



Anti-Bullying Policy

The Anti-bullying Policy is used in conjunction with other policies including – Behavioural Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, e-safety Policy and the Child Protection Policy

Reviewed – January 2016

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Countering bullying : a whole school policy statement

Rationale

1. Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun's main objective is to strive to ensure that all pupils realise their potential within a supportive, Welsh-medium environment. Aggressive behaviour of any kind can prevent us from achieving this objective and therefore neither physical nor oral abuse is acceptable in any situation. Bullying can cause unauthorised absence and truancy. It also affects learning, and can cause immense personal distress. Our policy regarding bullying is an intrinsic part of our wider pastoral and welfare strategies, and it is the responsibility of all persons who work on the school campus to ensure that bullying is addressed immediately, and that acceptable standards of behaviour are maintained. These standards are made clear to pupils and their parents in the school prospectus and personal organiser and we attempt to include the pupils, their parents, the school staff and the school governors in the decision-making process when any changes in the behaviour policy are considered.

NOTE ALSO: aspects of bullying are included in cross-curricular themes in the following subjects : drama, English, Welsh, as well as in PSE lessons.

Definition

Any form of sustained behaviour which is deliberately intended to make the victim unhappy may be considered to be bullying behaviour. It can include physical or verbal abuse - punching, name-calling and threatening, as well as extortion and excluding the victim from friendship group. The element of **conscious continuation of the oppressive behaviour** is the criteria which differentiates between bullying and other types of misbehaviour.

Cyber-bullying is treated in the same way if it has happened in school. A separate information/guidance sheet for parents is available.

We attempt to create an atmosphere that can counter bullying. We try to improve pupil relationships by encouraging talking through feelings rather than using physical and other forms of violence, and try to use all resources available to the school in order to achieve this. The countering bullying programme includes

- information sharing and awareness raising sessions for pupils, their parents, the whole school staff and governors
- supervising as closely as possible during break and lunch-time – this does not include restricted areas of the school site
- arranging counselling and support for both the victim and the bully (who may need to be made aware and educated that their behaviour constitutes bullying)

- taking specific actions to end the bullying
- the use of outside agencies where necessary e.g 'Bullies-Out' and our Interventions & Welfare Officer in school – Mrs Leanne Evans

Our objective is to try to raise the pupil's self-esteem and create an atmosphere in which all respect the rights of others, allow others the right to teach and learn in a peaceful and orderly environment. The effectiveness of the policy is monitored as follows:

- Via pupil questionnaires in order to measure pupils opinions on bullying
- monitoring records of incidents termly and annually in order to identify patterns e.g. individuals, locations etc. The Heads of Year and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for this
- responding to the outcomes of the above surveys by formulating an action plan, where necessary, to be incorporated in the School's Development Plan. The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for this (LMW)

The Management Structure

The School Governing Body
The Headteacher
Senior Leadership Team
Heads of Progress
Classroom tutors
PSE Co-ordinator
All staff
A group of Year 12/13 pupils (Peer mentoring)

Guidelines for implementing the policy

General

- (i)** All complaints regarding bullying are investigated and recorded. Serious incidents include those in which victims have suffered over a long period of time, or are refusing to attend school because of their distress.
- (ii)** The Heads of Progress will deal with day-to-day incidents following the guidance set out below. These are the specific steps taken:
- ◇ On occasions, the bully may be unaware of the suffering caused to others and in such instances the intervention of the Head of Progress and the need to make the individual aware of the seriousness of their actions is vital. As a result of such intervention the unacceptable behaviour must cease immediately.
 - ◇ In the first instance every effort should be made to explain to the bully why such behaviour is unacceptable, discussing the serious consequences and affect on the health and well being of those suffering from bullying.

- ◇ Cases of bullying need to be monitored on a daily basis – a quiet word with the victim (s) and contact with the bully in order to raise awareness of the school’s involvement.
- ◇ The Head of Year will discuss both bullies and victims with Mr G Smallwood – SEN Co-ordinator and the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team (Miss Lisa Williams).
- ◇ The Head of Progress should contact the parent/guardian of the bully (often, this is sufficient to solve the problem) and the parents/guardians of those affected in order to indicate the steps the school is taking to deal with the problem.
- ◇ **The Head of Progress should keep detailed notes regarding issues of bullying.** Relevant information regarding bullying behaviour will be shared with staff in the morning bulletin in order to raise awareness whenever this is deemed prudent.
- ◇ Heads of Progress are expected to raise awareness of bullying in their assemblies each term.
- ◇ The SLT (in particular LW) will assist Heads of Progress when dealing with cases of bullying (see (iii) below)
- ◇ Perseverance when dealing with bullying is essential in order to avoid a situation whereby the behaviour spreads within a year group or continues from one year to another
- ◇ A positive response from the bully should be matched by a positive response from the school.

