



Welshpool High School
Ysgol Uwchradd Y Trallwng

Raising Achievement By Raising Expectations

Codi Cyrhaeddiad Trwy Godi Disgwyliadau

Welshpool High School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date Reviewed: April 2024

Date for Review: April 2025

Signed
Chair of Governing Body

Date 25/04/2024

Signed
Headteacher

Date 25/04/2024

INTRODUCTION

The provision of a clear policy to which staff, pupils and parents are committed is the single most important thing that can be done to prevent bullying.

This policy will make explicit that Welshpool High School will not accept bullying behaviour of any kind. We believe that our pupils are entitled to receive their education free from fear and intimidation. We operate a 'no-put down zone' environment in Welshpool High School as seen on our school 'Anti-bullying' posters and the 'Learning Framework', which can be found in every room.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and every pupil has a right to learn in an environment which is safe and secure in which they are treated with dignity and respect.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as any form of behaviour which causes distress to another member of the school. Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour, whether physical or psychological, repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying is expressed through a range of hurtful behaviours: it can happen face-to-face or in the digital environment. It can be carried out by an individual or group but is generally executed in front of an audience to assert power or popularity. It may involve an element of secrecy so that adults are not aware of it.

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

- is deliberate or intentional
- is generally repeated over time
- involves a perceived imbalance of power between perpetrator and target

It is recognised that a one-off incident can leave a learner traumatised and nervous of reprisals or future recurrence. Welshpool High School expects intervention to be immediate whether it is bullying or any other one-off negative behaviour. Welshpool High School expects one-off incidents that do not appear to be the start of bullying will be handled as inappropriate behaviour and addressed under the school's behaviour policy.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber all areas of internet, such as email, social media and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging (including 'Sexting') and calls and misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities
- Prejudice-related this could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity and the protected characteristics such as disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation
- Indirect sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back, or spreading rumours

Bullying is not:

- a friendship fallout - although a friendship feud may deteriorate into bullying behaviour
- a one-off fight - this will be addressed according to Welshpool High School's behaviour policy
- an argument or disagreement - although young people may require assistance to learn to respect each other's views
- a one-off physical assault - this will be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement may also be appropriate
- insults and banter - if two friends of equal power are in the habit of bantering with each other this is not deemed to be bullying. If one learner uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is made fearful by the act, then the border between bullying and banter is likely to be crossed
- a one-off instance of hate crime - unless this is repeated it would not usually be regarded as bullying but it would be criminal behaviour, and dealt with according to Welshpool High School's behaviour policy.

The Aims of this Policy are as follows:

- to produce and implement a whole school anti-bullying strategy to approach and deal with bullying
- to heighten awareness of the whole school community including governors, parents, teachers, and pupils
- to take a pro-active, positive approach, addressing prevention and reaction issues
- to agree a common definition for the term 'bullying'
- to promote an environment of personal safety and philosophy of caring in practice
- to provide caring professional support for the target
- to provide caring professional support opportunities for the perpetrator
- to demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and that it will not be tolerated
- to take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school
- to support everyone in their actions to identify and protect those who might be targets
- to demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying
- to promote an environment where targets are able to report bullying behaviour to an adult

Objectives of this Policy

All pupils are encouraged to participate positively in the school community.

The Anti-Bullying Code is displayed in all classrooms and a disciplinary procedure is in place to deal with bullies. The anti-bullying message is included in the school's expectations and behaviour code.

All governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is.

All governors and teaching and support staff know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported. Pupils and parents know the school policy on bullying and the procedures to follow should bullying arise.

The school takes bullying seriously and pupils and parents are assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not to be tolerated.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff (as shown in the section for pupils).
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff (as directed in the section for staff).
3. In serious cases parents are informed and are asked to meet with appropriate staff in school to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police are consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying are investigated, and the bullying is stopped quickly.
6. An attempt is made to help the perpetrator(s) change their behaviour.
7. Restorative approaches - all pastoral staff have undertaken training to facilitate this.

Outcomes

The perpetrator(s) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place (such as detentions, etc).

If possible, the pupils are reconciled.

In serious cases, isolation or even exclusion is considered.

After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case is monitored to ensure that a repetition of the bullying does not take place.

Strategies

For Pupils

Targets of bullying have five potential routes to voice their concerns:

- Form Teacher or class teacher - The form teacher is the member of staff who is primarily entrusted with the well-being of the pupil in his/her form. Pupils are encouraged to talk to their form teachers regarding incidents and he/she will be the first person to help.
- Head of Year - Some pupils feel more comfortable telling their Year Head.
- Assistant Heads - lead the anti-bullying procedure in the school but are happy to deal directly with the victims of bullying.
- Support staff – students are regularly encouraged to use drop in facilities to see staff including YIS, school nurse, youth worker, and young carers staff.
- Parents - are welcome to contact appropriate staff to express concerns over bullying.

