

St Athan Primary School Anti-bullying Policy

Our vision and values at St Athan Primary School

At St Athan Primary School we adopt a whole-school approach for promoting positive, respectful behaviour between staff and learners as part of their whole school approach to well-being. This approach permeates through all school activities and procedures.

Through our school values and the importance, we place on the wellbeing of our entire school community we aim to create an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the cause of unacceptable behaviour. We encourage inclusivity through the development of an inviting and engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn and respect the needs and rights of others in a diverse society.

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 guidance 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 (see appendix 2 for more information on online bullying)
- **Relational aggression** – bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away,

exploiting a person's additional learning needs (ALN) 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 ALN
- **Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic** bullying
- Bullying connected with **race, religion and/or culture**
- **Sexist and/or sexual** bullying

What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying and should be dealt with through the school's behaviour policy to prevent an incident potentially escalating to become bullying. One-off incidents are recorded by the school and this data is regularly reviewed alongside data on bullying to inform future practice. Some cases might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. A young person may be in need of multi-agency support or therapeutic intervention.

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** – Welsh Government expects it 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** – Welsh Government expects it to be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate.
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- **Prejudice-related incidents** – A prejudice-related incident can be defined as

“Any incident which is perceived to be prejudice or discriminatory by the victim or any other person hearing or witnessing the incident”.

At St Athan Primary Schools we act on and record such incidents to ensure that they are clearly seen as unacceptable within the school community. Whilst not meeting the definition of bullying because they may not be repeated over time, they are no less hurtful to the child or young person subject to this. These incidents could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity.

Why it is important to prevent and challenge bullying

At St Athan Primary we pledge to do everything in our power to prevent and challenge bullying. The school promotes values education including tolerance, responsibility and respect, celebrating each child's uniqueness and promoting their safety and wellbeing at the centre of our curriculum.

Everyone involved in the life of the school is expected to take responsibility for promoting a common anti-bullying approach by being supportive of each other, providing positive role models and conveying a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour. All members of the school community are expected to report incidents of bullying.

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 St Athan Primary we will:

- 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 transport supervisors and school administrators are fully aware of the policy and the procedures they should follow
- Regularly seek out learner/parent/staff views on bullying within our school.
- Ensure that pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying and engage in the support groups offered by school e.g. Time to talk, Elsa, Nurture
- 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 details of useful helplines and websites in school newsletters and around the school

- Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and work closely with families.
- Educate pupils who have been involved in bullying others.

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

We aim to incorporate our positive behaviour approach through all aspects of school life and within all policies and procedures.

Our new curriculum is focused on the development of the 4 purposes enabling our learners to work towards becoming;

- 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.

Through our school approach to Health and Well-being we address wellbeing in all areas of learning - the physical, psychological, emotional and social aspects of our lives.

One-off lessons, presentations or visits will be part of this approach including work done on Anti Bullying Week however the main education in this area will be embedded within our curriculum long term planning and year group topics as well as addressing real life authentic experiences and world events.

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. 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.

At St Athan Primary we will:

- Create a culture and ethos which actively promotes positive relationships, respecting differences and valuing good behaviour.
- Actively engage day by day, with all aspects of Curriculum for Wales 2022 which promotes an anti-bullying agenda.
- Utilise reputable outside agencies which support our Anti-bullying message such as Bullies Out, Spectrum and Show Racism the Red Card. Use every opportunity to reinforce these messages throughout the school year.
- Create positive relationships in the school yard by establishing a 'Playground Buddy System.
- Staff pledge to have a close knowledge of the children in their care and build up relationships which involve mutual support, trust and respect.

Involvement of staff, learners, parents/carers and school governors in development and implementation of the policy

At St Athan Primary School we aim to successfully implement an effective anti-bullying strategy which challenges and prevents bullying in our school and involves the whole school community.

Without the wholehearted involvement of the school population anti-bullying strategies are not likely to succeed as they are unlikely to be successfully implemented. Our school encourages learner voice as an essential stage of our whole school anti-bullying development giving ownership to pupils and input in decision making.

Successful anti-bullying work respects every member of the school community and demonstrates this respect rather than imposing a set of rules onto learners without any reference to how well this is working.

At St Athan Primary 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

It is imperative that children and young people are taught, both at home and in school, about building and maintaining respectful relationships. We reinforce our positive relationships policy through our RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) and RVE (Religion, Values and Ethics) approach and our online Jigsaw sessions with the children as well as throughout our school policies and procedures.

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 our school and parents/carers help us to maintain high standards of behaviour and to encourage respect and kindness towards others.

At St Athan Primary we will ensure that parents/carers:

- are aware of the strategy
- know how the school would like them 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
- have been engaged to support their children and support the vision and values of the school
- are aware that prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable within the school community
- are aware of the school's complaints procedure, in case they are not satisfied with the way the school has dealt with a case of bullying they reported
- are aware that one-off incidents and bullying relating to school staff via social media is not acceptable.

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 of / 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
- Truancy
- 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 bullying will 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 St Athan Primary 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 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
- 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 can be used
- meetings with parents/carers to remind them about the values of the school.

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

Bullying outside school can include online bullying. Information on this can be found in appendix 2.

