

CAERSWS COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is an issue which is high on the agenda for us all. Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our pupils is of paramount importance. It is a requirement for all schools to have a policy which clearly sets out their strategies for preventing and responding to bullying behaviours.

The Vision and Values of the School

Everybody has the right to feel valued and entitled to the respect of others, both within and out of the formal learning environment. We are committed to the principles of inclusion and equality and recognise that these are essential to the promotion of positive behaviour. This is underpinned by a commitment to fostering the wellbeing of all pupils. We have developed a whole school approach to wellbeing and aim to weave this through all school activities.

The creation of a nurturing, healthy and safe environment encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour. In this environment pupils learn to respect and value themselves and other people, and to work independently and in collaboration with others. At Caersws C P School, we want all our children to succeed by achieving to their full potential. Creating an inclusive and engaging environment is crucial in preparing pupils to learn and enabling them to thrive. We also recognise the need to create an ethos that is engaging, empowering and supportive in order for learning and positive behaviour to develop. Our school is a place where children are challenged to go a bit further, to take responsibility, to learn from their mistakes and to foster a love of learning which remains with them into adulthood.

What is Meant by Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or indeed in Great Britain. Therefore, the definition used in this policy builds upon widely used principles established in the UK since 1993. Welsh Government guidance defines bullying as:

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

There are a number of distinctive elements associated with bullying. These include but are not limited to the following.

Intention to harm: bullying is deliberate with the intention to cause harm. Those who bully others are often 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 their target.

Harmful outcome: someone or a group is hurt physically or emotionally. They can be isolated, humiliated or made fearful. Their sense of self-worth is reduced.

Direct or indirect acts: bullying 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 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, often 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 bully 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.

There are specific types of bullying relating to protected characteristics. These can broadly be categorised into the following groups:

- Bullying connected with age
- Bullying involving learners with disabilities, which can include SEN
- Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying
- Bullying connected with race, religion and/or culture
- Sexist and/or sexual bullying

What is Not Bullying?

Some behaviours, though unacceptable are not considered bullying. These instances are 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.

A one-off fight – to 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. An 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.

A one-off physical assault – to 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.

A 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, it would be dealt 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.

Why it is Important to Prevent and Challenge Bullying?

Legislation applying in Wales, the UK and internationally states that all children have the right to a life free from abuse and harm, including bullying. Therefore, all schools should have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying.

We know that bullying can have a detrimental effect on a child's wellbeing and education. Bullying can lead to a child experiencing social, emotional or mental health difficulties and can have a serious impact on a child's attendance at school and their ability to learn. If not dealt with promptly, it could lead to persistent, long-lasting difficulties in a young person's life.

Every child has the right and deserves to feel safe in their school environment.

How Awareness of Bullying will be Raised?

If there is a good level of awareness in the whole school community about unacceptable behaviour it is likely more learners will come forward to report it.

At Caersws C P School, we will:

- Always view and approach bullying as a serious issue that must be tackled promptly.
- Ensure that staff receive regular training on the anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Ensure that, on induction, all new staff are made aware of the policy, the approach taken by the school and how the procedures are administered.
- Ensure that playground, lunch time and school administrator staff are fully aware of the policy and the procedures they should follow.
- Ensure that all our policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as needed.
- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Publish the anti-bullying policy on the school website.
- Publicise details of useful helplines and websites.
- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied.
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the reasons behind their behaviour and actions and any problems they may have.

How will anti-bullying work be embedded in the curriculum rather than as an isolated annual event (such as during anti-bullying week)?

Creating an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour will help create an inclusive and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn.

Successful Futures

Successful Futures identifies 4 purposes for the curriculum. It recommends that the entirety of the school curriculum should be designed to help all children and young people to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world, ready to be citizens of Wales and the world
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience is about the physical, psychological, emotional and social aspects of our lives.

One-off lessons or short 'blitz' type activities are less likely to succeed than work embedded in the curriculum which progressively addresses relationships, positive behaviour and resilience. Work across the curriculum builds a supportive school culture and shared values. It can be instrumental in enabling and empowering learners to acquire and maintain the social skills that will allow them to constructively manage their relationships with others and equip them to respond to bullying in an appropriate and, if necessary, assertive way. This approach to bullying enables the issue to be introduced progressively in an age, gender and culturally appropriate way and not treated as a 'one-off' lesson. It allows learners to make use of preferred and appropriate learning styles and can include the use of literature, audio visual material, drama, music, debates and outside visitors.

Targeted initiatives provide an opportunity to reinforce a positive and inclusive school culture. This can include awareness days, workshops, signposting and drop-in sessions as well as involving the wider neighbourhood and utilising a variety of organisations. However, we should not be restricted to embarking on targeted initiatives only within dates set aside for planned prevention activities. In fact, limiting discussion of equality or discrimination issues solely to preordained calendar dates misses numerous opportunities for 'teachable moments' such as what is topical in the news.

