

Eirias Primary Cluster



# 10. Anti-Bullying Policy

**Policy Valid until Summer 2026**

For and on behalf of the

Board of Governors: .....

Headteacher: .....

Date:

Our school believes that bullying behaviour is totally unacceptable and must not be tolerated. All members of the school community share a collective responsibility for tackling bullying should it occur and in working together to promote positive behaviour. The school acknowledges it has a legal duty to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying behaviour.

This comprehensive policy has been created to support our whole school ethos of ensuring that children feel safe, secure confident and happy. It is designed to prevent bullying behaviour wherever possible, to respond consistently in line with agreed procedures should it occur and to provide support to those involved as appropriate. Our children's safety, health and well-being is of paramount importance and everybody's business.

This school policy is based on the Welsh Government guidance series '*Challenging Bullying – Rights, Respect, Equality*' which includes statutory guidance for local authorities and governing bodies, as well as advisory guidance for children and young people, parents and carers.

In relation to the Equality Act 2010 it is our school's duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this means removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.

## 1 The Vision and the Values of the school

St Joseph's is a Catholic school with Christ's teachings at the centre of everything we do. God's Word directs our teaching, learning and the maintenance of all relationships within our community. In St Joseph's we strive to create an environment in which all can achieve our mission to 'Grow in Love'.

Promoting positive behaviour is a key element to fulfilling our aims.

## 2 Our definition of what is meant by bullying

### (2.1) The importance of a clear definition of bullying

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

There is no legal definition of bullying in Wales or indeed in Great Britain. Therefore the definition used in this guidance builds upon widely used principles established in the UK since 1993. For the purposes of this guidance,

## *2.1 Bullying can be defined as:*

*(2.2) 'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally'.*

The Welsh Government expects schools to 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.

(2.3) 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.

(2.4) Bullying differs from an argument, a fight or friendship fallout in that it:

- is deliberate or intentional
- is generally repeated over time
- involves a perceived imbalance of power between perpetrator and target
- causes feelings of distress, fear, loneliness, humiliation and powerlessness. It is recognised that a one-off incident can leave a learner traumatised and nervous of reprisals or future recurrence.

The Welsh Government expects intervention to be immediate whether it is bullying or any other one-off negative behaviour. The Welsh Government expects one-off incidents that do not appear to be the start of bullying to be handled as inappropriate behaviour and addressed under the school's behaviour policy (*you may decide to keep this paragraph and amend it accordingly*).

## *2.2 The distinctive elements of bullying behaviour.*

(2.7) There are a number of 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 images with people for whom the information/images were not intended
- *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.

### 2.3 How is bullying expressed?

(2.8) Bullying can take many forms, including:

- *physical* – kicking, tripping someone up or shoving them, injuring someone, damaging their belongings or gestures of intimidation
- *verbal* – taunts and name-calling, insults, threats, humiliation or intimidation
- *emotional* – behaviour intended to isolate, hurt or humiliate someone
- *indirect* – sly or underhand actions carried out behind the target's back or rumour-spreading
- *online* – using any form of technological means, mobile phones, social networks, gaming, chat rooms, forums or apps to bully via text, messaging, images or video
- *relational aggression* – bullying that tries to harm the target's relationships or social status: drawing their friends away, exploiting a person's special educational needs (SEN) or long-term illness, targeting their family's social status, isolating or humiliating someone or deliberately getting someone into trouble
- *sexual* – unwanted touching, threats, suggestions, comments and jokes or innuendo. This can also include sextortion, so called 'revenge porn' and any misuse of intimate, explicit images of the learner targeted
- *prejudice-related* – bullying of a learner or a group of learners because of prejudice. This could be linked to stereotypes or presumptions about identity. Prejudice-related bullying includes the protected characteristics.

Prejudice can and does also extend beyond the protected characteristics and can lead to bullying for a variety of other reasons such as social status and background.

### 2.4 Bullying and safeguarding.

(2.9) Some cases of bullying might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police.

Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern 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.

### 2.5 What is not bullying?

(2.10) Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. The Welsh Government expects these instances to be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy to prevent an incident potentially escalating to become bullying.

