

Thrussington C of E Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Statement of Intent

At Thrussington CE Primary School we are very aware of the possible consequences of bullying and through this policy and practice we strive to address the negative effect that such experiences may have on both pupils and staff within the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies;

Behaviour, Health and Safety, PSHE, Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable Use Policy (Internet and e mail)

2. Aims and objectives of the policy

- To raise awareness of bullying.
- To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future.
- To ensure a whole school approach to bullying.
- To reduce and, if possible, eradicate instances of all types of bullying.
- To help deliver the statutory requirement of the five outcomes of Every Child Matters particularly; Be healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve and Make a Positive Contribution.

3. Statement of Principles

At Thrussington CE Primary School we seek to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children and adults can grow and develop, making full use of the range of facilities available to them.

We are committed to a value system within which children and adults involved with them are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding and to participate without fear of intimidation. Any behaviour that undermines this is unacceptable.

We seek to ensure that those acting on behalf of our school will:

- Actively listen to children.
- Act appropriately on information received in order to ensure that a safe, secure and positive environment exists.

All our children have the right to feel secure, to be able to trust without fear, and to expect protection from adults in positions of care and responsibility. They also have a basic right to take full part in their education in an environment that does not subject them to cruelty or create despair.

All bullying is unacceptable, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it. Targets of bullying will be treated in a supportive manner, and their case heard in an atmosphere of positive concern.

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4. What is bullying?

'Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

(DEF definition within Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-bullying work in schools' guidance).

Although there are a number of definitions of bullying, these definitions would include the following characteristics:

- It tends to be repetitive.
- It involves an imbalance of power.
- It may be verbal, physical, psychological or cyber bullying.
 - Verbal: e.g. 'joke' making, mimicry/ridicule, name calling, spreading rumours, swearing, verbal abuse, gossiping.
 - Physical hurt/attack: e.g. physical intimidation, mimicry, unwanted or inappropriate touching.
 - Damage to property: e.g. graffiti, personal property.
 - Psychological: e.g. damage to reputation (sexual, denial of identity, gender /ethnicity), extortion of belongings, identity theft / impersonation, isolation /refusal to work/play with other pupil, revealing personal information, indirect threats.
 - Inciting others to bullying behaviour e.g. encouraging pupils with special educational needs to bully others so that they receive the consequences rather than the instigator.
 - Victimisation after previous complaint e.g. bullying due to either targets or bystanders speaking out as a result of a past bullying incident.
 - Cyber bullying e.g. chat-room/ blogs/message board, email, gaming console, Instant messaging, mobile phones including photos, social network site, video hosting sites, webcam).

Bullying is an antisocial behaviour. We must respond in a way which will help the child who is bullying improve their behaviour. Increasing their anxiety and alienation from us is not likely to work.

5. Forms of Bullying

Bullying can happen for a large number of reasons and the most common are listed below:

- Homophobic / Biphobic (any incident perceived by the alleged target or any other person to be targeted around being lesbian, gay or bisexual. People do not have to be lesbian, gay or bisexual to suffer homophobic bullying).
- Racist/religious/cultural (any incident perceived to be racist by the alleged target or any other person. Incidents related to religion, culture or those involving pupils who identify as Gypsy/Roma traveller come under this heading too).
- Related to disability, SEN or health (behaviour perceived to be insulting to people with a range of medical, mobility, sensory, mental health or learning impairments. Incidents related to other health or Special Educational Needs come under this heading too).
- Related to home circumstances (e.g. young carers or children in care).
- Sexist (incidents perceived to be demeaning to a gender in general. If unchallenged this can eventually lead to domestic violence).
- Sexual (incidents include intrusive language, damage to sexual reputation, inappropriate touching and other behaviour perceived to involve unwanted sexual attention).
- Transphobic (incidents are those perceived to be insulting to someone's gender identity or to transgendered people).
- Differences e.g. abilities, being new to school, appearance, health conditions.

6. Members of School Staff

If any member of the school team feels they are being bullied by another member of school staff, pupils or parents they should discuss any concerns with the head teacher. If the head teacher is the cause of the complaint then the member of staff should contact the chair of the governing body.

The Headteacher has been identified as the member of staff with responsibility for bullying. Children, parents, staff and members of the community with any issues related to bullying behaviour should speak to the class teacher in the first instance or in their absence, the Headteacher.

All school staff are briefed on the strategies outlined in this policy as well as having additional training available for individuals supporting behaviour and pastoral care in school.

7. Bullying Outside School Premises

Bullying can also occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers a specific statutory power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under charge of a member of school staff.

Where a pupil, parent or member of the community tells us of bullying off the school premises we will investigate and act upon all information received as we would for an incident within the school grounds. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the head teacher will also notify the police.

8. Effects of Bullying

Bullying can affect the target in many ways and some of these effects can be longstanding.

- Targets may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and may believe that it is something about them which has led the bully to pick on them.
- The target's life may be characterised by unhappiness, a sense of desolation and desperation and exclusion from normal social experiences. These feelings can permeate all aspects of the target's life and may lead to a strong desire to escape the situation by running away from home, truanting from school, and in some cases self-harm or even take their own life.
- School and other areas of a target's life can often deteriorate.
- Evidence has shown that targets of bullying may be more likely to experience mental health problems at some stage in their lives.
- Targets of bullying tend to underachieve at school.
- Targets may suffer from alcohol abuse, have employment problems, suffer marital breakdown, suffer from some form of psychiatric disorder and are more likely to commit violent crimes later in life.
- May live in fear that it will be their turn next.

9. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Signs of bullying can be extremely variable and will very much depend on the individual. It is important, however, that parents/carers and school staff are aware of the signs and symptoms associated with bullying so that they can identify possible problems. The more common signs include:

- Physical signs e.g. Physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress.

