



Belong... Believe... Achieve...

Islwyn High School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed by: Mr M Thomas – Assistant Headteacher

Ratified by Governors: 6th June 2021

Date to be reviewed: 6th June 2023

Signed: **Mr J Hicks**
Headteacher

Mr G Bryce
Chair of Governors

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INTRODUCTION

This school recognises that bullying exists in all schools and is aware of the detrimental effect on pupils. Where these incidents of persistent bullying exist the following policy ensures that all incidents whether major or minor, are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Bullying, if and when it does occur, affects everyone, not just the bullies and the victims. It also affects those children who watch, and less aggressive pupils who can be drawn in by peer pressure.

Bullying is not an inevitable part of school life or a necessary part of growing up, and it rarely sorts itself out.

No one person or group, whether staff or pupil, should have to accept this type of behaviour.

Only when all issues of bullying are addressed, will a child best be able to benefit from the opportunities at the school.

WHY IS AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY NECESSARY?

This School believes that pupils have the right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without the fear of being bullied.

All institutions, both large and small, contain some numbers of pupils with the potential for bullying behaviour. When a school is well disciplined and organised, it can minimise the occurrence of bullying. The school also has a clear policy on the promotion of good citizenship, where it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour.

This policy exists to promote the belief that bullying is wrong and will not be tolerated, and that pupils, parents and guardians must be aware that any bullying complaints will be dealt with **firmly, fairly and promptly.** It should be read in conjunction with the school's Strategic Equality Plan.

THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

This School values every child as an individual.

The school will do everything in its power to protect a child's individual, unquestionable rights.

- It is the right of every child to attend school in safety, without the fear of threats

from others.

- Pupils have the right to be taught without interference.
- Pupils have a right to learn in a class without being interrupted.
- Pupils have a right to fulfil their potential.

The actions of bullies may deprive others of their rights.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying, which is the wilful desire to hurt another, can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It also contains an element of persistence and is often repeated over a period of time. It can be:

PHYSICAL - A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

VERBAL - Teasing, taunting or vicious name calling

GESTURE - Threatening to use physical violence

EXTORTION - Demanding some form of payment

EXCLUSION - Being excluded from discussions/activities with those they believe to be their friends.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT

- Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen.

CYBER-BULLYING - Text messages on mobile phones, e-mails, social networking sites

An important aspect to consider is the victim's perception of the bullying behaviour. These types of behaviour can occur in a variety of situations which include*:

Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic - name calling, gestures, graffiti, unwanted physical contact

Emotional - tormenting, threatening, ridicule, humiliation.

*Bullying that occurs in relation to individuals' disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnerships (also referred to as "protected characteristics" under the Equality Act 2010) is also covered by the school's Strategic Equality Plan.

Prevention is always better than cure and children are taught responsibility and respect for themselves and others. This provides them with firm, clear and consistent standards of behaviour, so that a predictable, regular routine for everyday life is maintained.

How do we deliver these messages to our pupils?

It features as a topic in PSE lessons

- It is discussed and emphasised by form teachers
- It is highlighted in school assemblies, drama productions, and whole school forums.
- Pupils are trained as counsellors to help and advise victims.
- It is discussed at the School's Pupil Council. Strategies are proposed, and safe areas are identified.
- Advice is provided in the pupils' school diary.
- Leaflets are available for the parents with a list of support agencies.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

If an incident of bullying is suspected we talk to the suspected victim, the alleged bully and any witnesses. If any degree of bullying is identified, the following action will be taken:-

The incident will be investigated thoroughly:

- time will be taken to discuss the problem
- the bully and victim will be interviewed separately
- witness information will be obtained
- a record of the incident, investigation and outcomes will be entered on the school's SIMS database.

Help, support and counselling will be given as is appropriate to both the victims and the bullies.

We support the **victims** in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with

their Form tutor, or another teacher if they choose. They may also choose to speak to a pupil counsellor or a learning coach.

- Informing the victim's parents/guardians
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it.
- Involving the Educational psychologist or Behaviour Support if appropriate.