At Caersws C P School, we will:

- Ensure pupils are aware of what bullying is and know which behaviours are unacceptable.
- Ensure that pupils understand that bullies can be any age, sex or race and can come from all sorts of backgrounds.
- Ensure that pupils are aware of some of the reasons behind bullying behaviour, including low self-esteem, attention seeking, copying seen behaviour on screens or in the community or having experienced bullying themselves.
- Create an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and ready to learn.
- Be role models, showing the pupils the importance of respecting themselves, each other, the community and property.
- Ensure that we are available to our pupils and have time to talk and listen with them.
- Ensure topics are chosen to compliment and drive our PSE programme.
- Ensure that our PSE programme has dedicated class time each week and uses a selection of PSE resources including circle time, dina school and the KIVA programme.
- Reinforce positive messages through our collective worship and assemblies, including the importance of 'being kind'.
- Keep the wellbeing of all pupils in mind and encourage them to support and look after one another.
- Encourage a consistent approach to behaviour by discussing and displaying our class promise.
- Encourage good behaviour through praise, stickers, house points, dojos, certificates, prizes and rewards.
- Provide opportunities to develop essential social skills through planned activities, structured play and collaborative tasks.
- Provide opportunities to build resilience and positivity through our growth mindset programme.
- Provide opportunities to develop confidence, relationships and pupil voice through our committees, whole-school buddy system, classroom roles and responsibilities and pupil behaviour committee.
- Welcome visitors e.g. school nurse, police liaison officer and the peaceful school's project team.
- Work with organisations e.g. Autism Wales.
- Participate in awareness weeks and days e.g. Anti-bullying week.

What is the involvement of staff, learners, parents/carers and school governors in the development and implementation of the policy?

Successful implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy to challenge and prevent bullying in schools must involve the whole school community as taking a whole-school approach is more likely to succeed.

At Caersws C P School, we will:

- Engage widely with the school community to ensure that our policies and procedures are relevant and update them accordingly.
- Set clear and realistic objectives about what the strategy aims to achieve (awareness raising activities will be undertaken to promote these objectives among staff and learners).
- Provide training, if needed, on how to implement the objectives of the strategy.
- Consult with all those involved in implementing the strategy as to how well the strategy is working.

Our Governors will:

- Support the headteacher and school in all attempts to eliminate bullying from the school.
- Monitor incidents of bullying that do occur and review the effectiveness of this policy.
- Investigate and report on any parental concerns raised with them.

Our Staff will:

- Use a range of methods to help prevent bullying, ensuring that pupils know what bullying is and why it is unacceptable, and establishing a climate of trust, support and respect.
- Take all forms of bullying seriously.
- Investigate all suspected acts of bullying whilst providing support to all those involved.
- Keep accurate records of all incidents.
- Report to the governors on the effectiveness of our school's anti-bullying strategies.

Our pupils will:

- Be encouraged to share their views about a range of school issues, including bullying. This involvement will increase their sense of belonging and ownership and will allow them to influence decisions on important matters that will affect them.

It is imperative that children and young people are taught, both at home and in school, about building and maintaining respectful relationships. This is the foundation on which positive behaviour is based.

Parents/carers have an important role to play, as part of the school community, in taking responsibility for their child's behaviour inside and outside school. Partnership working between the school and parents/carers to maintain high standards of behaviour and to encourage respect and kindness towards other people is vital.

At Caersws C P School, we will ensure that parents/carers:

- Are aware of the school's anti-bullying strategy.
- Are aware of their responsibility in supporting the school, by actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school, showing friendship and tolerance for others.
- Are aware of the vital importance on all adults to provide a good role model to the pupils in regard to behaviour and language used both on the school site and away from it.
- Are aware that prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable within the school community and any bullying of school staff (including via social media) is not acceptable.
- Know how to report any concerns and how to escalate matters appropriately should they not be satisfied with the outcome of their initial concern.
- Know who to speak to when raising a concern about bullying and what evidence to provide.

What are the signs a child or young person might be experiencing bullying?

Indicators that a child is being bullied could include:

- Reluctance to go to school.
- Appearing frightened during the journey to and from school.
- Changing their usual route.
- Being anxious, moody, withdrawn, quiet.
- Complaining of illnesses such as stomach aches and headaches.
- Bed-wetting in a previously dry child or young person.
- Having nightmares or sleeping difficulties.
- Coming home regularly with missing or damaged possessions.
- Arriving home hungry.
- Asking for extra money or stealing money.
- Truanting.
- Deterioration in their work / handwriting.

- Not eating.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Being aggressive and bullying others.
- Giving improbable excuses for any of the above.

