



Anti-Bullying Policy

	Reviewed:	1/9/2025
	Next Review:	Autumn 2027
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Gowerton School is an inclusive community. All members of the community work hard to include everyone and to respect the rights and feelings of others. We are a Gold Level Rights Respecting School as recognised by the UNiCEF.

Every member of the school community has the responsibility to work together to stop and prevent bullying.

Gowerton School will not tolerate any form of bullying.

This school policy aims to:

- Ensure that pupils receive their education in a caring, protective environment where all pupils are encouraged to achieve the four core purposes as outline in the National Mission and agreed with our North Gower Partnership.



- To prevent all types of bullying
- To deal with bullying when it occurs
- To promote good behaviour, discipline and pastoral policies.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Welsh Government guidance for parents 'Challenging Bullying', which can be accessed here: [Anti-bullying Guidance parents and carers \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/anti-bullying-guidance-parents-and-carers)

What is Bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales. It is defined by Welsh Government as **'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually reported over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.'**

Bullying is expressed through a range of hurtful behaviours; it can happen face-to-face or in the digital environment (cyber-bullying).

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How is bullying expressed?

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 / cyber-bullying** – 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. 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. Prejudice-related behaviour of any kind is unacceptable and could be considered as, or escalate into, incidents of hate crime. The Welsh Government expects all forms of prejudice to be challenged equally. At Gowerton we will ensure that we do this.

What is not bullying?

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. These instances will be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy to prevent an incident potentially escalating to become bullying.

The following examples are cases which would not normally be considered bullying:

- **friendship fallouts** – a friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour that is enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of one another. Children and young people who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group
- **a one-off fight** – will be addressed according to our 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** – would be addressed according to our behaviour policy. Police involvement is considered in some cases depending on the severity of the physical assault
- **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.

Our school abides by the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act 2010 replaces previous antidiscrimination laws with a single act).

The act has three aims:

- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between people*
- *Foster good relations*

The policy also embraces the Children and Human Rights Act 1998.

Children and young people are critical to achieving the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Wales. They need to be made fully aware of their UNCRC rights and how to claim them and also need to be involved in monitoring and reporting on children's rights.

Support for pupils

Any reported incident of bullying is investigated objectively and anyone who reports an incident of bullying is listened to carefully and supported. We will always take reports of bullying seriously and talk to pupils in confidence and in a sympathetic way. We will deal with situations quickly, firmly and sensitively.

During assemblies and through Pastoral Matters a clear and consistent message is given. Respect, trust and kindness are central to the message.

During break and lunchtimes staff and the Senior Leadership Team supervise outdoor areas and inside the school. Pastoral Staff are always available in Gofal too if pupils need any support or advice.

Throughout the year information and raising awareness about bullying issues will be highlighted through assemblies, RE, form time, Pastoral Matters and external providers.

Pupils involved in bullying will have support and guidance. This can be given by a wide range of staff including our Behaviour Support Officers, Pastoral staff, Senior Leadership Team, external counsellors and Police Liaison Officer. Depending on the individual incident Restorative Practice may be an option for those involved. This is facilitated by our Behaviour Support Officers. Alternative interventions may also be appropriate.

The pupil planner has a page dedicated to relevant information on who to contact when ‘bad things happen’.

The Home School Contract also states that:

Pupils will:

Behave with courtesy and respect to school staff, to other pupils and to other people.

Pupils will not:

Use threatening or abusive words or behavior

Behave in or out of school in any way which threatens the maintenance of good behaviour and discipline among the pupil body

Support for parents/carers

Parents/carers are advised to contact the school if they have any concerns in relation to bullying. Incidents of bullying reported by parents are treated in the same way as those reported by pupils.

Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the pupil’s parent/carer.

Support is offered to parents/carers including information on other agencies and support options available within the school and from external agencies.

Responsibility of staff

All teaching and non-teaching staff of the school will take responsibility for being familiar with the anti-bullying policy. All know the procedures in place when an incident is reported.

We will always take reports of bullying seriously and listen to what pupils say. Initially this will mean listening to the victim, reassuring the victim and continuing to offer help, advice and support.

Role of governors

- Be aware and approve of the school anti-bullying policy.
- Support the school staff in implementing the policy.
- Review and monitor the effectiveness of the policy on a regular basis.
- The link governor works with the pupil governors to ensure that anti-bullying strategies are implemented in school life

Procedures in place if an incident is reported

In responding to incidents of bullying all staff should:

- Take action as soon as possible.
- Inform relevant Heads of Year/ Behaviour Support Officers who will investigate the matter, interview individuals involved and gather as much information as possible.

Heads of Year/ Behaviour Officers will then

- Make it clear to the bully that such behaviour is not acceptable
- Establish whether or not the incident is part of a pattern
- Encourage the bully to see the victims point of view – Restorative Practice
- Decide on suitable punishment or refer to the Senior Leadership Team
- Inform parents of all involved (victim and bully) of outcome and course of action -arrange meetings to discuss face-to-face.

Sanctions

We judge every incident individually and the sanction can vary depending upon each individual situation.

They may include:

- Lunchtime or after school detentions
- Alternative lunchtime arrangements
- Removal from school transport
- Transferring of form group or teaching group
- In extreme circumstances exclusion for a set number of days
- In extreme circumstances we may need to contact the police. In most extreme cases we will initially involve our Police Liaison Officer.

Support from External Agencies

If it is considered appropriate external agencies will be contacted to support the school when dealing with these issues. The external agencies could include:

- Exchange Counselling Service
- Local Authority Behavioural Support Team
- Police Liaison Officer
- School Health Nurse
- Educational Psychologist
- Early Help Hub