

THURLSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the people concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, physical bullying such as hitting or kicking, making a fool of someone, teasing or sending nasty notes, threatening violence, damage to another child's property, isolation, ridicule, extortion, or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone. The hurt can be physical or psychological, inflicted by one child or a group.

To be defined as bullying the following three points need to be present:

- Repeated actions or threats
- a power imbalance
- intention to cause harm

Bullying it is NOT when two children of similar age and strength have the occasional fight or quarrel.

Main Types of Bullying

Bullying can be:

Emotional/psychological:

Naming calling of an insulting or personal nature that causes a reduction of a person's self-esteem or confidence. Demanding money or possessions by means of threat or force. Excluding from groups or games.

Physical

Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or any use of violence because of some perceived difference. Again the imbalance of power is an overwhelming element here.

Verbal:

Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abuse and threats. The use of language in a derogatory or offensive manner.

Online:

All areas of internet or social media and gaming, mobile phone use including text and picture messaging.

Homophobic or gender:

Any hostile or offensive language against LGBTQ+ individuals or those perceived to be LGBTQ+.

This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance

- Bullying related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Prejudiced and discriminatory bullying based on protected characteristics:
 - o race, religion, faith, belief,
 - o ethnicity or culture,
 - o SEND,
 - o sexual orientation (LGBTQ+),
 - o gender (including transphobic bullying).

Bullying is not...

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with a friend, name-calling or arguments. The actions mentioned above are bullying if they are carried out several times on purpose with the intent of hurting someone physically or emotionally. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop the social skills required to repair relationships. At Thurlstone Primary we help children do this through a planned approach of PSHE and Circle Time activities.

The Impact of Bullying:

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying in schools.

All bullying is damaging to those who experience it and to those who perpetrate it. Recent research suggests that the consequences of bullying can last for many years and in extreme cases can undermine a person's confidence for life.

At Thurlstone Primary School we find all behaviour of this sort unacceptable and will do our best to prevent it by:

- ensuring that all children in the school are well aware of how damaging it is
- rewarding children for caring and considerate behaviour
- supporting all victims of bullying
- taking firm action against those who are responsible for bullying.

Statutory Duty of Schools

Head teachers have a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils.

Potential ways to support a targeted child when bullying has been identified:

- Immediate reassurance and pastoral support
- Opportunity to discuss with a teacher, member of SLT or a DSL. Child to be encouraged to confide in a named member of staff they feel comfortable with.
- Advised to keep a record
- Work towards building self-esteem, assertiveness and confidence
- Supported through Restorative Practice methods

Potential ways to support perpetrators when bullying has been identified:

- Restorative discussions around what has happened, why behaviours are inappropriate and what needs to change
- Informing parents and carers
- Providing appropriate and accessible levels of education
- If bullying has been online, requesting that content is removed

- Sanctions in line with school behaviour policy (losing unstructured time, removal from the class setting, apologising to the target of the bullying behaviour) including, in extreme or extreme repeated cases, suspension or exclusion.

Implementation

Schools

Schools' teaching and support staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the headteacher
- The head teacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- The class teacher will be kept informed and if it persists the class teacher will advise the appropriate members of staff
- School will communicate (via a phone call, email or in person) with parents when they feel it is appropriate to do so.
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.

Children

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a class teacher or member of staff of their choice
- it will be taken seriously
- reassuring the pupil
- it will be investigated and appropriate action taken
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence
- If they feel unable to make the issue public, information will be recorded and kept on file should bullying persist
- The Head teacher will be informed to establish facts and communicate with children and parents.

The following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- positive behaviour programme
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- monitored during identified times or situations
- exclusion from fixed periods of the school day
- minor fixed-term exclusion
- major fixed-term exclusion
- permanent exclusion

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusion in PSHCE, circle time, class time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

All interactions will be recorded and parents will be informed at the formalised stages. After completing investigations into bullying, the staff involved will monitor the situation, record on CPOMs and make regular contact with those affected.

Safeguarding procedures will also be followed in discussion with staff and DSLs. Additional support or advice from external agencies may be sought.

The Role of All Children in Preventing Bullying

During Anti-Bullying activities the children developed the following statements:

- Try to encourage people to make friends if you see them falling out
- Care for each other and report any unkind behaviour or verbal abuse to any adult in the school
- Support the child who is being bullied. BE A GOOD FRIEND
- Think before you say unkind words and be aware of how your behaviour may be viewed by others
- Never touch another child in an aggressive manner
- Do not leave children out of play. Make an effort to include everyone whenever possible
- If you want people to be nice to you, you must be nice to them

How School Works to Prevent Bullying

The ethos and culture in school is one of mutual respect and tolerance. This is reinforced and detailed in the school's Behaviour Management Policy. The following also help form an anti-bullying culture:

- The schools PSHE scheme, 1Decision, addressed relationships and bullying.
- Regular school assemblies reinforce the anti-bullying ethos and culture within the school
- Anti- Bullying Week is an annual event.
- Values such as respect, tolerance and kindness underpin all relationships in school
- Children are encouraged to speak to trusted adults and share worries and concerns in a number of ways which include, but are not limited to:
 - Worry Monsters – in each class and around school.
 - Post Boxes around school
 - Thrive Approach embedded across school
 - Circle of Friends approach used as appropriate

Parent/Guardians

Please report instances of bullying if:

- your child is a victim
- a friend of your child is a victim
- your child is involved in bullying

All information will, of course, be treated with the utmost discretion so that nobody will feel compromised by passing it on.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Signed:

Date: