BRYN CELYNNOG
Comprehensive School
Nurturing Success

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

LAST APPROVED BY GOVERNORS: 8th JULY 2025

DATE FOR REVIEW: JULY 2026

BRYN CELYNNOG COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy has been written in line with Welsh Government publication: Rights, Respect, Equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools (November 2019).

In line with Welsh Government Guidance, the words 'victim' and 'bully' have been replaced with 'target' and 'perpetrator'.

PHILOSOPHY

Statement of Intent

We believe that all students have the right to receive their education in a safe and secure environment, free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. The governors and staff at Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School are committed to ensuring that students and staff who attend this school will be able to develop fully in a protected, supportive and caring atmosphere, in which any form of abusive behaviour is challenged and dealt with robustly.

We are aware of the devastating and long-lasting impact bullying can have, not only to the young people targeted but also to the perpetrators of bullying. Severe impacts can be long-term, including poor mental health and reduced well-being.

If bullying becomes dominant in a school, no student can fully enjoy their rights under the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), including to be safe and to receive an education.

To that end, at Bryn Celynnog we take a proactive approach to preventing all bullying and to mitigating its effects when it occurs. This includes creating an ethos based on respect and tolerance, in which positive behaviours are actively promoted and a zero tolerance to unacceptable conduct is robustly maintained.

Objectives of this policy

Our Anti-Bullying Policy outlines what we do to prevent and tackle bullying. The policy has been drawn up through the involvement of the whole school community.

In our school community we:

- promote positive relationships and a safe learning environment;
- make students aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively;
- deal promptly with concerns from parents/carers and ask parents/carers in turn to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy;
- monitor and review our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis;

Definition of bullying

Welsh Government Guidance defines bullying as:

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

Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or a friendship fallout in that it:

- is deliberate or intentional
- is generally repeated over time
- involves a perceived imbalance of power between perpetrator and target
- causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, humiliation and powerlessness.

The distinctive elements of bullying behaviour

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 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.

- **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.

How is bullying expressed?

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **physical** – punching, kicking, spitting, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone, damaging their belongings or making gestures of intimidation;

- **verbal** – calling names, taunting, insults and making offensive remarks, threatening, humiliation, intimidation;

- **emotional** – behaviour intended to isolate, hurt or humiliate someone;

- **indirect** – sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back;

- **online** – using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums or apps to bully via text, messaging, images or video;

- **relational aggression** – bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status; drawing their friends away, exploiting a person's 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 any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the student targeted;

Prejudice-related bullying

Acts of prejudice-related behaviour often contain ideas, stereotypes and prejudices to do with discrimination and inequality that are present in wider society. These could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity, social status and background.

These ideas and attitudes involve hostility towards people who have protected characteristics, such as those who:

- are disabled (including those with ALN)
- are lesbian, gay or bisexual
- are questioning their gender or who are transgender
- whose ethnicity, race, appearance, religious heritage or gender is different from the perpetrators of the prejudice-related behaviour.

Bullying on the grounds of protected characteristics as identified in Equalities Act (2010)

- **disability / special needs / medical condition** - bullying of a person with a real or perceived disability, special need, health condition, or a student who is gifted and talented;

- **race / ethnicity** – bullying of someone due to their ethnic origin, skin colour, national origin, culture or language.

- **religion / belief** – bullying due to someone's beliefs, faith, lack of faith (Islamophobia and anti-Semitism for example). It may also be because of a perception or assumption about religion or belief (which may or may not be accurate), or because of their association with someone of a particular religion or belief.

- **homophobic, biphobic and transphobic** – these 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 student is different in some way.

- **sexist** – bullying based on sexist attitudes that demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender.

What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not bullying. These instances will 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 fall-outs** – though a friendship feud might deteriorate into bullying.
- **a one-off fight**
- **an argument or disagreement**
- **a one-off physical assault** – though the school may decide to involve the police.
- **insults and banter** – when shared between two friends of equal power.
- **a one-off instance of hate crime** – though this would constitute criminal behaviour and would involve the police and referral to the school's Prevent policy.

