

BRYN DERI PRIMARY SCHOOL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

Institutional Discrimination may occur when an institution assumes that all people that a policy serves are homogeneous or all have the same needs or experiences. This is sometimes known as 'ethnocentricity' or 'heteronormativity' (or by other terms).

It is often the case that although day to day practice and ethos within a school fully recognises a community's diversity, formal policy does not always fully reflect this. If this is the case this can sometimes result in a policy or procedure serving some groups of people less well than others, even potentially leading to negative experiences for some. If this is disproportionately and directly related to an aspect of a person's identity (e.g. being from a minority community, having different or additional needs, being within a historically oppressed community etc) then this can sometimes result in a 'negative differential impact'.

Aim and Purpose of Anti Bullying Policy

The main purpose of the policy is to explain our school's policy position on bullying. Further it aims to explain the actions the school will take to prevent to respond to bullying.

Is Equality Explicit/Clearly Referenced?

Yes. The policy makes explicit references more than once in terms of the protected characteristics. It doesn't go so far as to address how those different types of bullying might require specific measures.

Where is there *Unlikely* to be a Negative Differential Impact?

There is unlikely to be a negative differential impact in terms of

- Race
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Status
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Age

Religion/Belief

The Interfaith Network reports that 23% of pupils are bullied because of their Religion or

Belief. However, this relates mainly to pupils in Faith Schools who do not subscribe to the majority Religion of those schools (rather than pupils being bullied simply for being Religious). As ours is not a Faith School this is less likely to be an issue for us. There is likely to be a link between Racist Bullying and bullying on the grounds of Religion but for the purposes of this report this will be covered in the section on 'Race' below.

Race

Racist bullying is relatively low in schools across Wales according to the most comprehensive anti bullying survey undertaken in Wales (All Wales Survey of Bullying in Schools, Welsh Government, 2009). According to that report only 3% to 5% of the 8,000 pupils surveyed were bullied for reasons of ethnicity. The Annual Bullying Survey 2015 is one of the largest UK wide anti bullying survey shows Race as being a higher factor in bullying with 8% of bullying being Racist and 3% being related to culture.

The increase in numbers reported between the two surveys may correspond with a rise in Racism in recent years. For instance there was a 10% rise in racist incidents in South Wales in 2014 following the murder of Lee Rigby (*Plaid Cymru/South Wales Police*). At the time of this report being written there have been increases of Racist incidents of 60% following the result of the EU referendum and 'Brexit' (*True Vision – a Police Funded online hate crime reporting tool*).

Although there is a difference between Racist Incidents and Racist Bullying the recent spikes in racism across the country demonstrate that it continues to exist. Most pupils from Black or Minority Ethnic communities are likely to experience a racist incident at some point in their school life (*DCSF, Bullying around Racism, Religion and Culture (2006)*). This is not bullying per se, but for racist bullying to remain low across schools, the work done to tackle racism needs to continue. Our anti-bullying policy includes references to Racist bullying but could go further in explaining the actions it will take to try to prevent this type of bullying from occurring in the first place.

Sexual Orientation/Gender Reassignment

Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment are not the same issue. However, many (in fact, most) anti bullying studies recognise that pupils who do not comply with 'traditionally' male or female gender norms are targets for homophobic bullying, regardless of actual sexual orientation or Trans status. The All Wales Survey of Bullying in Schools referenced above states that homophobic bullying is ten times more likely to occur than racist bullying and that 70% of all bullying in schools is homophobic in nature.

The Annual Bullying Survey of 2015 also found that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) pupils were the groups "most likely" to experience bullying. Their report states that "*all those who deviate, or who are perceived to deviate, away from heterosexuality are significantly more likely to experience bullying*" quoting figures that two thirds (60% to 70%) of LGB pupils experience bullying.

Pupils who experience homophobic bullying experience barriers to reporting that other pupils do not. For an LGB pupil to report that they are being bullied because they are gay requires them to 'come out' to teachers or parents which is an incredible barrier for most young people. Nearly half of those pupils contemplate suicide as a result (*Stonewall School Report 2012*).

Similarly, straight people who are experiencing homophobic bullying may fear reporting it

out of concern for being labelled as potentially LGB and the stigma that goes along with that.

Almost every comprehensive report on bullying in the past decade has reported that homophobic bullying is endemic in schools. Our anti bullying policy currently does reference homophobic bullying but doesn't mention the particular difficulties inherent in reporting this type of bullying, nor specific measures to address it and could go further in that regard.

Where is there Likely to be a Negative Differential Impact ?

There is likely (or possibly likely) to be a negative differential impact on the grounds of

Gender

Disability

Gender Reassignment

Gender

There are likely to be two key aspects as to our policy might let down pupils from different genders when it comes to bullying. One is the different types of bullying that boys and girls are more likely to experience and the other is in terms of reporting.

Girls are more likely to experience cyber bullying, sexual bullying and indirect bullying (rumours, exclusion) whereas boys are more likely to experience physical bullying. This is borne out in all of the reports referenced throughout this report. Additionally, boys are less likely to report bullying at all even though they are as likely to experience it. Further, as they move through school pupils showing a decline in the numbers of pupils reporting bullying due to a reduction in belief that their schools can effectively deal with bullying.

Our anti bullying policy as it makes reference to the different types of bullying that occur (eg cyber, individual/groups) but not the strategies to tackle different types of bullying that affect boys and girls differently. Nor does it recognise that boys are reluctant to report bullying directly or mention the possibility of anonymous reporting.

Gender Reassignment

See above for general comments. There is a lack of research in terms of transphobic bullying in primary schools however by virtue of its absence in the policy there is a risk of perceived transphobia or of transphobic bullying being given a lower profile.

Disability

Disability is generally reported as being the second most likely reason for bullying, after sexual orientation. London University's Institute for Education found in 2014 that Disabled pupils were twice as likely to be bullied as pupils who aren't Disabled. There is evidence that pupils with a Learning Disability are even more likely to be bullied. Physically Disabled pupils were 20% more likely to be bullied than pupils who aren't Disabled compared to pupils with Autism/Asperger's who were 40% more likely to be bullied (*Annual Bullying Survey*

2015)

Our anti bullying policy does not reflect this, there is no mention of it within the policy. Some Disabled pupils will experience barriers to reporting bullying that other pupils would not face and this is also not taken into account with our policy as it currently stands.

Recommendations

- 1) Consider expanding the 'preventing' section to include more detail as to how bullying related to the protected characteristics will be addressed.
- 2) Put in place a variety of reporting tools for pupils (eg online reporting, anonymous reporting etc). There is an opportunity here to make reference to the difficulties boys and victims of homophobic bullying face in reporting bullying