- (iii) If the incident is a complex one, the Heads of Progress should consult LW who will, in turn, notify the Headteacher. They will together institute a programme of action which can include inviting parents to come into school to discuss the matter further, asking for guidance from the School's Education Psychologist, the school’s Behaviour Support Officer, or other outside agencies.
- (iv) Particularly serious and complex incidents will also be referred to the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, and the Chairman of Governors will also be informed where this is appropriate. The LEA will also be informed. Where a pupil is reluctant to co-operate in spite of school support and guidance there will be a recommendation of exclusion for a fixed term and the possibility of permanent exclusion should the unacceptable behaviour continue.

Specific

- (i) If a complaint of bullying is made to a form tutor, subject teacher or Head of Progress, the **facts** should be ascertained - where, when (time of day), place, names or descriptions of witnesses, what exactly was said or done and by whom. The evidence must be recorded in writing.
- (ii) If the referral is made by a third party, the same questions should be asked.
- (iii) The teacher or Head of Progress should interview both the victim and the bully, and question him or her without apportioning blame, in order to ascertain the facts. The teacher should then pass on the information to the Head of Progress.
- (iv) If the teacher is unable to make a full inquiry at the time, the victim and bully should be asked to write down all that has happened, keeping to the areas of inquiry outlined in (i) above

Pupil being bullied

Classroom teacher

(v) The victim should be asked to keep a diary and record over a set period of time exactly what happens.

Head of Progress

(vi) The Head of Progress should ^{Contact parents} contact the parents of the victim and bully if it is necessary to take the matter further, and agree on a programme of supportive strategies.

Assistant Headteachers

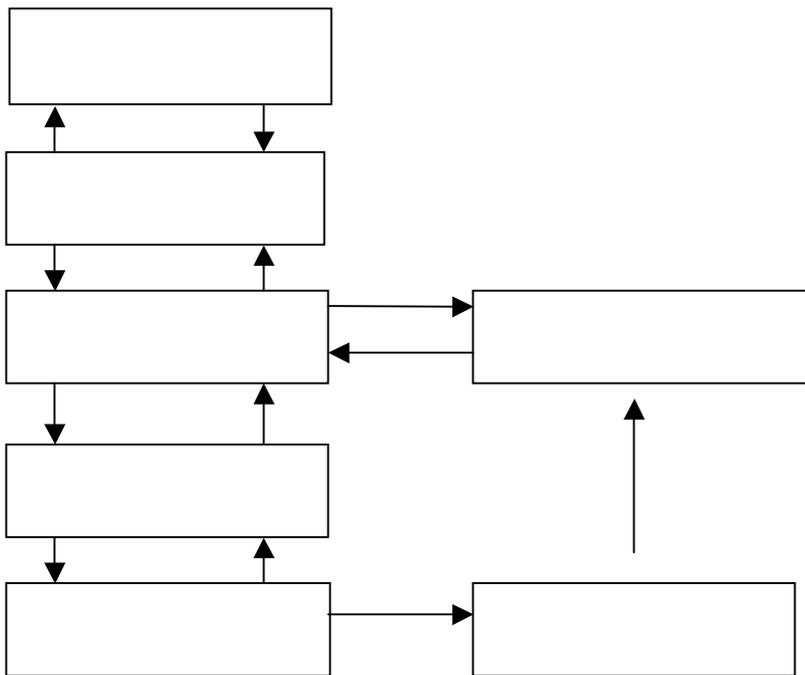
(vii) Awareness of elements in the Countering Bullying policy should be raised in school assemblies and during pastoral periods

Deputy Headteacher /
Headteacher

(viii) Pupils attention should be drawn to the guidance in the "Trefnydd Personol" and to the steps to be followed if they think they are being bullied.