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

- *friendship fallouts* – a friendship feud may however deteriorate into bullying behaviour that is enabled by the fact that former friends have an intimate knowledge of the fears and insecurities of

one another. Children and young people who are targeted by former friends feel the betrayal deeply and are frequently isolated from their former friendship group

- *a one-off fight* – the Welsh Government expects it to 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 others' views
- *a one-off physical assault* – the Welsh Government expects it to be stopped and addressed immediately. Police involvement in cases where physical assault has happened may also be appropriate
- *insults and banter* – children and young people will often protest that an incident was a joke or banter. If two friends of equal power are in the habit of bantering with one another it is not deemed to be bullying. If one learner uses banter to humiliate or threaten another who is powerless to stop it and made fearful by the act, the border between banter and bullying is likely to be crossed a one-off instance of hate crime – unless this behaviour is repeated it would not usually be regarded as bullying but it would be criminal behaviour, which the Welsh Government would expect to be dealt with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy and other relevant policies, such as the school's 'Prevent' policy. If considered necessary, the school would also need to involve the police.

(2.12) These examples illustrate the need to deal with the incident reported and record it. The Welsh Government expects this to 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 the guidance and will be highlighted later on in this document.

## *2.6 What motivations lie behind acts of bullying?*

(2.14) 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.

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

- stigmatising a learner with a disability or SEN
- using homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist or racist language
- actively trying to remove any religious clothing such as a hijab, kippah, turban, cap or veil

Prejudice-related bullying

- using sexist comments, unwanted touching or the taking of images without permission
- commenting on someone's appearance such as their weight or hair colour.

The Welsh Government expects all forms of prejudice to be challenged equally.

(2.15) The Welsh Government expects schools to consider motivations when working with children and young people who bully others. This will help their understanding and identify the root cause of the unacceptable behaviour, as well as help to change it, preventing further bullying from happening.

(2.16) Bullying behaviour may reflect attitudes held in society or expressed in the media. Schools will sometimes find they need to challenge these attitudes with the wider school community beyond the case they are addressing.

(2.13) 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 (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010.

## *2.7 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 SEN), who are lesbian, gay or bisexual; or who are questioning their gender or who are transgender; or whose ethnicity, race, appearance, religious heritage or gender is different from the perpetrators of the prejudice-related behaviour. Prejudice-related behaviour can also be directed towards those without protected characteristics, including those who have additional learning needs (ALN) that do not meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. This can lead to bullying for a variety of other reasons such as social status and background.

In relation to the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, it extends a duty on all public bodies including schools to take into consideration needs of vulnerable children and adults and a duty to report.

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

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

The Welsh Government expects all forms of prejudice to be challenged equally. Please refer to sections 3.1-3.44 for exact guidance on each group and positive actions suggested.

Schools can identify and work on these elements in line with their needs at any one time although all need to be considered.

## 2.8 Online bullying and aggression

### Online bullying and aggression

(4.1) Understanding children and young people's lives in a digital age is a complex task, and considering the implications for education is often a fine balance. On one hand there are calls to recognise the sophistication of children and young people's everyday uses of digital media, and for much greater integration of technology in education to equip learners effectively for their current and future lives. On the other hand there are anxieties about the implications of extensive screen time and online harms that are hard to regulate and difficult to confine. Moreover while many children and young people gain understanding and experience of digital environments from birth, their 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 toys and resources are taken up within different families.

(4.6) Online bullying behaviour can take different forms including:

- *profile* – people do not have to be physically stronger, older, or more popular than the person they are bullying online
- *location* – online bullying is not confined to a physical location and it can take place at any time. Incidents can take place in a learner's own home, intruding into spaces previously regarded as safe and private
- *audience* – online content can be hard to remove and can be recirculated and reposted. The potential numbers of people who can see content posted online is very large. Single incidents of online abuse can quickly escalate into bullying, e.g. by reposting, sharing and through comments
- *anonymity* – the person being targeted by bullying may not necessarily know the identity of the perpetrator(s) of the bullying behaviour. The target also will not know who has seen the abusive content. If the perpetrator actively hides their identity from the target this may be considered a form of passive aggression and, if repeated, this could constitute bullying
- *motivation* – online bullying is typically carried out on purpose. However, initial incidents may have unintended consequences, and can escalate through the involvement of others. An individual may not feel that by endorsing or reposting someone else's post that they are actively participating in bullying. The instigator may not have intended an offensive or hurtful comment to be repeated. A single incident – one upsetting post or message – may escalate into bullying involving a number of people over time.