- Emotional signs e.g. mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility and defensiveness.
- Behavioural signs e.g. withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, alcohol/substance misuse, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/bullying behaviour.
- General e.g. frequently "lose" money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/ leaving school with others.
- A child can be left out or excluded by others.

10. Preventing Bullying

Through the following preventative strategies and planned curricular opportunities we hope to lay the foundations of positive behaviour and to eliminate bullying before it becomes an issue.

- Raising of awareness through assemblies or lessons.
- Pupils are taught to follow STOP (Start Telling Other People)
- Clear Anti-Bullying policy which all members of the school are aware of.
- Anti-Bullying message embedded throughout the curriculum.
- National Healthy Schools Status.
- Reward system for positive behaviour.
- Circle Time – opportunities for children to discuss sensitive issues in a safe environment.
- PSHE scheme of work – delivered throughout the school which focuses on fostering positive relationships, dealing with difficult decisions, feeling good about yourself, etc.
- Buddies – older pupils supporting the younger pupils at play time.
- Sports Ambassadors - older pupils supporting the younger pupils at play time.
- Pupil consultation – through questionnaires and School and school Council.
- Positive role models reflected through staff behaviour.
- Ethos of the school.
- Link on website to www.BeyondBullying.com

11. Responding to Bullying

This strategy is used in parallel with our Rewards, Behaviour and Exclusions Policy.

11.1 Responding to allegations.

Bullying allegations can come from a number of different sources including from the child, child's friends, parent/carer or staff member. All allegations will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon. Allegations can be made face to face e.g. a child reporting directly to a member of staff, or indirectly via the super leader system or class/school council.

11.2 Responding to Bullying Incidents.

When bullying has been reported or observed then the following 7 steps will be taken:

Step 1: Listening to the target

When a teacher finds out that bullying has happened, she starts by talking to the target about his/her feelings. They do not question the target about the incidents but they do need to know who was involved.

Step 2: Convene a meeting

The teacher arranges to meet with the pupils who have been involved; this may include bystanders. The target must give permission for this to take place and feel easy about it. The meeting will include bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate bullying.

Step 3: Explain the problem

The teacher tells them about the way the target is feeling and might use the target's poem, piece of writing or drawing to emphasise his/her distress. At no time does the teacher discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step 4: Share responsibility

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that they know that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

Step 5: Ask the group for ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the target could be helped to feel happier. Children may need help to come up with their own solutions. The teacher gives some positive responses but will not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step 6: Leave it to them

The teacher ends the meeting by passing the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. They arrange to meet with them again to see how things are going on.

Step 7. Meet them again

About a week later the teacher discusses with each pupil, including the target, how things have been going. They arrange to meet with them again to see how things are going on.

The above procedure is Stage 1. If we find that the situation is not resolved after following this process and the behaviour continues, then the following stages are considered:

STAGE 2: Contact parent/carer and convene a meeting.

STAGE 3: Contact other agencies e.g. Behaviour Support Team, Educational Psychologist, Police (If a child is over 10 years of age they are criminally responsible).

STAGE 4: Put a Behaviour Support Plan in place possibly leading to a fixed term exclusion.

12. RECORDING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

All bullying and hate incidents are recorded by staff in the format supplied by the head teacher.

Dates, times and anything said by all children involved will be recorded for future reference. Staff will then use this data to discuss next steps for the school as well as to inform individual class planning of lessons.

13. PREJUDICE RELATED INCIDENTS

A prejudice related incident is one involving for example racist graffiti or sexist language, which needs to be addressed but may not constitute bullying because it is not repeated, not intentional or not directed at an individual. These incidents often involve the same behaviour as that included in the 'types of bullying' section. An incident may be a prejudice-related incident or a bullying incident or both. The school would record and report a prejudice related incident in the same way as a bullying incident. Our school actively promotes equality and cohesion and therefore operates a zero tolerance approach to all forms of bullying and prejudice related incidences.

14. BULLYING OF STAFF BY PUPILS, PARENTS/CARERS OR OTHER STAFF

Bullying can occur between adults. Bullying tactics are sometimes employed in business, relationships between members of staff are sometimes characterised by bullying. Parents, teachers and other adults sometimes bully children and vice versa. Staff are sometimes bullied by parents. Staff as well as children benefit if school establishes an ethos that repudiates bullying. The Headteacher and Governors of the school strive to support the emotional health and well-being of the staff in the school and so we believe that all bullying incidents must be investigated. This

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includes any incident reported by a member of staff or being bullied by a child and or parent. Members of the school workforce suffering from or concerned about bullying can also contact their trade union or professional association for support and advice.

15. INVOLVING PARENTS

The school has an open door policy and the Head Teacher will strive to speak with parents to discuss any concerns immediately. Parental involvement in the response process has been outlined in the Response to Bullying section above. Parental questionnaires will be sent out at least annually to collect views on the impact of policy and practice. Newsletters will outline strategies we have put in place to maximise the family ethos of the school.

16. ANTI-BULLYING COMPLAINTS

If parents are unhappy about the way that an alleged bullying incident has been handled they should in the first instance speak with the class teacher or Head Teacher. There is a School Complaints procedure if parents are still concerned.

Parents will be advised of this procedure by the Head Teacher and a copy will be made available from the school office.

17. MONITORING AND EVALUATION THE POLICY

- The policy will be part of the everyday life of the school. It will be maintained regularly through display of posters, PSHE and curriculum tasks.
- Assemblies
- It will be a regular item on School Council Agendas, at staff and Governors' meetings.
- Its effectiveness will be monitored through annual parent, pupil and staff questionnaires and reported incidents.