(ix) Threatening behaviour via Social Media and cyber-bullying should be reported to the Police. ^{Possibility of fixed term exclusion if bully does not respond to interventions}

Flowchart for implementing the policy Strategy (Within the school)



It is important that proper action in accordance with the above is taken when information is received regarding alleged cases of bullying.

Keeping written records

A written record must be kept of all serious incidents, and those with the potential to become complex. Information obtained from interviewing all parties must be dated and recorded, and the details kept by the Head of Progress. Action taken by the school in response to the incident must always be noted.

The Head of Progress should keep accurate and detailed notes of all serious incidents of bullying. Also,

- ◇ class teachers should complete a 'Cofnod o Ddigwyddiad' and ensure that it is given to the Head of Progress if the incident is in class
- ◇ teaching and support staff should make a written report of any incidents to the Head of Progress, including details of action taken

Contacting parents

The Head of Progress should contact the parents of the parties concerned to discuss the incidents and raise awareness. If the problems continue, Head of Progress should invite parents to school to discuss the matter further where appropriate, and again, agree on an appropriate programme of supportive strategies in order to improve behaviour and/or resolve the issues.

Outside Agencies

After ascertaining the facts of an incident, the school may wish to seek advice from outside agencies which could include

- ◇ • The school's Education Psychologist
- ◇ • The school Behaviour Support Officer,
- ◇ • The school nurse / health service / family doctor
- ◇ • Educational Welfare Officers for Merthyr and RCT
- ◇ CAMHS
- ◇ Counselling service
- ◇ Bullies Out
- ◇ Police Liaison Officer
- ◇ Youth Offending Team

- * The sessions can include assertiveness strategies for the victim and strategies to help the bully understand and modify his/her behaviour
- * Pupils who are peers of the bully and victim are encouraged to reject any physical or verbal behaviour which is deliberately intended to hurt. Pupils are encouraged to adopt positive ways of coping with difficult situations, rather than resorting to violence or threats. This happens within the curriculum, in lessons and in PSE, pastoral periods and assemblies, and the whole school staff are encouraged to model appropriate behaviour. We also have an Interventions and Welfare Officer trained in ELSA, SEAL and Restorative Justice strategies who can be called upon to run workshops with the pupils to resolve problems.

Possible punishment / sanctions

The circumstances of each incident are invariably different, but keeping the victim and bully apart at break and lunch-time could be considered also detention as a punishment for the bully, and to keep the victim

safe. Additionally, the bully could be excluded for a day or more to reflect on the situation, especially if he/she has used malicious or calculated physical violence. If the bully is responsible for breaking or damaging the victim's property, he/she should pay for the damage, or replace the property.

The role of parents / guardians

- Parents are encouraged to co-operate with the school to improve relationships between pupils.
- Parents can be invited to come to school to discuss matters with the Head of Progress, Assistant Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher.
- A summary of the bullying policy is included in the School Information booklet and guidelines for pupils are given in the 'Trefnydd Personol' (Pupil Organiser).
- Parents are asked to contact the Head of Progress if they suspect their child is being bullied, or is a bully. They should ask their son/daughter to keep a diary and record everything that happens - date, where, when, what was said, what was done, by whom, and include names or descriptions of witnesses.

6th Form Mentoring Role

- (i) A year 12/13 Peer Mentoring Group has been formed and pupils are encouraged to talk to the Group's members.

Training will be provided for the Year 12 pupils prior to commencing their responsibilities so that they are aware of key areas and the need to transfer information.

- (ii) The Group members and our Interventions & Welfare Officer are available to discuss pupils' problems in the Hwb Ddysgu during lunch time.

