Ysgol Aberconwy

Anti-Bullying

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THIS POLICY HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Signed:

Date : 25/11/25

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YSGOL ABERCONWY ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Everyone at Ysgol Aberconwy has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists the targets must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and bullies, and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

This document outlines how we make this possible at Ysgol Aberconwy

Principles

All pupils have an absolute right to be educated in a safe and secure environment and to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them.

There is **no justification whatsoever** for bullying behaviour and it should not be tolerated in any form. Respect for diversity regarding: race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, marital status and disability is fostered in our school and difference is never a valid reason for bullying.

Bullying behaviour is a problem for both the bully and the targeted individual and should be addressed in positive and constructive ways, which provide opportunities for growth and development for the bully and targeted individual alike.

Effective management of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve; school staff, pupils, parents/carers and other professionals involved with pupils who are the targeted individuals or perpetrators of bullying behaviour.

Information about the school's policy and procedures should be readily available in 'user-friendly' form to pupils and their parents, e.g. via Year Base, the school website, through form teachers.

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. The school is not legally responsible for bullying which takes place elsewhere.

However, as a school we have an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of our pupils and will take into account any information we receive about bullying outside school and to comply with our duty to provide continuing care thus:

- if it emerges that a pupil is responsible for bullying others outside school then the bully's parents/carers will be informed.
- if a pupil is found to be the targeted individual of bullying outside school (through direct or electronic means) then help and support will be offered and advice given on how to avoid further incidents in future. The targeted individual's parents/carers will be informed.
- if there are concerns about bullying issues outside school then the school would advise parents/carers to contact the local police and seek their help and advice in dealing with the situation.
- if concerns arise in relation to school transport then the issue will be raised with the transport companies and their help sought in dealing with the problem.
- if information is received that a pupil is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents/carers. If concerns persist then the matter may be referred under the Conwy Child Protection Protocol in line with current All Wales Child Protection Procedures.
- if pupils are being bullied by others from another school the Head of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

Definition of Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying but we consider it to be deliberately hurtful behaviour, targeting an individual or group that is often repeated over a period of time leaving the victim feeling insecure or threatened (although we recognise that a one off incident which leaves a victim traumatised could be categorised as bullying) Bullying can take many forms but we recognise 4 main types:

- Physical – including: physical assault, taking or damaging belongings, sexual harassment and aggression
- Verbal – including: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks and threatening
- Indirect – including: spreading nasty rumours or stories about someone and exclusion from social groups
- Cyber bullying – including: using mobile phones and the internet (including social networking sites, e mail, video and instant messaging) to deliberately upset or threaten someone

We also recognise that a bully may fall short of direct and targeted participation, but may be complicit in manipulating a third party into bullying behavior.

Bullying and Equalities

Ysgol Aberconwy takes all forms of bullying seriously and regards physical, verbal, indirect and cyber bullying equally seriously. We acknowledge that certain groups of pupils are at a higher-than-average risk of being bullied, including:

- pupils with special needs or a disability;
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils; and
- pupils from a minority ethnic or religious background.

The Equalities Act 2010 identified 9 protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

Under this Act we have a duty to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We are particularly concerned to monitor incidents which relate to any of the protected characteristics. In such cases these issues will be specifically addressed with the bully (and parents/carers where appropriate) in the course of post incident management. If trends are identified which suggest causes for concern, we will
take a more proactive approach to promoting respect for diversity and preventing and mitigating the effects of prejudice and discrimination.

Incidents of bullying which amount to sexual harassment and aggression will where necessary be recorded in line with and invoke the Child Protection Protocol and Procedures.
Incidents of bullying with racist content or motivation will be recorded in line with the school's Race Relations Policy.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- To fulfil the school's statutory responsibility to respect the rights of pupils and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

- To clarify our approach regarding responding to reports of bullying incidents with due regard for our legal obligations, and to demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that every reported incident is investigated and dealt with consistently

- To promote a school ethos in which each pupil is safe and able to realise their full potential.

- To promote a common understanding of what bullying is

- To outline the strategies we will use to promote an anti-bullying ethos and respect for diversity

- To protect the well-being of the whole school community and give appropriate messages to staff, pupils and parents/carers

- To affirm our commitment to addressing the problem of bullying and to bringing it under control through the implementation of whole-school policy and procedures.

- To reassure parents/carers and pupils that school takes its pupils' welfare seriously.

Ysgol Aberconwy will attempt to meet the aims of this policy through the following objectives:

- We will ensure that parents, staff and pupils know about our policy and understand the nature of bullying and its effects on individuals and communities

- We will raise awareness amongst staff; parents/carers and pupils about the issue of bullying and the school's attitude towards it and to create an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable.

- We will promote a culture of respecting ourselves and others through whole school programmes such as: Anti-Bullying Week campaigns and through pastoral and PSHE programmes.

