



Anti-Bullying Guidance

Rights Respect Equality

This document is available in Welsh

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg

Updated November 2021

RCT explanatory note in relation to The Welsh Government Anti bullying statutory guidance

Rights Respect Equality published November 2019

The Welsh Assembly Government has produced a suite of statutory and advisory guidance materials for different audiences. The guidance for schools and local authorities includes statutory duties and expected practices.

This guidance replaces the Respecting others: anti-bullying guidance issued in 2003 and 2011.

The documents provide information on the latest research into bullying and effective strategies to address bullying in schools. They provide consistency in the use of language and understanding of what bullying is and is not. It contains specific information relating to

- prejudice based bullying
- online bullying and aggression
- the Law relating to bullying
- Governance

The guidance includes reference to a range of resources and sources of support, it is accompanied by an online toolkit, which is built with contributions from stakeholders and forms a rich bank of resources for use at an operational level.

This document summarises the statutory guidance alongside specific guidance relating to policy and operational procedures specific to RCT. This guidance should always be read in the context of the statutory guidance linked below:

Guidance and services

- [**Rights, respect, equality: guidance for parents and carers**](#)

Guidance to help parents and carers deal with bullying.

- [**Rights, respect, equality: guidance for schools**](#)

Guidance to help schools deal with bullying.

- [**Rights, respect, equality: guidance for local authorities**](#)

Guidance to help local authorities deal with bullying.

- [**Rights, respect, equality: guide for young people**](#)

Guidance to help young people deal with bullying.

- [**Rights, respect, equality: guide for children**](#)

Guidance to help children deal with bullying.

- [**Bullying: posters for children and young people**](#)

Posters to display in schools with advice on what to do and who you can tell if you are being bullied.

- [**Anti-bullying briefing pack: questions and answers**](#)

An update on the revised statutory anti-bullying guidance.

- [**Bullying at school: guidance for parents and carers**](#)

What to do if your child is being bullied.

RCT anti bullying policy statement

Challenging bullying across Rhondda Cynon Taf remains a key priority.

Schools are uniquely placed to enable our learners to develop as ethical, healthy, confident and ambitious individuals. We want our schools to be places where our learners feel happy and safe. We are all committed to ensuring that each child and young person enjoys their rights to an education and are treated equitably.

RCT has adopted the definition of bullying as outlined in the Right Respect, Equality Guidance (WAG 2019)

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

RCT will continue to challenge bullying holistically, by supporting schools to address incidents of bullying and through developing effective proactive anti bullying strategies. This is achieved by addressing the root causes of unacceptable behaviour and by creating an inclusive environment of mutual respect. This can only be achieved if wellbeing is at the heart of all that we do. This way learners will feel safe and ready to learn. Children and young people need to be taught both at home and at school about respectful relationships.

Bullying is complex behaviour and the Welsh Government expects the response to be appropriate, while also following standardised framework guidelines. The Welsh Government expects a school's anti-bullying strategy to 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.

Too many pupils suffer from bullying at some point during their time in school. The effects of being bullied can be short or long-term, psychological or social, and often result in underachievement or attendance problems. Certain groups of pupils are at a higher-than-average risk of experiencing prejudice based bullying.

Under the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED), schools are also under an obligation to ensure appropriate and effective action is taken to remove or minimise disadvantages encountered by learners owing to their having protected characteristics, this includes in relation to antibullying work and responding to incidents of bullying.

Key Actions Schools should take to meet the expectations of Welsh Government expressed in the statutory guidance.

RCT expects all its schools to:

