

Anti Bullying Policy

Policy Formulation

This policy has been written so as to comply with the guidance and to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998, The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and The Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Equality Act 2010.

This policy has been developed with reference to the following Welsh Government documents:
Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance (2003)
Respecting Others: Anti Bullying Guidance Series (2011)
Respecting Others: Bullying around, race, religion and culture (2016)
Personal and Social Education Framework (2008)
School Crime Beat Policy (2012)
All Wales Child Protection Procedures (2008)

This policy should not be seen in isolation as it has clear links with the following school policies:

Behaviour
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Personal and Social Education
Mental Health and Wellbeing
Internet Safety

Consultation Process

In order to produce an effective policy which meets the needs of the whole school community the following groups have been consulted:

- Students
- All school staff
- Parents/carers
- Governors
- LA Guidelines – Respecting Each Other
- External agencies e.g. ChildLine, Police Liaison Officer

Rationale

Everyone at Ysgol John Bright has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy.

Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort impacts on this and restricts equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists the students must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied students and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

This document outlines how we make this possible at Ysgol John Bright.

Principles

All students have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them.

There is **no justification whatsoever** for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Respect for diversity regarding race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and ability is fostered in Ysgol John Bright and difference is absolutely repudiated as a reason for bullying.

Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the bully and the targeted individual and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways, which provide opportunities for growth and development for the bully and targeted individual alike.

Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve school staff, parents/carers and other professionals involved with students who are the targeted individuals or perpetrators.

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. The school is not legally responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere.

However, as a school we have an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of our students and will take into account any information we receive about bullying outside school and comply with our duty to provide continuing care thus:

- if it emerges that a student is responsible for bullying others outside school then the bully's parents/carers will be informed.
- if a student is found to be the targeted individual of bullying outside school (through direct or electronic means) then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The targeted individual's parents/carers will be informed.
- if there are concerns about bullying issues outside school then the school would advise parents/carers to contact the local police and seek their help and advice in dealing with the situation.
- if concerns arise in relation to school transport then the issue will be raised with the transport companies and their help sought in dealing with the problem.
- if information is received that a student is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents/carers. If concerns persist then the matter may be referred under the Conwy Child Protection Protocol in line with current All Wales Child Protection Procedures.
- if students are being bullied by others from another school the Head of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

Definition of bullying

There are many definitions of bullying but we consider it to be **deliberate hurtful behaviour, targeting an individual or group that is often repeated over a period of time**. However, we also recognise that **a one off incident which leaves a victim traumatised** could be categorised as bullying.

As a school community we work hard to ensure that all students know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

Bullying can take many forms but we recognise 4 main types:

- **Physical** – including: physical assault, taking or damaging belongings, sexual harassment and aggression;
- **Verbal** – including: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks and threatening;
- **Indirect** – including: spreading nasty rumours or stories about someone and exclusion from social groups;
- **Cyberbullying** – including: using mobile phones and the internet (including social networking sites, e mail, video and instant messaging) to deliberately upset or threaten someone.

Ysgol John Bright takes all forms of bullying seriously and is particularly concerned to take action in relation to any incidents which relate to sex* race**gender, disability, educational ability, sexual orientation, health issues.

In such cases these issues will be specifically addressed with the bully (and parents/carers where appropriate) in the course of post incident management.

Our school regards physical, verbal, indirect and cyber bullying equally seriously.

** Incidents of bullying which amount to sexual harassment and aggression will where necessary be recorded in line with and invoke the Child Protection Protocol and Procedures.*

*** Incidents of bullying with racist content or motivation will be recorded in line with the "Guidelines and Procedures for Dealing with Racist Incidents".*

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- To fulfil the school's statutory responsibility to respect the rights of students and to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- To clarify our approach regarding responding to reports of bullying incidents with due regard for our legal obligations, and to demonstrate our commitment by ensuring that every reported incident is investigated and dealt with consistently.
- To promote a school ethos in which each student is safe and able to realise their full potential.
- To promote a common understanding of what bullying is.
- To outline the strategies we will use to promote an anti bullying ethos and a respect for diversity.

- To protect the wellbeing of the whole school community and give appropriate messages to staff, students and parents/carers.
- To affirm our commitment to addressing the problem of bullying and to bringing it under control through the implementation of whole school policy and procedures.
- To reassure parents/carers and students that school takes its students' welfare seriously.