(4.7) Why online bullying is uniquely distressing

Although offline bullying remains more common than online bullying, 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.

(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, the Welsh Government expects schools to refer a case to the appropriate agency or service. Schools 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. The Welsh Government expects schools to 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 or later on in this document.

## *2.9 The law relating to bullying*

(5.1) There is no legal definition of bullying in Great Britain, but broader legislation can be applied to address certain acts of bullying.

(5.2) Legislation applies in Wales, the UK and internationally that 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, in Section 5 of the WG guidance that this document refers to.

## *3. Why it is important to prevent and challenge bullying*

(8.1) Planning: what does the Welsh Government expect schools to consider?

Before deciding on which of the many effective approaches they should use it is important that each school has some structure in place across its whole setting. Prevention is a vital component of a school's strategy.

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. The Welsh Government expects this approach to be woven through all school activity, creating an environment that 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.

### *3.1 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/carers who should be reminded about the values of the school. Effective engagement with parents/carers in developing the values and anti-bullying strategy in their 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 the Welsh Government expects interventions to adopt a whole-school approach, addressing the whole group or class so the majority opinion is heard.

All Conwy secondary schools have participated in the SHRN survey and received their bespoke reports, and Conwy primary schools have had an opportunity to participate in the Conwy primary online wellbeing survey.

This type of data will support schools in being able to raise issues by reflecting on real data which in turn represents pupil voice.

### *3.2 Curricular approaches*

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

(8.8) Our new curriculum – Curriculum for Wales 2022 –was introduced in September 2022. It looks to equip all our children and young people for life. It has four key purposes to support all learners to become ethical, informed, healthy and confident individuals who are ready to learn throughout their lives as they become citizens of Wales and the world.

(8.9) Curriculum for Wales 2022 has six areas of learning and experience. There will be opportunities across all six areas of learning and experience to embed positive behaviour and respect, not limited to the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience.

(8.10) Recognising good health and well-being as a key enabler of successful learning the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience will support learners to develop and maintain not only their physical health and well-being, but also their mental health and emotional well-being. It will also support learners to develop positive relationships in a range of contexts. Drawing on subjects and themes from mental, physical and emotional well-being, learning in this area of learning and experience also links to how the school environment supports children and young people's social, emotional, spiritual and physical health and well-being.

(8.11) The key characteristics outlined, which will support learners to become ethical, informed members, include:

- making positive choices, and learning how these affect their own and others' health and well-being
- interacting with others within different social situations
- engaging with different social influences and to appreciate the importance of respecting others
- considering the social and ethical issues that impact on the health and well-being of others.

(8.13) While Curriculum for Wales 2022 provides further opportunities for schools to embed health and well-being at the heart of all learning, the Welsh Government expects schools, under the parameters of the current curriculum, to adopt and maintain a whole-school approach, working across the existing curriculum 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. It allows learners to make use of preferred and appropriate learning styles and can include the use of literature, audio–visual material, drama, music, debates and outside visitors.

(8.14) 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.

(8.15) 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.

Additional support networks that schools are known to use:

- Supporting the development of emotional literacy, self-esteem and resilience through assemblies, Circle Time, PSE, the Healthy Schools programme, skills development, teaching pupils personal coping strategies, School Council involvement, Buddy schemes. KiVa and Peer Mentoring.
- Active involvement of our designated Police SCPO in the delivery of the all Wales School Liaison Core Programme.

#### *4. How awareness of bullying will be raised*

(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 headteachers 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.

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.

(9.2) The Welsh Government expects school procedures outlining the steps to take for addressing bullying to 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 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. If the response is too generic, heavy-handed or lacks sincerity, it can have the opposite effect from that intended. The Welsh Government expects schools to develop their anti-bullying strategy in collaboration with learners and parents/carers to ensure procedures for responding when instances occur are understood, agreed to and implemented by all those in the school community.

