




# Branas School

## Anti-Bullying Policy

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*CareTech's children's education services provide a safe and stimulating learning environment in which young people are always offered a fresh start, and empowered to achieve and fulfil their unique potential*

## 1. Description and Ethos of Branas School

### OUR CULTURE AND ETHOS

We are committed to providing a nurturing, safe and vibrant learning environment that fosters a love of learning and enables every student to become the best they can be. Respectful and supportive relationships are at the heart of all that we do: we value every member of the school community equally. We recognise that our pupils bring different experiences, interests and strengths, and we understand these will influence the way they learn. Therefore, we take a child-centred approach to education that recognises and responds to individual need. We celebrate effort and achievements and set high expectations. We are here to help our Learners learn the skills they need to become successful, motivated and resilient young adults who are fully equipped to make a positive contribution to society.

Branas Isaf operates an integrated model of care, education and therapy underpinned by the Good Lives Model. The school exists to improve the quality of life of our pupils both now and in their future. We specialise in supporting the Good Lives Model as a framework to offender rehabilitation, and as an underpinning therapeutic model across both care and education for the development of pupils.

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is grounded in the ethical concept of human dignity and universal human rights, and as such, it has a strong emphasis on human agency. That is, the GLM is concerned with individuals' ability to formulate and select goals, construct plans, and to act freely in the implementation of these plans. A closely related assumption is the basic premise that offenders, like all humans, value certain states of mind, personal characteristics, and experiences, which are defined in the GLM as primary goods.

### OUR SCHOOL

Branas School is an Independent School operating within the Branas Isaf Company, a subsidiary of CareTech Community Services Ltd., who are the proprietors.

The school provides specialist education to boys aged 11 to 18 years with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, and who are Looked After Children.

### OUR PUPILS

All young people in Branas School have a history of harmful behaviours and social, emotional and mental health needs often accompanied by a range of additional learning needs.

Most of the pupils have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of attainments on admission. All have fragile self-esteem and demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. Many have experienced loss and trauma, leading to attachment difficulties. As a result, many experience difficulties in forming and maintaining appropriate, positive relationships with others and have a limited ability to work cooperatively.

Pupils are:

- aged 11 to 18;
- boys only;
- placed within the residential setting of Branas Isaf;
- residents from placing authorities throughout the United Kingdom;
- all present a range of harmful behaviours;
- most are in receipt of an EHC plan or a Statement of SEN.

## THE VISION

***BELIEVE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE, ASPIRE***

**BELIEVE** IN OUR TEAM AND IN OUR LEARNERS

**EMPOWER** OUR LEARNERS TO BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES AND THEIR PERSONAL JOURNEY

NURTURE OUR LEARNERS TO **ACHIEVE**

AND **ASPIRE TO BE THE BEST THEY CAN BE.**

The school moto is at the heart of everything we do at Branas School -

*“Community with learning, is a community with heart”*

*“Cymuned a’i chynefin, sy’n chymuned â chalon”*

This vision drives everything we do and will be achieved through:

- A rich, deep and personalised education designed to meet the needs of each pupil;
- A pupil centred, skills focused curriculum that is relevant to the 21st century and inclusive of all;
- Encouraging all members of the school community to strive beyond expectations and develop a lifelong love of learning;
- Offering a broad range of learning experiences within a curriculum that values academic attainment as well as social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of education;
- Providing personalised careers education and guidance, with aspirational next steps planning, preparing pupils for their future;
- Recognising that time is precious; working quickly to turn around pupils’ attitudes towards education so they enjoy their time at school and make the most of the opportunities on offer;

- Working collaboratively with our professional partners to support the needs of each individual pupil.

