



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Challenging bullying and harassment

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

Draft guidance

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

Audience	Schools; school governing bodies; Management Committees; local authorities; diocesan authorities; social workers; healthcare professionals; Estyn; police; voluntary and third sector organisations involved with children and young people, and learner well-being and safeguarding; Parents and Carers; Children and Young People.
Overview	This document forms part of a series of guidance documents providing information for all involved in preventing and challenging bullying in schools and educational settings. Each document within this series provides tailored advice specifically aimed at key audiences. This is statutory guidance for local authorities and schools in Wales.
Action required	This guidance should be brought to the attention of 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.
Further information	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Equity in Education Division Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ e-mail: rightsrespectequalityguidanceconsultation@gov.wales

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Additional copies	<p>This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at https://www.gov.wales/rights-respect-equality-anti-bullying-guidance</p>
Related documents	<p>Rights, respect, equality: guidance for schools (2019)</p> <p>Inclusion and pupil support guidance (2016)</p> <p>Keeping learners safe guidance (2022)</p> <p>Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing (2021)</p> <p>School-and Community based Counselling Operating Toolkit revised 2020 (Welsh Government,)</p> <p>Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008: All Wales Travel Behaviour Code Statutory Guidance (2017)</p> <p>Curriculum for Wales: information for parents, carers and learners.</p> <p>This document is also available in Welsh: https://www.llyw.cymru/canllawiau-gwrthfwllo-hawliau-parch-cydraddoldeb</p>

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Terms used in this document

For the purposes of this statutory guidance, the following terms are defined as:

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

A learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty arises from a medical condition or otherwise), which calls for additional learning provision (Section 2 Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018).

Additional Learning Provision (ALP)

An educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in: (a) mainstream maintained schools in Wales, (b) mainstream institutions in the further education sector in Wales, or (c) places in Wales at which nursery education is provided. Additional learning provision for a child aged under three means educational provision of any kind (Section 3 Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018).

Anti-racism

Actively identifying and eradicating the systems, structures and processes that produce radically differential outcomes for ethnic minority groups. It involves acknowledging that even when we do not regard ourselves as 'racist' we can, by doing nothing, be complicit in allowing racism to continue. It is not about "fixing" ethnic minority people or communities, but rather about fixing systems that have not benefited and at times even damaged ethnic minority people. It is about working with the considerable strengths and leadership of ethnic minority people and using their lived experiences in how we, collectively, shape and deliver. It is about making a positive and lasting difference. (Anti-racist Wales Action Plan).

Antisemitism

A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

Asylum seeker

As a person fleeing persecution in his or her homeland, has arrived in another country, made themselves known to the authorities and has exercised their legal right to apply for asylum. These individuals will be awaiting the outcome of their asylum claim.

Bystander

A person who is present, whether on or offline, at an event or incident of bullying but does not take part.

Children and Young People

Are people under 18 years of age, in line with the definition of 'children' within the Children Act 1989.

Coercive and controlling behaviour

A person who uses cruel behaviours to hurt, control or scare someone else (the victim). This is a type of domestic abuse. The abuser uses violence, threats, puts them down or scares and frightens the victim. They do this so they can control the victim and make them do things they don't want to. This behaviour often happens with other abusive behaviours, including physical, sexual and financial abuse.

Direct discrimination

Less favourable treatment of a person compared with another person because of a protected characteristic. Your circumstances must be similar enough to the other person being treated better for a valid comparison to be made. It includes discrimination because someone is perceived to have a protected characteristic or where someone is discriminated against because they are associated with someone else who has a protected characteristic.

Disability and disabled person

A person has a disability if (a) the person has a physical or mental impairment and (b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A reference to a disabled person is a reference to a person who has a disability. (Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010).

Elective Home Education

Elective Home education is a term used to describe when parents educate their children at home instead of sending them to school.

Estyn

Is the education and training inspectorate for Wales. It provides an independent inspection and advice service on quality and standards in education and training provided in Wales.

Gender

For the purposes of this guidance gender is a term used to refer to whether someone's internal sense of themselves is female, male or non-binary. A person's gender does not always align with the sex they were registered at birth (see transgender / trans).

Gender Equity

Gender equity is fair and impartial treatment of people of all genders, including equal treatment or differential treatment to redress imbalances in rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Gender Fluid

This term refers to a non-fixed gender which can shift over time or be expressed differently depending on the situation.

Gender Identity

This term is often used interchangeably with gender and ultimately means the same thing – someone’s internal sense of themselves. The term “gender identity” has been the source of polarising rhetoric around the phrase “identify as...” and has been rejected by some people and groups who favour the more straightforward “gender”.

Gender Inclusive

A gender inclusive approach is one where all genders are included and equally supported.

Gender non-conforming

This describes a person whose behaviour, appearance or self-expression does not conform to prevailing cultural and social expectations about gender.

Gender Reassignment

Has the meaning given to it in section 7 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides that a person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person’s sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

Gender Questioning

In this guidance this refers to learners who may be unsure about their gender, or who may be seeking adult and peer support to understand feelings about their gender.

Hate Crime

Is a term that can be used to describe a range of criminal behaviour where the Perpetrator is motivated by hostility or prejudice or demonstrates hostility towards a characteristic of the Target, which could include the Target’s disability or perceived disability, race or perceived race, religion or perceived religion, sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity. A Hate Crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property. The Perpetrator can also be a friend, carer or acquaintance who exploits their relationship with the Target for financial gain or some other criminal purpose.

Intersectionality

It is related to the way in which different types of discrimination (i.e., unfair treatment because of a person's protected characteristics) are connected to and affect each other. Intersectional discrimination, sometimes known as combined discrimination, is where a person is discriminated against because of a particular combination of two or more protected characteristics.

Intersex

An intersex person is someone who does not fit conventional expectations for male or female development in terms of anatomy, metabolism or genetics.

Islamophobia

Unreasonable dislike or fear of, and prejudice against, Muslims or Islam. It encompasses any distinction, exclusion, restriction, discrimination, or preference against Muslims that impairs the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. Islamophobia not only refers to a category of hate crime but refers to barriers that Muslims face across all areas of public life.

LGBTQ+

Refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual/bi, transgender/trans people, queer or questioning. Other letters can be added to the acronym to include other groups, orientations and identities, such as I (intersex) and A (asexual/aromantic). The + (plus) in the acronym is used as a shorthand to include and acknowledge other diverse terms people identify with and use to describe their identities and orientations, including intersex, asexual and aromantic people.

Migrant

Is anyone who was born outside the United Kingdom but has come to the UK for work, study or other reasons.

Non-binary

A non-binary person is someone whose gender lies outside the traditional male/female binary idea of gender.

Online bullying

Describes all bullying via technology, also known as cyberbullying

Otherness

Refers to being or feeling different in appearance or character from what is familiar, expected, or generally accepted

People seeking sanctuary

Is as an umbrella term to refer to refugees or asylum seekers from any background. This is to combat the dehumanising rhetoric which can occur when referring to people by the immigration status which they have been assigned.

Perpetrator

Refers to Children and Young People who exhibit bullying behaviour towards others.

Poverty

The Child Poverty Strategy for Wales 2024 also recognises for learners to fully benefit from their school experience, they must feel safe and properly supported and that schools must adopt a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying.

Contributions to this will be delivered across the Strategy objectives and the Strategy includes a specific commitment to urgently refocus work with Estyn, partners and wider stakeholders to tackle the barriers to implementing approaches to poverty proof education and to consistently creating inclusive education environments which are based on the Rights of the Child, and anti-discriminatory values.

Prejudice-related bullying

Refers to any form of bullying related to characteristics considered to be part of a person's identity or perceived identity group. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics but 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. When incidents only involve under 18-year-olds situations will be considered on a case-by-case context, with some dealt with as a safeguarding and/or a criminal matter.

Protected Characteristics

Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the protected characteristics - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Is the duty on public authorities when exercising their functions as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, to have due regard to the need to: (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Queer

A term used mainly by people who identify with a minority sexual orientation or gender identity, sometimes rejecting other labels of orientations or identities. Although it was used in the past as derogatory term for LGBTQ+ individuals, and some people view the word as a slur, it has now been reclaimed by many LGBTQ+ communities.

Race

Includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins (Section 9 Equality Act 2010).

Refugee

Is a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

Restorative justice

A restorative approach is a way of addressing conflict with a focus on repairing the harm that has been done. It includes all parties involved.

Sex

Has the meaning given to it in section 11 of the Equality Act 2010, which says that “in relation to the protected characteristic of sex — (a) a reference to a person who has a particular protected characteristic is a reference to a man or to a woman”.

Sexual orientation

This term is defined in Section 12 of the Equality Act 2010. Sexual Orientation means a person’s sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex or persons of either sex. People might use the terms heterosexual, gay, bisexual/bi, lesbian or straight to describe their sexual orientation.

School

Means:

- (a) a community, foundation or voluntary school,
- (b) a community or foundation special school,
- (c) a maintained nursery school, and
- (d) a pupil referral unit.

Targets

Refers to Children and Young People who are bullied.

Transgender/Trans

An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex in which they were registered at birth. Some non-binary people regard themselves as falling under the trans umbrella, but not all.

Transphobic bullying

This is bullying motivated by prejudice against trans people. It is not characterised by specific acts but by the negative attitudes and beliefs towards trans people that underlie these. It can be experienced by any person, including people who are cisgender.

Status of this guidance

This is statutory guidance for local authorities and schools in Wales. The Welsh Ministers have exercised their powers in section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (duties of local authorities and governing bodies in relation to welfare of children) and section 88 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (responsibility of governing body for discipline) to give this guidance.

Governing bodies must have regard to this statutory guidance when exercising their functions relating to the conduct of a school and making arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people who are learners at the school, and when exercising their functions relating to promoting good behaviour and discipline at schools.

This statutory guidance refers to legal duties, and to matters to which persons must have regard to under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), link can be found in the annex. It identifies the Welsh Government expectation, outlines good practice and makes recommendations. In this guidance the Welsh Government uses the following terms to indicate the status of a point made in this statutory guidance.

- ‘Must’ means that there is a legal duty to do or refrain from doing the specified action.
- ‘The Welsh Government expects’ means that the Welsh Ministers have indicated a course of action or approach they expect to be followed. Schools should follow the course of action or approach unless they identify a good reason to depart from it, which they may be asked to justify to Welsh Ministers, ombudsmen, independent commissioners or other such parties.
- ‘The Welsh Government recommends’ means that the Welsh Ministers have indicated a course of action or approach they expect to be followed. Schools should consider the recommendation, but it is a matter for their discretion whether or not they follow the recommended course of action or approach.
- ‘The Welsh Government advises’ means that the Welsh Ministers have set out advice for schools on issues relating to bullying.

Introduction

My priority as Cabinet Secretary for Education is to ensure our children have positive experiences in school and that they thrive in the nurturing and supportive environment school provides.

Sadly, 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.

That is why 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.

The Welsh Government's approach is to support schools to work towards developing positive and respectful relationships amongst children and young people. This updated guidance 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.

The guidance 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, and the requirement to produce Trans guidance for schools and to strengthen areas of prejudice related guidance and takes account of relevant research available since 2019.

The Curriculum for Wales is now being used in all maintained schools and by others providing education to learners aged 3-16. One of the four purposes of the curriculum is for children and young people to become ethical, informed citizens, this includes:

- understanding and considering the impact of their actions when making choices and acting
- becoming knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past
- respecting the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) - LGBTQ+ inclusive is a mandatory element of the Curriculum for Wales and Health and Wellbeing is one of six mandatory areas of learning and experience in maintained schools.

This Rights, Respect, Equality updated guidance also takes account of the impact bullying can have on a learner's mental health and wellbeing. Since 2021 when the Welsh Government's Framework on embedding a whole school approach to emotional and mental health wellbeing (WSA) statutory guidance was published, all schools must adopt a "whole school approach" to the emotional wellbeing and mental health of learners, teachers and other school staff.

The WSA Framework is intended to support schools, including pupil referral units (PRUs) and education settings in reviewing their own wellbeing landscape and in developing plans to address their weaknesses and build on their strengths.

It also supports and complements the Curriculum for Wales, in particular the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience. The guidance sets out how schools should work in partnership with others, including the NHS and third sector organisations, to meet all the wellbeing needs of 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.

Implementation of this guidance will support that objective.

Lynne Neagle MS

Cabinet Secretary for Education

Governing bodies of maintained schools

1.1 School governing bodies are accountable for ensuring effective policies are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with Welsh Government guidance and for monitoring its compliance.

1.2 The Welsh Government expects school governing bodies and individual school governors to always act with honesty and integrity and be ready to explain their actions and decisions to staff, learners, parents and carers and anyone with a legitimate interest in the school.

1.3 The school governing body decides what they want the school to achieve. The Welsh Government expects that it should establish the strategic framework by:

- setting aims and objectives for the school
- adopting policies for achieving those aims and objectives
- setting targets for achieving those aims and objectives
- reviewing progress towards achieving the aims and objectives

1.4 The school governing body sets out a statement of principles for promoting positive behaviour and are required to have regard to guidance from the Welsh Government when making and reviewing the written statement of general principles on school discipline. The headteacher will use this statement of principles to lead work with the school community to determine the more detailed measures that make up the school behaviour policy.

1. What bullying is

Context

2.1 Despite work by Schools and other services, as well as government initiatives, bullying remains a problem. Bullying occurs in schools, whilst online spaces and social media have provided new tools and opportunities to bully others.

2.2 The United Kingdom has been found to be one of the worst countries for Children and Young People's life satisfaction and bullying is mentioned as a cause of this. Bullying behaviour can signal that there are other disadvantages in a child or young person's life, reflecting low overall life satisfaction.

2.3 Bullying is a widespread aggressive human behaviour and can be influenced by anger, prejudice, revenge or fear of others who are different. In some cases, bullying is a learned self-preservation behaviour. Factors and attitudes in the news and media, the community, within families and in each one of us can trigger the urge to bully others.