We also discipline, yet try to help the “bullies” in the following ways:

- By talking about what happened, to discover why they became involved
- Informing the parents/guardians of the bullies
- By continuing to work with the bullies in order to get rid of prejudiced attitudes as far as possible
- By taking one or more of the four disciplinary steps described below to prevent more bullying

DISCIPLINARY STEPS

1. **Bullies will be warned officially to stop offending.**
2. **Informing the parents/guardians of the bullies.**
3. **If the bullying behaviour does not stop a fixed term exclusion **will be considered.****
4. **If the bullies will not end such behaviour, even after intervention, further exclusion will be considered and the school police liaison officer will be asked to intervene.**

ADVICE

Advice for Pupils and Parents is included in two booklets. The information contained in the booklets is included in the appendices.

APPENDIX 1- Advice for pupils

Unfortunately, bullying is an unpleasant fact of life in schools all over the country, and it is important to deal with these incidents quickly and effectively.

Here in school there is a clear policy about what will be done if bullying occurs.

No-one should accept this kind of behaviour and all pupils can feel confident that bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly.

It is important to realise that reporting incidents is the best way to deal with the problem. Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse.

THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

This School values every child as an individual.

The school will do everything in its power to protect your individual, unquestionable rights.

- You have the right to attend school safely, without the fear of threats from others.
- You have the right to be taught without interference.
- You have a right to learn in a class without being interrupted.
- You have a right to fulfil your potential.

The actions of bullies may deprive you and others of your rights.

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WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Remember that your silence is the bullies' greatest weapon!

- Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied, and that is **WRONG!**
- Be proud of who you are. It is **good** to be an individual.
- Try not to show that you are upset. **It is hard but a bully thrives on someone's fear.**
- Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
- Be assertive! - shout **"NO!"** Walk confidently away. **Go straight to a teacher or a member of staff.**
- Fighting back may make things worse. If you decide to fight back, talk to a teacher or your parent/guardian first.
- Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. **You will get immediate support. You do not have to deal with this by yourself.**

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED:-

- **TAKE ACTION!** Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
- If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult **IMMEDIATELY. Teachers have ways of dealing with the bully without getting you into trouble.**
- **DO NOT PRETEND TO BE FRIENDS WITH A BULLY.**

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BULLYING CAN BE BEATEN- some contacts

Advisory Centre for Education, IC Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove. London N5 2DQ
Tel: 0207 704 9822 Tel: helpline: 0207 354 8321 (Mon-Fri 2-5 pm)
Advice line for parents on all matters concerning schools.

Anti-bullying Campaign, 185 Tower Bridge, London SE1 2UF
Tel: 0207 378 1446 (9.30am-5.00pm)

Children's Legal Centre, tel: 01206 873 920 (Mon-Fri 10am- 12.30pm and 2.00pm-4.30pm) Publications and free advice on legal issues.
Counter-Bullying Unit, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, Tel 02920416781

Kidscape, 2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W ODH Tel: 020 7730 3300 Fax: 02077307081
Bullying counsellor available Monday to Friday

Parentline Plus, 520 Highgate Studios, 53-59 Highgate Road, Kentish Town London NW5 1TL Tel: 08088002222.

ChildLine, Telephone number: 080011111. It is a confidential helpline and the phone call is free.

NSPCC Welsh Helpline: 0808 800 50000

This is also a confidential free help line. It operates from 9.00am until 5.00 pm.

APPENDIX 2- RESPECTING OTHERS

Information for Parents

Every school is likely to experience some problem with bullying at some time. Here at Pontllanfraith we have a clear policy for dealing with issues that arise which is used to reduce and prevent bullying.

This leaflet has extracted information from that policy which may be helpful to parents who have suspicions that their children may be involved in bullying behaviour either as perpetrator or victim.

What are the signs that parents should look for?

Your child may

- Be frightened of walking to or from school
- Be unwilling to go to school and make continual excuses to avoid going
- Beg to be driven to school
- Change the route to school every day
- Begin to do badly in school
- Regularly have clothes, books or schoolwork torn or destroyed, or start playing truant
- Come home starving (because dinner money has been taken)
- Become withdrawn
- Start to behave badly and/or start to hit other children
- Stop eating or become obsessively clean (as a reaction to being called “fatty” or “dirty”)
- Develop stomach pains and headaches owing to stress
- Begin bed-wetting or having nightmares
- Ask for money; continually lose pocket money

- Refuse to say what is wrong.

