

THORPE HALL

SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy should be read together with the Behaviour Policy of which it forms a part.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Thorpe Hall School ("the School"), our value of Community Ambition is based upon respect, good manners, and fair play and being able to demonstrate empathy within our school and the wider community. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence, and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop to their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other, inside and outside of School.

The School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that there are consistent expectations of behaviour both at school, online and at home, and that the School and parents co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination of pupils or staff will not be tolerated by the School. We treat all of our pupils and their parents fairly, and with consideration, and we expect them to respect the staff, the School and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at the School (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and any instances of bullying will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy.

This policy applies to all pupils in the School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and applies to actions undertaken both inside, and outside of the School

A definition of bullying:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. This behaviour does not always have to be repeated but can be a one off incident.

It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- 1 Physical** – any threat of or use of violence of any kind (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft, initiation/hazing type violence, sexual assaults, gender-based violence)
- 2 Verbal** (e.g. name calling, racism, sexism, sarcasm, rumour mongering, inappropriate teasing, homophobic remarks, or remarks based on religious grounds or the fact that a child is maybe adopted or a carer)
- 3 Emotional** - behaviour which intentionally hurtful to the emotions of the victim (e.g. by, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours)
- 4 Excluding** – deliberately excluding people from friendship groups with bad intent.
- 5 Hurtful behaviour based on:** *Racism* – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures; *Sexual behaviour* – unwanted physical contact, abusive comments; *Disability* – whether that be physical, mental or emotional; *Cultural* – based on the cultural differences between people; *Homophobia*; *Special Educational Needs*.
- 6 Electronic/Cyber Bullying** – e.g. text messages, sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (sexting), websites, photographs, social networking, video and email.

Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidating, and often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim whether that be a physical, psychological or intellectual imbalance, or by the perpetrator having the capacity to socially isolate the victim.

Bullying can sometimes amount to child on child abuse, which is defined as abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can be standalone or as part of wider abuse and can happen both inside and outside of school, and online. Further information about child on child abuse, including the procedures to follow when an incident on child on child abuse is reported can be found in the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection policy.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, and may involve actions or comments regarding a person's race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, special education needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions, or because of a child's familial circumstances, such as they are adopted, in care or that they have caring responsibilities. Bullying may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. For example, bullying can still be homophobic if directed towards a child that is perceived to be gay, whether or not this is the case. ***Any bullying on the basis of protected characteristics is taken particularly seriously.***

Where an incident of bullying causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a pupil, the School will follow the procedures set out in the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO BULLYING

Thorpe Hall School treats bullying very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the School's social and moral principles, and potentially with its policy on equal opportunities for pupils, and will not be tolerated. When incidents of bullying do occur, they are dealt with quickly and taken seriously. The School will never dismiss or downplay bullying as banter or horseplay, and all reported incidents of bullying will be dealt with by staff in accordance with this policy. Staff will reassure any victim(s) that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

The School understands that bullying can be so serious that it may cause physical, emotional, and psychological damage, such as eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide. Stopping violence and ensuring the immediate physical safety of pupils is the School's first priority, however, the School acknowledges that emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical bullying, and therefore staff will use their discretion when dealing with an incident of bullying within the parameters of this policy and the Behaviour Policy. Whilst bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, sexual violence and assault, sexting, the sharing of nudes/semi-nudes (in certain circumstances), upskirting and to violent and threatening behaviour. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying: everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

The School recognises that children with SEND or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and may be more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children. The School also recognises that certain children may face additional barriers to reporting an incident because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

Pupils who are victims of bullying will always be supported and will be reassured that they will be kept safe. Pupils who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be subject to appropriate disciplinary sanction and will also, where possible, be supported in learning different ways of behaving and offered support for their own circumstances, where appropriate.

Bullying which occurs on School trips, online, or outside of the School's premises will not be tolerated any more than bullying on School premises. Teachers will, where appropriate, discipline pupils for misbehaviour online, outside School premises and outside School hours.