These examples illustrate the need to deal with the incident reported and record it to enable the school to monitor patterns and prevent discrimination.

Possible signs of bullying

These signs might include, but are not limited to:

- Isolation from friends, family, and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity, mood, or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or change for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Drugs or alcohol misuse.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Adult bullying

Although the main focus of the school's bullying policy is on bullying between students, we acknowledge that bullying can take place between staff and students, between members of staff, between management and staff, and between parents and staff. We

encourage *all* personnel to report incidents of bullying to a senior manager, the headteacher or the chair of governors, as appropriate.

PRINCIPLES

Whole school anti-bullying strategies

At Bryn Celynnog, we take a multi-faceted, whole school approach, which includes preventing, identifying, responding to and challenging incidents of bullying.

- Senior leaders, middle leaders and governors provide strong moral leadership, which models values and high expectations and which places a strong emphasis on the well-being of the whole school community.

- We actively promote an ethos based on respect for others. We strive to create a culture where students feel safe, secure, valued and listened to.

- We have in place a secure understanding of our students' well-being and effective methods to monitor and evaluate this through student surveys and learning coaching.

- We provide systematic opportunities to develop students' social and emotional skills, including their resilience, and we encourage students to adopt an empathetic approach to the needs of others.

- We strive to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of our students, together with a range of learning experiences that educate them about their own and others' well-being.

- We strive to provide all our students with the care, support and guidance that is responsive to individual needs.

- We strive to create an environment that promotes our students' health and well-being, with good provision of sporting and recreational facilities, large outdoor spaces, healthy food and good site security.

- We work hard to ensure effective communication and partnership working with our parents/carers.

- We support professional learning for all staff, tailored to meet their needs and responsibilities.

- We work with stakeholders and partner agencies to deliver integrated services and to improve preventative and early interventions for our students and their families.

How awareness of bullying is raised

We consider all opportunities for addressing bullying: through the curriculum, through displays, through peer support and through the School Parliament. We hold an annual anti-bullying week during which the whole school community reflects on strategies to prevent bullying.

We are proactive in involving all members of the school community in preventing and responding to bullying. We aim to raise staff awareness of bullying through training and through opportunities for discussion, in order to clarify what constitutes bullying and what action should be taken. This is particularly important in the case of newly qualified teachers and other new staff. All members of staff receive copies of the school's policies and procedures, updated annually.

We operate a 'zoned area' policy at lunchtime by making available a separate social area to each year group. Staff patrols are operational throughout the lunch break. We also create 'safe spaces' for vulnerable students.

Curricular approaches

We ensure that the taught and wider curriculum provides students with opportunities to recognize that their own physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing are key enablers of successful learning.

The Curriculum for Wales 2022 will strengthen the school's ongoing work to support all learners to become ethical, informed, healthy and confident individuals and to embed health and wellbeing at the heart of all learning.

Involvement of students

We actively encourage the involvement of students through surveys and periodic interviews with small groups, to ensure that students have opportunities to discuss what constitutes bullying and are made aware of their right to a safe and secure environment in which to learn.

We ensure that students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying. We inform students of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying.

We actively involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in school. We make sure that students have an input into the content and wording of the anti-bullying page in the Student Planners.

As part of the Digital Competence Framework, we teach students the skills and behaviours they need to contribute positively to the digital world around them, which includes protecting themselves online.

PROCEDURES

The anti-bullying lead is the Headteacher. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- the creation of the school's anti-bullying policy, review and ongoing development;
- the implementation of the anti-bullying policy, including monitoring of its effectiveness;
- the management of bullying incident processes;
- the coordination of training for staff.

Reporting bullying

All instances of bullying are regarded as a serious breach of school rules and will be dealt with severely and may lead to exclusion. The school's stance on bullying is issued to all new entrants via the school prospectus.

Students are instructed to notify a member of staff immediately of any incident of bullying in respect of other students who they know, or suspect, are being bullied.