Pupils will:

1. Be challenged to engage in learning and achieve meaningful qualifications that will enable them to take their next steps in education, employment or training;
2. Develop into healthy, resilient and confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society;
3. Create, nurture and maintain healthy positive relationships with others;
4. Experience success, whatever form it takes;
5. Become enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work;
6. Celebrate diversity and develop into ethical, informed young people who are ready to be citizens of the world.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission statement is:

We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that nurtures mutual respect and encourages reflection so that our pupils develop the knowledge skills and confidence to enable them to achieve their potential in all aspects of their lives.

## OUR VALUES AND AIMS

Our values are:

- **Aspiration** : We encourage each other to be the best we can be
- **Curiosity**: We never stop learning and wondering about the world
- **Independence**: We think for ourselves and determine our own future
- **Innovation**: We look for new and creative solutions to problems
- **Reflection**: We learn from our experiences
- **Tolerance**: We value difference and respect other people's opinions
- **Trust**: We believe in the honesty and reliability of others



### Our Aims:

- All pupils will undergo a 2-week induction period where we look to initial assess and diagnose learners within core subject areas and look to support a transition timetable to reintegrate learners successfully back into education
- Within the first 6-weeks all pupils will undergo in depth assessments in order for us to fully understand them and their needs for effective learning;
- Everyone in Branas Isaf supports and challenges pupils to invest in education as a priority for a successful placement;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to achieve at least 95% attendance in school;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to engage in creative learning experiences appropriate to their needs, and supported by an accurate individual learning plan;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to achieve nationally recognised academic awards in core subjects;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to achieve accreditation in a wide range of subject areas;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to become independent learners;
- All pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, and build positive relationships with those around them;
- All pupils are enabled to take part in decisions that shape their lives, the school and the community in which they live;
- All pupils are supported to demonstrate the behaviours needed to stretch themselves and cope with the challenges of learning;
- All pupils are enabled to attend and participate in regular therapy sessions;
- All pupils learn strategies to manage their feelings and know where to go for help when things are difficult;
- All pupils will have the opportunity to participate in work experience and work-related learning opportunities;
- All our pupils learn the skills to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts;
- All our pupils learn the skills to use digital technologies creatively and safely in preparation for the world in which they will live;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to lead healthy, active lifestyles and be prepared to make a positive contribution to society as adults.

## 2. Anti-Bullying Policy

### RATIONALE

Branas School is completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to learn and work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment.

### LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- Human Rights Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008
- The Equality Act 2010
- Criminal offences legislation
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools 2019
- The Children Act 1989
- The Independent School Standards – Wales (2003)

#### Related documents:

- Wales Safeguarding (2019)
- Inclusion and pupil support (2016)
- Keeping learners safe (2021)
- Thinking positively: Emotional health and well-being in schools and Early Years settings (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010)
- School-based Counselling Operating Toolkit (Welsh Assembly Government, 2011)

Additionally, the Welsh Government Office document, Children and Young People: Rights to Action (2005) builds on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).to which Bran

School fully subscribes. This document recognises seven core aims which seek to ensure that all children and young people:

- have a flying start in life (Articles 3, 29 and 36)
- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities (Articles 23, 28, 29 and 32)
- enjoy the best possible health, and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation (Articles 6, 18–20, 24, 26–29, 32–35, 37 and 40)
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities. (Articles 15, 20, 29 and 31)
- are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised (Articles 2, 7, 8, 12–17 and 20)
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being (Articles 19, 20, 25, 27, 32–35)
- are not disadvantaged by poverty (Articles 6, 26, 27 and 28).

## PRINCIPLES

Branas School will challenge bullying whenever it arises. The School takes an approach to bullying which is preventative, through raising awareness: with pupils through the curriculum and around the school; supports the staff team with appropriate professional development opportunities; and supports a school-wide ethos where bullying is everyone's responsibility, and all pupils and staff are encouraged and supported to raise any issues of bullying that they are subjected to, or witness.

Prevention and challenge work hand in hand, whereby a no tolerance and challenge approach to incidents of bullying, with a clear level of reparative sanction, is also supported by both remedial work with the bully to help them understand and change their behaviours, and with the victim, to offer support and encouragement to move forwards.