- We will maintain the focus on respecting ourselves and others through: assemblies, encouraging the school council to be proactive and anti-bullying campaigns

- We will demonstrate that bullying behaviour is unacceptable through imposing sanctions and we will take action action to safeguard targeted individuals and groups

- We will record all incidents of bullying and monitor for re-occurring themes and the effectiveness of strategies for preventing bullying

- We will challenge pupils who exhibit bullying behaviour in a firm and non- aggressive way and provide them with support to change their problematic behaviour

- We will make pupils, parents/carers and staff aware of what steps to take when an incident of bullying has occurred.

- We will consider the linguistic requirements of pupils and parents/carers where Welsh/English is not their first language.

Responsibilities

Governing Body

The ‘nominated governor’ will liaise with the Chair, the Head and ‘designated teacher’ over all anti-bullying strategies, and individual cases where appropriate.

The governing body will discuss, review and endorse agreed strategies on the initiative of the ‘nominated governor’, and in any case will discuss the Head’s annual report on the working of this policy.

The Head will:

- ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them;
- determine the strategies and procedures;
- discuss development of the strategies with the Leadership Team

- ensure appropriate training is available;
- ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils; and
- report annually to the governing body.

The Assistant Headteacher will:

- be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems;
- ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both the bullied and bullies;
- keep the Head informed of incidents
- arrange any relevant staff training;
- determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems; and
- make an annual report to the Head and Governing body .

Year Mentors will:

- be responsible for ensuring that the school's positive strategies are put into practice; and
- know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported.
- investigate incidents and pass information to the relevant Deputy or Assistant Headteacher.
- record incidents according to the school's procedures / systems and provide data for reporting purposes.

Form Tutors will:

- be responsible for liaising with Year Mentors over all incidents involving pupils in their form;
- be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution; and

All Staff will:

- know the policy and procedures;
- be observant and to ask pupils what is happening to them;
- deal with incidents according to the policy;
- never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity; and
- take part in the anti-bullying programme in the PSHE.

Whole School Preventative Measures

All staff involved in the education and supervision of pupils will be made aware of the issue of bullying and the need to apply the school's policy consistently when episodes of bullying are witnessed or reported. Staff will constantly reinforce the message to pupils that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it.

In addition the issue of bullying will be raised with pupils at a number of levels including:

At whole school level – school handbook, home school planners and through assemblies when children will be informed of the school's anti-bullying policy. The school has also adopted the KIVA Programme starting in KS3 but processing through the whole school by 2024.

At classroom level – during form periods, tutorial groups, cross-curricular activities, and pastoral lessons.

At individual level – children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance. Pupils who have bullied others will be given advice and support and taught strategies to enable them to modify their unacceptable behaviour and to prevent further incidents.

Ysgol Aberconwy recognises that there are particular times when pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day. Arrangements are in place to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents.

It is recognised that there are locations about the school where incidents or bullying are more likely to occur. Arrangements have been made to ensure that these are supervised or pupils will be forbidden access to these areas. For example, the remodeling of the KS4 toilet area was undertaken to minimise the likelihood of bullying (and other incidents of poor behaviour)

We recognise our duty to deal with incidents of cyberbullying, which are often likely to take place out of school but which can impact very strongly on the school life of those learners involved. (The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines some legal powers which relate quite directly to cyberbullying. Headteachers have the power 'to such extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of learners when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff.)

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware. In these circumstances staff will respond positively, take the expression of concern seriously and ensure that the matter is fully investigated.

Parents/carers who believe their children are the targeted individuals of bullying should share their concerns with school at the earliest opportunity and be prepared to work with school to keep their children safe in future. All expressions of concern will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Similarly if parents/carers believe their child is bullying others, this information should be shared with school so that the problem can be addressed and a plan agreed to prevent further incidents and the bullying pupil helped to modify their behaviour.

All of these preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help pupils learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff

at all times will treat each other parents/carers and pupils, with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

Parental Involvement

Ysgol Aberconwy is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

As a school we recognise the important influence that parents/carers have on their children and would wish, using the home/school agreement, to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as targeted individual, an accessory to cyberbullying (eg passing on messages and/or images, although not initiating them) or a perpetrator.

If a pupil is involved in a single serious incident of bullying or there is evidence that the same pupil is involved repeatedly in less serious incidents (either as a targeted individual, an accessory or a perpetrator) school will inform parents/carers and invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents. Isolated and less serious incidents will be managed by school staff and parents/carers informed.

In the event where parents/carers are unhappy with the way the school has investigated an alleged incident of bullying, then they have the right to complain to the Headteacher in the first instance. If parents/carers still consider the issue to be unresolved then they have the right to inform the Governing Body through the Chair of Governors, who will decide whether to launch an investigation. A report will be made directly to the parents/carers concerned.