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 sanction could be imposed while a learner is on a school trip, but not while the learner is on their journey home from school for instance. In such circumstances, the member of staff could indicate to the learner that they have been 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.

At St Athan Primary School we will:

- Discuss any reports of misbehaviour / bullying on the journey to and from school with our Travel companies to ascertain the nature of the incident and take appropriate action.
- School will contact the parents of the children concerned and the school behaviour/ anti-bullying policy will be applied as necessary.

How the school will respond to incidents

At St Athan Primary Mrs Haynes (Headteacher), in her absence Mrs Davies (Deputy Headteacher) will ensure that all school staff, are aware of the procedures to follow if a learner reports being bullied or a prejudice-related incident.

All staff are mindful that a learner may approach any member of staff they trust. Staff training and regular updates will increase their readiness and confidence in respond to incidents.

Interventions may be at class level, year group level or only with the pupil.

Whole-school response

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

Responding to the perpetrator

At St Athan Primary we will:

- address the learner according to the procedures and agreed sanctions in the school if they are found to have acted inappropriately
- give them the opportunity to put their side of the story before any decisions on penalties are made
- determine the most appropriate sanction in line with behaviour policy
- 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.

Where isolation is used to tackle bullying, this will be fully supervised, used only short-term and as part of a longer-term plan for addressing the root cause of the bullying.

Staff will explain to pupils the reason why they have been isolated and outline that the strategy is a short term intervention as part of a longer term plan to address the issue.

How to report bullying

At St Athan Primary there are several ways in which pupils can report bullying. These include:

- a quiet and private space to talk
- Ask to speak directly to the Mrs Haynes(with or without parents)
- supportive key staff available at all times
- Request to speak individually with a trusted staff member
- feedback /worry boxes
- Time to talk sessions.

Supporting the pupil who has reported that they have been bullied

Effective listening

Using effective listening techniques staff (or a peer supporter where these are used) can help the targeted learner to feel they are doing something about the problem. Aim to empower the learner in sharing their feelings and ensure they feel supported.

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 (note that for safeguarding best practice, it should be possible for other staff to observe the meeting)

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

When deciding on next steps to increase the self-confidence of the learner who reports being bullied, staff should where possible give pupils an element of choice. Choices offered to the learner may include:

- how the incident will be handled
- whether changes to the learner's current journey to or from school should be considered in more detail
- whether the learner would like help from a specific staff member

What learners can expect

Welsh Government has produced helpful guidance for children and young people:

- Challenging bullying: rights, respect, equality. A guide for children

- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-guide-for-children.pdf>
- Challenging bullying: rights, respect, equality. A guide for young people
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-guide-for-young-people.pdf>

Schools should ensure that this information is readily available to all pupils.

At St Athan Primary we will:

- Regularly ask children and young people's views on the extent and nature of one-off incidents and bullying
- Ensure that pupils know how to express and report worries and anxieties about one-off incidents and bullying
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in one-off incidents and 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, for example through the school council
- Appoint a Wellbeing Warrior

What parents/carers can expect

Welsh Government has produced helpful guidance for parents and carers:

- Challenging bullying. Rights, respect, equality: guidance for parents and carers

- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-11/rights-respect-equality-guidance-for-parents-and-carers.pdf>

At St Athan Primary we will:

- Ensure that parents / carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying.
- Ensure that parents 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 bullying and one off prejudice-related incidents will be recorded and monitored

At St Athan Primary we record all incidents on My Concern, an online tool supported by the local authority. Records are also sent to the local authority identifying cases and the details linked to them.

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. A high number of incidents alone is not therefore an indicator that the school is ineffective. It could be the result of recent awareness raising work or anti-bullying activities.

Schools reporting zero cases of bullying may be challenged through the inspection process to clarify what mechanisms the school employs to ensure learner well-being and inclusivity.

Where schools have recorded incidents of bullying, they should demonstrate that they are taking action to challenge bullying, address unacceptable behaviour and improve learner well-being.

At St Athan Primary no discriminatory or prejudicial actions or comments against pupils with protected characteristics will be tolerated and these will also be recorded monitored to ensure that all pupils are treated with respect.

In some cases, bullying may be so severe as to become a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. A young person may be in need of multi-agency support or therapeutic intervention. If this is the case, this will be reported to the DSP (Designated Safeguarding Person) Mrs Haynes or the DDSP (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person) Mrs Davies who will contact the local authority safeguarding officer.

At St Athan Primary we will:

- implement an ongoing cycle of school-level data recording, monitoring and analysis of anti-bullying and one off incident information
- use school level anti-bullying and one off incident data to identify priority areas for implementing whole school improvement
- take action to make those improvements
- share all data with the local authority

How learners and/or parents/carers can 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.

Under section 29 of the Education Act 2002, school governors are required to have and publicise 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 the school will 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.

St Athan Primary Schools will seek out the views of all stakeholders during the reviewing of this policy.

At St Athan Primary 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 and one off incidents (perceived and actual), behaviour present
- monitor incidents of bullying and one off incidents (perceived and actual) 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.

Updated June 22 – Mrs L Haynes

Ratified at Governing Body Meeting – July 22

Reviewed July 23 – Mrs L Haynes

Reviewed at Governing Body Meeting – Due Oct 23