

Action on Bullying- Information For Parents

Whilst we at Ysgol Rhiwabon are confident that the percentage is nowhere near as high in our school, we also believe that there is no room for complacency and that any school which states that bullying does not take place is deluding itself.

The leaflet is intended to give answers to four key questions. If you feel that you require further information or if you wish to report any suspected bullying, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 01978 822392 and ask for your child's Lead Learner, a Pastoral Support Worker or Mrs Hellen.

What is bullying?

Bullying is a form of cruelty and abuse that can cause great suffering and unhappiness to the person who is being bullied and to the family of that person.

Bullying of children and young people tends to happen mostly at school or on the way to and from school. It takes many forms:

Direct bullying:

- teasing
- calling names and using nicknames
- taunting or threatening
- deliberately damaging another person's work or taking something of his or hers
- physical attacks
- exclusion - deliberately making someone an outsider by, for example, not allowing him or her into a game

Indirect bullying:

- cyber-bullying

How might I recognise that my child is being bullied?

The victims of bullying can suffer both physically and psychologically. The charity KIDSCAPE lists the behaviours indicated below in their publication 'Stop Bullying'. If your child, or someone you know, starts to do these things then he or she *may* be being bullied.

A child may:

- be frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school
- ask for a lift to school
- begin doing less well at school
- come home regularly with clothes or books destroyed
- come home hungry because lunch money was taken
- become withdrawn
- start eating less
- sleep badly
- have unexplained bruises, scratches and cuts
- have possessions 'go missing'
- ask for money or begin stealing money (to pay the bully)
- continually 'lose' pocket money
- refuse to say what is wrong

If your child has been bullied:

- calmly talk with your child about his or her experience
- Make a note of what your child says, particularly who was said to be involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you.
- Explain to your child that if further incidents occur he or she should report them to a teacher immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's form tutor, Lead Learner or Pastoral Support Worker.
- Explain the problems your child is experiencing
- Don't encourage your child to 'hit back'.

Unfortunately, most bullying of children takes place in schools. We will work with all concerned to deal with the matter head on.

Therefore you should contact the school immediately so that action can be taken.

When talking with school staff about bullying:

- Try to stay calm; bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened; give dates, places and other children involved
- Stay in touch and let the school know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

What will the school do about it?

Once informed a member of staff will look into the matter and together with you, devise strategies to improve the situation for your child.

Ysgol Rhiwabon takes bullying very seriously and has an anti-bullying policy which includes:

- The use of a variety of methods to gauge the situation periodically
- An E-cadets service for incidents of cyber-bullying
- An anti-bullying charter
- Links to internal support including a counselling service, Youth Work service, Pastoral Support workers, Year 11 buddies and Succeed provision (ALN support)
- Links to external agencies including CAMHS, INSPIRE, Police Liaison and Childline.
- Clear guidance and strategies for dealing with bullying
- Useful websites and helplines

Useful Websites:

www.Kidscape.org.uk

www.beatbullying.org

www.childline.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.bullying.co.uk

Free phone number for childline: 0800 1111