Challenging Bullying
Rights, Respect and Equality

Ysgol Gelli Aur/ Golden Grove School

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Introduction

This school believes that bullying behaviour is totally unacceptable and must not be tolerated. All members of the school community share a collective responsibility for tackling bullying should it occur and in working together to promote positive behaviour. The school acknowledges it has a legal duty to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying behaviour.

The Power of Language

In line with Welsh Government guidance series ' *Challenging Bullying – Rights, Respect, Equality'* the school is aware that using terms such as 'bully' and 'victim' entrenches the notion that the powerful have power over the weak and can sometimes encourage pupils to become bullies so as not be perceived as weak. In line with Welsh Government guidance this school will use the terms 'perpetrator' and 'target'

In setting policy objectives for this school, we will take due regard to the Equality Act 2010 general duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this means removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it

Aims of the Policy

This policy is essential to support our whole school ethos which is to ensure that children feel safe, secure confident and happy. It is designed to prevent bullying behaviour wherever possible, to respond consistently in line with agreed procedures should it occur and to provide support to those involved as appropriate. Our children's safety, health and well-being is of paramount importance and everybody's business.

Prevention includes sending out a clear message that negative behaviour is anti-social, unacceptable and will not be tolerated here. This school policy is based on the Welsh Government guidance series ' *Challenging Bullying – Rights, Respect, Equality'* which includes statutory guidance for local authorities and governing bodies, as well as advisory guidance for children and young people, parents and carers.

What is Bullying?

The school uses the definition of bullying, provided by Welsh Government;

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

It also describes a number of distinctive elements associated with bullying. These include but are not limited to:

- **An intention to harm** – bullying is deliberate with the intention to cause harm. Those who perpetrate bullying behaviours are 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 the target.
- **Harmful outcome** – someone or a group is hurt physically or emotionally. They can be isolated, humiliated or made tearful. Their sense of self-worth is reduced.
- **Direct or Indirect Acts** – bullying behaviour 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. An isolated aggressive act, such as a fight, is not usually considered bullying. Yet any incident can be the start of a pattern of bullying behaviour which develops subsequently. That is why incident records are so valuable.
- **Unequal Power** – bullying involves the abuse of power by one person or a group who are (perceived as) more powerful due to their age, physical strength, popularity or psychological resilience

Bullying can take many forms, including:

Physical – kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone, damaging their belongings or gestures of intimidation

Verbal – taunts and name-calling, insults, threats, humiliation or intimidation

Emotional – behaviour intended to isolate, hurt or humiliate someone

Indirect – sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back or rumour-spreading

Online – using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums or apps to perpetrate bullying 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 special educational needs

(SEN) 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 sextortion, so called 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the learner targeted

Prejudice-related – bullying of a learner or a group of learners because of prejudice. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics. (Including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) Prejudice can and does also extend beyond the protected characteristics and can lead to bullying for a variety of other reasons such as social status and background.

What is not Bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered 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 fallouts – a friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour that is enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of one another. Children and young people who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group.

One-off fight – this will be addressed according to the school's behaviour policy unless it is part of a pattern of behaviour that indicates intentional targeting of another individual.

Argument or disagreement – between two children or young people is not generally regarded as bullying. Nevertheless, they may require assistance to learn to respect others' views.

One-off physical assault – this will be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate.

Insults and banter – children and young people will often protest that an incident was a joke or banter. If two friends of equal power are in the habit of bantering with one another it is not deemed to be bullying. If one learner uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is powerless to stop it and made fearful by the act, the border between banter and bullying is likely to be crossed

One-off instance of hate crime – unless this behaviour is repeated it would not usually be regarded as bullying but it would be criminal behaviour, which the school would deal with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and other relevant policies, such as the school's 'Prevent' policy. If considered necessary, the school would also need to involve the police.

Our whole school approach to preventing bullying includes:

- Adopting preventative approaches to bullying.
- Developing a positive ethos which includes knowing bullying is unacceptable.
- Expecting positive behaviour which helps and supports learning and development.
- Promoting co-operation and expecting socially responsible behaviour.
- Encouraging those bystanders who witness bullying to act positively by alerting staff and exerting collective peer pressure to deter perpetrators.
- Valuing and celebrating everyone's differences, skills and talents.
- Supporting the development of emotional literacy, self-esteem and resilience through assemblies, Circle Time, PSE, the Healthy Schools programme, skills development, teaching pupils personal coping strategies, School Council involvement, Buddy schemes and Peer Mentoring.
- Active involvement of our designated Police SCPO in the delivery of the all Wales School Liaison Core Programme.
- Showing respect for others and challenging and educating about inappropriate language that is;
    - racist,
    - homophobic,
    - sexist,
    - religiously biased,
    - disability driven,
    - or would be deemed offensive or derogatory by any protected groups named in the equality act.
- Making the information in this policy available to everyone in our school community.
- Involving all members of the school community in designing /implementing the policy.
- All staff modelling appropriate positive behaviours by example.

Encouraging Reporting of Incidents if Bullying occurs:

Pupils and parents/carers can be assured that their concerns will be responded to with sensitivity.

- All reports will be taken seriously and investigated.
- Confidentiality for anyone who shares information will be respected.
- Opportunities for children to communicate concerns include a problem box access to any member of staff, representation on the School Council and buddies/mentors who will pass on concerns.



If bullying occurs we will implement the following procedures, as appropriate, in line with the Welsh Government guidance series ' *Challenging Bullying – Rights, Respect, Equality'* We will take all incidents seriously and record their occurrence on a Bullying Log.

A designated person will monitor and collate information on victims of bullying and perpetrators, that person will:

- Investigate the incident / establish facts by independently talking to all involved.
- Use appropriate Restorative intervention techniques to manage difficulties between perpetrators & targets; encourage reconciliation where this is possible/ feasible.
- Where bullying behaviour has been established, implement agreed sanctions consistently and fairly as necessary to prevent further incidents.
- Involve parents as early as possible where appropriate.
- Apply guidelines from the all Wales Police "School Beat" partnership working document to determine whether official police involvement is needed; as indicated in these guidelines, deal with incidents internally wherever possible.
- Keep accurate, factual records of all reported incidents and the school's response.
- Always follow-up incidents after they have been dealt with and review outcomes to ensure bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Provide on-going support for those involved where necessary; Welsh Government leaflets are available for children, young people and parents/carers.

The school will always offer a Restorative Approach and look to repair harm. It may also, depending on the type of incident, use sanctions, these may include;

- Withdrawing privileges/free time.
- Preventing access to parts of school.
- Short or long term exclusion, detention or lunchtime exclusion.
- Involving parents when necessary.
- Involving appropriate outside agencies.
- Including details on the perpetrator's school record.

Reviewing the Policy

The final details of this policy have been drawn up in consultation with pupils, parents, staff and members of the school community.

It will be discussed, reviewed and revised annually.

Reference Documents and Useful Links:

- ***Welsh Government guidance, challenging bullying, 'Rights, respect, equality'***
  Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools
  Statutory guidance for local authorities
  Guidance for parents and carers
  A guide for young people
  A guide for children
  https://gov.wales/anti-bullying-guidance

- ***The Equality Act 2010***
  http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2011/1064/contents/made

- ***Action on bullying. A review of the effectiveness of action taken by schools to address bullying on the grounds of pupils' protected characteristics (ESTYN June 2014)***
  https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/action-bullying-june-2014

- ***Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. Act Wales. 2015.***
  http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/3/contents

- ***Wales Safeguarding Procedures***
  http://www.myguideapps.com/projects/wales_safeguarding_procedures/default/

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