2.4 In the face of rising digital threats and broader prejudices expressed online and offline, a focus on challenging bullying is perhaps more vital than ever before. In England and Wales, there is an increase in reported Hate Crime revealing the need to challenge discrimination. Thousands of children and young people in Wales have said bullying remains their top priority. One of the reasons it regularly tops surveys as a primary concern, is that it affects so many. Children and Young People's calls for action to be taken by adults is supported by an array of research, which shows the devastating and long-lasting impact bullying can have not only to Targets but to Perpetrators of bullying and bystanders too. Severe impacts can be long-term, including poor mental health and reduced well-being and in some cases, parents choose to remove their child from school.

2.5 Bullying can also lead to Children and Young People becoming lonely and socially isolated. The growing evidence on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) demonstrates the ways in which childhood experiences can have significant impacts on a person's ability to form and maintain relationships in childhood or adolescence and with long lasting impacts into adulthood. This is why it is so important to ensure Children and Young People have positive relationship experiences.

Scale of bullying

2.6 The Secondary School Children's Health and Well-being Dashboard: School Health Research Network (SHRN) Survey Data 2023/24 includes responses from 11 to 16 year-olds. 130,000 learners in years 7 to 11 took part, from 200 Welsh secondary schools.

The survey looked at young people's experiences of bullying. Almost 38 per cent of young people said that they had been bullied in the previous couple of months, up from 32 percent in 2021. Results are higher than ever previously reported in the survey with more than 40 per cent of girls being bullied compared to over 30 per cent of boys.

2.7 Twenty one percent stated they were cyberbullied at least once or twice in the past couple of months. Cyberbullying victimisation was markedly higher among young people who identified as neither a boy nor a girl (44%), relative to boys (17%) and girls (24%).

2.8 Bullying victimisation showed some evidence of a social gradient, with learners from less affluent families reporting slightly higher rates of being bullied than those from medium or high affluence families.

2.9 A slightly higher proportion of boys than girls reported having been cyberbullied. There was a social gradient in cyberbullying victimisation, with learners from less affluent families experiencing higher rates of bullying than those from more affluent families.

2.10 In 2023/24, Childline delivered just under 7000 counselling sessions about bullying (excluding online). This was a small decrease (-1%) when compared to 2022/23. Among the counselling sessions about bullying in which gender was known, 69% were with girls, 26% were with boys and 5% were with young people identifying as trans or non-binary.

2.11 In 2023/24, Childline delivered 932 counselling sessions to children and young people about online bullying, a similar figure to the previous year. Among the counselling sessions about online bullying last year in which gender was known, 61% were with girls, 35% were with boys and 4% were with young people identifying as trans or non-binary.

2.12 Girls received almost eight out of ten of the counselling sessions. The most common reasons cited for their increased feelings of loneliness were bullying, mental health issues and social media use. This can also be seen in the 2018 UK Youth report *A Place to Belong*, which noted that when asked to identify the major causes of youth loneliness one of the top three answers provided by youth workers was bullying (83%).

2.13 Stigma and discrimination over poor mental health can be a cause of bullying: though equally, bullying can also contribute to the development of poor mental health and well-being. Tackling the root cause of bullying is often the precursor to improving the child or young person's mental well-being.

2.14 If bullying becomes dominant in a school, or elsewhere no learner can fully enjoy their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): including to be safe and to receive an education.

Bullying and school

2.15 Bullying behaviour:

- Is harmful for all the individuals involved
- Becomes the focus of a learner's experience of daily life
- Undermines safety, well-being, and attainment
- Damage's school ethos
- Is detrimental to the school and the wider community
- Affects bystanders and those who know it is prevalent in their school

2.16 Changes in society and culture can influence how bullying manifests in a school environment. With children and young people exploring new interests, activities and navigating the digital world, including social media, this is not surprising. Keeping abreast of emerging trends and behaviours can support with the development of strategies to address and prevent all forms of bullying

2.17 It is important to remember most children or young people do not bully others and positive, caring behaviour can be the norm at home and in society if the right school culture is developed.

2.18 Effective Schools take a proactive approach to preventing all bullying and to mitigate its effects when it occurs, through the adoption of restorative practice. The Welsh Government strongly recommends all Schools should adopt this approach. This includes teaching Children and Young People and training staff about respect, positive behaviour, stereotypes and addressing prejudice, building confidence to challenge unacceptable language and ensuring they are addressed in accordance with the school protocols. It also involves effective supervision for example, between lessons, at break times and at lunch times with suitable places provided for vulnerable learners during these times.

2.19 The suite of guidance is accompanied by an online toolkit on Hwb providing resources to support implementation of the guidance at an operational level.

The power of language

2.20 There is a debate about the language used when talking about bullying behaviour. Using language that includes bullying or aggressive words such as 'stamp out', 'kick out' or 'combat' bullying has been challenged. It has not been shown to reduce bullying effectively. Instead, it entrenches the notion that bullies have power, leading learners to aim to be one of the 'powerful' rather than the 'victim'. This can encourage weaker members of a group to begin bullying others weaker than themselves to assert some ascendancy. In contrast, the aim is to create a respectful community whose members learn to live alongside one another without aggression.

2.21 When referring to the roles played in bullying incidents it is preferable not to label Children and Young People as a 'victim' or 'bully' because:

Learners are often encouraged to 'hate bullying' which can then translate into hating individuals who bully. It is a label a child or young person can internalise and live up to, or it can impede their ability to change their behaviour. By not labelling someone a bully, space opens up to help them change their unacceptable behaviour and use their power or leadership in other ways. It is helpful to separate the person from the behaviour to allow the person to change. Their behaviour is disliked or unacceptable, but they are not hated as individuals.

Similarly, labelling learners 'victims' can entrench their 'otherness' and lead to not being accepted by their peers. They are seen as weak, and many Children and Young People avoid them for fear of being seen in the same way. Some targeted Children or Young People begin to believe it is their fault they are bullied and see themselves as a victim.

2.22 To reflect this the guidance uses other terms. There are many roles played by all who are involved, including bystanders who witness bullying. It is not always clear-cut.

Defining Bullying Behaviour

2.23 There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or indeed in the UK. Therefore, the definition used in this guidance builds upon widely used principles established in the United Kingdom since 1993.

2.24 For the purposes of this guidance, bullying is defined as:

- Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.

The Welsh Government strongly recommends Schools use this definition as the foundation for developing their own definition, or a learner-friendly version. It is essential that Schools define what is meant by bullying because this will form the basis of their anti-bullying policy and everyone, including all staff and learners, should understand what is meant by the definition.

2.25 Bullying is expressed through a range of hurtful behaviours: it can happen face-to-face or in the digital environment. It can be carried out by an individual or group but is generally executed in front of an audience to assert power or popularity. It may involve an element of secrecy so that adults are not aware of it.

2.26 Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or friendship fallout, which generally lack the following features:

- bullying is deliberate or intentional
- it is generally repeated over time

- there is a perceived imbalance of power between Perpetrator and Target
- bullying causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, humiliation and powerlessness.

2.27 It is recognised that a one-off incident can leave a learner traumatised and nervous of reprisals or future recurrence. Intervention should be immediate whether it is bullying or any other one-off negative behaviour. One-off incidents that do not form part of a repetitive pattern of bullying should be handled as inappropriate behaviour and addressed under the school's behaviour policy.

The importance of a clear definition of bullying

2.28 Clarifying what is meant by bullying behaviour is an essential starting point. Agreeing a definition provides an opportunity for your school to align your values and vision and create a consistent framework of policies and procedures. The definition should be used in professional learning, in day-to-day anti-bullying work with learners and to clarify the position for parents and carers. This will help to make the policy clear and consistent for the whole school community.

2.29 Learners should be consulted in the development of your school's definition of bullying and the associated policy for how your school challenges bullying. Learners should also be given a version of your school's policy with the definition explained clearly and simply.

The distinctive elements of bullying behaviour

There are several 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 or 'deep fake' images with people for whom the information / images were not intended. When incidents only involve under 18 year olds situations will be considered on a case-by-case context, with some dealt with as a safeguarding and/or a criminal matter.

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.

How is bullying expressed

Bullying can take many forms, including:

Physical

Kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone or damaging their belongings or gestures of intimidation.

Verbal

Taunts and name-calling, insults, banter, 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 technology, online services or platforms, e.g. gaming, social media, messaging services and forums. Online bullying can include threatening behaviour, abuse, harassment, shaming, exclusion, impersonation, malicious damage, non-consensual sharing of images or videos (including AI-generated) and coercion.

Relational aggression

Is bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, exploiting a person's additional learning needs or an illness, targeting their family's social or financial 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, 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the learner targeted. When any of these incidents only involve under 18

year-olds situations will be considered on a case-by-case context, with some dealt with as a safeguarding and/or criminal matter.

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, age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, Race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (section 4 of the Equality Act 2010). Prejudice can and does also extend beyond the Protected Characteristics and can lead to bullying for a variety of other reasons such as social and financial status and background.

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

Bullying and emotional and mental well-being

2.30 The WSA seeks to support good emotional and mental well-being by strengthening the relationship(s) between:

- teacher and learner
- teaching staff
- the school senior leadership team and wider school staff
- the school and parents and carers
- the school and other professionals working with the school
- the school and the wider community that surrounds the school.

2.31 This will be achieved by embedding good well-being through teaching, as well as all the other aspects of school life. Schools should develop and implement an ethos that values inclusion, where everybody works together, contributing their individual skills and resources to the collective good. They should create a supporting environment where young people are encouraged to fulfil their personal and academic potential, where they thrive, learn and emotionally develop, supported by teachers who operate in a culture that also values teachers' own wellbeing.

2.32 Schools and other education settings are part of the WSA system of support around children, young people and families. Complimenting the WSA Framework the NYTH/NEST framework aims to create a shared language and understanding of supporting babies, children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. It brings health, social care, education and third sector together in partnership to provide a Nurturing, Empowering, Safe and Trusted NEST of support around

children and families, creating a whole system approach to mental health and well-being that considers the whole life of the child and the wider determinants of mental health and well-being. It has well-being across education as one of its core principles.

2.33 The WSA and NYTH/NEST frameworks are complimentary guidance to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people in educational, health and social care settings. The WSA is the implementation method for NEST in schools. Together, these frameworks provide a holistic approach to children's mental health and wellbeing, promoting clarity, collaboration and continuity of practice across each sector. It is therefore important that all school staff know about the WSA and the actions being taken by their school to improve learner's and their own mental health and wellbeing. School staff with a responsibility for liaising with external agencies, for example, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or charities working with the school, should share an understanding of the NYTH/NEST framework.

2.34 The Welsh Government's draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, to be published summer 2025, recognises that education is a vital part of the connected system when considering the mental health and wellbeing needs of children and young people. When carrying out consultation on the draft strategy children and young people told us it is important schools are part of a multi-sector, multi-agency approach to mental health and wellbeing. Young people spoke passionately both about the ways in which the school environment (and their teachers) can help and support their mental health and wellbeing, and the harm that can be caused, by bullying, exam stress, and other features of the school environment (and education system more broadly). Young people consistently cited bullying as a significant threat to their mental health and wellbeing. This included online bullying, and the need for greater support and protection for young people online.

Bullying and Safeguarding

2.35 Some cases of bullying might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern under the Children Act 1989 when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child [or young person] is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this is the case, the school must report their concerns to their local authority's social services department.

What is not bullying?

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

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

Friendship fallouts

Are not generally regarded as bullying. 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

Is not regarded as bullying. It should 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 other's views.

A one-off physical assault

Should be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate.

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 would need to be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and other relevant policies, such as the school's 'Prevent' policy and, if considered necessary, the school would need to involve the police.

2.38 These examples illustrate the need to deal with the incident reported and record it. This should reveal any previously recorded incidents and allow a considered assessment to be made. Further information on reporting, recording and monitoring incidents is provided in Section 11 of this guidance.

2.39 The Welsh Government expects all hate incidents to be accurately recorded to enable Schools to monitor patterns and prevent discrimination. Local authorities frequently monitor hate incidents and may require Schools to report these to evidence how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

What motivations lie behind acts of bullying

2.40 Children and Young People who engage in bullying can have a range of motivations. They may have prejudices against certain groups in wider society. These prejudicial opinions may be informed by a wide range of factors including the following influencers: media; community and/or family values or previous personal experience. Perpetrators' motivations may also include a desire:

- for power, pride and popularity
- to belong to a strong in-group with a robust sense of identity and self-esteem
- to avoid being a Target of bullying themselves
- to compensate for humiliations, which they themselves have suffered in the past.

2.41 The Welsh Government expects Schools to consider motivations when working with Children and Young People who bully others. This will help understand and address the root cause of the unacceptable behaviour and help to change it, thereby reducing further incidences of bullying.

2.42 Bullying behaviour may reflect attitudes held by families, in society or expressed in the media. Schools will sometimes find they need to challenge these attitudes with the wider school community beyond the individual case of bullying presenting in school.

2. Prejudice-related bullying

Prejudice in context

3.1 Acts of prejudice-related behaviour often contain or express ideas, stereotypes and prejudices to do with discrimination and inequality that are present in wider society. These ideas and attitudes involve hostility towards people who have Protected Characteristics, such as learners who are disabled (which can include those with additional learning needs); whose ethnicity, race, appearance, religious heritage or gender is different from the perpetrators of the prejudice-related behaviour. It could also include those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual; or questioning their gender sexuality or who are transgender. Prejudice-related behaviour also extends beyond the Protected Characteristics to other reasons such as social status and background.

3.2 There are many examples of prejudice-related behaviour. Some of these might include:

- stigmatising a learner with a disability or additional learning need
- using homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist or racist language
- actively trying to remove any religious clothing such as a hijab, kippah, turban, cap or veil
- using sexist comments, unwanted touching or the taking of images without permission
- commenting on someone's appearance such as their weight or hair colour

All forms of prejudice should be challenged in accordance with your anti-bullying policy and considered on a case-by-case context, with some dealt with as a safeguarding and/or a criminal matter.

3.3 All forms of prejudice-related behaviour connected with the protected characteristics have certain basic features in common. Therefore, the same essential principles apply when preventing and challenging them. None of the protected characteristics are less important than any of the others. Sometimes individuals may have more than one protected characteristic and may be subject to prejudice-related behaviour for a number of reasons.

