



# Thaxted Primary School

# Anti-bullying Policy

<b>Policy Date:</b> Spring 2022	<b>Review Date:</b> Spring 2024	<b>Responsible Person:</b> Headteacher <b>In Conjunction with:</b> Inclusion Leader Deputy Headteacher
<b>Other Policies to be read in conjunction with this policy:</b>		Behaviour and Exclusions Child protection

## 1. Introduction

Throughout the school we encourage all members of the school community (children and adults) to treat everyone with kindness and respect. Thaxted Primary School is opposed to any form of bullying and will endeavour to eradicate it.

This policy has been developed and reviewed by the teachers, children, parents and governors. All stake-holders have been involved to ensure whole-school ownership.

## 2. What is bullying?

We define bullying as repeated action, taken by one or more children, with the deliberate intention of hurting another, either physically or emotionally.

Whilst we regard bullying as particularly serious and we will always take firm action against it, we believe that it is not helpful to regard bullying as abnormal or evil.

*“Many of us will remember standing back and at least colluding with, if not participating in, some hurtful behaviour towards another person because it increased our own sense of belonging or identify that we were not the one being rejected...A willingness to step outside a peer group and stand alongside someone who is rejected and harmed takes strength and courage. It puts the “rescuer” at risk of rejection himself/herself and the success of his/her stand is likely to depend upon his/her social or physical status. We are likely to take this risk only when we identify with the distress of the victim and when we feel that our intervention is likely to bring about some change; when we feel involved and powerful” – Maines & Robinson, The No Blame Approach, 1991.*

When a group of children interact the dynamics of the group strive to produce a leader. The establishment of power within the group may lead to behaviour patterns, which we recognise as bullying.

***Thaxted Primary School is a telling school and we encourage children to report any incidents of bullying.***

At Thaxted Primary School, pupil voice is important and the children have formed their own definitions of what they think bullying means. Children recorded the thoughts below during an assembly:

*‘Someone not being very nice’*

*‘Constant’*

*‘Talking behind someone’s back’*

*‘Someone calling you names’*

*‘People making you feel uncomfortable’*

During a parents group session, the adults added to this:

*‘Whispering, low level, pecking away’*

*‘Excluded from friendships’*

### 3. Types of Bullying

We define bullying as *repeated* action, taken by one or more children, with the deliberate intention of hurting another, either physically or emotionally. This may be:

**Physical** : Hitting; kicking or taking belongings

**Verbal**: Name calling; making insulting, unkind or offensive remarks (including comments about someone's appearance or ability/ disability)

**Emotional**: Emotional bullying involves behaviours that upset, exclude, or embarrass a person. Examples include nasty notes; saying mean things using technology (e.g. cyber bullying using emails, instant messaging, chat rooms); tormenting; threatening; humiliating; leaving someone out or making them feel uncomfortable or socially embarrassed.

**Homophobic**: When a young person's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity is used to exclude, threaten, hurt, or humiliate them.

**Racial\***: Racial bullying involves rejection or isolation of a person because of ethnicity. Examples include gestures; racial slurs or taunts; name calling; making fun of customs/skin colour/accent/food choices. \*For incidents which include racism, the County Guidelines on Racial Harassment will be used

**Cyber**: Bullying via the internet or text messaging

Bullying is not random "one off" occurrences of this behaviour. It is the certainty that the behaviour will be repeated that makes it so traumatic.

Early signs of distress include: -

- Withdrawal
- Deterioration of work
- Spurious illness
- Isolation
- Desire to remain with adults
- Erratic attendance
- General unhappiness/anxiety/fear
- Late arrival
- Bed wetting

### 4. How Thaxted Primary School Prevents and Tackles Bullying

We will work towards the prevention of bullying by:

**i) The children's view – (quotes from children within school)**

- Tell them to stop - 'Stop It, I don't like it'

- Our Playground Buddies help us
- Tell an adult as soon as possible

#### **ii) The teachers view - (quotes from staff within the school)**

We use the 6Rs to teach children to respect one another and believe in themselves.

#### **iii) Preventing bullying through the curriculum**

The school will raise the awareness and prevent bullying through PSHE programmes of study, school assemblies, the school parliament and the use of our Playground Buddy Scheme. Each term includes an anti-bullying and cyber-bullying assembly. Within these sessions we also offer education and role play for the bystanders and what they can do to gain support. The school also has a year round focus on representing the 6Rs, which includes being respectful. When teaching computing teachers ensure their lessons contain information on E-Safety to ensure children remain safe and responsible when working online. These strategies will foster the good practice of equal opportunities, inclusion, as well as the Unicef Rights Respecting Campaign.