Students who believe they are being bullied are encouraged to report the matter immediately to a member of staff. Bullying is often a complex issue and there is no single course of action that is appropriate to every situation. However, we will always take the student's concern seriously, conduct an investigation and take appropriate action in the light of our findings.

Students who are bullied will be given individual support. Other supportive measures will be offered, as required, in discussion with the student's parents. These may include

- **building resilience**: strengthening the student's ability to effectively cope after being bullied, often by working with a Learning Coach;

- **peer support**: ensuring that the student is accepted and included by other students.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the student is able to function safely within the school community as quickly as possible.

Motivations that lie behind acts of bullying

Children and young people who engage in bullying can have a range of motivations. They may have prejudices against certain groups in wider society, informed possibly by media, community or family values; or from a desire for power and popularity; or to avoid being a target of bullying themselves.

The school will explore with the perpetrator the motivation for bullying to identify the root cause of the unacceptable behaviour. The perpetrator will be given counselling and support as part of the school's disciplinary procedure and to ensure that such incidents are not repeated.

Disciplinary processes for those involved in bullying incidents

It is crucial that the perpetrator understands the impact of his/her actions on the target; as such, counselling and monitoring may need to be ongoing over a period of time.

Other steps may include one or more of the following:

- **mediation**: this involves helping the perpetrator and target of bullying to talk about the issue and agree on a solution;
- **restorative approaches**: this is used to promote accountability and seek to repair any harm caused in a situation;
- **time out**: removing the perpetrator from the group, not so much as a punishment, but rather as a time when he or she can think about their behaviour and offer a solution;
- **individual student management plan**, to monitor behaviour;
- **removal of perpetrator** into a different class;
- **denial of privileges,** with the opportunity to redeem one's self.

If all efforts fail to help students stop bullying, we will take tougher action to deal with persistent and violent bullying. Students should be aware that their behaviour is related to an outcome and has consequences for themselves and others. In severe cases, additional disciplinary measures may be taken, including fixed-term and permanent exclusion. Parents will always be informed of instances of bullying, and fully involved in the disciplinary processes taken by the school.

Working with external agencies

Where students do not respond to preventative strategies to combat bullying, it may be necessary to consider whether they have additional social, emotional, physical or mental health problems that need to be addressed by external agencies.

Incidents of bullying on the grounds of protected characteristics

Through our Anti-bullying Policy, we aim to build mutual understanding and respect in children and young people. Promoting tolerance helps to prevent children and young people becoming perpetrators of Hate Crime in adult life.

A Hate Crime is defined as a criminal offence..... which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice, based on a person's actual or perceived disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation and transgender.

Hate crimes are serious criminal offences that have a higher level of sentencing. Where someone is targeted because of their age or life style choice, then this is also recorded as a Hate Crime or a Hate Incident, but without the enhanced level of sentencing, although support services would still be available.

Hate Crime or Hate Incidents may include:

- Verbal abuse
- Offensive graffiti
- Threatening behaviour
- Damage to property
- Assault
- Online bullying
- Abusive texts, emails or phone calls
- Taking money, valuables or your possession.

Most Hate Incidents within schools are most effectively managed via the Anti-Bullying Policy and with a restorative practice approach.

The school will seek the involvement of external organisations at an early stage to help avoid escalation of a situation, particularly one which may involve the wider community or disputes between families or groups.

Serious Hate Crimes or Hate Incidents may be reported to the Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency.

Bullying outside the school's premises

Bullying may take place outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. Where a student tells of bullying off the school premises, a range of steps will be considered. These include:

- talking to the school's Police Community Liaison Officer about problems on local streets;
- talking to the transport company about bullying on the buses and encouraging drivers to report incidents;
- encouraging senior students to report incidents on the buses to a designated member of staff;
- talking to the Headteacher of another school whose students are bullying others out of school;
- talking to students about how to avoid or handle bullying out of school.