3.4 Prejudice-related behaviour of any kind is unacceptable and could be considered as, or escalate into, incidents of hate crime. If the action is a one-off occurrence and is not repeated, the incident is not usually considered bullying, this does not mean the incident should not be addressed. All forms of prejudice should be challenged in your school using the most appropriate school policy.

3.5 Where prejudice-related behaviour is repeated by a Perpetrator, whether directed towards a single individual or towards a group of learners, the action becomes bullying. Other terms used widely in society to describe prejudice-related bullying include: 'identity-based bullying, 'discriminatory bullying'; 'hate-related bullying'; or 'inequality-based bullying'.

3.6 Schools should assess local and school populations for any recent and rapid changes to ensure their prevention approaches have the appropriate focus. The following learners should be carefully considered within the context of a school's bullying prevention strategy: -

- those with a disability
- Those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (Trans) and queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) learners
- those from Ethnic Minority groups
- those from a religious background
- those new to English or Welsh based educational systems (NEWBES). (the term newly arrived learner is used to describe children, often of minority ethnic backgrounds, for whom neither English nor Welsh is their home language).
- those with emotional health and well-being issues
- those with additional learning needs (ALN)

Specific types of bullying linked to Protected Characteristics

3.7 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 disabled learners, which can include additional learning needs
- Homophobic, biphobic and / or transphobic bullying
- Bullying connected with race, religion and/or culture
- Sexist and/or sexual bullying

Bullying involving disabled learners and/or learners with additional learning needs (ALN)

Defining disability and ALN

3.8 Please see "Terms used in this document" earlier in this guidance for the definitions. It should be noted that there will be some Children and Young People who are covered by the Equality Act 2010 but not the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and vice versa, although a significant number of Children and Young People are likely to be covered by both.

Key issues for disabled learners and/or learners with ALN experiencing bullying

3.9 Reports from Mencap and the Anti-Bullying Alliance show that disabled Children and Young People and/or learners with ALN are more likely to experience bullying than their peers. A study by the Institute of Education in 2014 found that even after controlling other factors that might influence the likelihood of a child being bullied, at age seven a child with ALN is twice as likely to be bullied as a child with no ALN. The Welsh Government expects Schools to be proactive in countering this trend.

3.10 Disabled learners and/or learners with ALN and deaf British Sign Language (BSL) signing learners may be more vulnerable to bullying because:

- of negative attitudes towards disabled children or children with a learning disability
- lack of understanding of different impairments and conditions
- they may not recognise they are being bullied and therefore not report it
- they may be doing different work or have additional support at school
- they may be more isolated than others due to their impairment or condition, because of attitudes, culture and barriers
- they may find it harder to make friends because of attitudes, culture and barriers
- they may communicate, interact and understand the world in different ways
- they may experience lots of change; for example, spending periods of time in different settings, with different professionals, moving from a mainstream to a special school, or spending periods of time accessing medical support.

3.11 Disabled learners and/or learners with ALN and deaf British Sign Language (BSL) signing learners may be at an increased risk of bullying because of attitudes, culture and barriers. In addition to being distressing, bullying can isolate learners further, impact their wellbeing, and set back their social and educational development. In addition to being distressing, it can isolate them further, impact their wellbeing, and set back their social and educational development.

3.12 Bullying of disabled learners and/or those with an ALN and deaf British Sign Language (BSL) signing learners can take any of the traditional forms of bullying.

Conditional friendship

In these cases, a group will allow a target to believe they are accepted into the friendship group. The group may however be using the target or place condition on them to be part of the group. They might make the Target the subject of their jokes, use them to run errands or even engage in criminal activity for them.

Exploitative

In these cases, the bullying takes the form of deliberately subjecting a target to something they cannot tolerate. For example, if a target is especially sensitive to sounds or smell, exploitative bullying might be where the Perpetrator repeatedly makes loud noises to startle them or spreads food over their work. The eventual aim is to get the Target child or young person into trouble because they will gradually become more stressed until they have an outburst of anger and/or retaliate.

Manipulative

In these cases, the Perpetrator manipulates the target who at first may not realise what is happening. They might believe the other child/young person or group of children/young people like them and they are friends. The Target however might be manipulated into high-risk relationships and the bullying becomes very controlling.

Positive action

3.13 The Welsh Government expect Schools to address bullying holistically whilst also considering the individual needs and circumstances of disabled learners and/or ALN. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, Schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to their disabilities or additional learning needs.

3.14 It is important to remember that not all disabled learners and/or those with an ALN are bullied.

Social Model of Disability

3.15 In 2002 the Welsh Assembly Government adopted the Social Model of Disability as the foundation of its work on disability in Wales, and it requires society to remove the barriers to promote equity for disabled people.

3.16 The Social Model of Disability offers a different perspective on disability stating that:

. . . disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. The Social Model of Disability looks at ways of removing barriers which restrict life choices for people with impairments or differences. When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

3.17 The Social Model of Disability makes the important difference between impairment and disability. It recognises that people with impairments are disabled by barriers that commonly exist in society.

3.18 It is not the inability to walk that prevents a person entering a building unaided, but the existence of stairs that are inaccessible to a wheelchair user. Disability is socially constructed, and the Social Model of Disability requires society to remove the barriers, so all people have equality.

3.19 In Schools removing barriers for disabled learners and developing a truly inclusive environment is a key element of an effective disability equality scheme and anti-bullying policy.

3.20 The Disability Rights Taskforce was established in direct response to the Locked-Out: Liberating Disabled People's Lives and Rights in Wales beyond Covid 19 Report. Its purpose was to bring members together to address the inequities and barriers, which impact the lives of many disabled people, and which were identified in the Locked-Out Report. It provided strategic oversight of ten working groups, each led by disabled people, namely:

- Embedding and Understanding of the Social Model of Disability (across Wales)
- Independent Living: Health
- Employment and Income
- Children and Young People
- Access to Justice
- Access to Services (including Communications and Technology)
- Independent Living: Social Care
- Travel
- Affordable and Accessible Housing
- Well-being (as a workshop)

3.21 Working to the principles of the Social Model of Disability, the Taskforce co-produced recommendations with more than 350 external stakeholders including children and young people, parents and carers, and a small number of schools. The Disability Rights Action Plan will set out the actionable steps and longer-term outcomes required to create positive change for all disabled children and adults, in Wales.

3.22 The Children and Young People working group identified the need to address disabled children's experiences of bullying and ableism to create a more inclusive environment. Bullying can have devastating effects on a child's self-esteem and mental health. Tackling ableism - the discrimination and social prejudice against disabled children and adults is essential to fostering a culture of respect, inclusion and participation.

Homophobic, biphobic, transphobic bullying

3.23 Homophobic and biphobic bullying are specific forms of bullying motivated by prejudice against lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Homophobic and biphobic bullying can be experienced by any learner. It is not characterised by specific acts but by the negative attitudes and beliefs towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people that underlie these acts.

3.24 Transphobic bullying is a specific form of bullying motivated by prejudice against trans people. Transphobic bullying can be experienced by any learner, including cisgender learners. It is not characterised by specific acts but by the negative attitudes and beliefs towards trans people that underlie these acts.

The Welsh Government expects Schools to incorporate anti-bullying work in the wider context of an equalities and social justice approach to respectful and healthy relationships and violence prevention as part of a whole school approach to celebrating difference, including embedding LGBTQ+ issues across the curriculum in maintained schools. It is mandatory for RSE to be LGBTQ+ inclusive for all children and young people in Wales.

3.25 Considered information sharing. As with any type of bullying or harassment, practitioners will need to consider information sharing carefully and only share information with parents and carers when necessary. This is because children and young people may not report prejudice-related bullying if they think this will automatically lead to the involvement of their parent or carer. Young people may be particularly concerned about this in relation to any prejudice-related bullying. Sometimes this may be to protect parents or carers, particularly if they or family members have also been subject to prejudice in the past. In incidents of homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying, or when bullying is focussed on an aspect of a young person's LGBTQ+ identity, the young person may have worries about how their parent/carer will respond. This may be the case whether or not the young person is LGBTQ+, but this may particularly apply when a young person does not want to come out to their parents or carers. Practitioners therefore need to exercise caution and sensitivity in how they share information with parents and carers in relation to prejudice-related bullying.

3.26 Transphobic bullying can be experienced by any learner, including cisgender learners. Sometimes learners who are gender non-conforming may experience transphobic bullying. Learners may also experience transphobic bullying if they have a family member or friend who is trans or non-binary.

3.27 Trans and non-binary learners in Wales are disproportionately likely to experience bullying. Not all bullying experienced by trans learners will necessarily be prejudice-related bullying, but the 2021 School Health Research Network data show that learners who are trans or who select that neither boy nor girl describes them are more likely to experience bullying.

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic insults used in place of other insults or indirectly

3.28 In Schools where learners believe they will not be challenged when using homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic insults and/or actions, they may use such language or actions towards others they are targeting for other reasons, such as additional learning needs or Race, religion or culture. Homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic insults can be used as a proxy for the language and/or actions they know they are likely to be challenged for using, such as racist insults. This behaviour can be observed through incident records or learner surveys, for example if learners with ALN report higher than average incidents of homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic bullying.

3.29 In Schools, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and actions can be wide-ranging and used directly or indirectly to:

- deride or disparage someone considered inferior or risible
- insult a learner with a Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual Parent/Carer or relative
- use sexual orientation to denigrate the actions of another
- imply something is unacceptable
- intimidate someone or make them feel uncomfortable through insinuation
- undermine and bully a learner by suggesting that they are Lesbian, Gay or bisexual, including by spreading rumours and malicious gossip
- bully a male or female learner considered effeminate or masculine respectively. To put down a learner with a gender non-conforming friend or family member
- to imply gender variance is unacceptable
- to verbally bully a Target considered gender-fluid.

Material in this section is adapted with permission of the publishers from 'That's So Gay! Challenging Homophobic Bullying' By Jonathan Charlesworth.

Positive action

3.30 Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying cases require very sensitive responses. The family of the Target may respond in ways which distress the child or young person further due to community pressure, homophobic, biphobic and/or transphobic views, or possibly being unaware of their child's sexual orientation.

3.31 The Welsh Government expect Schools to work with families to ensure the right support, at the right time, is provided for the learner to ensure the best outcomes for that child or young person. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, Schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or

minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to their having Protected Characteristics.

Gender based and Sexist bullying

3.32 Gender-based bullying is based on attitudes repeatedly expressed in ways that demean, intimidate and/or harm another person because of their gender. Gender-based bullying may be physical, verbal or psychological. Children and young people who are perceived by others to not conform to dominant or stereotypical gender roles can be targeted by this type of bullying. It can be experienced by learners of any gender.

Gender stereotypes can cause learners to feel they have to appear and adopt behaviours to conform to socially constructed expectations and behave in a way which is considered either 'male/masculine' or 'female/feminine'. This can contribute to gender-based bullying, where learners are bullied if they do not conform to expectations.

3.33 In 2015 Girlguiding UK found that 75% of girls and young women said anxiety about potentially experiencing sexual harassment affects their lives in some way. The same survey found that 90% of young women aged 13–21 agreed the UK Government should make sure all Schools are addressing sexual harassment and bullying in Schools. On 24 January 2024, the Welsh Government published the Peer on Peer sexual harassment in education settings: action plan, to prevent and respond to peer-on-peer sexual harassment in education settings.

3.34 Sexist bullying is based on sexist attitudes repeatedly expressed in ways that demean, intimidate and/or harm another person because of their sex or gender. It may sometimes be characterised by repeated inappropriate sexual behaviours including harassment, groping, 'upskirting', 'downshirting' and use of humiliating sexist language. In rare cases violence may be used.

3.35 Sexual bullying may be physical, verbal or psychological. Behaviours may involve suggestive sexual comments or innuendo including offensive comments about sexual reputation or using sexual language that is designed to subordinate, humiliate or intimidate. It may involve sharing of explicit images online, sometimes by multiple people, coercion, or unwanted sexual touching.

3.36 It is also commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes. Sexual bullying and sexual harassment are terms which are often used interchangeably in Schools with sexual bullying often regarded as a type of sexual harassment. Whether the incident is considered sexual bullying or sexual harassment, Schools should address the issue through their anti-bullying, behaviour or safeguarding policy whichever is deemed most appropriate. Sexual bullying can affect boys and girls.

Relationship based bullying

3.37 Relational bullying is a hidden type of aggression (or hostile behaviour) where peers harm "others through purposeful manipulation and damaging of their peer relationship". These acts of meanness may be difficult to detect things because a child may attack their peer verbally and pretend it was all a joke.

Stonewalling

The Silent Treatment: Stonewalling or the silent treatment is where people ignore one another. If two children are angry with another child, they may choose to go about their business, ignoring the other child completely.

Exclusions from the group

Exclusion from a group is where a single member can be cut out from all activities and participation in a group. This is slightly different from the silent treatment, because it goes a step further from ignoring by making sure a child knows that he or she isn't allowed in the group.

Spreading rumours and gossip

Children will often say things about other people, behind their backs, or even worse within earshot. Hearing it through the grapevine can easily skew true stories, and ruin children's reputations.

Taunting

Taunting is another form of spoken relational bullying, but it's said to a person's face. Taunting continues and even flourishes in the face of distress.

Making Friendship Conditional

It is often noticed when the phrase, "I'll only be your friend if..." is used. By making friendship conditional, it makes children overly cautious around their friends; those they should be most comfortable with.

Positive action

3.38 Girls and young women are most frequently harmed by sexist and sexual bullying; however, boys and young men can also suffer sexist and sexual bullying and humiliation. For example, by a group of girls/young women or a former girlfriend. Where this happens, Schools should not treat these cases any differently or less seriously than those involving girls and young women.

3.39 The Welsh Government expects Schools to consider all learners as potentially at risk of sexist or sexual bullying, particularly where they are perceived by others to not conform to dominant or stereotypical gender roles. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, Schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and

effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to their having Protected Characteristics.

3.40 The Welsh Government worked with a range of stakeholders, including the Police, to publish a multi-agency action plan to tackle peer-on-peer sexual harassment in education settings. The Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment Action plan was first published on the 24 January 2024. It includes specific actions to tackle the unwanted behaviours all too frequently experienced by LGBTQ+ children and young people.

