



Preventing Bullying Policy

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Review date: March 2019

Next review date: March 2020

Introduction

This policy has been written in line with Welsh Government circular 23/03 Respecting Others: Anti-bullying Guidance.

Gwenllian Education Centre educates a small number of students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and Associated Disorders.

It is recognised that the students at the Gwenllian Education Centre will have significant impairments typical of students with Autism, which may influence the likelihood of events of bullying occurring and the procedures implemented to deal with bullying behaviour. The school, however, still needs to prepare for the event of bullying. Every student at the Gwenllian Education Centre should be able to learn in an environment free from bullying and where they feel safe and supported. This document has been created to ensure this happens.

Aim

We aim to provide an environment where our students can learn effectively, free from the fear of bullying. Everyone at the Gwenllian Education Centre needs to work together to ensure we take an active approach to prevent bullying behaviour and respond appropriately to any incidents that may occur.

The Nature of Bullying

Bullying is considered to be a deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can take place between students, between students and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly – through other people, by communication methods such as the written word or pictures or by using a range of cyberbullying methods.

The three main types of bullying are:

- Physical - such as hitting, kicking and taking belongings
- Verbal - such as name calling, insulting and making offensive remarks
- Indirect - including spreading nasty stories, excluding people from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending malicious e mails or text messages.

It is important to recognise that bullying is not an isolated incident, but a series of repeated attacks.

Specific forms of bullying

Bullying takes place for a number of reasons. These include:

- Bullying around race, religion and culture

This identifies the importance of teaching about controversial issues such as cultural and religious diversity, ethnicity, prejudice, race and racism.

As a staff we have to monitor and record any incidents of bullying around race, religion and culture, towards our staff and pupils, and by staff and pupils. We have to consider the similarities and differences between racist behaviour and other forms of unacceptable behaviour.

- Bullying around special educational needs and disabilities

This is the form of bullying our students are most likely to experience, particularly when transitioning between routine activities in the community or repeatedly moving between regular environments. We also have a responsibility towards educating our students about disabilities.

- Homophobic

We need to considering and understand different models of family and developing systems to develop understanding of this.

- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying

- Cyberbullying

We need to consider how cyberbullying is different to other forms of bullying in that, for example, the audience for the bullying can be very large and reached rapidly. This includes the need to understand its ever-changing nature as technology and culture develops.

To safeguard our students and staff, we constantly update our existing policies and practices. We will ensure it is easy to report cyberbullying and will promote the positive use of technology while evaluating the impact of prevention activities.

Objectives

This policy will ensure that:

- all teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and students, when possible, should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- all teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- all parents and students, when possible, should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if the event arises.
- as a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- bullying will not be tolerated.

Training for staff

Training on anti-bullying is provided to all staff through INSET days and team meetings. All staff are required to sign that they have read the policy.

Awareness raising for pupils

Pupils will be taught the importance of treating others kindly and with respect. Where appropriate, they will be taught what to do if they feel that have been bullied or if they have observed another pupil being bullied. They will be taught who to go to if they have a concern.

Procedures

Students with Autism often lack social and communication skills which can sometimes lead to “challenging behaviour”. Gwennlian Education Centre aims to ensure that all pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment, without fear of being bullied. However, the overall position of the school is that bullying will not be tolerated.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- The bullying will be discussed with the children involved using their individual level and method of communication i.e. PECs, signing or social stories.
- Children will be listened to sympathetically and impartially. The member of staff will not make any premature judgments.
- Those concerned will be encouraged to resolve the situation amicably.
- All parties will be led to consider other people’s perceptions and feelings and explore the factors which contributed to the situation.

- All parties will consider alternative strategies, and how they might change their behaviour.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Head Teacher.
- The Head Teacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident.
- Parents will be kept informed.
- Appropriate procedures will be implemented and a way forward outlined and in consultation with all parties concerned.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- reassuring the pupil
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- establishing the function of the behaviour in order to put in place appropriate consequences on the child's Behaviour Plan, as well as individual ABA programmes to teach new ways to express themselves
- informing parents or guardians to ensure the consistency of the Behaviour Plan between home and school to promote generalisation of approach

Gwenllian Education Centre does not use disciplinary steps but instead monitors behaviour to establish any emerging patterns, antecedents, consequences and ensures the correct consequence is put in place dependent upon the function as determined by data collection and functional assessment.

Gwenllian Education Centre ensures there is always the opportunity to teach alternative more appropriate behaviours and skills to the child. Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy regularly and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.