Guidelines for pupils

If you feel you are being bullied, follow these guidelines. Try to tell a teacher or a Year 12/13 pupil. The school **CAN** prevent bullying with your help

- (i) Try not to show you've been hurt.
- (ii) Try to ignore the bully. Block contact via mobile phone & Social Media sites. He/she enjoys seeing you show that you've been upset or hurt so your silence or laughter will disappoint him/her. [This may not work at first, but generally does in the end, so persevere].
- (iii) Walk confidently (even if you feel very different).
- (iv) Try to sound assertive and confident.
- (v) If a group is bullying you, look into their eyes and say "Why are you doing this? It's not funny" then walk away quickly.
- (vi) Don't go on your own to areas where bullying could take place or any unsupervised areas
- (vii) If you are afraid, ask your class teacher, Head of Progress or other teacher if you can stay in at break or lunch-time, and say why.
- (viii) Run to a member of staff if you are in danger.
- (ix) Keep a diary and write down where, when, the date, names or descriptions of witnesses, what exactly is said (exact words).
- (x) The bully will not stop if he or she thinks they can continue to get away with their unkind behaviour. **So you must tell somebody, or ask a friend to tell somebody - and make sure that you tell somebody if a friend is being bullied.**

You can stop the bully if you are willing to do this:-

- (i) Don't stop to watch and support the bully - go and get help.
- (ii) Show that you do not like what the bully is doing and saying. Walk away or tell him/her to stop.
- (iii) Show sympathy for the victim and try to support him or her. Perhaps it will be your turn next.
- (iv) Be careful not to tease people or make personal remarks, or call them silly names. Perhaps the other person will not share your humour. Ask yourself whether you would think it was funny if somebody said the same thing to you.
- (v) If you know about a serious bullying incident, tell a teacher or member of Yr. 12. Perhaps the victim is too afraid, shy, lonely or unhappy to tell anyone himself.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

1. Watch for signs of distress in your child (*see list*).
2. Take an active interest in your child's social life, and listen to your son or daughter.
3. If you think your child is being bullied, inform the Head of Progress immediately
4. Keep a written record of events in the form of a diary; - who, what, where and when, exactly what was said and done and by whom, names and/or descriptions of witnesses. [Your son/daughter should keep the diary]
5. The school has a written policy on bullying which you are welcome to see.
6. In partnership with the school, draw up a programme of strategies that will help your child.
7. Advise your child to tell a trusted teacher or a member of 6th Form about bullying incidents.
8. Tell your son or daughter that there is nothing wrong with him or her which justifies bullying.
9. Do NOT encourage your child to hit back or call names back.
10. Threats made via 'social media' should be reported to the police as this may be considered a criminal offence.

POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BEING BULLIED

- * be frightened of walking to or from school
- * be unwilling to go to school and make continual excuses to avoid going
- * begin doing poorly in their schoolwork
- * regularly have clothes or books or schoolwork torn or destroyed
- * become withdrawn
- * start stammering
- * stop eating or become obsessively clean
- * develop stomach cramps and headaches
- * cry themselves to sleep
- * begin wetting the bed
- * have nightmares and call out things like 'leave me alone'
- * have unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- * have their possessions go missing
- * ask for money or begin stealing
- * continually lose their pocket money
- * refuse to say what's wrong
- * aggressive eruptions/tantrums
- * constant attention seeking, over-pleasing
- * self harm

Reviewed January 2016

Compliant with 1998 Human Rights Act and 2010 Equalities Act



Legislation and Police Involvement

Most young people are unaware that cyber bullying can be a crime in some cases. There are many laws protecting people's right to not be harassed, including by technology, and laws to protect people's privacy.



Many mobile phone companies and Internet Service Providers also have the ability to trace harassing phone calls, text messages and emails, and websites such as Facebook can remove degrading or abusive content and block the user's account.

The following laws may apply in cases of cyber-bullying:

☛ **Computer Misuse Act 1990**

An Act to make provision for securing computer material against unauthorised access or modification (i.e. hacking)

☛ **Communications Act 2003 (section 127)**

Improper use of public electronic communications network.

(1) A person is guilty of an offence if he:

- (a) Sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or
- (b) Causes any such message or matter to be so sent.

(2) A person is guilty of an offence if, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another, he:

- (a) Sends by means of a public electronic communications network, a message that he knows to be false
- (b) Causes such a message to be sent; or
- (c) Persistently makes use of a public electronic communications network.

- (3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or to both.

 **Sexual Offences Act 2003**

An Act to make new provision about sexual offences, their prevention and the protection of children from harm.

 **Malicious Communications Act 1998**

An Act to make provision for the punishment of persons who send or deliver letters or other articles for the purpose of causing distress or anxiety

 **The Obscene Publications Act 1959 and 1964**

An Act to make it an offence to publish, whether for gain or not, any content whose effect will tend to "deprave and corrupt" those likely to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it.