- Identify an Anti bullying lead as a designated role. (See Section 6: Effective anti-bullying strategies). It is also recommended that the school governing body appoint a link governor to liaise with the school council.
- Develop an anti-bullying policy as a separate policy document, which should link to the school behaviour policy, which schools must have by law, and complement other related policies. (see section 7: Policy, specifically paragraph 7.2 for contents of policy and appendix A; Checklist for policy development). In developing the policy schools should consult with pupils, parents and carers and other stakeholders to agree a definition of bullying in line with the definition in the guidance (see Section : What is bullying?). The policy should specifically address the issues relating to prejudice based bullying and online bullying. The policy should be published on the school website and it should be reviewed at least every 3 years.
- Detail an anti-bullying strategy that is appropriate to the characteristics of the school particularly in relation to prejudice-related bullying (See Section 3).
- Incorporate anti-bullying work in the wider context of an equalities and social justice approach to respectful and healthy relationships and violence prevention. This should be done as part of a whole-school approach to celebrating difference (see section 6: Effective Anti-bullying strategies and Section 8; Prevention)
- Headteachers and school governing bodies should ensure all teachers and administrative staff through induction and regular training; are aware of the school's anti bullying strategy, and policy and should be clear about the action they should take to promote positive respectful relationships and the procedures to follow if a learner reports being bullied.
- Recognise that those who perpetrate the bullying of others also need help, support and opportunities to change their behaviour and to ensure that they receive these. 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 (see Section 9: Responding when bullying occurs).
- Have in place mechanisms for reporting and recording all incidents of bullying which are clearly communicated to the whole school community.

(see Section 11: Evaluation and accountability) The Welsh Government expects the information schools record and monitor to relate directly to their school's definition of bullying and broader provisions outlined in their school's anti-bullying strategy and policy. Records should outline the specific types of bullying, including bullying around the protected characteristics. An RCT exemplar bullying incident recording form is included as Appendix B.

- Offer learners a range of ways to report bullying.
- Encourage targets of bullying to keep evidence of the activity. Dates and times of when things happened should be noted, screen grabs can provide online evidence. Bystanders may also be able to provide witness statements or additional evidence.
- When determining the most appropriate response or sanctions for addressing bullying, consider the impact a response may have more broadly in the short and long-term on all parties involved. Schools 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. 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. Where cases are resistant to resolution, regular reviews and ongoing communication between all parties is vital to ensure interventions are working properly.
- RCT expects schools to provide a report of bullying incidents to the Local Authority on a termly basis. From January 2022 schools will be able to submit this report in SIMS. The data is submitted retrospectively at the end of each term. The data schools will need to submit is detailed in Appendix C. Guidance notes will be provided to support schools to submit the data via SIMS.
- Carry out a self-evaluation exercise seeking feedback from both staff and learners to measure the extent of bullying behaviour present. Sample surveys can be found in the toolkit.
- Monitor processes regularly. 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 PSED. This information could also be used by schools when reviewing their equality objectives and monitoring the impact of their anti-bullying policies. Analysis of information in relation to bullying incidents and the school's anti bullying strategy should form part of the MER cycle.

- Governing bodies should monitor
 - an overview of recorded bullying incidents in their setting to see how long it takes on average for cases to be resolved
 - the recurrence rates
 - whether learners who have reported bullying incidents believe they got a satisfactory outcome
 - whether there are any emerging trends or groups being discriminated against
 - whether there are online cases that suggest work is required with the learners, parents/carers and staff to counter new forms of bullying
 - absenteeism rates
 - that the regularly collected data on reported incidents is showing progress towards the equality objectives.

What schools can expect from RCT.

To support schools in meeting these expectations RCT through the work of Access and Inclusion, particularly the Behaviour Support Service will:

- Ensure all schools have an anti bullying policy on the school website.
- Monitor school termly reports of bullying and provide support and challenge to schools to address issues and improve practice through training and advice.
- Analyse the data from schools and identify patterns and trends and provide information to schools to ensure they are prepared to be responsive to trends.
- Have a specific focus on accurate recording of prejudice-related incidents to enable monitoring of patterns and prevent discrimination to ensure compliance with the PSED.
- Monitor equality data and advise schools on local trends.
- Develop an Anti bullying self evaluation framework. Support schools to undertake self evaluation of the extent of bullying behaviour and the effectiveness of anti bullying strategies and how to address the findings
- Ensure RCT website has up to date information relating to anti bullying to support schools, pupils and families. ([website link](#))
- RCT provides an independent counselling service for children and young people aged 7 to 25 through Eye to Eye Young People's Counselling.
- Support schools to share effective antibullying approaches through cluster group working and wellbeing forums.
- Support schools through advice, support and where funding opportunities arise resources to develop their practice to celebrate differences across the local authority area and the wider community.
- Actively dissuade schools from encouraging a school move to address a bullying issue, and should this become apparent to challenge the school concerned.