#### *4.1 The Welsh Government expects work to be undertaken with all parties*

(9.5) Alongside the support provided to targets of bullying, the Welsh Government expects schools to recognise that those who perpetrate bullying of others also need help, support and opportunities to change their behaviour and to ensure that they receive these. Effective listening can be used along with teaching relationship skills to those who bully others. The Welsh Government expects

them to 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/carers parting can be revealed when working with learners who bully. The Welsh Government expects staff to 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 paragraph 2.9.)

(9.6) The Welsh Government expects schools to 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. The Welsh Government expects schools to 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.

*You should note your strategies for awareness raising here.*

*Examples given by WG:*

#### (9.8) Routes to report

The Welsh Government expects schools to 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
- feedback boxes.

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.

### *5. How anti-bullying work will be embedded in the curriculum rather than an isolated annual event (such as during anti-bullying week).*

*See section 3.2 above (and map out or list your tailored events here).*

### *6. Involvement of staff, learners, parents/carers and school governors in development and implementation of the policy (Section 6 of WG guidance)*

*(6.32) Involving all school staff in developing and implementing the anti-bullying strategy*

Staff should be well prepared and feel confident to handle 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.

*(What will your staff training entail? How frequent?)*

(6.33) 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 as a result of the reporting mechanisms or responses being ineffective. Learners do not feel safe in raising their concerns. 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.

(6.34) 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.

(6.35) 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.

(6.37) 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.

### *6.1 Why is it important to involve learners in developing and implementing an anti-bullying strategy?*

(6.15) Without the wholehearted involvement of the children and young people in their school, anti-bullying strategies are not likely to succeed.

(6.16) The Welsh Government expects schools to consult learners as an essential step in all stages of anti-bullying work. It is recommended that the school governing body appoint a link governor to liaise with the school council. Schools in Wales must ensure that the school council has the opportunity to nominate up to two learners from Years 11, 12 and/or 13 from its membership to be associate learner governors on the school's governing body.

(6.17) 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 the majority of learners may say the opposite. For strategies to be most effective there needs to be a general 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.

(6.18) An example of this is a school that 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 owing to glass panels. They stayed away, not because the peer support offered was inadequate but simply because the facility provided was unsuitable.

(6.19) 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 strategies effective and 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?

## *6.2 Why is it important to involve parents/carers in developing and implementing an anti-bullying strategy?*

(6.20) 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.

(6.21) Parents/carers have an important 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 (paragraph 6.25 of the guidance provides more information about schools' responsibilities for the behavioural conduct of learners outside of school).

(6.22) Partnership working between the school and parents/carers to maintain high standards of behaviour and to encourage respect and kindness towards other people is vital.

(6.23) The Welsh Government expects schools to engage with parents/carers, taking into account the following considerations when developing and rolling out their anti-bullying strategy.

- Are parents/carers aware of the new or existing strategy? Do they know how the school 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 parents/carers know who to speak to when raising a concern about bullying and what evidence to provide?
- Have parents/carers been engaged to support their children and support the vision and values of the school?
- If parents/carers are aware prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable within the school community this can help a school deal with incidents when they occur.
- If parents/carers are not satisfied with the way the school has dealt with a case of bullying that they reported they should be aware of the school's complaints procedure.

(6.24) There are a variety of techniques schools can employ to achieve effective parental/carer engagement, including:

- online feedback forms
- group meetings with staff and parents/carers

- parents/carers evenings to help families provide support for learning as well as allowing parents/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 homework tasks that learners work on with their families, providing messages in homework or home-school books/e-learning books, etc.

## *7. Signs a child or young person might be experiencing bullying.*

### **Warning signs at school**

If a student is being bullied at school they may:

- become aggressive and unreasonable
- start to get into fights
- refuse to talk about what is wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches, particularly those appearing after recess or lunch
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- have falling school grades
- be alone often or excluded from friendship groups at school
- show a change in their ability or willingness to speak up in class
- appear insecure or frightened
- be a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule.