3.41 The action plan outlines the actions taken by Welsh Government and partners reflecting the different experiences of sexual harassment and the needs of different groups, for example the impact of characteristics such as sexuality, gender identity, race, disability and ethnicity, as well as the challenges of intersectionality.

3.42 This will be reviewed annually on the anniversary of publication of the action plan, Welsh Government last commissioned updates on the peer on peer sexual harassment plan actions in December 2024.

3.43 Estyn are undertaking a national thematic review of healthy relationships in schools. This will include views and recommendations on the sufficiency of resources and training for teaching healthy relationships. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a mandatory cross cutting theme for all learners aged 3 to 16 in Wales. The RSE Code sets out learning at developmentally appropriate phases, and this includes learning about healthy relationships, keeping safe, online, and offline, and being confident to raise issues with responsible adults.

3.44 Cross-cutting themes for designing your curriculum – on Hwb.

Bullying linked to Race, religion and culture

3.45 This form of bullying describes a range of hurtful behaviour both physical and psychological that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded or powerless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith (including lack of faith), national origin or national status. At its most extreme it may also lead to the perpetrator and/or victim becoming radicalised (see 5.39 on counterterrorism and extremism).

3.46 Most public bodies in the UK, including Schools, use the working definitions of racism and a racist incident that were proposed in the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry in 1999.

3.47 The report defined racism as 'conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin' and a racist

incident as 'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'.

Forms of Racism

3.48 Historically, the term 'racism' has been used in situations where colour and physical appearance are considered to be significant markers of difference. However, there has almost always been a cultural element as well.

3.49 Racism around skin colour continues to be prevalent, and Schools must continue to be alert to it and to challenge it. But also, there are forms of racism, which are primarily to do with culture, customs, religion and heritage. These too must be addressed and countered by Schools.

3.50 Schools should consider, for example, the following.

Anti-Gypsyism

Gypsies and Travellers are the Target of a few misleading and harmful stereotypes, many of which are deep rooted in the public consciousness in the UK. Negative representations in the media further exacerbate the prejudice experience by these individuals. It has even been suggested that discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers remains 'permissible' in the UK. A consequence of this environment is that the task of winning the trust of Children and Young People of Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds is rendered even more difficult and sensitive.

Anti-migrant prejudice

The political discourse and media reporting around immigration has heightened tensions between communities and created a challenging climate for migrants in the UK. There is a trend of using dehumanising language when discussing immigration, for example words such as 'swarming' and 'invasive'. Migrants are often represented as a threat or a drain to public funds, and their motives for settling in the UK are regularly questioned. Schools must be alert to these harmful narratives and consider how their actions could foster good relations and help to eliminate discrimination. Schools should also be aware that refugee and asylum seeking children and young people may have endured traumatic experiences in their country of origins, during their journeys to the UK, and during their time seeking sanctuary in the UK. Incidents of bullying can deepen trauma and increase vulnerability.

Anti-Semitism

Hostility, dislike or fear of Jews and Jewish things, manifested in discriminatory attitudes and actions. As is also the case with Islamophobia, it is frequently exacerbated in Britain by events and underlying conflicts elsewhere in the world, particularly the Middle East.

Islamophobia

Hostility towards Islam which results in discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities and excludes Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs. The term itself is not ideal, but undoubtedly Schools should play a part in countering anti-Muslim prejudice and hostility within their own spheres of influence. Islamophobia is not necessarily to do with hostility to Islamic religious beliefs, but with denying equal rights and respect to people of Islamic heritage.

3.51 Schools should consider, when recording incidents of racist bullying, that there should be distinct and separate categories for noting the basis of the racist bullying e.g. based on religious heritage, Gypsies and Travellers, or those who seek sanctuary eg asylum seekers or refugees. Section 11 of this guidance provides information on reporting, recording and monitoring arrangements.

3.52 We know bullying is very often motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived Race, religion or culture. At the root of such bullying is a view some people are different or 'other'. By 'othering' them through remarks and insults it becomes easier to see any group as set apart and de-humanise them. This can remove all compassion. The role of Schools in helping every learner feel they belong is of immense value in building a cohesive society. Very young children do not see difference until they learn or adopt attitudes and prejudices which may be present around them.

Positive action

3.53 The Welsh Government expects Schools to work with learners, their families and communities to ensure the right support, at the right time, is provided to learners to ensure the best outcomes for that child or young person. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the Welsh Government expects schools to record the information which will assist in forming part of their duty under the PSED to collect, analyse and publish information about their progress in achieving their obligations under the PSED and ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners due to their having Protected Characteristics.

3.54 The Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (ArWAP) sets out several actions which aim to embed anti-racism within Wales' education system.

3.55 It is important that learners, their families, schools and education settings are not discouraged from reporting racism. Reporting incidents is an important part of putting in place appropriate and robust responses to racism. It helps schools plan preventative approaches and support their learners to participate in an anti-racist community.

3.56 Welsh Government is focused on ensuring that anti-racist training and the development of education practitioners is continuous, collaborative, and evaluative rather than a one-off, isolated, prescribed experience.

3.57 School governing bodies are encouraged to appoint Equity and Diversity champions as one way to show the whole school community that it takes equality seriously and wants to lead by example.

Approaches to respond to all types of prejudice-related bullying

As with any bullying incident, the key principles are ensuring that the child or young person is listened to and taken seriously, and that reporting is actively encouraged by all staff. There are also some specific areas to consider in relation to prejudice-related bullying and these are set out below.

Immediate response

Some schools have developed a shared consistent message which all staff can use if they if they hear discriminatory language, comments or 'banter', which can be applied to any type of discriminatory bullying or language. In these schools a set phrase has been developed for all practitioners, pastoral teams, support and associate staff to use in response. This phrase can:

- Make clear that what has been heard is unacceptable;
- Make clear that every child or young person belongs in your school and has the right to be treated equally and with respect;
- Make clear that the practitioner will address this as soon as appropriate.

This immediate response ensures a consistent way that all staff can confidently close down 'banter' quickly and effectively. It is then important to follow up with the child or young person using this language to explain to them why this language is discriminatory, threatening or hurtful, and why there is no place for it in your school or in society. Practitioners can use their judgement as to whether it is more appropriate to follow this up immediately, for example in the classroom, or subsequently, for example, requesting the young person to stay behind.

Developing understanding

When responding to bullying, settings should also work with the perpetrator to support them to change their behaviour on an individual level. Where bullying or harassment is prejudice-related this work with should also challenge the underlying prejudice. To be most effective, this work on an individual level with the perpetrator is reinforced by wider work across the whole setting to challenge discrimination, including through the curriculum.

Wellbeing support

It is recommended that settings automatically put in place ongoing wellbeing support if a learner reports prejudice-based bullying or harassment. Practitioners should determine the most appropriate support available in their setting, including ongoing pastoral support and support from school-based and/or external services.

Ongoing check-in and review

In the response to prejudice-related bullying schools should set meetings at intervals with the child or young person to check their wellbeing and to ask whether the bullying or harassment is continuing. If it is, then further interventions can be put in place with all parties. Schools should not expect children or young people to automatically re-report. Children and young people who experience bullying often have higher absences, so if the young person is absent ensure that they are pro-actively asked, with discretion, if they are experiencing bullying or any other type of harassment.

Use data to plan preventative approaches

As well as responding to the individual, it is important to reflect young people's lived experiences in developing preventative approaches through your curriculum and wider policies. Young people have identified that they value practitioners systematically addressing discrimination in this way. The below sections around recording and preventing bullying harassment outline how this can be achieved.

4. Bullying in an online context

4.1 Balancing the integration of technology in education to prepare learners for the future with concerns about online harms and impact on wellbeing is essential. Many Children and Young People gain understanding and experience of digital environments from birth, however, access to devices and experience of using technologies varies considerably. This disparity is not just linked to economic circumstances but to the different ways in which digital technologies are taken up within different families.

4.2 For many young people, there is little distinction between their online and offline lives, interactions on social media are seamlessly integrated into their daily routines. With technology offering constant connectivity, it is vital that they are equipped with the knowledge, skills and strategies to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly and know how and where to access help and support.

4.3 Where a technological future is inevitable, Schools need to consider the online harms from which Children and Young People need to be protected whilst gaining digital competence, preparing them for the world ahead. This is within the wider context of the Online Safety Act 2023 where online platforms and services will be required to protect and minimise the risk to children and young people of accessing harmful and age-inappropriate content and to give parents, children and young people clear routes to report problems if they occur.

4.4 While technology can be misused to facilitate traditional bullying behaviours such as insults or rumour spreading it also provides additional ways to bully and humiliate others such as the non-consensual sharing of images or videos, (see 'Responding to incidents of sharing nudes' guidance), live streaming, using anonymous messaging apps or harassing someone online. Online bullying often occurs at the same time or follows on from traditional bullying, but it can occur in isolation.

4.5 Anonymity online often leads to disinhibited and cruel behaviour that would be less likely face-to-face and can change traditional power dynamics seen in offline bullying. The vast audience for online content means single incidents of online abuse can quickly escalate into bullying, for example, by reposting, sharing and comments.

4.6 Online bullying is often more pervasive, intruding on private spaces, and the content posted online can be difficult to remove. This can continue to affect the target long after the incident. Digital communications leave a trail, providing evidence of bullying behaviour. This can be both a positive and a negative aspect, as it can help in addressing the bullying but also means the harmful content is recorded.

4.7 Online and offline bullying can crossover when incidents that start in person continue online, or when online harassment leads to face-to-face confrontations.

There are examples where bullying incidents that began offline were filmed and then posted online, causing the situation to escalate. Learners report that the features of online bullying, stated below, make the experience uniquely distressing.

- The audience can be unlimited
- It can occur anywhere and at any time, there is no respite from it
- It can involve unknown people although most cases involve known peers
- Technology facilitates the storage of images and messages for repeat viewing.

What is the role of Schools?

4.8 Digital competence is a cross curricular responsibility, together with literacy and numeracy, within the Curriculum for Wales in maintained schools. The Digital Competence Framework (DCF) has four strands of equal importance ('Citizenship', 'Interacting and collaborating', 'Producing', and 'Data and computational thinking').

4.9 The focus of the 'Citizenship' strand is on learners developing the skills and behaviours to contribute positively to the digital world around them, which includes protecting themselves on-line. The strand includes the elements of 'Identity, image and reputation', 'Health and well-being', 'Digital rights, licensing and ownership', and 'online behaviour and online-bullying'. These skills will help learners to critically evaluate their place within the digital world, so that they are prepared to encounter the positive and negative aspects of being a digital citizen.

4.10 The 'Interacting and collaborating strand' also allows learners to explore both formal and informal methods of communication including social media and instant messaging. Learners will not only look at how to store data, but also the implications of data laws and how to share information appropriately.

4.11 The rapidly evolving digital landscape and emerging technologies present both opportunities and risks. Hwb's 'Keeping Safe Online' area is designed to enhance online safety in education. It offers a wide range of resources, guidance, and training to help the entire school community stay informed about the latest trends and safety concerns and seek help when they need it.

4.12 Schools have powers to discipline learners for incidents taking place off the premises and powers to search or confiscate mobiles where learners have contravened the school behavioural policy and/or anti-bullying policy and the confiscation is the disciplinary penalty resulting from the contravention. Further information on legal powers is provided in section 5 of this guidance.

Positive action

4.13 The Welsh Government expects Schools to address online bullying where it has an impact on the well-being of learners at the school. Where necessary, Schools should refer a case to the appropriate agency or service. You must act in cases that involve a safeguarding concern. All staff should receive regular training in safeguarding and online safety.

4.14 Online and mobile communications leave a digital trail. Keeping evidence is essential. Schools should be mindful that evidence can be taken down or disappear from viewer online platforms at any time: whether removed by individuals or at the request of corporate administrators of social media platforms. Screen grabbing is a useful route to preserve evidence. Schools should log and record incidents as part of their wider safeguarding monitoring practice and impact evidence. In some cases, further evidence may come to light at a later point, and it may become necessary to review the entire history of the case again. Further information and guidelines on recording information is provided in section 11 of this guidance.

5. The law relating to bullying

5.1 There is no legal definition of bullying, but broader legislation can be applied to address certain acts of bullying and a broad definition of bullying as it should be applied in schools in Wales has been provided at section 2.24 of this guidance.

5.2 Legislation applies in Wales, the UK and internationally which aims to protect the rights of Children and Young People to a life free from abuse and harm including bullying. Existing legislation and international conventions with relevance to bullying in Wales include, set out in chronological order:

- Protection of Children Act 1978 (as amended)
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Criminal Justice Act 1988
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 (as amended)
- Children Act 2004
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

5.3 Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with ALN.

5.4 The Welsh Government has issued Connected Communities: A strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger social connections, which recognises the impact of loneliness and social isolation on individuals and communities.

Human Rights Act 1998

5.5 The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It incorporates the rights set out in the European

Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic British law. The Human Rights Act came into force in the UK in October 2000.

5.6 The 1998 Act requires all public bodies, including Schools and local authorities, and other bodies carrying out public functions to respect and protect individual's human rights.

5.7 Education in Wales: Our national mission sets out how we intend to improve the school system by developing transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements that place well-being at the heart of education. Enabling objective 3 (Strong and inclusive schools, committed to excellence, equity and well-being) further states our intention to embed equity.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

5.8 In 2004, the National Assembly for Wales adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as a basis of all policy making for Children and Young People in Wales.

5.9 Section 64 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 places a duty on schools, settings, and providers of EOTAS including PRUs to promote knowledge and understanding of Part 1 of the UNCRC, and of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, among those who provide teaching and learning.

Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011

5.10 In 2011, the National Assembly for Wales passed the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure ('the 2011 Measure'), which strengthened and built on the rights-based approach. It placed a duty on Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the requirements of the UNCRC when exercising any of their functions.

5.11 The 2011 Measure underpins the framework and values for education settings. Children and Young People have a right to be safe and a right to an education.

