# TAFF BARGOED
# LEARNING PARTNERSHIP
*'Learning and Growing Together'*

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## INTRODUCTION

The Taff Bargoed Learning Partnership is committed to preventing all types of bullying. It is entirely contrary to the values and ethos of our schools.

All members of the school community have the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment. Everyone will be vigilant and will intervene promptly if there are any signs or reports of bullying. All staff will work to ensure that bullying is not prevalent in the school community by implementing preventative strategies involving staff, parents and pupils and also the wider school community.

We have a responsibility to safeguard all pupils. The aim of this document is to ensure a unified approach is practised across our schools when dealing with bullying and also to ensure consistency with a wider purpose to enable pupils to thrive in a positive and safe learning environment.

## AIMS  & PURPOSE

Our policy sets out the rights of all stakeholders in relation to bullying. It contains definitions of bullying and for staff, pupils and other stakeholders to be vigilant of the signs that may indicate that a person has been, or is being bullied. It also contains information on how to communicate concerns, procedures to deal with allegations and proactive and reactive strategies to combat bullying.

Our policy takes into consideration consultation with stakeholders, as well as guidance that exists, data available and training undertaken. The policy will be subject to regular review to ensure it conforms to the latest guidance. It reflects current practice within our schools. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff and stakeholders. This policy is supported by and links closely to other policies such as our school's Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Digital Safety and Acceptable Use of ICT Policies, and Curriculum Policies, all of which safeguard and promote the welfare of Pupils in our schools.

Our vision within the Taff Bargoed Learning Partnership is to have high standards of teaching and learning which challenge all our pupils to achieve. Our anti-bullying policy supports this ideal by ensuring that:-

- All pupils feel safe whilst learning to work, play with and relate to others
- All pupils are treated fairly, with respect and dignity.
- We listen carefully to what all pupils have to say.
- We treat reports from all pupils seriously and take prompt, appropriate action.

We believe in tackling incidents of bullying by encouraging an environment where individuality is celebrated and individuals can develop without fear. This involves including and engaging everyone's perception of bullying.

## DEFINITION

We adopt the following definition of bullying:

*"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, additional learning needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences."*

Anyone can demonstrate bullying behaviours/be a bully.

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff; or between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. It can happen in isolation or quite often in the presence of others. Some people know that they are bullying others and they mean to bully, i.e. there is intent.

However, some people bully others without recognising the impact of their actions. Similarly, a victim of bullying might not recognise what is happening to them and that bullying behaviour has a very insidious effect that affects a person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being.

A one-off incident tends not to comprise bullying. A characteristic of bullying is that in its different forms/behaviours it happens repeatedly over a period of time. However, individual incidents will be monitored to ensure that they are not repeated, as if undealt with these can become bullying over time.

Instances of bullying tend to have the following common characteristics:

- **Repetitive and persistent.** Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.
- **Intentionally harmful.** The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.
- **Involves an imbalance of power.** Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some cases an imbalance of power may mean that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse requiring implementation of safeguarding procedures.

We recognise that there are different levels of bullying. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- **Emotional** - e.g. being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), being bossed, hurting people's feelings, being nasty, unfriendly, mean, blackmailing.
- **Physical** - e.g. pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence, pushing people around.
- **Racist** - e.g. racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual** - e.g. unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic/Biphobic/Transphobic** - associated with or focused on the issue of sexuality or identity.
- **Verbal** - e.g. name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, being cheeky. E-mail or text bullying. Bullying through a 3rd party.

Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:
- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

This abuse can:
- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:
- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing, suffering abuse or experiencing violence at home
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

It can also be because:
- They don't know how to manage their own thoughts and feelings (e.g. they often hit and hurt others)
- They have been bullied or hurt by other people themselves
- They are scared of being hurt by other people
- They are jealous of other people
- They feel like they are not good enough
- They have negative beliefs about people who are different
- They are overcome by stress or pressure

Bullying is NEVER acceptable but understanding what has led to a person harming another person could help to prevent re-occurrence of bullying incidents.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. School staff, alongside the Designated Safeguarding Person and/or Deputy DSPs, have to make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

## EXAMPLES OF BULLYING

Racist bullying – an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. This can be in the form of:
- verbal abuse, name calling, racist jokes, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- inciting others to behave in a racist way
- racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs
- refusing to co-operate in work or play.