“What can we do?”

As concerned parents:

- Look for the signs mentioned above.
- Always take an active role in your child’s education. Enquire how the day has gone, who have they spent time with, how was the lunch money spent, etc.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. **Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.**
- It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. **It can make matters worse!**
- Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not his/her fault that the bullying is happening.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of the school policy concerning bullying and that they should not be afraid to ask for help.
- Distinguish between an incident of boisterous play which has become a fight and bullying. What can be seen as messing about to one person can be viewed more seriously by another.
- Help your children to recognise when they are being “wound up” by comments made by a third party, which are usually untrue.
- Make sure your child has the social skills to deal with everyday situations. What may be normal play to one child, might be seen as bullying by an over sensitive child.

CAUTION! Please be aware of being manipulated. Bullying can be used as a convenient excuse for other difficulties eg: work problems or truancy. It is also important to note that a child exhibiting the signs mentioned is not necessarily being bullied. There may be another problem.

If your child has been bullied:

- Calmly talk to your child about it.
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened, when it happened and what happened.
- It is very important that accurate records are kept of the incidents of bullying and of the action taken when the bullying was reported.
- Reassure your child that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do.
- Explain that any further incidents should be reported to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child’s class teacher or form tutor.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

Talking to teachers about bullying:

- Try and stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened – give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school – let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If you think your concerns are not being addressed:

- Check the school anti-bullying policy to see if agreed procedures are being followed.
- Discuss your concerns with the parent governor or other parents.
- Make an appointment to meet the Headteacher, keeping a record of the meeting.
- If this does not help, write to the Chair of Governors, explaining your concerns and what you would like to see happen.
- Contact local or national parent support groups for advice.
- Contact the Director of Education for your authority who will be able to ensure that the Governors respond to your concerns.
- Contact the Parentline Plus helpline for support and information at any of these stages.
- In the last resort, write to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

If your child is bullying other children:

- Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware. Children sometime bully others because:
 - They don't know it is wrong.
 - They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family they admire.
 - They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
 - Their friends encourage them to bully.
 - They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To stop your child bullying others:

- Talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how to join in with other children without bullying.

- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher or form tutor, explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing and discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop them bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people.

Useful Contacts

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Incidents of bullying and the action taken must be recorded by the member of staff involved using the appropriate section on the SIMS database.

Possible alternative to the above Disciplinary steps above:

Step 1: The person receiving the complaint will keep a written record of the conversation. The incident will then be referred to the appropriate Head of Year in the first instance. If necessary the victim will be interviewed by the appropriate member of staff. A written record will be kept.

The Head of Year and any staff who subsequently deal with the issue must complete and maintain accurate records. These sheets should be signed and dated.

The alleged bully will be interviewed separately. A written record will be kept. Any witnesses will be interviewed and a written record will be kept. In the event of a complaint being upheld parents of both parties will be informed.

Coping strategies with the victim will be discussed. Reassurance will be offered.

The child demonstrating bullying behaviour will be counselled by staff members, told to stop and given an official warning. The underlying cause of any bullying will be discussed. This will be recorded.

Step 2: If the behaviour is repeated, the pupil's parents will be invited into school to discuss the situation. The pupil will be placed "on report" and sanctions applied which are individual and proportionate. All teachers will be alerted to the problem, where this is appropriate.

Step 3: Any repetition of this behaviour could result in "inclusion" with the pupil working away from the normal timetabled lessons, for a period of time, in line with the individual nature of the issue. The School may access outside agencies along with parents to attempt to correct behaviour. This may include the School Police Liaison Officer. In cases of severe and persistent bullying exclusion from school may follow. Pupils subjected to bullying will need to be reassured that any repercussions will lead to sanctions being applied against the bully.

These procedures do not cut across, compromise or pre-empt the right of the parents or the pupils from making a direct complaint to the Police. In most circumstances, a restorative approach will be applied and mediation between the pupils and a suitably senior member of staff will take place. The aim of which will be to restore relationships and eliminate further unacceptable behavior. Mediation could take place between pupils and the School's Police Liaison Officer. Parents cannot be present during mediation meetings between pupils. Some of the above steps may be bypassed depending on the specific nature of the case.

