

# Challenging bullying: rights, respect, equality



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



A guide for young people

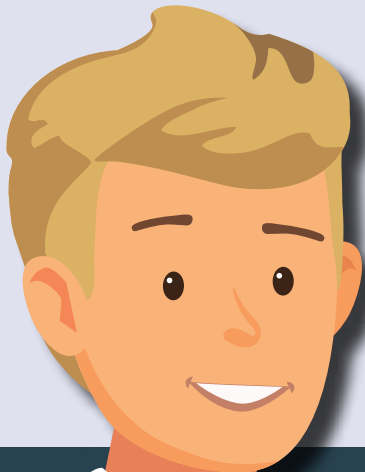
# Hello

## Education is important.

This is your time in school. It isn't just about what you learn – it's setting you up for your future.

School should be a safe place. Somewhere to develop skills, grow and enjoy friendships.

## Bullying can stop this happening.



## No one should be bullied.

Bullying leaves people feeling hurt, unsafe and disrespected. It can leave people feeling helpless, alone and like they have no power to change things.

## People should be treated equally.

There should be no discrimination. This is the law (the Equality Act 2010).

The Welsh Government want all children and young people to be respected, feel safe and enjoy their time at school.



We have written new guidance for schools across Wales on how to prevent and challenge bullying.

This booklet explains what bullying is, and what it's not. It has advice on dealing with bullying and where to get help.

# Your rights



The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** (UNCRC) is a list of 42 rights for children and young people. It says you have the right to:

- be protected from being hurt and mistreated
- a good-quality education that helps you develop your talents and abilities
- practice your religion
- a safe environment.

You should enjoy these rights and respect the rights of others. Bullying stops people getting their rights.

Wales put the UNCRC into law in the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. **It means we have to consider children and young people's rights in everything we do.**

Your right to a safe, good-quality education, means your school:

- should have a plan to encourage positive behaviour and challenge bullying
- must have a behaviour policy that explains how they do this
- should consult with you about the policies and activities
- should make sure you know about the policies so you know how to behave.



**Bullying stops people getting their rights.**

# What is bullying?

There is no legal definition of bullying. Bullying means different things to different people. In this guidance we define bullying as:

**‘Behaviour**  
by an **individual** or **group**,  
**repeated** over time,  
which is meant to **hurt someone**  
**physically** or **emotionally.**’



Bullying:

- hurts or upsets someone
- targets someone and leaves them feeling powerless to stop it
- happens on purpose
- happens more than once.



# Types of bullying

## Verbal

- Being called nasty names
- Being teased and made fun of
- Being threatened or put down



## Emotional

- Having rumours or gossip spread about you
- People talking about you behind your back
- Being left-out, excluded or isolated



## Physical

- Being hit, kicked or punched
- Being tripped up or knocked down
- Being forced to do things you don't want to do



## Online

- Having hurtful or embarrassing things posted online
- Getting nasty messages or being threatened online through apps like Snapchat or Instagram
- Someone using a fake profile on a social network to make fun of others
- Targeting someone by misusing personal images
- Targeting someone by misuse of private, explicit images including sexual images



Bullying happens in different ways.

# Prejudice-related bullying

**Bullying happens in many ways, to all kinds of people, for many reasons.**

Sometimes bullying is about appearance – tall, short, too fat, too thin, rich, poor or even hair colour.

Bullying might focus on what's different about a person's identity. It can be targeted at one person or a whole group because they're different, whether this is true or not. **This is called prejudice.**

Prejudice-related bullying is being bullied because of:

- your race or your religion
- your culture or your family background
- your special needs or disability
- your gender identity and the way you look or act
- your sexual orientation—(heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual)
- sexism – because of your gender (often this is harassment).

# Your feelings

Being bullied can leave you feeling very unhappy, depressed or isolated.

**Being bullied is not your fault:**

- Don't believe the nasty things said about you.
- You are a valued person.
- You have a right to be safe.
- You don't have to change how you look or who you are.

Try to take some action. It can be difficult but tell someone. It can make you feel better because it proves you are not powerless.