As a school, we also have a duty to "*eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act*" in relation to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, and this includes in the form of bullying. Under S.4 of the Act, these characteristics are as follows:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

Part 6 of the Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

Whilst the main focus of this policy is concerned with the prevention of bullying to pupils, it should be noted that the policy includes prevention of bullying against anyone: pupils, teaching staff, residential care staff, and members of the wider community.

In our School:

- Pupils have a right to learn free from intimidation and fear.
- The needs of the victim are paramount.
- Schools will not tolerate bullying behaviour.
- Bullied pupils will be listened to.
- Reported incidents will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.



## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The definition used in this policy builds upon widely used principles established in the UK since 1993. For the purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as:

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

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.

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. Branas School expects intervention to be immediate whether it is bullying or any other one-off negative behaviour.

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 Branas School will record incidents to track patterns of behaviour.

- **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.

### WHAT DOES BULLYING LOOK LIKE?

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<sup>10</sup>. 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.

Some cases of bullying might be a safeguarding matter or require involvement of the police. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident will 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 will report their concerns to their local authority's safeguarding board, in line with the safeguarding policy.

Some behaviour, though unacceptable, is not considered bullying. Branas School will deal with these with in accordance with the school's behaviour policy to prevent an incident potentially escalating to become bullying.

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** – this 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** – Branas School 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 school will with in accordance with the school’s behaviour policy. If considered necessary, the school would also need to involve the police.

## THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING

The effects of bullying, both being bullied and bullying another, are diverse and manifest themselves in different ways dependent on the individual. Generally, exhibited effects of a victim are often used as a tool or coping strategy by a young person to avoid having to come into contact with the bully, or are developed health problems as a direct result of the trauma of persistent and unchallenged bullying.

In many cases a **victim** will become reluctant to attend school, often being absent or truanting from school premises. Behaviour in the classroom may be withdrawn, with a young person declining from participation in group work. Such behaviour is consistent with the victim suffering decreasing self-esteem and confidence with peers for fear of being negatively and inappropriately challenged. If left to develop a young person might find it increasingly difficult to enter a classroom full of peers, some of whom may be responsible for bullying, resulting in a young person truanting or refusing to come to school at all.

Such instances have shown that victims may present a variety of anxiety related health problems with documented symptoms ranging through faints, vomiting, fits, pains, paralysis, headaches, visual problems, stomach aches, enuresis, sleeping difficulties, self-harm and depression. Acute levels of distress leading to depression may result in young person experiencing feelings of a suicidal nature and attempting self-harm.

**Bullies** themselves are often subject to a range of feeling and emotions not consistent with healthy learning and peer relationships. Low self-esteem and levels of confidence in a peer group / learning environment can lead to lower levels of achievement. A young person might then “opt out” of learning opportunities available, frightened to expose difficulties in front of peers, and look for strategies which mask true difficulties encountered. Such strategies may manifest themselves

behaviourally; disruption in the classroom, refusal to engage, refusal to abide by school rules, but may also be directed towards peers who then become the targets for bullying. Such strategies also seek to enhance the self-esteem of the bully, making them feel better about themselves.

In Branas School we understand the importance of promoting a learning environment in which all may succeed and a huge part of what we seek to achieve comes from raising levels of self-esteem and confidence such that all who attend are able to access learning on an appropriate level and receive the help they need. Partnered with a whole-school ethos of non-tolerance towards bullying, and an atmosphere of positive peer relationship building and reliance on each other we seek to alleviate many of the issues encountered by victims and bullies alike so decreasing the chance of bullying occurring in the first place. Such an approach hopefully decreases the feelings experienced by potential bullies, thus decreasing the occurrence of bullying and so decreases the symptoms displayed by victims of bullying and increases levels of attendance.

### ONLINE BULLING AND AGRSSION

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.