How will bullying be prevented, including on journeys to and from school?

Creating a whole-school ethos

Effective schools take a proactive approach to preventing all bullying and to mitigate its effects when it occurs.

At Caersws C P School we will:

- Adopt a whole-school approach for promoting positive, respectful behaviour between staff and learners as part of our whole school approach to well-being - this approach will be woven through all school activity.
- Create an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour – this will help create an inclusive and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn.
- Teach children and train staff about respect, positive behaviour, stereotypes and addressing prejudice.
- Build confidence to enable unacceptable language to be challenged and addressed.
- Ensure effective supervision between lessons with safe places provided for vulnerable learners during these times, if needed.
- Communicate a clear message of positive behaviour, kindness, loyalty and team spirit.

Tailoring intervention

Young children who bully others using insults may not always understand the hurt they have caused and may be repeating what they have heard at home or in the community.

We will address this through:

- Sensitive restorative work.
- Group activities exploring why some words are unacceptable.
- Meetings with parents/carers to remind them about the values of the school.

When young people become adolescents, they are more likely to be influenced by their peers and therefore interventions should address the whole group or class so that the majority opinion can be heard.

When will the school take action in relation to bullying outside the school?

Online bullying

Bullying outside school can include online bullying and whilst technology facilitates traditional bullying behaviours such as insults or rumour-spreading it also provides additional ways to bully and humiliate others such as through the misuse of images or videos, live-streaming, using anonymous messaging apps or harassing someone online. Online bullying often occurs at the same time or follows on from traditional bullying but can occur in isolation. The perception of being able to act anonymously online often leads to disinhibited and cruel behaviour that would be less likely face-to-face.

Although offline bullying remains more common than online bullying, learners report that the features of online bullying, stated below, make the experience uniquely distressing.

- The audience can be unlimited.
- It can occur anywhere and at any time, there is no respite from it.
- It can involve unknown people, although most cases involve known peers.
- Technology facilitates the storage of images and messages for repeat viewing.

Digital competence will be a cross-curricular responsibility within the new Curriculum for Wales 2022, with a focus on the 'Citizenship' strand helping pupils develop the skills and behaviours to contribute positively to the digital world around them, which includes protecting themselves online.

As a school it is expected that we discipline learners for any incidents of online bullying where it has an impact on the well-being of learners at the school and where necessary, we would refer a case to the appropriate agency or service.

Offline bullying

Welsh Government guidance states that while schools are able to regulate certain conduct off school premises, such as bullying behaviour, they can only impose sanctions when the learner is on the school site or under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff. A member of staff could indicate to the learner that they have seen misbehaving and/or engaging in bullying

behaviour and will receive a sanction; however, the member of staff must wait until the learner is next in school to apply the sanction.

How will the school respond to incidents?

All school staff, are aware of the procedures to follow if a learner reports being bullied. Staff should always be mindful that a learner may approach any member of staff they trust. Training and regular updates will increase staff readiness and confidence to notice and respond when issues of bullying present.

The most effective interventions are sustained over the long-term, developed with staff, learners, parents and partners in the community. These are monitored, evaluated and revised to reflect changes in circumstances or context. Interventions are supported by a school ethos which inhibits bullying and promotes empathy and respect for diversity. A single strategy or initiative is unlikely to provide a solution to bullying and the most effective anti-bullying strategy will usually include a range of tools which can be adapted to suit particular incidents and form part of the school's wider whole school approach to well-being.

Interventions may be at class level, year group level or only with the pupils directly involved.

Whole-school Response

There are frequent learning opportunities for the whole class, year group or school which can be implemented without mentioning the name of the person who reported it. This protects against retaliation.

Responding to Pupils Directly Involved

At Caersws C P School we will:

- Move to quickly calm the situation by separating the pupils involved in the incident.
- Offer support as needed.
- Give all pupils involved the opportunity to talk and present their side of the story.
- Aid pupils in identifying strategies to avoid situations being repeated.
- Allow pupils involved the opportunity to meet and discuss the incident, with the aim of conflict resolution and apologies being made. This option may not always be suitable.
- Determine the most appropriate sanction in line with the behaviour policy. This could be loss of privileges, contact with parents/carers, internal exclusions or formal exclusion.
- Complete a record log of the incident.

- Inform or refer to the headteacher as is necessary.
- Inform parents of incident and actions taken as necessary and work in tandem if appropriate.
- Alert staff to the incident so that they can be observant of repeat incidents.
- Aim to address the root causes for the bullying happening in the first instance - this is likely to have the greatest impact in preventing the issue from continuing.
- Implement class based strategies and activities to address the inappropriate behaviour in a structured way.
- Provide the clear message that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Involve chair of governors if the incident is repeated or escalates.