Procedures to follow

Any school member, whether a child or an adult, has the right not to be bullied and are actively encouraged to tell someone who will be in a position to end the bullying. For a child that person might be their form teacher or any teacher they prefer, a Prefect, a trusted friend, a Deputy Headteacher, Co-Head or the Headteacher. They are also encouraged to tell their parents and/or family. A parent or family member has a duty to inform the school of accusations of bullying behaviour so that the school can investigate.

The School ensures that all instances of, or concerns about bullying and cyberbullying, both on and away from School premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly. Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept on the Pastoral Deputy Headteacher's files, and also on pupil files. Records will also be kept on files relating to safeguarding where appropriate, in order to enable the School to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of this anti-bullying policy.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering (or likely to suffer) significant harm from the behaviour of another child or children, then this situation will be reported to local agencies and all the children involved, both perpetrator and victim, may be treated as being 'at risk'.

Any adult experiencing bullying is encouraged to tell a colleague, manager or Governor or any member of the community who might be in a position to help.

Investigation and recording

Where bullying is reported, an accurate written record of events and facts is kept, and recorded on the Bullying Register. The school will interview all parties concerned to establish the facts and action against a bully will only be taken when they are established. Teachers, teaching assistants or staff member recording incidents will take contemporaneous notes, quote verbatim where possible and finally write up a report. Notes and reports will be filed and archived. The school will distinguish in its records any incidents of bullying which are based on protected characteristics.

Support and consequences

The school will employ a range of strategies to ensure that the victim is supported and protected in the future and that the bully/bullies fully understand the hurtful and damaging nature of their actions. The school may require the bully to sign a behaviour contract. Consequences may be applied if appropriate and may be serious, including internal or external isolation and, where there are serious incidents or those pupils repeating incidents, there may be fixed term exclusion or permanent exclusion. Parents of the victim and bully/bullies will be informed and the school will work with the families to ensure that bullying behaviour is not repeated. We believe that students need time to reflect on their behaviours and ensure we provide the time and resources for them to learn from their behaviours and rectify accordingly.

Promoting an anti-bullying ethos

The School's response to bullying does not start at the point in which a pupil has been bullied. We take the following preventative measures in order to create an environment that prevents bullying from becoming a problem at the School in the first place:

- The School promotes an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat each other with respect at all times, inside and outside of school;

- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the School's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished, will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- We use appropriate teacher and pupil-led assemblies to explain the School's policy on bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying). Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the School. It focuses on the importance of equality and diversity and pupils are encouraged to avoid prejudicial and exclusionary language;
- The school also promotes its anti-bullying policy through form time and form teachers, through the school councils, and by precedent. Bullying and conflict often arise from 'play fighting' and verbal abuse disguised as banter - both these forms of behaviour are not allowed at Thorpe Hall School;
- Other lessons highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show all bullying to be unacceptable;
- All of our pupils are encouraged to tell any member of staff at once if they are being bullied, or if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place. They are reassured that they will be taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe;
- Pupils are made aware of confidential help lines and websites where they can connect with external specialists, such as [ChildLine](#), [Kidscape](#), [Bullying UK](#), and the [Samaritans](#). The School has a dedicated email address where pupils can report any worries they may have at Here4U@THS.BUZZ which is monitored by 2 members of staff.

Pupils are taught how to prevent bullying and what to do if they witness it.

Parents

- We encourage close contact between pastoral staff and parents/ guardians, and will always make contact if we are worried about a pupil's well-being;
- If parents know or suspect that their child, or another pupil, is being bullied, they should contact the School without delay. All concerns will be taken seriously; and
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures and all other aspects and implementation of this anti-bullying policy.

Staff awareness raising and training

Staff awareness of bullying is raised through daily briefings which are attended by teachers or other staff, at which children's pastoral welfare is discussed and incidents from the previous day shared. All staff are required to remain constantly alert to bullying and the need to reduce the risk of it arising. They pay particular attention to times and locations where bullying might be more prevalent, such as break times and trips. Staff failing to deal with an incident appropriately will be required to undergo further training.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually.

Date reviewed:	October 2022
Date approved:	October 2022
Next review:	October 2023