5.12 Public authorities have duties that contribute towards the realisation of the right of Children and Young People stated in the UNCRC and 2011 Measure.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

5.13 The purpose of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

5.14 Disabled people include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

5.15 The principles of the UNCRPD are:

- respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- non-discrimination
- full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- equality of opportunity
- accessibility
- equality between genders
- respect for the evolving capacities of Children and Young People with disabilities and respect for the right of Children and Young People with disabilities to preserve their identities.

Education Act 2002

5.16 The Education Act 2002 places a legal duty on maintained Schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of Children and Young People.

5.17 Some incidents of bullying may also be or reveal, a child protection issue. A bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection issue under the Children Act 1989 when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.' These concerns must be reported to the member of staff in school responsible for child protection and then reported to the local authority's children's social services. (This responsibility now extends to bullying incidents online where it has an impact on the well-being of learners at the school).

Education and Inspections Act 2006

5.18 Under section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act') the head teacher of maintained Schools is required to determine measures to (a) promote, among learners, self-discipline and proper regard for authority, (b) encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst learners, (c) secure that the standard of behaviour of learners is acceptable, (d) secure that learners complete any task reasonably assigned to them in connection with their education, and (e) regulate the conduct of learners. In determining such measures,

the head teacher must act in accordance with the behaviour policy, which all Schools are required by the 2006 Act to have. Procedures outlining how a school will address bullying and strategies for challenging bullying behaviour, should be clearly set out in a Schools anti-bullying policy. These measures must be communicated to all learners, school staff and parents and carers. The head teacher must follow through and adopt the policy and all learners, parents and carers and teachers should be notified of it once it has been decided.

5.19 Under section 89 of the 2006 Act head teachers can determine measures to regulate the conduct of learners when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. This is of particular significance to online bullying which often takes place out of school but can impact very strongly on the school life of those learners involved.

5.20 Section 94 of the 2006 Act also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items, such as mobile phones, from learners if they are being used to contravene the school behaviour and/or anti-bullying policy and are being confiscated as a disciplinary penalty. School staff may request a learner reveal a message or show them other content on their phone for the purposes of establishing if bullying has occurred. A refusal to comply might lead to the imposition of a disciplinary penalty for failure to follow a reasonable instruction. Where the text or image is visible on the phone, staff can act on this. Where the school's behaviour policy expressly allows it, a member of staff may search* through the phone themselves where the learner is reasonably suspected of involvement.

**Advice is never to do so without another appropriate staff member present. This is best done with the designated safeguarding lead or the ICT manager and a careful written note taken of the date, time, who was present and the purpose of the search and any evidence that it was necessary. It is vitally important that these matters are well covered in your school's anti-bullying and/or behaviour policy.*

Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008

5.21 The head teacher must require learners at the school to comply with the Statutory Travel Behaviour Code (the Travel Code) made by the Welsh Ministers under section 12 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. The Travel Code sets out specific requirements regarding the behavioural conduct of learners when travelling. The Travel Code requires all learners to "never bully other learners" and "respect others (including the bus driver)".

5.22 The purpose of the Travel Code is to promote safety when travelling, by laying down a set of behavioural standards across Wales, for all learners, irrespective of the mode of travel. This includes contract buses, public buses, public trains, walking, taxis, scooters, and motorbikes, cycling and journeys in cars. It applies to all learners

under the age of 19 years (or who have reached 19 but started a course when under 19 and continue to attend that course).

5.23 The Travel Code guidance sets out the framework for the sanctions regime within the Travel Code, which provides for the removal of free or subsidised transport for set periods of time if a learner misbehaves on learner transport.

5.24 There may be circumstances where the behaviour of the learner is not appropriate to be addressed through the Travel Code and in these cases, Schools should work with their local authority, with the parents and carers and other services such as the health professionals, the police, social services, etc. Bullying may be an example of this.

5.25 The Welsh Government expects the Travel Code to form part of a school's behavior and anti-bullying policies. Any misbehaviour, including bullying, on the journey to and from school should be dealt with using the most appropriate policy, such as the school's behaviour/ anti-bullying policies or by enforcement of the Travel Code.

The Equality Act 2010

5.26 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation to learners who have one of the Protected Characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

5.27 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires Schools to take action to improve outcomes for learners with different Protected Characteristics. It is a legal requirement, under the 2010 Act, which Schools in Wales must follow. It can be used as a helpful mechanism to tackle prejudice-related bullying and implement a whole school approach

5.28 The general duty has three aims, which each have clear links to anti-bullying. It requires Schools in Wales to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination and harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality and opportunity; and
- foster good relations across all Protected Characteristics.

5.29 To fulfil the three aims of the general duty, Schools have three sets of specific duties:

- To collect, analyse and publish information about their progress in achieving the three aims of the 2010 Act

- To decide on certain specific and measurable objectives that they will pursue over the coming years to achieve the three aims and publish these objectives

and when undertaking the first two sets of specific duties:

- To engage with people who have a legitimate interest – including all staff, all parents and carers and learners, and local groups, organisations, and individuals as appropriate.

5.30 Further information setting out the Welsh Government's expectation of Schools compliance with this provision is outlined in section 11 of this guidance

Criminal offences legislation

5.31 Some online bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, and the Online Safety Act 2023.

Malicious Communications Act 1988

5.32 Section 1 of the 1988 Act makes it an offence to send an indecent, grossly offensive or threatening letter, electronic communication or other article to another person with the intention that it should cause them distress or anxiety.

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

5.33 The 1997 Act is relevant for incidents that have happened repeatedly (i.e. on more than two occasions). Section 1 prohibits behaviour amounting to harassment of another which the person knows or ought to have known amounts to harassment. Section 2 provides a criminal offence if guilty of harassment and section 3 provides a civil remedy for the victim of harassment in section 1. Section 4 provides a more serious offence of someone causing another person to fear, on at least two occasions, that violence will be used against them. A civil court may grant an injunction to restrain a person from conduct which amounts to harassment and following conviction of an offence under sections 2 or 4, restraining orders are available to protect Targets of the offence.

5.34 Under the Protection of Children Act 1978 (as amended) and the Criminal Justice Act 1988 it is illegal to make, circulate or possess indecent images of a child under the age of 18 years.

5.35 Section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 inserts a new offence into the Sexual Offences Act 2003, at section 15A, criminalising sexual communication with a child. Under the new law, it is illegal for anyone over 18 years of age in England and Wales to send a sexually explicit message to a child or attempt to encourage the child to send something explicit themselves.

5.36 Part 10 of the Online Safety Act 2023 introduces new criminal offences covering encouraging or assisting serious self-harm, cyberflashing, sending false information intended to cause non-trivial harm, threatening communications, intimate image abuse, and epilepsy trolling. These offences apply directly to the individuals sending them.

5.37 If school staff or parents and carers feel that an offence may have been committed, they should seek assistance from the police.

5.38 The All Wales Practice Guides on safeguarding children in specific safeguarding circumstances are to be used in conjunction with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. This includes Guides on the following subjects; Safeguarding children from online abuse, Safeguarding children when there are concerns about harmful sexual behaviour, and Safeguarding children from radicalisation. All Practice Guides are available in the safeguarding children section on the Wales Safeguarding Procedures website - Safeguarding Wales.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

5.39 The Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on Schools in relation to the Prevent agenda. Schools must demonstrate that they are protecting Children and Young People from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies in place to identify Children and Young People at risk and, where necessary intervene as soon as possible. This is relevant in the context of bullying because Children and Young People who are isolated, victimised and/or who otherwise feel they do not belong, can be more likely to fall prey to recruitment and grooming. There are three UK Government Prevent training modules available online, all of which can be accessed in Welsh.

Prevent Awareness

5.40 Prevent Awareness is an introductory course for anyone new to Prevent, those who are unsure of what Prevent is and what signs to look for when it comes to risks of radicalisation. Awareness is the first course in our Prevent duty training.

5.41 It's for anyone working with members of the public on a regular basis, for example those who work in education, health, probation, police and local authorities. Members of the public who would like to learn more about how to identify behaviours that cause concern may also complete it.

Prevent Referrals

5.42 The Referrals course is primarily designed for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), Prevent professionals or equivalent roles who make Prevent referrals. If that responsibility is a part of your job role, regardless of your job title, then this course is for you.

5.43 It is also for anyone who may need to make a Prevent referral and those who might spot a concern and share it with their DSL or an equivalent so that they can make a referral to the police.

Channel Awareness

5.44 Channel is a multi-agency programme across England and Wales that provides support to anyone vulnerable to being drawn into or supporting terrorism. This course is for Channel panel members, local authority Channel panel Chairs, and anyone who may be asked to contribute to, sit on a Channel panel.

5.45 Schools should have clear safeguarding procedures which deal with matters linked to Prevent. The Prevent Duty Guidance provides education settings, that are subject to the Prevent duty, with an understanding of their requirements as part of their wider safeguarding and welfare responsibilities.

5.46 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016 and seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It makes public bodies think more about: • the long-term • work better with people, communities and each other • look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. The Act has seven well-being goals, creating a vision to (among other things) make Wales healthier, more equal, globally responsible and more resilient.

5.47 Welsh Language Standards – The Welsh Language Wales Measure 2011 provides that the Welsh Ministers can specify five types of standards in regulations: service delivery standards, policy-making standards, operational standards, promotion standards, and record-keeping standards. Although it is the Welsh Ministers that specify the standards, it is for the Welsh Language Commissioner to decide which standards a body has to comply with.

6. What works when launching new strategies

6.1 Successful implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy to challenge and prevent bullying in Schools must involve the whole school community. Taking a strategic whole-school approach to challenging and preventing bullying is more likely to succeed than a single initiative by a teacher or group of learners.

6.2 The most effective interventions are sustained over the long-term, developed with staff, learners, parents and carers, and partners in the community. These are monitored, evaluated, and revised regularly to reflect changes in circumstances or context. Interventions are supported by a school ethos which inhibits bullying and promotes empathy and respect. A single intervention or initiative is unlikely to provide a solution to bullying and the most effective anti-bullying strategy will usually include a range of tools which can be adapted to suit particular incidents and form part of the school's wider whole school approach to delivering the Curriculum And other priorities such as those for well-being. Schools are required by the Curriculum and Assessment Act (Wales) 2021 to keep their curriculum under review and ensure it continues to comply with legal requirements set out in the Act. Schools should also look to respond to the changing needs of their learners and communities and seek to maintain or improve existing practice to help realise high expectations for all. Everything a learner experiences in pursuit of the four purposes is not simply what we teach, but how we teach and crucially, why we teach it.

6.3 The Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on all authorities delivering children's services to collaborate with stakeholders and partner agencies to deliver integrated services and improve preventative and early interventions for Children and Young People and their families.

6.4 The Welsh Government recommends Schools establish an anti-bullying lead within their Schools as a designated role for an individual or a team. The key responsibilities of the role are:

- Anti-bullying policy creation, review, and on-going development. This will involve all learners, all staff, parents and carers, school governors and relevant local authorities;
- Implementation of the policy. This will include scheduled assessments and monitoring of its effectiveness and the progress being made;
- Ensuring evaluation of every procedure takes place and this informs policy reviews. Document all reviews in procedures, documentation, etc.;
- Managing bullying incidents processes, such as intervention used, reporting, recording, monitoring etc.;

- Coordinate and manage training and support for staff, parents, and carers where appropriate;
- Research, evaluate and appraise strategies for preventing bullying behavior

6.5 An effective anti-bullying strategy should set out how the school intends to coordinate its anti-bullying work within its whole school approach. It should include developing a holistic range of interventions, which include preventing, identifying, responding to, and challenging incidents of bullying.

6.6 To achieve a whole-school approach, the Welsh Government expects Schools to:

- Prevent school toilets becoming spaces where bullying can occur. All learners need to feel safe and comfortable using a toilet in school. This can be supported by providing learners with flexibility to choose which toilets they can use, for example by enabling learners to use a number of different toilets across the school site, or by providing some washrooms/toilets which are sex separate and some which are mixed provision.
- Have a strong moral leadership from the head teacher, other senior leaders and the governing body, which models values and high expectations, thereby 'leading by example' by valuing health and emotional well-being;
- Imbed a climate and culture, where learners feel safe, secure, and valued, promotes the UNCRC and UNCRPD, in particular, seeks and listens to the voice of the child or young person;
- Have in place a secure understanding of the health and well-being of your learners and effective methods to monitor and evaluate this;
- Provide a curriculum that meets the needs of learners (both now and for their future), with learning experiences that support with and challenge learners about their health and well-being;
- Establish and maintain strong and responsive care, support, and guidance;
- Create an environment that promotes health and well-being (e.g., space to play and relax, maximising the benefits of outdoor learning, suitable toilet facilities, support healthy food and drink, ensure site security etc.)
- Ensure effective communication and partnership working with parents and carers.

- Support professional learning for all staff, tailored to meet their needs and responsibilities.

6.7 Before launching a new anti-bullying strategy, the Welsh Government advises that Schools should:

- engage widely with the school community to ensure your policies and procedures are relevant and updating them periodically. The Welsh Government recommends reviewing the policies at least every three years or sooner in light of new initiatives or wider relevant policy change
- set clear and realistic objectives about what the strategy aims to achieve (awareness raising activities should be undertaken to promote these objectives amongst staff and learners)
- if needed, training on how to implement the objectives of the strategy should be provided

6.8 Information on what governance arrangements Schools should have in place is provided in Section 7 of this guidance.

6.9 Prevention should be fully embedded. Further information on prevention is provided in Section 8 of this guidance.

How your school will know a strategy is effective

6.10 When a strategy is introduced a cycle of reflective practice begins measuring the situation at that point providing a baseline against which progress can be benchmarked. The Welsh Government advises Schools should conduct a self-evaluation exercise seeking feedback from both staff and learners to measure the extent of bullying behaviour present. Surveys provide a useful method of collecting this information, sample surveys can be found in the Toolkit.

6.11 Schools should regularly measure the views of learners, parents and carers, and staff. In this way they will be able to measure effectiveness. Learners should be fully engaged in developing, implementing, and reviewing activity. Co-construction means working with the pupils and families on the anti-bullying strategy/policy/approaches rather than asking their views on proposals.

