as involving the wider community and utilising a variety of organisations.

At Ysgol Afon Wen , we will:

- engage widely with the school community to ensure that our policies and procedures are relevant and update them accordingly
- set clear and realistic objectives about what the strategy aims to achieve
- provide training, on how to implement the objectives of the strategy
- consult with all those involved in implementing the strategy as to how well the strategy is working

It is imperative that children and young people are taught, both at home and in school, about building and maintaining respectful relationships. This is the foundation on which positive behaviour is based.

Parents/carers have an important role to play, as part of the school community, in taking responsibility for their child's behaviour inside and outside school. Partnership working between the school and parents/carers to maintain high standards of behaviour and to encourage respect and kindness towards other people is vital.

At Ysgol Afon Wen , we will ensure that parents/carers:

- are aware of the strategy
- know how the school would like them to report any concerns and how to escalate matters appropriately should they not be satisfied with the outcome of their initial concern
- know who to speak to when raising a concern about bullying or one-off incidents and evidence to provide
- have been engaged to support their children and support the vision and values of the school
- are aware that prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable within the school community
- are aware of the school's complaints procedure, in case they are not satisfied with the way the school has dealt with a case of reported one-off incidents and bullying
- are aware that one-off incidents and bullying relating to school staff via social media is not acceptable.

## **Signs a child or young person might be experiencing bullying**

Indicators that a child 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 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
- 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

## **How bullying and prejudice-related incidents will be prevented, including on journeys to and from school**

At Ysgol Afon Wen 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
- 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
- teach children and train staff about respect, positive behaviour, stereotypes and addressing prejudice
- build confidence to enable unacceptable language to be challenged and addressed
- ensure effective supervision between lessons with safe places provided for vulnerable learners during these times
- communicate a clear message of positive behaviour, kindness, loyalty and team spirit.

## **When the school will take action in relation to prejudice-related incidents and bullying outside the school**

Bullying outside school can include online bullying.

Welsh Government guidance states that while schools are able to regulate certain conduct off school premises, such as one-off incidents and bullying behaviour, they can only impose sanctions when the learner is on the school site or under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff. A sanction could be imposed while a learner is on a school trip, but not while the learner is on their journey home from school for instance. In such circumstances, the member of staff could indicate to the learner that they have been seen misbehaving and/or engaging in bullying behaviour and will receive a sanction; however, the member of staff must wait until the learner is next in school to apply the sanction.

Welsh Government expect that any misbehaviour, including one-off incidents and bullying, on the journey to and from school should be dealt with using the most appropriate policy, such as the school's behaviour/anti-bullying policies

**At Ysgol Afon Wen , all reports of bullying, whether on school site or outside school including online bullying, will be investigated. Parents/Carers will be involved and sanctions applied in cases where bullying is found to have taken place.**

## How the school will respond to incidents

All 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 around one-off incidents and of bullying preALNt.

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

### Whole-school response

There are frequently learning opportunities for the whole class or year group which can be implemented.

### Responding to the perpetrator

At Ysgol Afon Wen we will:

- address the perpetrator/s according to the procedures and agreed sanctions in the school if they are found to have acted inappropriately
- give perpetrators the opportunity to put their side of the story before any decisions on penalties are made
- determine the most appropriate sanction in line with behaviour policy
- aim to address the root causes for the one-off incidents and/or bullying happening in the first instance - this is likely to have the greatest impact in preventing the issue from continuing.

Where isolation is used to tackle bullying, this will be used short-term and as part of a longer-term plan for addressing the root cause of the bullying.

Staff will explain to pupils the reason why they have been isolated and outline that the strategy is a short term intervention as part of a longer term plan to address the issue.

## How to report bullying

At Ysgol Afon Wen , there are several ways in which pupils can report one-off incidents and bullying. These include:

- reporting to Year Tutor in person or by email
- reporting to any subject teacher in person or by email who will pass on the concern
- speaking to school counsellor
- speaking to outside agency counsellors and mentors
- using the worry button on the school website to report a concern or incident
- Parents/carers can telephone/email/ request a meeting to pass on information
- Reporting to a trained peer mentor who will pass on the concern

### Supporting the pupil who has reported that they have been bullied

#### Effective listening

Those who are targets of one-off incidents (perceived and actual) and 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
- explain to them the next steps of how their concerns will be taken forward

#### Saving evidence

Learners who are bullied or subject to a one-off incident should be encouraged, where possible, to keep evidence of the activity. Evidence may include:

- threats or images ALNt on or offline by messaging, conversations, notes or images, damaged clothing or other belongings, online conversations or notes
- witness statements or additional evidence from bystanders
- dates and times when things happened
- screenshots

Bullying and one-off incidents rupture healthy self-esteem, replacing positive beliefs about oneself with beliefs linked to shame, disgust, criticism, incapacity, powerlessness and helplessness. 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 help from peer supporters or agrees to join a club or activity.

### What learners can expect

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

- Challenging bullying: rights, respect, equality. A guide for children
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-guide-for-children.pdf>
- Challenging bullying: rights, respect, equality. A guide for young people
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-guide-for-young-people.pdf>

At Ysgol Afon Wen we will:

- Canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of one-off incidents and bullying
- Ensure that pupils know how to express and report worries and anxieties about one-off incidents and bullying
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in one-off incidents and bullying
- 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 and parents/carers to discuss anti-bullying

## What parents/carers can expect

Welsh Government has produced helpful guidance for parents and carers:

- Challenging bullying. Rights, respect, equality: guidance for parents and carers
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-guidance-for-parents-and-carers.pdf>

At Ysgol Afon Wen , we will:

- Ensure that parents / carers know whom to contact if they are worried about one-off incidents and bullying.
- Keep parents informed about what is being done to address the issue raised
- 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 one-off incidents and bullying.
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to one-off incidents and 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.

## How bullying and one off prejudice-related incidents will be recorded and monitored

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.

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.

In some cases, bullying may be so severe as to become a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. A young person may be in need of multi-agency support or therapeutic intervention. If this is the case, this will be reported to the DSP who will contact the local authority safeguarding officer.

At Ysgol Afon Wen we will:

- implement an ongoing cycle of school-level data recording, monitoring and analysis of anti-bullying and one off incident information
- use school level anti-bullying and one off incident data to identify priority areas for implementing whole school improvement
- take action to make those improvements
- share all data with the local authority

**How learners and/or parents/carers can appropriately escalate the matter if they do not feel that their concerns are being taken seriously**

**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.**

**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.

At Ysgol Afon Wen 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
- seek the views of learners, parents/carers and staff, through surveys and discussions, to measure the extent of bullying and one off incidents (perceived and actual), behaviour preALNt
- monitor incidents of bullying and one off incidents (perceived and actual) 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.