### **Warning signs at home**

A parent may observe changes in their child's behaviour at home which they can report to the school. Their child may:

- have trouble getting out of bed
- not want to go to school
- change their method or route to school or become frightened of walking to school
- change their sleeping or eating patterns
- have frequent tears, anger, mood swings and anxiety
- have unexplained bruises, cuts and scratches
- have stomach aches or unexplained pain
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- ask for extra pocket money or food
- arrive home hungry
- show an unwillingness to discuss, or secrecy about, their online communication.

## *8. How bullying will be prevented, including on journeys to and from school*

(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 whole-school approach 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/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 that 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 that can be adapted to suit particular incidents and form part of the school's wider whole-school approach to well-being.

(6.3) The Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on all authorities delivering children's services to work together 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 that 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 ongoing development. This will involve all learners, all staff, parents/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. This will include documenting all reviews in procedures, documentation, etc.
- managing bullying incident processes, such as intervention used, reporting, recording, monitoring, etc.
- coordinating and managing training and support for staff and parents/carers where appropriate
- research, evaluate and appraise strategies for preventing bullying behaviour.

(6.5) The Welsh Government expects an effective anti-bullying strategy to set out how the school intends to coordinate its anti-bullying work within its whole-school approach. The Welsh Government expects it to 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:

- have a strong moral leadership from the headteacher, other senior leaders and the governing body, which models values and high expectations, thereby 'leading by example' by valuing health and well-being
- embed a climate and culture where learners feel safe, secure and valued, promote the UNCRC and, in particular, seek and listen to the voice of the child or young person
- have in place a secure understanding of the health and well-being of their learners and effective methods to monitor and evaluate this
- provide a curriculum that meets the needs of learners (both now and for their future), implemented with learning experiences that support 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 where possible, suitable toilet facilities, support healthy food and drink, ensure site security, etc.)
- ensure effective communication and partnership working with parents/carers

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

(6.30) 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
- ensure behaviour 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.

## *9. When the school will take action in relation to bullying outside the school*

### *9.1 Behaviour and conduct outside of school*

(6.25) Section 89(5A) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers a statutory power to regulate learners' behaviour in these circumstances 'to such extent as is reasonable'. Bullying may be an example of where headteachers used this power. Individual schools are best placed to make judgements about what is reasonable in their particular circumstances. However, paragraph 6.26 suggests factors that a school could take into account in making such judgements.

(6.26) While schools are able to regulate certain conduct off school premises, such as bullying behaviour, they can only impose sanctions when the learner is on the school site or under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff. A sanction could be imposed while a learner is on a school trip, but not while the learner is on their journey home from school for instance. In such circumstances, the member of staff could indicate to the learner that they have been seen misbehaving and/or engaging in bullying behaviour and will receive a sanction; however, the member of staff must wait until the learner is next in school to apply the sanction.

### *9.2 Dealing with incidents of misconduct on and off school premises*

(6.27) The Welsh Government expects effective policies on school behaviour, anti-bullying and discipline will 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, as well as behaviour on the way to and from school and behaviour when wearing school uniform (if any) in a public place.

(6.28) 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.

*(You may wish to add your out of school protocols here or refer to behaviour models or Risk Assessment procedures you would carry out for such events. Your general behaviour policy/protocol may cover all these aspects, however please take account of the following guidance)*

The Welsh Government expects schools to decide what to take into account 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
- the extent to which the reputation of the school has been affected
- whether the learner/learners in question was/were wearing the school uniform or was/were otherwise readily identifiable as a member/members 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; the Welsh Government expects schools in collaboration with their local authority to consider whether to impose sanctions under the travel behaviour code or school behaviour policy when addressing misconduct on the journey to and from school (paragraphs 5.17–5.21 provide 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/learners were truanting.

(6.29) Applying such factors, there would, for example, be a strong case for disciplining a learner for harassing and/or bullying a member of staff off school premises, including through the internet. There would also be a strong case for disciplining a learner for verbally abusing other people, including members of the public, while travelling on the way to/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/carers and those in the local authority and wider community responsible for tackling antisocial and bullying behaviour may be particularly relevant in this context.