6.12 Monitoring incidents of bullying enables a school to identify patterns of behaviour and the extent of bullying which in turn enables them to take pro-active steps to challenge unacceptable behaviour and bullying. Section 11 of this guidance provides information on reporting, recording and monitoring arrangements. Schools which use monitoring processes are best placed to be able to modify their anti-bullying policies effectively to respond to specific trends and issues.

6.13 Data contributes and can be used to evidence progress as part of self-evaluation and the school development plan, helping Schools to:

- Understand the current situation and show where to focus your efforts
- Assist in achieving the equality goals you have set as a school
- Allow you to measure and demonstrate success
- Assist you to meet your general and specific obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

6.14 Where Schools collect data about bullying incidents, much of which would be personal data as defined under data protection legislation, such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the Welsh Government expects Schools to work with their Data Protection Officer to ensure that all personal data is processed lawfully and with appropriate protection for the individual's rights.

The importance of involving your learners in developing and implementing the anti-bullying strategy

6.15 Without the wholehearted involvement of the Children and Young People in your school, anti-bullying strategies are not likely to succeed. The Welsh Government expects Schools to fully engage learners as an essential step in all stages of anti-bullying work.

6.16 To determine how effective a school strategy is, it is important to consult with all those involved in implementing the strategy – this includes the learners. In some Schools, staff may believe it works well, while most learners may say the opposite. For strategies to be most effective there needs to be a consensus that the strategy is working. This involves ongoing dialogue between staff and learners. A key question, which should be asked continually is “Are there ways in which it could be improved?” Some approaches might work better in some circumstances. Good ideas may not be working well because small, but significant, changes are needed.

6.17 An example of this is a school, which had gone to considerable trouble to train peer supporters and then found that not a single report was received for two terms. It found that the room allocated for children to meet and talk to the peer supporters, was nicknamed ‘the fishbowl’ by learners because it made them highly visible due to glass panels. They stayed away. Not because the peer support offered was inadequate but simply because the facility provided was unsuitable.

6.18 Useful questions Schools might ask prior to implementing anti-bullying strategies include:

- Do learners understand what is meant by bullying?
- Do learners understand that they can report other types of incidents which are not bullying?
- How can learners report a concern or a bullying case and are these effective or being used?
- Have learners' suggestions and observations been considered when developing this strategy?
- Have learners been fully prepared for the launch of a new strategy?

The importance of involving parents and carers in developing and implementing your anti-bullying strategy

6.19 It is imperative that Children and Young People are taught, both at home and in school, about building and maintaining respectful relationships. This is the foundation on which positive behaviour is based.

6.20 Parents and carers have a significant role to play, as part of the school community, in taking responsibility for their child's behaviour inside and outside school, so too do schools (section 6.27 provides more information about school responsibility for the behavioral conduct of learners outside of school).

6.21 Partnership working between the school and parents and carers to maintain high standards of behaviour and to encourage respect and kindness towards other people is vital. The Welsh Government supports Family Engagement Officers who are employed by schools to help foster a trusting and positive relationship between their schools and families by bridging the gap between school and home life. Through offering support and guidance, they ensure that parents and carers feel listened to and are engaged with the school. They work to improve attendance by understanding the broader factors that may be preventing the child from wanting to attend school and working with families to tackle these.

6.22 We recognise that issues around attendance, behaviour and exclusions can have an impact on the wellbeing of children. Preventing attendance and behavioural concerns from escalating, with the right support, can maintain learner engagement in education. We have a wealth of guidance available to support practitioners to support learners.

6.23 The Exclusion from schools and pupil referral units will be updated during 2025/2026. A behaviour toolkit resource for practitioners will also be published during 2025.

6.24 Schools should engage with parents and carers, taking into account the following considerations when developing and rolling out your anti-bullying strategy:

- Are they aware of the new or existing strategy?
- Do they know how you would like them to report any concerns and how to appropriately escalate matters should they not be satisfied with the outcome of their initial concern?
- Do they know who to speak to when raising a concern about bullying and what evidence to provide?
- Have they been engaged to support their children and support the vision and values of the school?
- If they are aware prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable within the school community this can help a school deal with incidents when they occur.
- If they are not satisfied with the way the school has dealt with a case of bullying, which they reported they should be aware of your complaints procedure.

6.25 There are a variety of techniques schools can employ to achieve effective Parental/ Carer engagement including:

- Online feedback forms
- Group meetings with staff, parents, and carers
- Parents and carers evenings to help families provide support for learning as well as allowing parents and carers the opportunity to provide quality feedback on their child's progress and learning environment. Take advantage of other opportunities to communicate to families the most effective ways in which they can support their child's learning and well-being, and support them to act on this, e.g., designing activities that learners can work on with their families, sending messages digitally or that children take home from school etc.

6.26 Engaging with families is a key elements of the Welsh Government's Community Focused Schools approach. The published *Developing family engagement in Community Focused Schools* guidance provides sets out how within a Community Focused School, families are made to feel welcomed, listened to and valued. Their needs, and those of their children, are understood and catered for. They are encouraged to play an active role in their child's learning and are supported to best utilise and enhance the home learning environment, which includes the

physical characteristics of the home, but also the quality of the learning support that they provide themselves. This guidance details some of the ways that schools can develop their family engagement provision. It provides an overview to prompt discussion and links to other relevant guidance where appropriate. Further supplementary resources will be developed to compliment this guidance through ongoing engagement with the sector.

Behaviour and conduct outside of school

6.27 Section 89(5A) of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 gives head teachers a statutory power to regulate learners' behaviour in these circumstances 'to such extent as is reasonable', bullying may be an example of where head teachers used this power. Individual schools are best placed to make judgements about what is reasonable in their circumstances. However, paragraph 6.30 suggests factors that a school could consider in making such judgements.

6.28 While schools can regulate certain conduct off school premises, such as bullying behaviour, the situation will be discussed and addressed with the learner and a suitable consequence for their actions will be implemented and reviewed.

Dealing with incidents of misconduct on and off school premises

6.29 Effective policies on school behaviour, anti-bullying and discipline should clearly set out expectations for positive behaviour of learners off the school site. This includes behaviour on activities arranged by the school, such as work experience placements, educational visits and sporting events; behaviour on the way to and from school; and behaviour when wearing school uniform (if any) in a public place.

6.30 Schools must act reasonably both in relation to expectations of learner behaviour and in relation to any measures determined for regulating behaviour by learners when off the school site and not under the lawful control or charge of a school staff member. Schools should decide what to consider in deciding whether a rule or sanction in a particular case is reasonable, challenging bullying behaviour may be an example of when schools implement this provision. A school could sensibly take account of the following factors (which may not all apply to every incident).

- The severity of the misbehaviour.
- Whether the learner(s) in question was wearing the school uniform or was otherwise readily identifiable as a member(s) of the school.
- The extent to which the behaviour in question would have repercussions for the orderly running of the school and/or might pose a threat to another learner or member of staff (e.g. bullying another learner or insulting a member of the staff).

- Whether the misbehaviour in question was on the way to or from school (schools in collaboration with their local authority should consider whether to impose sanctions under the travel behaviour code or school behaviour policy when addressing misconduct on the journey to and from school. Section 5.21 of this guidance provides more information relating to this provision).
- Whether the misbehaviour in question was outside the school gates or otherwise in close proximity to the school.
- Whether the misbehaviour was while the learner was on work experience, taking part in a further education course as part of a school programme or participating in a sports event with another school (i.e. when the learner might be expected to act as an ambassador for the school) which might affect the chance of opportunities being offered to other learners in the future.
- Whether the learner(s) were truanting.
- The extent to which the reputation of the school has been affected.

6.31 Applying such factors, there would, for example, be a strong case for educating the learner in the first instance, understanding the reasons behind behaviour should be the first step, with more formal restrictions the last resort, after restorative justice approaches have been exhausted. There would also be a strong case for educating a learner in the first instance for verbally abusing other people, including members of the public, while travelling on the way to or from school. However, the case for disciplining a learner for verbally abusing somebody who had no connection with the school at a weekend would be much weaker. This is not of course to say that schools should take no interest in behaviour they do not regulate. Liaison between the school, parents and carers and those in the local authority and wider community responsible for tackling antisocial and bullying behaviour may be particularly relevant in this context.

6.32 Schools may find it helpful to relate whatever factors they decide to use to a set of overall objectives that make clear why a policy for regulating behaviour, including strategies for challenging bullying behaviour and promoting respectful relations off school premises is being applied. Such objectives might be to:

- maintain good order on transport and while walking or cycling to and from school, educational visits or other placements such as work experience or college courses
- secure behaviour which does not threaten the health or safety of learners, staff or members of the public
- provide reassurance to learners who may feel threatened or intimidated by the behaviour of a small minority of their peers or from 'stranger danger'

- provide reassurance to members of the public about school care and control over learners and thus protect the reputation of the school
- provide protection to individual staff from harmful conduct by learners of the school when not on the school site.

6.33 Many extended school activities take place off school premises. Behaviour during such activities may be dealt with in the same way as for any other on-site activity. It would be logical to deal with behaviour during off-site extended school activities which are not supervised by school staff in the same way as behaviour during Further Education, college or work experience placements. Further information and guidelines on regulating behaviour and conduct outside of school is provided in section 5.18 and 5.19 of this guidance, 'Education and Inspections Act 2006' of this guidance.

Involving all school staff in developing and implementing the anti-bullying strategy

6.34 Staff should be well prepared and feel confident to manage any incidents reported to them. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff. They should expect more reports than usual when a new strategy is launched. It is considered a positive sign when Children and Young People come forward.

6.35 Schools who report they have no bullying may not have the trust of their learners. Where schools report they have no bullying, this may be because of the reporting mechanisms or responses being ineffective. This may mean that learners do not feel safe raising their concerns, or that parents and carers have removed the learner from school in response to bullying. 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.

6.36 If Children and Young People lack confidence that they will achieve a good outcome when they report what is happening to them, they tend to stay silent. The Children's Commissioner for Wales found that 'trust' was a recurring theme raised by children. Having a trusted person to talk to emerged as a key pathway to address bullying.

6.37 Schools can find that the most challenging aspect of reducing bullying is to obtain a good resolution to cases. If learners come forward only to find that interventions either make no difference, or worsen the situation, trust is lost. Evaluations frequently reveal that this is the weakest point in a school's strategy.

6.38 A resource in the Toolkit for this guidance provides more information on effective approaches to responding when instances of bullying are reported.

6.39 An effective anti-bullying strategy works best when it is part of a broader school framework: specifically, a whole school approach to health and well-being, which includes cross cutting policies and procedures that help deliver the strategy in a consistent and coherent manner.

6.40 The link between bullying and mental health is well known. At its most extreme young people have taken their own lives as a result of being bullied, therefore combating suicide and self-harm in education is a priority area.

6.41 Self-harm in school-aged children and young people is a very real issue that we all need to take seriously. In 2019 we published suicide and self-harm guidance for teachers, “Responding to issue of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people”, which provides practical advice on how to help learners. It covers a general understanding of self-harm, signs to look out for, tips on how to have those conversations and what to do if they become aware that a pupil is self-harming.

6.42 As part of the development of the new Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Strategy for Wales 2024-2034 we analysed evidence from stakeholders, submitted during a public consultation held in 2024, to better understand the key drivers of suicide and self-harm in Wales which includes a focus on children and young people. The consultation summary report was published on 10 October 2024 and informs the development of the strategy. Objective 3 of the new strategy describes a targeted approach of support for those who need it most and recognises schools as a key setting. We know that certain groups in society including some children and young people, are at heightened risk of self-harm, for example younger girls. We need to ensure they have access to person centred support when and where they need it.

6.43 Section 7 in this guidance provides more information on effective approaches to governance and policy development.

7. Governance

Policy

7.1 The Welsh Government recommends schools and education settings develop their anti-bullying policy as a separate policy document, but that it should link to the school behaviour policy, which schools must have by law.

7.2 The Welsh Government expects school and education settings' anti-bullying policies to outline:

- the vision and values of your school
- your definition of what is meant by bullying
- why it is important to prevent and challenge bullying
- how awareness of bullying will be raised
- how anti-bullying work will be embedded in the curriculum rather than an isolated annual event (such as during anti-bullying week)
- involvement of staff, learners, parents and carers and school governors in development and implementation of the policy
- signs a child or young person might be experiencing bullying
- how bullying will be prevented including on journeys to and from school
- when the school will take action in relation to bullying outside the school
- how the school will respond to incidents
- how to report bullying
- what learners can expect
- what parents and carers / school community / others can expect. How incidents will be recorded and monitored
- how learners and/or parents and carers / school community / others can appropriately escalate the matter if they do not feel that their concerns are being taken seriously
- how you will evaluate and review your policy and strategy.

Making the policy effective

7.3 The overall approach taken by the school should be clear to all readers, with fair and consistent consequences and sanctions explained. The policy should clearly support the vision and values of the school and set out the school's equality objectives to meet your Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

7.4 The policy should be regularly updated. The Welsh Government recommends reviewing the policies and making any relevant updates at least every three years or sooner in light of new initiatives or broader policy change. As part of the review, it is recommended that all members of the school community be consulted, including staff, learners, Parent/Carers and support agencies and organisations, such as the school nursing service. Following a serious incident of bullying, you may wish to review your policy and strategy and make relevant adjustments.

7.5 The anti-bullying policy should be user-friendly and be made known to all teaching and support staff, to learners and parents and carers. Schools should publish the policy on your websites. Where this is not an option, schools should clearly outline how staff, learners and parents and carers can access the policy. Schools may also adopt an approach whereby the policy, or specific elements of it, are made available for learners digitally or in hard copies. This may help to embed the policy into your school culture and extend the message to learners' homes too.

7.6 As part of the school's approach to ongoing training and development we recommend staff should receive regular training on your anti-bullying policy and procedures including in relation to any new trends or concerns arising within your school. On induction all new staff should be made aware of the policy, the approach taken by your school and how the procedures are administered. Playground, lunch time and school transport supervisors and school administrators should be fully aware of the policy and the procedures they should follow.

