

Kirsty Williams AC/AM  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-862  
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/05517/19

David John Rowlands AM  
Chair, Petitions Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

[Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales](mailto:Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales)

12 March 2019

### **Petition P-05-862 – Tackling school bullying**

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 4 March requesting further information on the above petition following the meeting of the Petitions Committee on 12 February.

I recently met with the petitioner and we discussed similar points to those set out in his letter to you. The petitioner also accepted my offer to meet with my officials to discuss the detail of the consultation on the draft anti-bullying guidance. My officials are considering the feedback the petitioner provided during this meeting alongside the other responses we have received to the consultation and the feedback gathered from the engagement events we have held.

You ask about our assessment of the sufficiency of current legal duties in relation to preventing and challenging bullying in schools; our overarching approach in Wales focuses on prevention, with respect and positive behaviour central to this. That said, the revised draft guidance does set out the current legal duties. In particular, it is a legal requirement that all schools have a school behaviour policy. The expectation is that effective anti-bullying strategies should be central to that behaviour policy and be developed and put into effect by everyone in the school, including the pupils.

The draft guidance also highlights that some types of bullying behaviour that constitute harassment or threatening behaviour or communication may in fact be a criminal offence. Where school staff or parents feel a criminal offence may have been committed they can and should take immediate action and report it to the police. It is then for the police to decide whether to investigate and prosecute.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

[Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales)


Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

As part of the recent consultation on revised anti-bullying guidance we have spoken with children and young people, schools, local authorities and voluntary organisations to understand the challenges they face in dealing with bullying. We have engaged widely to ensure that the guidance is as effective and impactful as possible.

The consultation closed on 15 February and my officials are currently analysing the responses and feedback from the engagement events we held. Once this task is complete, I will be in a better position to confirm the timetable for publishing the new guidance and supporting resource toolkit.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**

Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education