(6.30) 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

- ensure behaviour 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.

(6.31) 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, 'Education and Inspections Act 2006'.

## *10. How the school will respond to incidents*

(10.2) Bullying damages healthy self-esteem, replacing positive beliefs about oneself and beliefs linked to shame, disgust, criticism, incapacity, powerlessness and helplessness. The Welsh Government expects that when deciding on next steps to increase the self-efficacy of the learner who reports being bullied, staff will 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 the Welsh Government expects staff to 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 a peer or wants to join a club or lunchtime activity.*

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

*You may add further steps here or use the following, adding further details accordingly:*

(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 the 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 the bullying. This protects against retaliation.

(10.7) The Welsh Government expects a school to 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.

## *11. How to report bullying*

A designated person will monitor and collate information on victims of bullying and perpetrators, that person will:

- Investigate the incident / establish facts by independently talking to all involved.
- Use appropriate Restorative intervention techniques to manage difficulties between perpetrators & targets; encourage reconciliation where this is possible/ feasible.
- Where bullying behaviour has been established, implement agreed sanctions consistently and fairly as necessary to prevent further incidents.
- Involve parents as early as possible where appropriate.
- Apply guidelines from the all Wales Police “School Beat” partnership working document to determine whether official police involvement is needed; as indicated in these guidelines, deal with incidents internally wherever possible.
- Keep accurate, factual records of all reported incidents and the school’s response.
- Always follow-up incidents after they have been dealt with and review outcomes to ensure bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Provide on-going support for those involved where necessary; Welsh Government leaflets are available for children, young people and parents/carers.
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The school will always offer a Restorative Approach and look to repair harm. It may also, depending on the type of incident, use sanctions, these may include;

- Withdrawing privileges/free time.
- Preventing access to parts of school.
- Short or long term exclusion, detention or lunchtime exclusion.
- Involving parents when necessary.
- Involving appropriate outside agencies.
- Including details on the perpetrator’s school record.

## *12 What learners can expect*

### *Particular types of intervention*

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

### *12.1 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.

### *12.2 Consider the setting*

(9.10) The Welsh Government expects staff to 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.

### *12.3 Saving evidence*

(9.11) The Welsh Government expects learners who are bullied to 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. Screen grabs can be saved as online evidence.

## *13. What parents/carers can expect how incidents will be recorded and monitored*

### *13.1 Reporting, recording and monitoring*

(11.1) The Welsh Government expects schools to have in place mechanisms for reporting and recording bullying which are clearly communicated to the whole school community. 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.

(11.2) Effective record maintenance enables schools to review an incident, check whether there are other reports concerning the learners involved and make a decision 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 proactive steps to challenge it.

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

*13.2 Our procedure for the recording and monitoring of individual cases at school will be the following:*

- Completion of the incident investigation and recording forms in the School Bullying File
- Collation of information from forms presented to Governors in Headteachers Termly Report to Goverbors

*14. How learners and/or parents/carers can appropriately escalate the matter if they do not feel that their concerns are being taken seriously*

*14.1 The right of parents/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 available on the school website and/or 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, the Welsh Government expects all children and young people to be listened to and treated with respect. The Welsh Government expects schools to ensure a learner making a complaint has fully understood what is on the complaint form and any decisions that may flow from this.

(10.20) The Welsh Government expects information to 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 handled fairly, openly and without bias. The Welsh Government expects schools to investigate the concerns raised and make a decision quickly.

(10.22) Further information on complaint procedures can be found in the Welsh Government's guidance on complaint procedures for school governing bodies in Wales.

### *15. How the school will evaluate and review their policy and strategy*

(11.11) The Welsh Government expects their school anti-bullying policy and strategy to be regularly reviewed and involve consultation with school staff, learners and parents/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.

(11.7) The Welsh Government expects school governing bodies to monitor the following in relation to bullying:

- that schools maintain 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.

(7.4) The Welsh Government expects the policy to be regularly updated. The Welsh Government expects reviews of the policies and 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 and police 'All Wales School Liaison Core Programme'. Following a serious incident of bullying, schools may wish to review their policy and strategy and make relevant adjustments.