**If you feel upset, sad or low, let someone know. Talk to friends or family or use the helplines at the end of this document.**

# Bad behaviour

There is a difference between bad behaviour and bullying. Some things might upset you but it's not like bullying if:

- it's a fight or an argument that happens once
- it's banter that goes wrong once
- it's a problem in a friendship
- someone doesn't want to be friends with you.

## Telling someone

You may be able to sort out issues on your own. But, if you don't feel safe or able to, don't take this step without the support of friends or a teacher.

Some things you should always tell your school about:

- violence
- unwanted sexual behaviour
- bad behaviour because of your race or identity
- bad behaviour towards you because of your special needs or disability
- behaviour that threatens you or makes you feel unsafe
- anything that happens online that upsets or could harm you.

## Challenge bullying

If you see someone being bullied, you should:

- report it to your school
- offer to go with the person to tell someone
- walk with them and your other friends between lessons and break times.

## Banter

People might try to excuse bullying by saying it's only a joke or it's just banter.

### It's banter when:

- everyone involved understands it's banter
- everyone finds it funny
- everyone feels included and safe.

When close friends joke together, tease each other and all enjoy it, it isn't bullying.

### It isn't banter when:

- someone feels hurt or humiliated by it
- someone's identity is being made fun of
- someone feels excluded
- someone feels unsafe.



# Have you been bullied?

If you're being bullied, you don't have to deal with it on your own. Tell someone you trust like:

- a friend
- your brother or sister
- your parents or carers
- a teacher or other adult at school.



## Report it

Things to think about before you report it:

**Be sure about the facts** – write down what happened. Did anyone else see it happen?

**Keep a timeline** – write down how often it happens, where and when.

**Keep any evidence** – this helps show people what has happened and can help you be heard. You could:

- take a photo of what's been damaged
- save online messages or texts that are cruel or abusive
- take a photo of any injuries if you've been physically hurt.

When you keep evidence, remember:

- saving online messages doesn't stop you blocking the sender online
- you can report bullying online to the social media sites where it's happening.

If you've been sent an unacceptable image do not forward it to anyone. Show a teacher or adult what's in the message using your device.



You might prefer to get information from a website or speak to someone from a helpline. There's a list at the end of this guide.



# Taking it further

If you tell a teacher, and the situation isn't getting better, then tell someone else at school.

**You could tell a different member of staff, your head-of-year or the headteacher.** You can ask a friend, parent or carer to go with you. They can help make sure you are being listened to.



## Make a complaint

If you or your family feel your school is not taking your concerns seriously, you can make a complaint to the school.

All schools must have a complaints procedure. It is usually on the school website, but you can ask for a copy. It sets out how your school deals with complaints and gives you the name of who will help you through the process.

You should only make a complaint if:

- you have taken steps to sort out the situation with your school
- the situation isn't improving
- you feel the school hasn't done enough to help.



### Tips for dealing with issues on your own:

- find the right time
- stay calm
- talk to the people involved
- be confident and firm
- explain how it made you feel.



Seeing bullying can leave you feeling upset or sad.

You don't have to deal with it on your own. Talk to someone you trust.

# Don't be a bully



**Bullying someone is wrong.  
It harms everyone involved.  
It doesn't mean you're a bad person,  
but it needs to stop.**

There are many reasons people bully others. You may need help in understanding why you act in the way you do.

If you don't want to talk to someone, think about the following:

- Who was harmed?
- Were other people also upset by it?
- Would you like to be treated that way?
- What were you feeling at the time?
- Were you angry, emotional or upset at them or something else?
- Could you recognise this feeling in future and stop your actions?
- Are there other things going on in life that you need help with?
- How could you make things right?



**Everyone** needs help sometimes. So, there's nothing wrong with asking for help to change your behaviour. Actually, it's a brave choice to ask.

# Moving on

Bullying can be upsetting whatever your role in it. It can take up all your thoughts and emotions. There are other enjoyable things to think about and do like:

- joining a new club
- taking up a new interest or activity
- finding other things you enjoy during lunchtime or after school.