Although offline bullying remains more common than online bullying, 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.

School delivers Digital Competence as a cross-curriculum responsibility within the Curriculum for Wales 2022, which includes strands on 'Citizenship' and 'interacting and collaborating', all of which look at how to act appropriately in the digital world.

### **PARTICIPATION & CONSULTATION PROCESS**

In Branas School the prevention of bullying is the responsibility of everyone. In order for any school strategy to be effective it must be developed through the involvement of all parties who are to be influenced by the policy. Only then will there be engagement from all in supporting the school's approach to recognising and challenging bullying.

In the annual review process of this policy, the thoughts and feelings of the pupils, teaching team and residential care team will be gathered in order to better inform the further development of the policy. All parties will have a voice and be listened to. This will be through annual feedback questionnaires sent out to all parties, and, for pupils, with bullying as a regular agenda item for discussion in the School Council.

The school records, collates and evaluates all incidents of complaint, intervention, sanctions and incidents happening within the school day. Data from these sources recorded as incidents of bullying will be extracted and analysed independently in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying strategy, and identify further areas for development and improvement. This policy will be reviewed annually and the described data analysis will be used to inform this review process.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS.**

#### **Our staff will:**

- Support the school-wide strategy for raising awareness of, and challenging bullying whenever it occurs;
- Foster in our pupils' self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others;
- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils;
- Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully, and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens;
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying;
- Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them;
- Report suspected cases of bullying to The Executive Headteacher, as our designated safeguarding person for the School;

- Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken;
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.

**We expect our pupils to:**

- Support the school-wide strategy for raising awareness of, and challenging bullying whenever it occurs;
- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity;
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so;
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

Anyone who becomes the target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.

**We ask our parents / corporate parents to support their children and the school by:**

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying;
- Advising their children to report any bullying to (name of a member of staff/specific post in school/their class teacher) and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils;
- Advising their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying;
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassuring them that appropriate action will be taken;
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying;
- Informing the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved;
- Co-operating with the school, if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth. And point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.

**Everyone should:**

- Support the school-wide strategy for raising awareness of, and challenging bullying whenever it occurs;
- Work together to combat and, hopefully in time, to eradicate bullying.

<b>PREVENTATIVE MEASURES</b>
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## Branas School:

- Has a comprehensive Behaviour Policy that describes the expectations of the school, its approach to supporting and challenging inappropriate behaviour, a system of rewards and sanctions, and the role that all members of the school community have in supporting the expectations of the school. Bullying is unacceptable behaviour within the school and so would fall within the parameters of this policy. In particular, one of the expectations of the school, as identified in every class room, is *“BE RESPECTFUL AND TOLERANT OF OTHERS”*. This key expectation, against which pupils are measured, seeks to highlight the message against bullying.
- Where each young person has a key tutor assigned and they have a pastoral role for the pupils assigned to them. Pastoral responsibilities include the support of PSHE topics within key teacher sessions, in which bullying may be covered. Pastoral duties also include responsibility for ILP and IBP targets for individual pupils, and behavioural targets can include issues of bullying and appropriate relationship building and social interaction. Pastoral duties include developing appropriate relationships with pupils such that they are able to discuss difficulties, and, at times, the tutor may advocate on their behalf.
- Where awareness of bullying and the School’s zero-tolerance approach to bullying is promoted to all members of the school community in a holistic manner, such that school displays in corridors and classrooms raise awareness, provide information as to who to talk to and how to access them, support Anti-Bullying week, and bullying represents a continuing agenda item for school council.
- Where all young people, on admission to the school, are informed as to the school’s expectations, including its approach to bullying, are informed of their right to make a complaint, and given a complaints booklet, and are informed of the variety of opportunities they have for speaking with someone about any problems they might be experiencing.
- Ensures that all young people have a voice and are listened to. We are understanding that a one-size-fits-all approach does not meet the individual needs of pupils, and so work to provide a range of opportunities for pupils to raise concerns and be listened to. These include:
  - School Council;
  - Key Tutors, Staff Team and Senior Leadership;
  - Residential care staff and management, particularly Key Workers;
  - Independent Advocacy;

