



OLCHFA

Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by: GB

Date: November 2023

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by: November 2024

The Olchfa Anti-Bullying policy aims to support the [Olchfa Equal Opportunities Statement of Commitment](#) and is supported by the [Promoting Core Values and Positive Behaviour Policy](#).

The policy has been produced in line with the Welsh Government publication [Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools](#).

For further advice and support, parents and carers may also refer to the Welsh Government publication [Rights, respect, equality: Guidance for parents and carers](#).

Rationale

We strive to create a culture based on Olchfa's core values of Ready, Respectful and Safe. Pupils must feel safe and respected if they are to learn effectively. Since we are a school, which sets high standards for our pupils, it is important that we create an atmosphere in which bullying cannot thrive and in which no pupil has to suffer from harassment of any kind. Because bullying happens in all societies, at all levels, it is important that we make all members of the school community knowledgeable about bullying and teach them strategies that enable them to stand up for themselves without resorting to retaliation in any form.

A definition of bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying, however our school definition of bullying, in line with the Welsh Government definition is: Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.

The distinctive elements of bullying behaviour

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

- **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 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, often due to their age, physical strength, popularity or psychological resilience.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or on social media) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, physical characteristics or family

background. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- **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.

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. In such cases, we will support pupils and deal with the behaviour in line with our [Core Values and Positive Behaviour policy](#).

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 betrayed.
- **A one-off fight** – the 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** – the Welsh Government expects it 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, which the Welsh Government would expect to 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.

Building an atmosphere of trust

If those who feel they are being bullied are to tell us about bullying we must work together to create an atmosphere of trust. Those who are classed as targets must know that their concerns will be taken seriously and recognise that investigations take time.

Investigations may result in a number of different outcomes depending on the findings and victims will have an input into how we approach a resolution. Wherever possible, providing both parties agree, we will look to implement restorative practices to resolve issues.

If this is to happen, then everyone on the site has a responsibility to ensure that we live by our Core Values and that we all set a good atmosphere around the school. We want to make it clear that this responsibility includes:

- Promoting an open and honest ethos that ensures that all members of the school community know and agree with our stance on bullying.
- Ensuring that all members of the school community exhibit positive behaviours, demonstrating our Core Values of Ready, Respectful and Safe.
- Treating other people with respect at all times.
- Doing nothing that could be construed as bullying.
- Doing nothing that could be construed as supporting bullying. This includes relaying distressing messages, relaying threats, laughing at bullying, watching a fight.
- Reporting to the proper person any bullying we witness or any behaviour, which we feel, could escalate into bullying.
- Engaging with all members of the school community when reviewing and developing our anti-bullying practices.

How to report bullying

Tell someone. This could be parents/family members or someone in school who will initiate action to sort out the problem. This could be a member of CHAT, form tutor, PGW or Learning Leader or other appropriate person.

Sometimes it might be difficult to speak to someone in person. Concerns can be reported to studentsupport@olchfa.org.uk. The PGW team will respond to emails and work to decide the best next steps to support.

If anyone witnesses bullying behaviour, we ask that they too report their concerns using the above protocols. If parents or carers have concerns regarding bullying behaviour, we ask that this be reported to their child's Pastoral Guidance Worker or Learning Leader. This will be logged and the matter will be investigated. Bullying behaviour that takes place away from

school can also have an impact in school and we ask this is also reported to allow us to act to the best of our ability. However, there are limits to how much influence any school can have, especially in the online world.

What interventions we use

Our aim is to work to repair the relationships between those involved in bullying wherever possible. The intervention used will depend on the specific circumstances but may include:

- Mediation – this involves helping those involved in bullying to talk about the issue and agree on a solution
- Restorative approaches – built on values, which separate the person from the behaviour. They promote accountability and seek to repair any harm caused in a situation
- Building resilience – strengthening the learner’s ability to effectively cope, adjust or recover from being bullied or facing other sources of trauma, stress or adversity; equipping learners with a solid foundation or emotional resilience by ensuring that they feel accepted
- Peer support – our CHAT peer mentors are trained in dealing with bullying situations
- School sanctions – At our school, sanctions are applied fairly, proportionately, consistently and reasonably. Bullying/Victimisation of others is regarded as Serious Misbehaviour and after investigation could result in any level of sanction up to and including permanent exclusion. Further information on sanctions can be found in the [Promoting Core Values and Positive Behaviour Policy](#).

How we monitor the situation

Pastoral staff will try to check at regular intervals on the welfare of anyone who has been bullied, but we do rely on reporting of any repetition. Whilst intervention and sanctions will be used as appropriate, we cannot take action if we are not made aware.

Review

The policy will be reviewed and ratified annually at a full governing body meeting at least once a year and recorded in the minutes.