## Help and advice

If it's difficult to talk to someone at school or at home, contact Meic.

**Meic** is a helpline for children and young people, so you can talk to someone about worries or concerns everyday, 8a.m.–midnight.

Meic gives advice and support. They can also contact your school to talk about the bullying if you want them to.

[www.meiccymru.org](http://www.meiccymru.org)

☎ 08088 023456

If bullying is upsetting you, you can speak to a professional. Counselling is available in Year 6, and free for young people 11–18. Make an appointment yourself or ask someone you trust to make an appointment for you.

Check out your local council's website for more information.



## Thanks for reading this.

**No one should be bullied.**

It can be hard but try not to let the bullying take over your life. Don't let it stop you being around people or doing things.

## Anti-bullying charities

### Bullies Out

Anti-bullying charity based in Wales. Their e-mentors offer online support.

[www.bulliesout.com](http://www.bulliesout.com)

[mail@bulliesout.com](mailto:mail@bulliesout.com)

### Anti-Bullying Alliance

Information for children, young people, parents/ carers and schools

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

### Kidscape

Anti-bullying charity.

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

### The Diana Award

Young ambassadors trained to help others.

[www.antibullyingpro.com](http://www.antibullyingpro.com)

### Children in Wales

[www.childreninwales.org.uk/our-work/bullying](http://www.childreninwales.org.uk/our-work/bullying)

### Stand Against Bullying [Bridgend] at Mental Health Matters

[www.imhawales.org](http://www.imhawales.org)

## Toolkit

There is a toolkit with more information and help if you want it.

For more information please go to the [Hwb website](#).



## Helplines and advice

### Childline

Childline offers advice.

☎ 0800 1111

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### Kooth

Counselling service.

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

### CALL

Community Advice and Listening Line.

[www.callhelpline.org.uk](http://www.callhelpline.org.uk)

### The Mix

Support service helpline for under 25's

☎ 0808 808 4994

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

### Mind Hub Cardiff and Vale

[www.mindhub.wales](http://www.mindhub.wales)

### The Children's Commissioner for Wales

[www.childcomwales.org.uk](http://www.childcomwales.org.uk)

### Equality and law

The Equality and Human Rights Commission.

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/commission-wales](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/commission-wales)

## Homophobia

### EACH

Education Action Challenging Homophobia.

☎ 0808 1000 143

[www.each.education](http://www.each.education)

## Racism

### Show Racism the Red Card

[www.theredcard.org](http://www.theredcard.org)

## Disability

### MENCAP Cymru

Helpline Mon to Fri, 9a.m. – 5p.m.

☎ 0808 8000 300

[wales.mencap.org.uk](http://wales.mencap.org.uk)

## Emotional health

### Heads Above the Waves

Support for young people suffering depression or self-harming.

[hatw.co.uk/straight-up-advice](http://hatw.co.uk/straight-up-advice)

### Samaritans

A safe place for you to talk anytime.

☎ 116 123

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### Rethink Mental Illness

Advice and information for vulnerable people with mental health issues.

☎ 0300 500 0927

[rethink.org/help-in-your-area](http://rethink.org/help-in-your-area)

## Crime

### Internet Watch Foundation

Report illegal images of children and young people.

[www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)

### Victim Support

Report hate crime in Wales.

[www.reporthate.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.reporthate.victimsupport.org.uk)

### Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)

If child sexual abuse or exploitation is suspected.

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

### NSPCC

If you or you think another child or young person is in immediate danger, don't delay – call 999 or call us

☎ 0808 800 5000

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### SchoolBeat

[www.schoolbeat.org/en](http://www.schoolbeat.org/en)

## Online issues

### Internet Matters

Advice on online issues for children, young people and their families.

[www.internetmatters.org.uk](http://www.internetmatters.org.uk)

### Childnet International

All aspects of online safety.

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

## Online safety

In this area on Hwb you can find resources and links that will help to keep you safe online.

[hwb.gov.wales/zones/online-safety/learners/](http://hwb.gov.wales/zones/online-safety/learners/)