Child Protection

The school will strive to remain alert to evidence of sexually inappropriate or abusive behaviours and act promptly where concerns are evident. The school's nominated Designated Senior Person will consider the need for referral to the Children's Services in line with the procedure agreed with the local safeguarding team.

Recording

Senior staff will ensure that all incidents of bullying are recorded. Details of records will include age, gender and bullying on the grounds of protected characteristics. Senior staff will also monitor the situation to check that the bullying has not started again. The Governing Body will receive a report each term, including information on bullying statistics.

Liaison with parents/carers

We make every effort to ensure that parents understand that bullying will not be tolerated and that the school will take immediate action in all reported cases of bullying. This includes working proactively with them and with the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.

If parents wish to complain about bullying, they should:

- talk to their child's Head of Learning, being as specific as possible about what their child says has happened;
- make a note of what action the school intends to take;
- ask if there is anything they can do to help their child at school;
- stay in touch with the school.

If parents are worried that their concerns are not being addressed, they should:

- check the school's Anti-Bullying Policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed;
- make an appointment to meet the Headteacher.

If this does not help, parents should:

- follow the school's complaints procedure;
- contact the Director of Education for the local authority, who is able to ensure that the governors respond to their concerns;
- contact local or national parent support groups for advice.

We aim to keep parents informed of anti-bullying initiatives through:

- newsletters home
- anti-bullying weeks
- the school prospectus
- the school website

Training

Schools have a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Headteachers, with the advice and guidance of governors and the assistance of school staff, must identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect for others, and self-discipline among students, and to prevent all forms of bullying.

The school will ensure that staff and governor training on bullying includes reference to

the Welsh Government Guidance 'Respecting Others' in order to raise awareness of issues in relation to protected characteristics and online bullying. The Equality Act 2010 specifically relates to those with protected characteristics.

PERFORMANCE

Monitoring & Evaluation

The school will carry out a self-evaluation exercise seeking feedback from staff and students to measure the extent of bullying behaviour present. This will provide a baseline against which progress can be benchmarked.

The school will monitor incidents of bullying in order to identify patterns of behaviour. This will enable the school to modify the anti-bullying policy effectively and respond to specific trends and issues.

GDPR

All personal data collected in relation to bullying incidents will be processed lawfully in line with GDPR requirements and with the support of the school's GDPR Officer.

Link governor

The school's link governor will work closely with the School Parliament to help monitor the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Reporting, recording and monitoring arrangements will be managed through the Senior Management Team.

The Governing Body will review and update the school's anti-bullying policy at least once every two years. The school will use national guidance to inform its action-planning. Senior staff and members of the School Parliament will be actively involved in monitoring the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying procedures.

This policy is only effective if the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated at Bryn Celynnog. It is the responsibility of:

- governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy;
- the Headteacher, senior managers, teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly;
- the Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community;
- students to abide by the policy.

The named contact for this policy is the Headteacher.

Appendix 1

In writing this policy, we have heeded legislation, applicable to all schools in Wales, which aims to protect the rights of children and young people to live a life free from abuse and harm including bullying, includes the following;

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

- The Education Act 1996 – Part 4 of the Act makes provision in relation to children with special educational needs (replaced by ALNET Act 2018).

- Human Rights Act 1998 – requires schools to have policies that comply with the Act, in particular, Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Act which provides that no one must be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

- Education Act 2002 – requires schools to have a complaints procedure. This is particularly important for parents and carers who feel that their school has not adequately dealt with a case of bullying.
- Children Act 2004 – requires a local authority to promote co-operation between itself and various other bodies and persons with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in its area so far as it relates to education, training and recreation.

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 – requires schools to establish policies to promote good behaviour, and in particular, prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. It also gives head teachers the power to impose disciplinary sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.

- The Equality Act 2010 – Chapter 1, Part 6 of the Act prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation in schools.

- Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010

- Rights of Children and Young People (Wales) measure 2011

- Breaking the Barriers (2014)

- Keeping Learners Safe (2015)