



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Number: WG51172

Welsh Government
Consultation Document

Challenging bullying and harassment.

Rights, respect, equality – statutory guidance for schools and settings

Date of issue: 19 May 2025

Action required: Responses by 31 July 2025

Overview

This consultation seeks views on the Rights, respect, equality guidance on providing information for all involved in preventing and challenging bullying in Schools and educational settings.

This consultation is for anyone with a role or interest in anti-bullying, including local authorities, schools, governing bodies, parents/carers and other interested parties.

How to respond

Responses to this consultation should be emailed/posted to the address below to arrive by **31 July 2025** at the latest.

Responses to the consultation can be made by using the questionnaire at the back of the document.

Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at gov.wales/consultations

Contact details

Wellbeing and Safeguarding
Equity in Education
The Education Directorate
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: rightsrespectequalityguidanceconsultation@gov.wales

This document is also available in Welsh: [hyperlink](#)

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UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for Welsh Government consultations and for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation.

Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. The lawful basis for processing information in this data collection exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government. (Art 6(1)(e))

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. In the case of joint consultations this may also include other public authorities. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation and that the Welsh Government may be under a legal obligation to disclose some information.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

1. to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
2. to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
3. to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
4. for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
5. to (in certain circumstances) data portability
6. to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ
e-mail:
dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information
Commissioner's Office are:
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113
Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Summary

Why are we reviewing this guidance?

Despite our best-efforts school is not a positive experience for all children and young people. Our differences should never be the reason for someone to be bullied, or mistreated. Bullying continues to be a problem, and it has a very real impact, particularly on children's emotional wellbeing. We made a commitment to updating, this anti-bullying guidance 'Rights, respect equality' published in 2019 to reflect changes in legislation and current policy developments.

What is the purpose of the consultation?

The guidance has been reviewed to support schools to work towards developing positive and respectful relationships amongst children and young people. Tackling bullying and its impact is a key Welsh Government priority. We want to send the message that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We also want to be clear that we will support the target, and work with the perpetrator to recognise the harm they have done, helping them find a positive way forward.

The review takes account of the Children's Commissioner for Wales (CCfW) recommendations within "Take it seriously": children's experiences of racism within secondary schools and of the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan commitment to strengthen the guidance in respect of bullying on the ground of race.

It also reflects the issues raised in Estyn's report on peer-on-peer sexual harassment in secondary schools (December 2021) "We don't tell our teachers" and link with the LGBTQ+ Action Plan, requirement to produce Trans guidance for schools and to strengthen areas of prejudice related guidance and other relevant research available since 2019.

The approaches should be adopted, developed and built upon so that they are aligned to the needs of children and parents/carers.

The guidance consultation

This consultation seeks to gather views on the clarity and usefulness of the guidance to be a useful, practical document for all managers, staff and relevant professionals working within an educational setting, maintained or non-maintained school, Pupil Referral Unit, Independent School, Special School or Education other than at school setting to assist in developing and implementing anti-bullying policies and strategies. Local authorities and the governing bodies of schools must have regard to this guidance when they are considering their anti-bullying arrangements.

The guidance is divided into:

1. Introduction
2. What is bullying
3. Prejudice-related bullying
4. Bullying in an online context
5. The law relating to bullying
6. What works when launching new strategies
7. Governance
8. Prevention
9. Responding when bullying occurs
10. Interventions
11. Evaluation and accountability

Consultation questions

Question 1 – Does the draft Rights, respect, equality guidance on anti-bullying provide suitable useful, practical information for leaders, teachers and other practitioners in schools, pupil referral units and education otherwise than at school settings to inform approaches to preventing and responding to all forms of bullying?

Question 2 – Does the Rights, respect, equality guidance on anti-bullying clearly set out the legal responsibility of the school and governors?

Question 3 – Does the Rights, respect, equality guidance on anti-bullying clearly set out the responsibilities of the local authority?

Question 4 – Does the Rights, respect equality guidance on anti-bullying connect properly with broader policy areas and guidance on separate but related topics?

Question 5 – Are learners with protected characteristics included?

Question 6 – Is the Rights, respect, equality anti-bullying guidance explained clearly?

Question 7 – Is the Rights, respect, equality anti-bullying guidance user-friendly?

Question 8 – Should other areas which you have not had an opportunity to comment on above be included in the Rights, respect, equality anti-bullying guidance?

Question 9 – How helpful do you find the Rights, respect, equality guidance on anti-bullying?

Question 10 – Does the current suite of training on Hwb support the use of the Rights, respect, equality guidance on anti-bullying?

Question 11 – How helpful is the Rights, respect, equality guidance on anti-bullying in supporting you to report and record incidents of bullying?

Question 12 – To what extent do you agree that the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 should be amended to make clear that schools may provide gender-neutral toilets in addition to sex-separated toilets?

Question 13 – What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of revising the Rights, respect, equality anti-bullying guidance on the Welsh language? We are particularly interested in any likely effects on opportunities to use the Welsh

language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects?

Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

Question 14 – In your opinion, could the revised Rights, respect, equality anti-bullying guidance be formulated or changed so as to:

- have positive effects or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English; or
- mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?

Please use the consultation response form to respond to the above questions.