If all efforts to help pupils stop bullying fail, the school takes tough action to deal with persistent and violent bullying:

- Pupils are made aware that their behaviour is unacceptable and has consequences for themselves and others.

- Time-out. Removing the pupil from the group, not so much as a punishment, but rather as a time when they can reflect on their behaviour and find a solution to remedy it.
- Denial of privileges, including social times, with the opportunity to redeem themselves.
- Parental involvement.
- Internal isolation with a minimum one day working on their own.
- Individual pupil management plan (ref: Pastoral Support Plan).
- Counselling.
- Involvement in a Restorative Programme.
- Removal of perpetrator away from the target (e.g. into another class).
- If all steps fail it may be necessary to exclude the pupil for a fixed period or, particularly where serious violence is involved, the Head Teacher has the option of permanently excluding the pupil. This is not a standard course of action, and each case is considered separately.
- Any event of racial bullying will be reported to the Education Authority and may also be reported to the police.

For Staff

If bullying is suspected or reported the incident is investigated and dealt with initially and as soon as possible by the teacher approached.

If a racial element to the bullying is suspected the Head of Year or Senior Staff should be informed immediately.

The teacher records the details of the incident and informs the Head of Year/Senior staff.

The Head of Year/Senior staff interviews all parties concerned and maintains a record which is kept in the pupil's records.

Staff teaching the target and the Form Tutor are informed.

The Head of Year/Form Tutor determines, in consultation with Senior staff, the appropriate strategy and plan of action to combat the bullying.

The Form tutor/Head of Year oversees the implementation of the strategy.

Parents are kept informed by the Head of Year and are invited to school if necessary.

Any sanctions against the bullies will be determined by the Head of Year/Senior staff.

Within the curriculum, the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in RSE, form tutorial time, assemblies, and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Staff on duty supervise communal areas at break and lunchtime.

Staff Inset

Training days are now offered on an individual basis for new staff, and Local Authority induction is available in Llandrindod Wells for NQTs.

INSET days are also used as an opportunity to reinforce and update staff on policy measures.

For Parents

Parental support is vital for our school's anti-bullying policy procedures. If parents suspect their child is being bullied, we ask them to report the incident immediately to either their child's Form Tutor or Head of Year.

The following guidelines may be useful for parents wishing to report the bullying of a pupil:

- Try to stay calm.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened.
- Make a note of the action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child at school.
- Stay in touch with the school.
- Those reporting a bullying incident can expect to be kept informed by the school of action taken where appropriate.

If your concerns are not being met

- Check the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- Discuss your concerns with the parent governor.
- Make an appointment to meet the Head of Year/Assistant Headteacher or the Headteacher
- If the above fail to help, write to the Chair of the Governors explaining your concerns.
- Contact the Director of Education, who is able to ensure that the Governors respond to your concerns.
- Contact local or national parent support groups for advice.

Signs and Symptoms for Staff and Parents

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these **possible** signs and that they should investigate if a pupil:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning

- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Prevention Measures

We use several methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these include:

- discussions about bullying; why its prevention matters and why it is serious
- mediation
- school sanctions
- restorative approaches
- support groups- (drop in, time to talk)
- behaviour contracts
- Anti-Bullying assemblies and workshops
- role play (as part of drama/RSE curriculum)
- ensuring appropriate use of electronic media (see E-Safety Policy)

Outside Agencies and Support Strategies

The following may be used in order to support both the victim and/or perpetrator:

Local Authority based support

EWO [Educational Welfare Officer]

Police

Youth Worker
CAMHs Counselling [Children's Mental Health]
Social Inclusion Officer
School Nurse Drop-In [by request]
Area 43 [counselling service]
Kooth online [internet-based counselling service]
Young Carers
Additional Learning Needs Officer, Powys County Council
CEOP [online training course for Child Protection]
Youth Intervention Service
ChildLine
Supervision between lessons
Safe places
Key member of staff

Bullying and its effects will be exemplified and reinforced through many areas of the curriculum:

- RSE
- Tutor Group activities
- Creative writing and reading
- Drama
- History
- Religious Education
- Assemblies

CONCLUSION

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. Everyone in the school community i.e. pupils, staff and parents have a duty to report incidents of bullying in the knowledge that the procedures detailed in this policy will be adhered to and the incident will be dealt with.

Welshpool High School regularly consults its learners as to their experiences regarding bullying, and both uses and shares this feedback with its students in order to evaluate and improve procedures on an ongoing basis.