Procedures to Follow

Implementation

Ysgol Aberconwy is committed to creating a bully-free environment and will ensure that this policy is applied rigorously. All staff involved in the teaching and supervision of pupil will take responsibility for addressing incidents which fall with the school's definition of bullying and ensure that the targeted individual receives what support is required; a referral will be made immediately to the relevant Year Mentor, Head of Year or Assistant Head depending upon the seriousness of the incident. If CP issues may be involved the CP Mentor or Assistant Head (CP) should be the immediate point of contact. The bully will be informed of the unacceptability of his/her behaviour and a record made of the incident.
All pupils need to be aware that staff want to be informed of any incidents or concerns and that action will be taken when bullying is reported.

Incident management

Actions taken will include:

- Speaking to the individual pupils involved in any reported incident of bullying
- Speaking to the parents/carers of both the alleged bully(ies) and target(s)
- Referring more serious incidents to the Head of Year and the most serious to the relevant Assistant Headteacher

- Inviting the parents/carers of the pupils involved into school to discuss the incident
- Notifying the Head promptly
- Implementing appropriate action swiftly
- Taking action to limit the damage caused by incidents of cyber bullying (e.g removing offensive material)

Support for the Targeted Individual

When information is received, either directly or indirectly, that a pupil may have been the target of a bullying incident, this report will be taken seriously and investigated.

The school will offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response to pupils who are the targeted individuals of bullying. The exact nature of the response will be determined by the particular pupil's individual needs and may include:

- immediate action to stop the incident and secure the pupil's safety
- Removal of offensive material from school website, supporting pupil to report incidents of cyber bullying to appropriate outside agencies and /or reporting incidents of cyber bullying directly to the internet service provider or mobile phone companies.
- positive reinforcement that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do
- reassurance that the targeted individual is not responsible for the behaviour of the bully
- strategies to prevent further incidents
- sympathy and empathy
- counselling
- befriending
- assertiveness training/raising self esteem
- extra supervision/monitoring
- creation of a support group
- peer mentoring
- informing/involving parents/carers
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the targeted individual (provided this does not increase the targeted individual's vulnerability)
- arrangements to review progress

Support for the Bully and/or Accessories to Cyber Bullying

Ysgol Aberconwy takes bullying behaviour very seriously and will adopt a supportive, pragmatic, problem-solving approach to enable bullies to modify their behaviour. As a School we believe the positive use of sanctions can be useful in demonstrating to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable and in promoting change.

Ysgol Aberconwy will respond to incidents of bullying behaviour in a proportionate way – the more serious the cause for concern the more serious the response. When sanctions are felt to be necessary they will be applied consistently and fairly. The following options will be considered:

- immediate action to stop an incident of bullying in progress

- engagement with the bully to reinforce the message that their behaviour is a breach of the school discipline policy and behaviour management plan and is unacceptable
- loss of lunch/break time privileges
- detention
- Behaviour report card
- removal from class/group
- withholding participation in sports or out of school activity (if not essential part of curriculum)
- parents/carers informed
- counselling/instruction in alternative ways of behaving
- adult mediation between the perpetrator and the targeted individual (if agreeable)
- fixed periods of exclusion
- permanent exclusion (in extreme cases which may involve violence)
- rewards/positive reinforcement for pupils in order to promote change and bring unacceptable behaviour under control
- involvement of appropriate outside agencies e.g. police in instances where the law has been broken

Monitoring and Evaluation

Each incident of bullying falling within the school definition will be recorded. Any incidents linked to prejudice or intolerance based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, culture/language or race will be identified and addressed in line with the procedures detailed in the section *Definition of Bullying*

An Assistant Headteacher has been assigned the specific role as the co-ordinator of the Anti-Bullying policy and will be responsible for the monitoring, review, evaluation and reporting processes inherent within this policy.

An annual report will be made to the Governing Body which will highlight the extent of the incidents occurring and detail any trends which may have emerged.

Senior staff and Governors will evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and agree adjustments that may be necessary to address any ongoing concerns. These will be shared with staff, parents/guardians and pupils.

Monitoring and Evaluation of School Policy

It is recommended that the following are consulted when reviewing the policy:

- Pupils
- Parents/carers
- Staff
- Governors
- Outside agencies e.g. Police School Liaison Officer, Young People's Health Adviser, Viva and ChildLine

It is also recommended that the policy is reviewed at least every three years.

Conclusion

An anti-bullying policy alone will not stop bullying. Bullying is an aspect of life that we strongly believe can only be reduced through an understanding of why it happens. Our policy is directed at improving this understanding, thereby reducing the need for a bully to bully and as such is an integral part of the school's ethos and philosophy.