Sexual bullying – this is generally characterised by:
- abusive name calling
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- inappropriate and uninvited touching
- sexual innuendos and propositions

- pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- in it's most extreme form, sexual assault or rape.

<u>Sexual orientation</u> – this can happen even if the pupils are not lesbian, gay or bisexual. Just being different can be enough. This can be in the form of:
- use of homophobic, biphobic, transphobic language
- looks and comments about sexual orientation or appearance.

<u>ALN or disability</u> – These pupils are often at greater risk of bullying. This can be characterised by:
- name calling
- comments on appearance
- comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels.

<u>Text Bullying</u> – Pupils receiving threatening or disturbing messages from possibly anonymous callers. *(Mobile Phones are not allowed to be brought into school by pupils unless there is an urgent reason to do so (see mobile phone policy)).* It is likely that most children will be using mobile phones out of school.

<u>Cyber Bullying</u> – Pupils receiving abusive messages or images via email or social networking sites. Within school children have restricted access to both of these, but could be using inappropriate social media sites and unsafe use of gaming platforms outside school and at home. Parents/ carers are responsible in the first instance for their child's phone-use safety outside of school.

<u>Indirect</u> – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, text messages, emails and cyber-bullying. This type of bullying is usually part of a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

If an individual considers themselves to have been bullied, this may have a negative impact on their emotional wellbeing, which can perpetuate the fear of a further perceived or real incident and thus will need to be dealt with appropriately.


## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from school policies and procedures designed to ensure that the school remains a safe environment in which to teach, learn and thrive.

As a federation of schools, we work together and strive to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010. This also includes promoting equality for people with 'protected characteristics'. The 'protected characteristics' the Act covers as discrimination are based on: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It is really important that all children gain an understanding of the world they are growing up in, and learn how to live alongside, and show respect for, a diverse range of people


## THE SIGNS OF BULLYING

There is no definitive way of identifying that a person is being bullied. Staff should therefore be vigilant in order to identify any of these physical and/or behavioural changes in a person as soon as possible.

The following physical and behavioural signs have been identified as possible indicators that bullying has/ or is taking place:

- Significant changes in normal behaviour or attitude
- Appearing upset
- Being withdrawn/ low mood
- Appearing frightened or subdued, possibly in the presence of particular people
- Flinching at actual or anticipated physical contact
- Asking not to be hurt
- Refusal to eat
- Refusal to participate
- Unwillingness to travel on public transport
- Not wanting to go to a certain venue
- Starting to bully others
- Incontinence
- Vomiting
- Unexplained illness
- Claims of feeling unwell with no apparent signs or symptoms
- Bruising or other physical marks
- Torn clothing
- Unexplained loss of money or possessions
- Sleepless nights
- Repeating words the perpetrator has said to them, e.g. "shut up or I'll hit you".

We also recognise the role of pupils, staff and other stakeholders in reporting incidents and not taking on a role of bystander if they witness an incident of bullying. We aim to promote a positive, caring ethos within our school.

Victims are more likely to have the following vulnerability characteristics:
- Lack of assertiveness, anxious or fearful and unlikely to fight back.
- Solitary children with few friends.
- Children with Additional Learning Needs or Disabilities.
- Appearance
- Ability
- Health issues, including mental health
- Home circumstances
- Social class
- Ethnicity
- Gypsy/Roma and Traveller Children
- Children in Care
- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual or Transgender/ non-binary/ children
- Young Careers

# PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Everyone involved in the life of our schools must take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach by being supportive of each other, by developing an awareness of the rights of the child, providing positive role models and conveying a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour (but not the pupil). All members of the school community are expected to report incidents of bullying.

The types, rates and patterns of bullying, and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to ALN, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment or disability are taken into account.

In order to support all pupils within the school, we focus on each individual. Evidence of this is recorded as appropriate through different methods, which can involve regular tracking and monitoring of absence and attendance rates, Team around the Child/ Family, Early Help meetings, pupil's voice and other plus targeted support for students. We teach our pupils about staying safe online and internet safety and the consequences of inappropriate actions.