7.7 The anti-bullying policy should not just align with the school's behaviour policy, it should also interlink with RSE and broader mandatory school policies such as safeguarding, attendance, acceptable use of ICT, online safety, travel behaviour and exclusions and the work of wider agencies which support the learner and school. Aligning policies will help schools ensure a whole school approach is taken to multifaceted issues. For example, where a learner is absent from school, the Welsh Government expects schools to work with the learner and their parents and carers alongside family engagement officers (FEOs) and education welfare officers (EWOs), where appropriate, to determine the nature of the absence. If it is determined the learner does not wish to attend school because of bullying, the school's priority should be to address the root cause of the absence, namely the bullying. Where various policies within a school are written by different individuals or groups, checks should be made to ensure they do not result in conflicting advice and inconsistencies. All policies should interact seamlessly and consistently using the same definitions, terminology and values. The various policies should contribute to your whole school approach to health and well-being.

8. Prevention

Planning: what should be considered

8.1 Before deciding on which of the many effective approaches you use, it is important to have some structure in place across the whole school. Prevention is a vital component of your anti-bullying strategy.

8.2 The Welsh Government expects schools to adopt a whole-school approach for promoting positive, respectful behaviour between staff and learners as part of their whole school approach to health and well-being. This approach should be woven through all school activity. Creating an environment which encourages positive behaviour and addresses the root causes of unacceptable behaviour. This will help create an inclusive, engaging environment where learners feel safe and are ready to learn.

Effective Communication

8.3 Schools should be very mindful of the behaviours being promoted in their settings. Focus should be made on positive behaviour and action, emphasising what learners should be doing, rather than concentrating on negative behaviour underpinned by a 'must not' culture.

8.4 All schools encounter negative behaviour in their settings, which needs to be addressed. However, schools should consider whether negative behaviour is receiving too much attention. If this is happening, schools should create a sense that the norm is positive behaviour by keeping a high profile for pro-social behaviour, kindness, loyalty and team spirit, in contrast to a low profile for negative behaviour, such as bullying. Whilst the unwanted behaviour continues to be addressed as rigorously as before, the message is not constantly about what learners should not do.

Tailoring intervention

8.5 Young children who bully others by 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. Sensitive restorative work and education can be effective in these cases. Group activities exploring why some words are unacceptable can be used along with meetings with parents and carers who should be reminded about the values of the school. Effective engagement with parents and carers in developing the values and anti-bullying strategy in your school from the outset may also encourage learners and their families to adopt the shared values in the wider community.

8.6 When young people become adolescents, they are more likely to be influenced by their peers and therefore interventions should adopt a whole-school approach,

addressing all learners within a school or education setting so the majority opinion is heard.

Curriculum for Wales

8.7 One-off lessons or short ‘blitz’ type activities are less likely to succeed than work embedded in the curriculum which progressively addresses relationships, positive behaviour and resilience.

8.8 The Curriculum for Wales framework provides every school in Wales with the opportunity to design and adopt their own curriculum. It encourages schools to build their own vision for their learners within the context of the four purposes and the learning defined at a national level. It is for schools and practitioners, drawing on guidance and resources, to decide what specific experiences, knowledge and skills will support their learners to realise the four purposes. This is set within the consistency provided by the national framework.

Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience

8.9 The curriculum’s mandatory Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience (Area) provides a holistic structure for understanding health and well-being. It is concerned with developing the capacity of learners to navigate life’s opportunities and challenges. The fundamental components of the area are physical health and development, mental health and emotional and social well-being. It will support learners to understand and appreciate how the different components of health and well-being are interconnected, and it recognizes that good health and well-being are interconnected, and it recognises that good health and well-being are important to enable successful learning.

8.10 Successful design, learning and teaching of the Area in the curriculum should be both underpinned and supported by the whole-school approach as the two go hand-in-hand. A whole-school approach to health and well-being should pervade all aspects of school life and be supported by school policies and practices.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

8.11 Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a mandatory requirement within the Curriculum for Wales in maintained schools and aims to keep children and young people safe from harm. The mandatory RSE Code sets out learning at developmentally appropriate phases and includes learning on a range of issues such as healthy relationships, keeping safe, online and offline, and being confident to raise issues with responsible adults.

8.12 RSE aims to reduce all forms of bullying and discrimination, and learners are supported to develop an understanding of the social, emotional, physical and legal nature and impact of harmful behaviours, and awareness of laws in place to protect from different forms of discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect and harassment.

8.13 The 'Empowerment, Safety and Respect' strand of the RSE Code sets out the requirement for schools to support learners to develop empathy, kindness and compassion towards each other and empowering them with the confidence to draw upon available support if they are concerned about their own safety or that of others.

Targeted approaches

8.14 The Welsh Government expects schools to adopt and maintain a whole-school approach, to build a supportive school culture and shared values. Implementing this approach can be instrumental in enabling and empowering learners to acquire and maintain the social skills that will allow them to 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 appropriate way and not treated as a 'one-off' lesson. Across the curriculum, use of literature, audio visual material, drama, music, debates and visits into and out of school can help develop learners' understanding.

8.15 Targeted initiatives provide an opportunity to reinforce a positive and inclusive school culture. This can include awareness days, workshops, sign-posting and drop-in sessions as well as involving the wider neighbourhood and utilising a variety of organisations to educate learners on equality and diversity.

8.16 Schools should not be restricted to embarking on targeted initiatives only within dates set aside for planned prevention activities. In fact, limiting discussion of equality or discrimination issues solely to publicised or scheduled events misses numerous opportunities for 'teachable moments' such as what is topical in the news.

9. Responding when bullying occurs

9.1 Schools must comply with their legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of learners and any other legal duties. The Welsh Government expects all head teachers and school governing bodies to ensure all teachers and administrative staff, are aware of their school's anti-bullying policy and the procedures to follow if a learner reports being bullied.

9.2 Staff should be mindful that a learner may approach any member of staff they trust. Staff training and regular updates will increase their readiness and confidence to notice and respond when issues of bullying present. School procedures outlining the steps to take for addressing bullying should be understood by all staff and applied in a consistent and fair manner. This will help to ensure that when a learner reports an issue of bullying to staff, irrespective of which staff member the learner approaches, the same procedure is followed.

9.3 Successful strategies provide a consistent framework with options to suit the situation. Bullying is complex behaviour, and the response should be appropriate, whilst also following standardised framework guidelines. A school's anti-bullying strategy should be child-centred and not lose sight of the needs of the learner, irrespective of whether they are a Target or Perpetrator of bullying or a bystander. If the response is too generic, heavy handed or lacks sincerity, it can have the opposite effect from that intended. Schools should develop your anti-bullying strategy in collaboration with learners and parents and carers to ensure procedures for responding when instances occur are understood, agreed to and implemented by all those in the school community.

9.4 Effective schools use each incident as a learning opportunity. The school's role is to nurture and support learners to understand they are in the process of learning to be informed citizens of the future.

Work should be undertaken with all parties

9.5 Alongside the support provided to Targets of bullying, schools should also ensure that those who perpetrate bullying of others also need and should receive help, support and opportunities to change their behaviour as part of a restorative justice approach. Effective listening can be used along with teaching relationship skills to those who bully others. They should be guided to recognise and handle their difficult feelings and to learn positive communication skills. Bullying behaviour can be a sign of some bigger problem at school, home or elsewhere in a Child or Young Person's life. Domestic violence, punitive parenting, neglect, bereavement or parents and carers parting can be revealed when working with learners who bully. Staff should be appropriately prepared for such disclosures as part of broader training, such as safeguarding. Schools with an open culture and good safeguarding

protocols will be responsive to all parties involved in bullying. (See the reference to 'Bullying and Safeguarding' in section 2 of this guidance).

9.6 Schools should also support bystanders of bullying. Children and Young People who witness bullying and do nothing to help the Target or stop the situation may feel bad or guilty about it later. Bystanders who laugh or join in the bullying are at risk of becoming bullies themselves. Schools should ensure Children and Young People who are bystanders to bullying understand that they have the power to challenge the bullying, either by intervening – if they feel safe to do so or by reporting it immediately to a member of staff or trusted adult.

9.7 Educating learners by helping them to develop resilience by practicing the problem-solving and assertiveness skills they need to challenge unacceptable behaviour, stand up for themselves and for their peers and feel safe is important.

Routes to report

9.8 Learners may disclose an incident or incidence of bullying in a variety of ways and to an individual they view as a trusted adult. Schools should also offer a range of ways for learners to report bullying. These can include:

- Trained peer supporters or 'buddies'
- A quiet and private space to talk
- Anti-bullying pastoral leads and staff available at key times
- School nurses or counsellors
- 'I wish my teacher knew' cards
- Feedback boxes

Effective listening

9.9 Those who are Targets of bullying behaviour tend to feel powerless. One of the first steps when responding to incidents is to work to restore their capacity to make choices for themselves. 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. Acknowledge calmly the anger or distress of the targeted Child or Young Person speaking. If they need time to process their thoughts or articulate the story, try not to rush them. Staff should 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. This will help to reassure them that their concerns are being taken seriously.

Consider the setting

9.10 Staff should consider the environment where discussions with learners about bullying take place. Ensuring the setting is neutral and offers suitable levels of

privacy can make the difference between a learner engaging in discussion or not. Staff are recommended to sit at the same level as the learner reporting their experience of bullying. Placing chairs at a slight angle rather than directly opposite each other can also help reduce any conscious or unconscious sense of confrontation or opposition. Ensure privacy to avoid other learners overhearing what is said or seeing a meeting taking place, but for safeguarding best practice, it should be possible for other staff to observe the meeting.

Saving evidence

9.11 Learners who are bullied should be encouraged, where possible, to keep evidence of the activity. Evidence may be threats or images sent on or offline by messaging, conversations, notes or images, damaged clothing or other belongings, online conversations or notes. Bystanders may also be able to provide witness statements or additional evidence. Dates and times when things happened should be noted. Screenshots can be saved as online evidence.

10. Interventions

10.1 The Welsh Government expects Schools to have a consistent approach to challenge bullying, which utilises a range of tools to deliver the anti-bullying policy. This will enable staff to select the most appropriate interventions, which they feel is best suited to address the individual needs of each case in a timely fashion.

10.2 Bullying damages healthy self-esteem, replacing positive beliefs about oneself and beliefs linked to shame, disgust, criticism, incapacity, powerlessness and helplessness. When deciding on next steps to increase the self-efficacy of the learner who reports being bullied, staff should try to include decisions made by the learner themselves where appropriate. Staff may wish to offer some choices unless, in doing so, there is a risk of evidence of significant harm. In that case staff should apply their School safeguarding procedures. Choices offered to the targeted learner may include:

- How the incident could be handled
- Whether changes to the learner's current journey to and from School should be considered in more detail
- Whether the learner would like help from peers, a trusted adult, or group activity such as a club or lunch time activity

10.3 Interventions may be at a class level, year group level or only with the individuals involved in the bullying incident.

10.4 There are a variety of intervention methods Schools may choose to use. Examples of these include:

Mediation

This involves helping the Perpetrator and Target of bullying 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 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

Is about Children and Young People feeling accepted and included by other learners. It can help individuals feel like they belong in a School and can be an

important factor in reducing bullying and conflict. It can be encouraged in Schools in both informal and formal ways

School sanctions

Schools can use disciplinary sanctions, as set out in their school policies to address bullying. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable

10.5 There are various programmes schools can adopt to address bullying. It is for individual schools to determine the most effective way to address bullying and implement anti-bullying policies in their school setting; this includes which, if any, programmes they choose to employ to support this provision.

10.6 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.

10.7 The school should address the Perpetrator/s of bullying according to the procedures and agreed approach in the school if they are found to have acted inappropriately; but Perpetrators must be allowed to put their side of the story and given a fair hearing before any decisions are made.

10.8 When determining the most appropriate response or sanctions for addressing bullying, the Welsh Government expects schools to consider the impact a response may have more broadly and long term on all parties involved. They should consider whether this is likely to help address the root causes for the bullying happening and how interventions might have the greatest impact on preventing the issue from continuing or recurring.

10.9 Schools should consider what interventions are appropriate and give careful consideration as to whether the action is addressing the issue or simply delaying the issue happening again. Interventions should consider the impact on individual learners and should not include removing a bullied learner from school. Whilst this may provide a very short-term achievement of safeguarding the learner from further immediate harm, it could damage their self-esteem and emotional wellbeing and empower the perpetrator. It also sends a message that the bullying is acceptable, disrupts the targeted learner's education and may make it more difficult for them to reintegrate. Therefore, it is not a suitable strategy for addressing the root cause of the issue or provide real solution.

If deemed appropriate, the school could provide separate on-site provision (for either learner) to provide respite for the targeted learner. Schools should make every effort to ensure that a bullied learner is able to attend school and that they feel safe doing so.

What happens when the intervention is not working

10.10 It is not productive to continue using an intervention to address a case of bullying if the approach has failed to work. If an intervention is not working as intended, alternative approaches should be tried. Schools must not consider the issue resolved on the grounds that the intervention is completed, if the outcome is not successful.

10.11 If a case is persistent or the same Perpetrator is consistently reported for bullying others, a different response is required. Some approaches may not be suitable for certain cases. For example, where there is an imbalance of power so great that the Target is afraid of the Perpetrator, restorative approaches may be unwise until sometime later when work has been undertaken to address the power balance.

When interventions fail or struggle to have an impact

10.12 Resistant cases can cause immense distress to learners and their parents and carers. Where a school's response is that it has followed its anti-bullying policy, there may be stalemate. The school insists they are addressing the matter, but the Target and their parents and carers are not seeing any improvement in the situation.

Positive Action

10.13 When this happens, and evidence suggests the current action plan is not working, the Welsh Government expects schools to work with the learners involved and their parents and carers to review the case and, if deemed necessary, a new intervention should be tried. Where cases are resistant to resolution, regular reviews and ongoing communication between all parties is vital to ensure interventions are working properly.

10.14 Difficult behaviour does not always improve in a steady progression. It might improve for a time and then slip back. This may not indicate the approach is not working but that it should be continued, reinforced or slightly altered. If it is not working at all, a new plan should be made.

10.15 Plans can include work for the family to do at home. Schools may wish to remind parents and carers that they should support the school's values. If the source of the prejudice-related behaviour is in the home or community, this should be acknowledged and help sought in the local area.