Ysgol John Bright will attempt to meet the aims of this policy through the following objectives:

- We will ensure that parents, staff and students know about our policy and understand the nature of bullying and its effects on individuals and communities.
- We will raise awareness amongst staff, parents/carers and students about the issue of bullying and the school's attitude towards it and to create an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.
- We will promote a culture of respecting ourselves and others through whole school programmes such as All Wales Core Police Liaison Programme and Anti Bullying Week campaigns and through pastoral programmes and ICT lessons.
- We will maintain the focus on respecting ourselves and others through assemblies, encouraging the Senedd to be proactive and anti bullying campaigns.
- We will demonstrate that bullying behaviour is unacceptable through imposing sanctions and we will take action to safeguard targeted individuals and groups.
- We will record all incidents of bullying and monitor for re-occurring themes and the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying.
- We will challenge students who exhibit bullying behaviour in a firm and non aggressive way and provide them with support to change their problematic behaviour.
- We will make students, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of bullying has occurred.
- We will consider the linguistic requirements of students and parents/carers where Welsh/English is not their first language.

Whole School Preventative Measures

All staff involved in the education and supervision of students will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the school's policy consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to students that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition the issue of bullying will be raised with students at a number of levels including:

- At whole school level – school handbook, home school planners and through assemblies when students will be informed of the school's anti-bullying policy.
- At classroom level – during tutor periods, cross-curricular activities, and pastoral lessons.
- At individual level – students who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance. Students who have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to modify their unacceptable behaviour and to prevent further incidents.

Ysgol John Bright recognises that there are particular times when students may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements are

in place to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.

It is recognised that there are locations about the school where incidents or bullying are more likely to occur. Arrangements have been made to ensure that these are supervised or students will be forbidden access to these areas.

We recognise our duty to deal with incidents of cyberbullying, which are often likely to take place out of school but which can impact very strongly on the school life of those learners involved. Headteachers have the power 'to such extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of learners when they are off-site or not under control or charge of a member of staff.

Students will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.

Parents/carers who believe their children are the targeted individuals of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Similarly if parents/carers believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying student helped to modify their behaviour.

All of these preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help students learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff at all times will treat each other and students, parents/carers with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

Parental Involvement

Ysgol John Bright is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

As a school we recognise the important influence that parents/carers have on their children and would wish, using the home/school agreement, to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as targeted individual, an accessory to cyberbullying (eg passing on messages and/or images, although not initiating them) or a perpetrator.

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

In the event where parents/carers are unhappy with the way the school has investigated an alleged incident of bullying, then they have the right to complain to the Headteacher in the first instance. If parents/carers still consider the issue to be unresolved then they have the right to inform the Governing Body through the Chair of Governors who will decide whether to launch an investigation. A report will be made directly to the parents/carers concerned.

Implementation

Ysgol John Bright is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that this policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and supervision of student will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the targeted individual receives what support is required; a referral will be made immediately to the relevant Behaviour and Wellbeing Manager or Behaviour Lead dependent upon the seriousness of the incident. The bully will be informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record made of the incident.

All students need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

Incident Management

Actions taken will include:

- Speaking to the individual students involved in any reported incident of bullying
- Speaking to the parents/carers of both the alleged bully(ies) and target(s)
- Referring serious incidents to the relevant Assistant Headteacher
- Inviting the parents/carers of the students involved into school to discuss the incident
- Implementing appropriate action swiftly
- Taking action to limit the damage caused by incidents of cyber bullying (eg removing offensive material)

Support for the Targeted Individual

When information is received, either directly or indirectly, that a student may have been the target of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

The school will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to students who are the targeted individuals of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular student's individual needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the student's safety
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the targeted individual is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- assertiveness training/raising self esteem
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mediation/peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents/carers

- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the targeted individual (provided this does not increase the targeted individual's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress

Support for the Bully

Ysgol John Bright takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to modify their behaviour. As a School we believe the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

Ysgol John Bright will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress
- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of the school discipline policy and behaviour management plan and is unacceptable
- loss of lunch/break time privileges
- detention
- removal from class/group
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum)
- parents/carers informed
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the targeted individual (if agreeable)
- fixed periods of exclusion
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)
- rewards/positive reinforcement for students in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control
- involvement of appropriate outside agencies eg police in instances where the law has been broken.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded. Any incidents with a racist, sexist, disability or homophobic element will be identified and addressed in line with the procedures detailed in the section Definition of Bullying.

Mrs S Lewis Jones, Assistant Headteacher, has been assigned the specific role as the co-ordinator of the Anti-Bullying policy and will be responsible for the monitoring, review, evaluation and reporting processes inherent within this policy.

Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, students and parents/carers.

Monitoring and Evaluation of School Policy

It is recommended that the policy is reviewed at least every three years.

Conclusion

An anti-bullying policy alone will not stop bullying. Bullying is an aspect of life that we strongly believe can only be reduced through an understanding of why it happens. Our policy is directed at improving this understanding, thereby reducing the need for a bully to bully and as such is an integral part of the school's ethos and philosophy.