(7.5) The Welsh Government expects the anti-bullying policy to be user-friendly and be made known to all teaching and support staff, to learners and parents/carers. The Welsh Government expects schools to publish the policy on their websites. Where this is not an option, the Welsh Government expects schools to outline clearly how staff, learners and parents/carers can access the policy. Schools may also adopt an approach whereby the policy, or specific elements of it, are included in homework books/e-learning books such as an index code on the inside cover. This may help to embed the policy into their school culture and extend the message to learners' homes too.

(7.6) As part of the school's approach to ongoing training and development the Welsh Government recommends staff should receive regular training on their anti-bullying policy and procedures, including in relation to any new trends or concerns arising within their school. The Welsh Government expects that on induction all new staff will be made aware of the policy, the approach taken by their school and how the procedures are administered. The Welsh Government expects playground, lunchtime and school transport supervisors and school administrators to be fully aware of the policy and the procedures they should follow.

### **Resources that can be used:**



Bullying UK, part of Family Lives, is a leading charity providing advice and support to anyone affected by **bullying**. This could be bullying at school, work, advice for parents, cyber bullying and so much more....

[Bullying.co.uk](http://Bullying.co.uk)



Bullying affects over one million young people every year, and anyone can be bullied. Here's what you can do if you're being bullied. [Young minds](#)

## **Bullying and cyberbullying**

If you or someone you know is being bullied we're here to help. Try our tips below or find out how to help a friend.



- [What is bullying?](#)
- [Dealing with bullying](#)
- [Can I talk to the police?](#)
- [Taking care of your mental health](#)
- [Supporting someone who's being bullied](#)
- [Help if you're bullying someone](#)
  - [Childline](#)



Looking to get involved in #StandUpToBullying day? We've created a whole range of resource packs to get you started.

Whether you're looking to support on social media, run a session in your school or review your organisation's anti-bullying policy there's plenty to get you going.

[standuptobullying.co.uk](http://standuptobullying.co.uk)

## Online blackmail education resource for 15-18 year olds

*Online blackmail* is a new education resource which aims to help young people identify key characteristics of how blackmail manifests online, understand the impact it can have, and how they access help if they experience it.



The term 'online blackmail' is used to refer to the act of threatening to share information about an individual (including sexual images or videos) to the public, or their friends and family, unless a demand is met.

Anyone can be targeted by online blackmailers, but as young people begin to become more financially independent, this can be a point of vulnerability which offenders seek to exploit.

[Click here](#)

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Home  
shouldn't  
be a place  
of fear

**'Home shouldn't be a place of fear' campaign** so far. It aims to let those at risk of domestic abuse, sexual violence and coercive control know that help is available 24 hours a day, every day, via Live Fear Free. We need your

continued support to reach anyone in a position to help those who may be at an increased risk, including family, friends and service providers, also volunteers.

There are a number of ways to contact the Live Fear Free helpline for help and support – by telephone 0808 8010800, also live chat, text or email, visit our website for information.

The campaign includes advertising on TV (Sky AdSmart and S4C), regional and community radio, Spotify, social media and digital channels.

We've developed an animation illustrating snapshots of scenarios and the issues that Live Fear Free can support. We've also updated our 'Partner pack' with new messaging and creatives as restrictions ease, and again want to promote the link to the on-line training available that so many have now taken.

To find out more visit: <https://gov.wales/live-fear-free/staying-safe-during-coronavirus-emergency>

### **How You Can Support the Campaign**

- Sharing and re-tweeting messages from our social media channels: [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Tagging the campaign in your own social media messages using #livefearfree #bywhebofn
- On your website, in newsletters, emails and downloading and displaying posters and sharing images on digital screens as areas open to the public
- Complete the VAWDASV ELearning module and also encourage others

If you need information in a format not included, please contact us: [VAWDASV@gov.wales](mailto:VAWDASV@gov.wales)

All campaign materials (including jpegs, posters and social media assets) can be downloaded here:

<https://gov.wales/home-shouldnt-be-place-fear-campaign-campaign-material>

All materials are available bilingually

[VAWDASV@llyw.cymru](mailto:VAWDASV@llyw.cymru)