The right of parents and carers to escalate the matter

10.16 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.

10.17 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.

10.18 A school complaints policy must be made available on request from the school or school governing body. The policy must explain the process for raising a complaint to enable the complainant to understand how the school governing body will deal with the issue.

10.19 In accordance with the principles of the UNCRC, all children and young people should be listened to and treated with respect. Schools should ensure a learner making a complaint has fully understood what is on the complaint form and any decisions which may flow from this.

10.20 Information should be recorded to enable the school to:

- Be clear about the nature of the complaint
- Keep the complainant informed of the progress of their complaint
- Make reasonable adjustments to timescales if the complaint is complex
- Keep an accurate record of the complaint and process followed
- Monitor the progress of a complaint
- Document what has been done and what needs to be done
- Provide evidence that the complaint was considered properly
- Record information for future reference given that bullying cases can reoccur so a full picture should be available
- Identify trends or recurring themes in complaints cases, to inform wider school improvement processes
- Compile reports to school governors and others on complaints

10.21 All complaints must be managed fairly, openly and without bias. Schools should investigate the concerns raised and make a decision quickly.

11. Evaluation and accountability

Reporting, recording, and monitoring

11.1 Schools should have in place mechanisms for reporting and recording bullying which are clearly communicated to the whole-school community. The information schools record and monitor should directly relate to your school's definition of bullying and broader provisions outlined in your school's anti-bullying strategy and policy. Local authorities should work with schools and other local authorities to adopt a standard way of recording and reporting bullying.

11.2 Effective record maintenance enables schools to review an incident, check whether there are other reports concerning the learners involved and plan in the light of what is recorded in a holistic and informed way. Monitoring incidents of bullying enables a school to identify patterns of behaviour and the extent of bullying. The Welsh Government expects schools to then take pro-active steps to challenge it, provide support to affected learners and ensure that the issue can be resolved.

11.3 Schools must ensure that the information they record, maintain and monitor complies with data protection laws, such as the EU GDPR and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

11.4 By law all schools are required to have in place a Data Protection Officer (DPO) to ensure that the school is aware of and able to meet their obligations under GDPR and DPA 2018. The Welsh Government and the Information Commissioner's office expect schools to work with their DPO to ensure that all personal data is processed lawfully and with appropriate protection for individual's rights.

11.5 Schools have broader responsibilities regarding the collection and monitoring of data, including data relating to bullying. The lawful basis for processing data is set out in Article 6 GDPR (lawfulness of processing) and Article 9 GDPR (processing of special categories of personal data). Schools must determine a legal basis before processing any information about bullying. Schools will also need to ensure that they are not collecting more data than they need and have a clear retention schedule for the information. Processing of information for anti-bullying measures will need to be reflected within each school's fair processing information. Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) will be required by individual schools in determining what data they need to collect to ensure that it is proportionate and that any appropriate steps that may be necessary to mitigate risks to individual's rights are taken.

11.6 Since April 2011, all public bodies, including schools and local authorities, have obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. In Wales, there are specific duties on public bodies to develop and publish equality objectives and a Strategic Equality

Plan and to collect, analyse and publish information about the progress they are making in achieving their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

11.7 Schools should record all incidents of bullying outlining the specific types of bullying, including bullying around the Protected Characteristics. Schools should regularly monitor processes and the outcome of each recorded incident. This should include whether a formal complaint has been made in response to the school's approach to a bullying incident, or if a parent has removed their child from school because of bullying. This will enable schools to modify their bullying policies to respond to specific trends and emerging issues in a swift and effective manner. Schools are likely to find this helpful in the context of their public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. This information could also be used by schools when reviewing their equality objectives and monitoring the impact of their anti-bullying policies.

11.8 It is for individual schools to determine what data and information they collect in the context of the specific issues within the individual school and in compliance with data protection law. This should be done by:

- Implementing an ongoing cycle of school-level data recording, monitoring and analysis of anti-bullying information
- Using school level anti-bullying data to identify priority areas for implementing whole school improvement
- Taking action to make those improvements: ensuring the cycle of improvement continues. Analyse data as part of self-evaluation

11.9 Estyn highlights that, historically, self-evaluation has been the weakest area in school inspections. All schools have areas on which they can improve. Self-evaluation and improvement processes underpinned by an open and honest collaborative culture should be an integral and ongoing feature of the work in all schools, regardless of current performance or situation. This is a constructive process and should be embedded into the culture and embraced by staff to improve for the future.

11.10 Through regular evaluation schools will be responsive to the trends in the school and community. It will be easier to be aware of improvements needed or the changes in procedures required if schools are in touch with changes in context.

11.11 The school anti-bullying policy and strategy should be regularly reviewed and involve consultation with school staff, learners and parents and carers.

11.12 Surveys and group discussions can be used to identify which aspects of the school's current policy and strategy work well and any areas for improvement.

11.13 Effective schools use surveys of learners' experiences asking whether or not a learner, if bullied, reported it and the subsequent outcome. This gathering of feedback to learn lessons and continuously improve, more than any other, is of importance to establish trust among learners. Learners need to believe it is worthwhile to report being bullied and trust action will be taken.

11.14 When evaluation procedures are transparent, it allows learners to engage with and influence the policies and processes of the school. If learners feel 'ownership' of the anti-bullying strategy, they are more likely to abide by it. It also allows them to influence decisions on matters that affect them, in line with their rights under the UNCRC and UNCRPD. As respected members of the school, learners are more likely to feel a sense of belonging.

11.15 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. Staff, parents and carers should also help to inform anti-bullying strategies and procedures.

11.16 If schools measure only the level of incidents reported, a false sense of success may be obtained if the figure is low, leading them to believe bullying is not happening. That is unlikely to be the case.

11.17 If there is a good level of awareness in the whole school community about unacceptable behaviour, it is likely that 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.

11.18 Where schools have high levels of recorded bullying, but the school can demonstrate they are taking action to challenge bullying, address unacceptable behaviour and improve learner well-being, these schools may be rated stronger in self-evaluation than schools who report no or little bullying in their settings but are unable to explain why.

Appendix: Where to find further help and advice

Bullying

Bullies out

[Anti-bullying charity](#) based in Wales who work with individuals, schools and colleges, as well as with youth and community settings.

The charity offers an [online e-mentor service](#).

Anti-bullying Alliance

[A coalition of organisations and individuals](#) who provide information for schools, parents, carers, children and young people on all aspects of bullying.

Kidscape

[Anti-bullying charity](#) who provide interventions with children and work with schools and the community.

The Diana Award

An [online resource and support centre](#) for young people, parents/carers and educators to access information.

Helplines and support services

General

Samaritans

A [registered charity](#) aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress through its free to call telephone helpline, email, live chat, and other services available.

Rethink

An [advice and information](#) service providing practical advice on a wide range of topics like access to mental health and social care, mental health treatments, and laws, and advice for carers .

Mencap

The [Wales Learning Disability Helpline](#) offers information and advice on the rights of people with a learning disability.

Meic

A [helpline service](#) providing information, advice and advocacy for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales.

Childline

Childline offer a confidential and available any time, day or night [service](#) where you can talk about anything.

Kooth

A [digital mental health support service](#) providing children and young people easy access to an online community of peers and a team of experienced counsellors.

CALL

[Mental health helpline](#) for Wales offering emotional support and information/literature on Mental Health and related matters

Parents and Carers

Family Lives

A confidential [helpline service](#) for families offering emotional support, information, advice and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life - 0808 800 2222.

Parent Zone

Offers [services and resources](#) to parents and families to improve outcomes for children in the digital world.

Young Minds

A [helpline](#) for parents and carers providing information, advice and support with your child or young person's mental health or wellbeing - 0808 802 5544.

Schools/ Professionals

Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH)

Operated by the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) this helpline is solely dedicated to supporting all members of the community working with or for children with any online safety issues - 0344 381 4772 or [email](#).

Hwb – Keeping safe online

The Keeping Safe Online [area](#) in Hwb allows you to report harmful content or activity that you have experienced or witnessed online.

Advice and support networks

General

Internet Watch Foundation

The Internet Watch Foundation's [website](#) allows you to report suspected online child sexual abuse images or videos.

Victim Support

The Wales Hate Support Centre's [website](#) allows you to report hate crime that has been committed.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection [website](#) allows you to report suspected child sexual abuse, exploitation or online sexual abuse.

NSPCC

The NSPCC's [helpline](#) allows you to report child abuse and neglect and advice if you are worried about a child and not sure what to.

Children and Young People

Mental Health Matters

A [registered charity](#) providing support and counselling services to promote well-being.

Head above the Waves

A not for profit [organisation](#) that raises awareness and offers advice for depression and self-harm in young people.

Resources for schools

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH)

A [charity](#) offering a confidential, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying reporting service for children and young people up to 18 years of age. Also offers training and consultancy services.

Show Racism the Red Card

An [anti-racism charity](#) offering educational training, workshops, resources and activities, designed to educate young people and adults about the causes and the consequences of racism.

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

An [intergovernmental organisation](#) working to help people better remember, understand, and learn about the Holocaust and genocide of the Roma so that we can build a world without genocide.

UK Government

Statistics on [hate crimes](#) recorded by the police and information on hate crime from the Crime Survey for England and Wales in 2017 to 2018.

Access to [training courses](#) on the Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation, the threat from terrorism and extremism in the UK and how to support people susceptible to radicalisation.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Hub

A [service](#) hosted by Public Health Wales who provide training to help prevent and mitigate ACEs and support those who have experienced ACEs or trauma.

Department of Quantitative Social Science, University of London

A Leading Education and Social Research [report](#) titled 'Bullying experiences among disabled children and young people in England: Evidence from two longitudinal studies' published in June 2014.

School Health Research Network (SHRN)

Interactive [dashboard](#) presenting updated survey results on the health and well-being of secondary school-aged children in Wales.

Welsh Government

Published [guidance and services](#) to support practitioners with attendance and absence.

Published [guidance and services](#) to support practitioners with behaviour and discipline.

Published [guidance](#) to help schools develop their family engagement in Community Focused Schools.

Published [guidance](#) to support the delivery and evaluation of the whole-school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing.

Published [guidance](#) providing School Governors' with a reference guide to the law on the roles and responsibilities of a school governing body.

Published [information](#) on professional standards for teachers, leaders, teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants.

Published [consultation](#) on Draft Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Strategy 2024-2034 to replace the previous strategy [Talk to me 2](#).

Published [action plan](#) to prevent and respond to peer-on-peer sexual harassment in education settings.

Published [information](#) sharing updates and supporting materials for the Curriculum for Wales.

Published [information](#) for parents, carers and learners about the Curriculum for Wales.

Published [guidance](#) to help schools and settings develop their own curriculum, enabling learners to develop towards the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience.

Published statutory [guidance](#) in relation to Relationships and Sexuality education (RSE) to assist those responsible to design RSE as part of the curriculum.

Published [guidance](#) to support senior leaders and practitioners in schools and settings in the planning, designing and implementing of a pedagogically appropriate curriculum for all learners to enable learning.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific resources, case studies, guidance and a toolkit for helping schools create and implement effective anti-bullying strategies in their school settings.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific resources and guidance to help schools effectively report, record and monitor instances of bullying in their school communities to help ensure appropriate evaluation and accountability mechanisms are in place to address bullying.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific guidance and checklists to help schools create an effective anti-bullying policy setting out governance arrangements for their setting.

Playlist providing [advice](#) about online safety and bullying for parents/carers. As school governors, this resource may help you when signposting parents/carers to support provision available to them in addressing bullying in the school and home setting.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific anti-bullying intervention programmes and guidance to support schools to challenge and address bullying in their school communities.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific resources and guidance to help schools challenge prejudice-related bullying.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific resources, guidance and advice to help schools prevent bullying from happening in their school communities.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific resources and guidance to help schools effectively respond when instances of bullying occur in their school communities.

Playlist providing [details](#) on the law relating to bullying.

Playlist providing [details](#) on specific resources and guidance to help schools better understand what bullying is in order to address the issue in their school communities.

Other

The Children's Society

A [report](#) titled The Good Childhood Report 2024, shows the latest trends in children's wellbeing, and shares research which seeks to understand how young people feel about different aspects of their lives.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales

Offers a [service](#) which shares advice and assistance to young people or those who care for them if they feel that a child has been treated unfairly.

A [report](#) titled 'Sam's Story' is the culmination of a large-scale consultation with over 2,000 children and young people and nearly 300 professionals' views about contemporary experiences of bullying in Wales.

Children in Wales

A national [umbrella](#) membership body for organisations and individuals who work with children, young people and their families in Wales.

UNICEF

Works to protect the [rights of every child](#) with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) especially the most disadvantaged and those hardest to reach.

Just Like Us

A published [report](#) titled Growing Up LGBT+: the impact of school, home and coronavirus on LGBT+ young people which sheds light on the disproportionate challenges they face and ways we can work together to improve the lives of LGBT+ young people across the UK.

Time to Change Wales

A [campaign](#) for young people, which aims to change attitudes towards mental health, ending stigma and discrimination.

Welsh Government

A [website](#) to help sanctuary seekers to understand their rights.

Online Issues

Welsh Government

[Keeping Safe Online](#) area of Hwb hosts online bullying classroom resources, information and advice for schools, learners and their families:

[Online bullying](#) area of Hwb shares resources, guidance and information for education practitioners, learners, and families on online.

[Online issues and worries: online bullying](#) area of Hwb provides information and advice specifically for children and young people for online issues and worries.

[360 safe Cymru](#) is a free, bilingual tool to support schools to review their online safety provision and develop and review their online safety policies in line with current practice

A collection of [guides](#) providing parents and carers with key information about the most popular social media and gaming apps children and young people are using today.

Guidance for [schools](#) providing advice on understanding and responding carefully to online viral challenges and hoaxes to ensure learners are kept safe online.

Further digital resilience, online safety [guidance and support](#) can be found through the following trusted organisation and partner sites.

Published [guidance](#) for designated safeguarding persons (DSP), headteachers and senior leadership teams which outlines how to respond to an incident of sharing nudes or semi-nudes.