# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Welsh Government response to incident of alleged racist bullying in Blaenau Gwent** |
| **DATE** | **23 May 2022** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language** |

I was shocked and saddened to learn of the incident in Blaenau Gwent last week, which resulted in a child being seriously injured.

The incident is being investigated by the school and the local authority, and Gwent Police are involved and carrying out an investigation. My officials have been in close contact with the local authority in Blaenau Gwent since last week and we will continue to engage with them while the investigation is ongoing. We also understand that the child and the child’s family are being supported by Gwent Police.

This incident involved a child being injured and experiencing extreme fear for their safety. The results of the investigation by Gwent Police and other agencies will be required in order for us to reach detailed conclusions on the incident and I support the agencies involved in engaging with the child and their family.

Every one of our education settings in Wales should be an inclusive, engaging environment where everyone’s well-being is considered and everyone feels accepted, safe and ready to learn. The Welsh Government condemns bullying and harassment in any form, including any form of racist bullying or harassment.

We expect allegations and incidents of bullying and racism to be fully investigated by schools, with appropriate action taken to address the matter and prevent further instances from happening. [The Welsh Government’s suite of guidance ‘Rights, respect, equality’ provides statutory guidance for both governing bodies of maintained schools, and local authorities to help address and prevent bullying and harassment in education settings in Wales](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.wales%2Fanti-bullying-guidance&data=02%7C01%7CKate.Murray%40gov.wales%7C8e24f57417204f0fbef108d773358150%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637104545942546340&sdata=a9Tb0dEabPI%2B1aXMHioDmOpXU9FvuQqo%2Fk%2Bc%2FFabkHk%3D&reserved=0).

A key goal within the forthcoming Anti-racist Wales Action Plan is to improve the experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic learners and teachers in schools by taking an inclusive and anti‑racist approach to teaching and school experience.

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that the education, opportunities and outcomes for our children and young people in Wales are fair and equitable, and we are committed to building an anti-racist Wales by 2030 – this includes an anti-racist education system.

As part of our Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan, we are updating our statutory anti-bullying guidance to ensure it reflects our vision for a truly anti-racist Wales. This will be in place for schools by September 2022.

It is important that our Curriculum for Wales reflects the true diversity of our population and that learners understand how this diversity has shaped modern Wales. That is why the Welsh Government has made mandatory changes to include the teaching of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic histories and experiences in the new curriculum. In supporting a child to make strong connections with their home and community, and embracing past and present experiences, teachers should support learners to develop an appreciation of the extent to which they are part of a wider international community, fostering a sense of belonging that can encourage them to contribute positively to their communities and confront racism.

The Welsh Government funds a suite of training for schools, practitioners and governors focussed on anti-bullying, delivered by the Anti-Bullying Alliance and Kidscape. I would urge all schools to engage with this training and learning, to ensure all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with appropriately.