### 1. Staff
Staff have a vital role to play as they are at the forefront of behaviour management and supporting pupils' sense of wellbeing in school. They have the closest knowledge of the pupils in their care and should build up a relationship involving mutual support, trust and respect.

We expect staff to:
● Provide pupils with a framework of behaviour including class charters and promoting the rights of the child, which supports the whole school policy.
● Emphasize and behave in a respectful and caring manner to pupils and colleagues, to set a good tone and help create a positive atmosphere.
● Provide pupils with a good role model
● Raise awareness of bullying through stories, role-play, discussion, Circle-time, Peer support, RSE, RVE and assemblies.
● Through the head teacher, keep the governing body well informed regarding issues concerning behaviour management.

### 2. Parents/Carers
We expect that parents/carers will understand and be engaged in everything that is being done to make sure their child enjoys and is safe at school and to:
● Support us in helping us meet our aims.
● Feel confident that everything is being done to make sure their child is happy and safe at school.
● Be informed about and fully involved in any aspect of their child's behaviour.
● Be informed about who can be contacted if they have any concerns about bullying.

### 3. Governors
We expect that governors will:
● Support the Head teacher and the staff in the implementation of this policy.
● Be fully informed on matters concerning anti-bullying.
● Regularly monitor incident reports and actions taken to be aware of the effectiveness of this policy.

### 4. **Pupils**
We expect that Pupils will:

● Support the Head teacher and staff in the implementation of the policy. This might involve contributing to agreed approaches designed to reduce bullying or better deal with incidents that arise.
● Be involved in the monitoring and review of the policy.
● Feel confident that everything is being done to make school a safe and secure environment for them to achieve and learn.
● Feel supported in reporting incidents of bullying.
● Be reassured that action regarding bullying will take place.

## <u>PREVENTION</u>

Our main aim as a federation of schools is to prevent bullying from occurring gin the first place. There are a number of ways in which we aim to achieve this including through:-

<u>The Culture: Strategies to prevent bullying behaviour include:</u>
- Belief that bullying does happen, whether we know about it or not.
- Careful implementation of the Behaviour and Safeguarding policies
- The encouragement and development of good relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils.
- The use of collective worship and circle time to explore those relationships, areas of conflict, feelings, ideas and opinions.
- Actively encouraging children to seek support with any problems and giving them time and privacy to share any concerns.
- Working with children to help them grow in understanding of the consequences of their actions
- Working with other agencies – e.g. other schools, Behaviour Support Services, Educational/clinical psychologists, CAMHS, Social Services, services, Place 2 Be
- All staff who work with children to have appropriate training and a clear understanding of the school's approach to behaviour management and tackling bullying.
- Regular staff monitoring of behaviour during lesson time, at break time and lunch time.

<u>The Curriculum: learning about healthy relationships, how to stay safe, the rights of the child.</u>
We ensure that in all aspects of school life there is an emphasis on the importance of relationships, emotional wellbeing and a community ethos. Proactive strategies for the school can involve:
- RSE lessons support pupils in understanding what bullying is and how to combat it, encouraging pupils to problem solve.
- Educating pupils in an age-appropriate way, to understand and be respectful to people who may be different to them, including those with 'protected characteristics'.
- Involving parents and professionals in being proactive.
- Any child considered to be at risk is supported individually e.g. counselling, the class teacher and child work towards a resolution.
- Bullying is talked about openly.
- Fact and fiction books on bullying raise awareness and deepen understanding.
- Problem solving activities are employed effectively in many areas of the curriculum and pupils work together.
- Regular assemblies to promote anti-bullying.
- Planned activities and events for national Anti-Bullying week each November.
- Recruitment and training of children in older classes to be Playground Leaders.

Furthermore, RSE will tackle, in an age-appropriate way, issues which are set out in the Curriculum for Wales, such as:
- healthy and respectful relationships
- boundaries and consent
- stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- the concepts of, and laws relating to - sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT
We recognise that all adults in the school are in effect role models for the pupils.