How to Report Bullying

At Caersws C P School, there are several ways in which pupils can report bullying. These include:

- Through friendships, playground buddies or whole school buddies.
- Through staff being available for quiet discussions and talk.
- Through opportunities to write and communicate their worries.
- Through parents/carers.

Supporting the pupil who has reported that they have been bullied

Effective listening

Those who are targets of bullying tend to feel powerless. One of the first steps when responding to incidents is to work to restore their capacity to make choices for themselves. Using effective listening techniques staff can help the targeted learner to feel they are doing something about the problem.

We will:

- Acknowledge calmly the anger or distress of the targeted child or young person speaking.
- Try not to rush them if they need time to process their thoughts.
- Be mindful that it may have required considerable courage to come and report what is happening.
- Thank the learner for reporting the problem.
- Explain to them the next steps of how their concerns will be taken forward.

Consider the Setting

We will:

- Sit at the same level as the learner reporting their experience of bullying.
- Place chairs at a slight angle rather than directly opposite each other to help reduce any conscious or unconscious sense of confrontation or opposition.
- Ensure privacy to avoid learners overhearing what is said or seeing a meeting taking place.

Saving evidence

Learners who are bullied should be encouraged, where possible, to keep evidence of the activity. Evidence may include:

- Threats or images sent on or offline by messaging, conversations, notes or images, damaged clothing or other belongings, online conversations or notes.
- Witness statements or additional evidence from bystanders.
- Dates and times when things happened.
- Screenshots (if appropriate)

Bullying ruptures healthy self-esteem, replacing positive beliefs about oneself with beliefs linked to shame, disgust, criticism, incapacity, powerlessness and helplessness. When deciding on next steps to increase the self-efficacy of the learner who reports being bullied, staff should where possible give pupils an element of choice. Choices offered to the targeted learner may include:

- How the incident will be handled.
- Whether any changes need to be considered.
- Whether the learner would like additional support or help.

What Learners Can Expect

At Caersws C P School we will:

- Regularly canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that pupils know how to express, and report worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools.
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites.

- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied.
- Work with pupils who have been bullying in order to address the problems they have.
- Encourage pupils to discuss anti-bullying.
- Appoint an anti-bullying champion.

What Parents/Carers Can Expect

At Caersws C.P School we will:

- Ensure that parents / carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Ensure that parents / carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively.
- Ensure that parents / carers know where to access independent advice about bullying.
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.

Having reported an issue regarding bullying to the school, if a learner or their parent/carer does not feel that the school has taken it seriously or has not addressed their concern to a satisfactory standard, they can make a formal complaint. The school complaints policy is available on the school website and made available on request from the school or school governing body.

How will Incidents be Recorded and Monitored?

The school has mechanisms in place for reporting and recording bullying incidents. We monitor these processes regularly, enabling us to modify our anti-bullying policy to respond to specific trends and emerging issues in a swift and effective manner.

At Caersws C P School we will:

- Implement an ongoing cycle of school-level data recording, monitoring and analysis of anti-bullying information.
- Use school level anti-bullying data to identify priority areas for implementing whole school improvement and take action to make those improvements.

How can learners and/or parents/carers appropriately escalate the matter if they do not feel that their concerns are being taken seriously?

Having reported an issue regarding bullying to the school, if a learner or their parent/carer does not feel that the school has taken it seriously or has not addressed their concern to a satisfactory standard, they can make a formal complaint. The school governors have a complaints procedure ensuring anyone with an interest in the school can raise a complaint, confident it will be considered properly and without delay.

How will the school evaluate and review its policy and strategy?

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where required. In reviewing the policy, all members of the school community, including members of the governing body will be consulted.

We will use surveys of learners' experiences asking whether or not a learner, if bullied, reported it and the subsequent outcome. This gathering of this feedback enables us to learn lessons and continuously improve, and most importantly establish trust among learners. Learners need to believe it is worthwhile to report being bullied and trust action will be taken on an individual and whole school level.

At Caersws C.P School we will:

- Use surveys and group discussions to identify which aspects of the school's current policy and strategy work well and any areas for improvement.
- Regularly seek the views of learners, parents/carers and staff, through surveys and discussions, to measure the extent of bullying behaviour present.
- Monitor incidents of bullying and identify patterns of behaviour and the extent of bullying. This will enable us to modify our anti-bullying policy if required to respond to specific trends and issues.

Please remember that the vast majority of our pupils are well behaved and we are proud of the high level of parental support we have. Where pupils' behaviour falls short of our expectations, parental involvement and support are of crucial importance, in realising positive and sustained change. The basic requirement is that pupils should be polite and thoughtful towards others. Our staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour; good behaviour is expected, praised and rewarded. There is no place for violence, bullying, harassment, rudeness or bad language in our school.