- National Helplines;
  - Local Authority representatives, including social worker, IRO and virtual school;
  - Parents;
  - School group meetings and tutor times;
  - Complaints system.
- Maintains accurate records of all incidents, sanctions, physical interventions, complaints and accidents. All data is analysed and evaluated, including for incidents of bullying. Said information is used to inform improvements in policy and practice to ensure that the anti-bullying strategy for the school remains effective and properly implemented.

#### PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

- Incidents of bullying reported to the School by the Victim (or advocate), or by a Third Party external to the school (e.g. parent, stakeholder) are recorded, reported and followed through using the procedures detailed in the School's **Complaints Policy and Procedures**;
- Incidents of bullying reported to the School by a witness within the School (teaching team, care team, other pupil) will be treated as Whistleblowing, and is recorded, reported and followed through using the School's **Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures**;
- Incidents of bullying reported to the School by an employee suffering bullying by another employee will be treated as a grievance, and is recorded, reported and followed through using the School's **Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures**.
- 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 is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'*. Where this is the case, the School will report their concerns to their local authority safeguarding officer, and the placing authority for the child in question, and will follow the School's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**.

As per the School's Complaints Policy and Procedures, any alleged incidents of bullying raised against a member of the school's senior leadership team must be passed to the Director of Education Services for investigation.

Additional to the policies stated above, the School will seek to provide support and reassurance for any victim of bullying in order to ensure that they are helped through incidents of bullying to achieve a more positive outcome, and to ensure that they remain engaged with the school.

Bullies will be sanctioned under the guidelines of the Behaviour Policy, and this includes a reparative approach to making amends. It should also include support and guidance for the bully in order to help them, and us, understand and address the reasons behind the bullying, and help them to modify their behaviour to prevent it happening in the future. Any disciplinary sanction applied to the bully will, as far as is reasonably practical, take into consideration any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

In some circumstances the nature of the bullying may be so serious as to cause others serious harm, or put others at significant risk of harm, that an exclusion may be necessary. Continued bullying that



does not respond to school sanction and reparation may also result in exclusion. On these occasions the School will follow the procedures outlined in the School's Exclusion Policy.

In serious circumstances it may also be appropriate to involve the Police, as the bullying may take the form of criminal activity, but this would be assessed on a case by case basis. For example, and in consideration of cyber-bullying, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

For all instances of bullying the parent/corporate parent, and the placing authority social worker, will be informed, and kept updated on progress of investigation and outcomes. This will be the case for both the victim and the alleged bully. If there is a need for extra therapeutic involvement with either the victim or the bully, then the school will raise this with the therapy team at Branas Isaf.

In all cases, and on completion of investigation and any following actions, all parties involved in the incident, or informed as part of the incident, will receive full feedback on the process and outcomes arising.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In accordance with Standard 7, 33 (k), of The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2003, Branas School will maintain standards of confidentiality of records, unless so requested by those referred to in the Regulations.

#### **CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF**

As part of the induction process, all staff joining the school team will complete a session on bullying and the school's approach to tackling bullying. All new staff will have to read and sign the existing policy in order to ensure full implementation.

The School's annual programme of professional development days may include additional training on tackling bullying.

#### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, and scheduled as part of the school's policy review calendar.

**The date of next review will be September 2024**

Monitoring of all recorded information in the school takes place half-termly, data involving incidents of bullying will be used to review and improve the school strategy, and so the policy, on a more regular basis if required.

**LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

For further detailed guidance on those policies referred to in this policy, and other relevant policies, please read the School's policies as listed below:

- Complaints Policy and Procedures;
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures;
- Behaviour Policy and Procedures;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures;
- Acceptable Use of Technologies Policy