The way in which we behave towards each other and to pupils is particularly important in terms of providing positive role models. Therefore, as adults we must:
- show respect for every child and other colleagues within the school community as individuals
- be aware of vulnerable pupils
- criticise the behaviour rather than the child
- avoid favouritism
- be seen to be fair
- avoid labelling
- have high expectations of pupils
- never give children ammunition to use against each other
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the school.

## HATE CRIME
A hate crime is any incident that constitutes a criminal offence that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate. It could involve physical attack, threat of attack or verbal abuse or insult around issues such as race, faith, homophobia, transphobia or disability.

A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence but is perceived by the victim, or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. If an incident appears to be a hate crime or incident, we as a school recognise the need for this to be reported to the police if appropriate.

## REACTING TO INCIDENTS

### Recording
All incidents in or out-of-class should be recorded for reference. Incidents clearly identified as bullying must be reported to a senior member of staff (head teacher / deputy head teacher). Parents (of both bully and person bullied) are then informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with.

Records of all discussions to be filed and minuted using the school 'Anti-bullying Record' (See Appendix A)

### Dealing with an Incident
Whenever a bullying incident is discovered school will go through a number of prearranged steps. The exact nature of each step will depend in part on the nature of the incident and those involved.

1. The school community need to be aware that when a bullying incident has come to the attention of adults in the school it has been taken seriously and action has resulted.

2. School expects to support all involved by:
- Talking through the incident with bully and person bullied
- Helping the bully and victim to express their feelings
- Talking about which rule(s) and rights have been broken
- Discussing responsibilities and strategies for making amends

3. Nevertheless consequences may include:
- Time away from an activity within the classroom.
- Time out from the classroom.
- Missing break or another activity (including extra-curricular)
- Removal of rewards or other privileges
- Formal letter home from the Head teacher expressing concerns, where the pattern of behaviour continues.
- Meeting with staff, parent and child.
- School Wellbeing Team involvement (where appropriate)
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

4. Parents (of both bully and person bullied) are informed of what has happened, and how it has been dealt with. Records of these discussions to be minuted by a third person and filed. Failing face-to face discussion, parents/carers will be informed of any incidents by letter or direct message.

5. Child Protection procedures should always be followed when concerns arise.

## **Monitoring**

Careful monitoring and analysis provides us with a regular opportunity to link monitoring to action planning for the following school year.

## APPENDIX 1 INDIVIDUAL ANTI-BULLYING RECORD

This report will be held in strict confidence and will not be made available to any outside persons or agencies.

Report from _____ Date of incident_____ Time of incident_____

Ethnic origin of victim_____        Ethnic origin of perpetrator(s)_____

Identifies as: Male / Female / other-state_____        Male/ Female / other- state_____

### Indicate type of incident

| Verbal | | Physical | | Emotional | | Cyber | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Name calling | | Kicking | | Offensive graffiti | | Offensive text messages | |
| Taunting | | Hitting | | Excluded from group | | Offensive emails | |
| Mocking | | Punching | | Spreading rumours | | Sending degrading images | |
| Making offensive comments | | Pushing | | Being forced to do something against own will | | **Other (please state)** | |
| Teasing | | Pinching | | | | | |

**If you feel the bullying incident was in any way motivated by any of the following, please indicate by circling.**

| Appearance | Disability | Home circumstances | Gender | Race/ethnic origin |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Medical condition | Religion | Sexuality | Other- please state | |

Factual Description of incident, detailed where needed. (Attach notes of investigation where appropriate. Include:
*Nature of incident(s) – outline of what happened, where, when, type/ Name of those involved – those bullying, those being bullied, bystanders; understanding of seriousness, taking into account eg severity of impact, frequency, duration, intent, imbalance of power, empathy (remorse)*




Actions taken




| | |
|---|---|
| Did the incident lead to the perpetrator(s) being excluded? | Yes/ no |
| Have you had contact with the victim's parent/carer? | yes/no |
| Have you had contact with the perpetrator's parent/carer? | yes/no |
| Have you reported this incident to any other agencies? | yes/no |

If 'yes' which agencies? _____

Signed _____ Date_____