#### **iv) Managing transitions between key stages and supporting new children**

##### **Key stage transition**

Transitions between key stages can be a stressful time for children. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure the children foster a smooth transition between the year groups, ensuring PSHE activities are planned for and activities are created to develop positive peer relationships between children. All of the children spend half a day with their new teacher at the end of the year, ready for September. This then supports the children when they enter a new year group as they already know the exciting things they will learn about and what is expected of them.

##### **A new child**

Through our buddy system, we allocate a buddy to the new child who makes them feel safe and welcome.

## **5. Supporting Children**

#### **i) Bullied pupils**

Pupils who have been bullied will be given support through our Pastoral Care Leader, peers and the staff. If children feel they are being bullied they can talk to their class teacher, the Pastoral Care Leader or another adult that they feel comfortable with. A buddy system has also been embedded into the classes where buddies are assigned to vulnerable children or children who may be victims of bullying. This ensures they feel safe and supported. Some victims may behave in a way which seems to invite bullying. Any child who has poor social and friendship skills or who is very unassertive will be offered help and support in order to learn appropriate social interaction. These group sessions are led by the school's Pastoral Leader.

#### **ii) Bullies**

It is recognised that support must also be given to the perpetrator. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. Bullies will speak to their class teachers, the Pastoral Care Leader and the Headteacher. The parents will be involved if any incidents occur.

#### **iii) Bystanders**

Bystanders will also receive support whether they have told an adult or if they were unsure what they should do. We will ensure they have a chance to be listened to and will offer advice on what to do if future incidents should occur. Where appropriate we will ensure the bystanders parents are informed so support

can also be given at home. Bystanders will have a chance to speak to the Pastoral Care Leader or another member of staff who they trust in school.

## **6. Formal Procedure for Complaints**

Parents/carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should :

- Speak to the child's class teacher in the first instance (class teachers will record the accusation and fully investigate the matter)
- Speak with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher if the bullying continues
- It is advised that parents/carers speak with school staff and do not approach any other child/adult who they believe to have been involved.
- If parents feel that an incident has not been dealt with and would like to make a formal complaint they will need to contact the Chair of Governors
- Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

## **7. Implementing the Policy**

All teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of the policy guidelines and how to implement the policy should there be a need to.

All members of the school community are encouraged to look for the signs and symptoms of bullying and are taught how to recognise them. Victims and witnesses of bullying should know that it is ok to 'tell' and that they will receive practical help if they do so. Staff and Midday Assistants (MDAs) receive training in how to deal with bullying and MDAs and Learning Assistants will regularly meet with the Deputy Head- teacher, Headteacher or Inclusion Leader to discuss any issues that arise from the supervision of the playground and dining hall.

The school takes an active part in local and national anti-bullying initiatives, such as the annual National Anti-bullying week. As part of this special emphasis is placed on anti-bullying policies and strategies both in assembly and in class. However, this is also a focus during weekly PSHE lessons and twice a term during assemblies.

A confidential 'Worry Box' is available to children at all times. This provides an opportunity for any child who feels he/she is being bullied to report this in a confidential written form. All responses are collated by the Pastoral Care Leader and follow-up action is taken, where appropriate. Regular monitoring of the 'Worry Box' helps the Pastoral Care Leader to gauge the general well-being of the children across the school.

The Pastoral Care Leader also runs a weekly 'Time to Talk' session on a Wednesday lunchtime to help children share their worries and friendship issues.

With any allegations of bullying the following procedure is followed:

1. Investigation of the incident e.g. by speaking to the victim and or witnesses as well as the perpetrator (with older children we often encourage them to write down their views as then they can speak without interruption).
2. We ensure each child involved gets a chance to speak and put forward their side of the story.
3. If appropriate we contact parents of the victim and offender.

4. We come up with a plan to help eliminate the behaviour.
5. We review the situation after a short period.
6. The nature and response to an incident of bullying is logged and reported using a bullying form, kept in the Headteacher's office.
7. If the behaviour continues, action in accordance with Thaxted Primary's School's Behaviour Policy will be taken. Most bullying does not involve serious physical violence. However, if this should occur, the usual sanctions described in the School's Behaviour Policy would be applied. Depending on the type of bullying that occurs, there may be action in accordance with Thaxted Primary School's E-Safety Policy and signed Acceptable Use Agreement.
8. If the bullying behaviour has happened online, we ask all children to screen shot any messages and print them out. We then ask these to be brought into school to be used as evidence.

**The following procedures will be used in connection with the victim:**

- the school will contact their parents/carers;
- they will be listened to and reassured;
- the school will ensure that they have access to comfortable and safe areas for play at break times, which are sensitively supervised;
- the school will encourage them, and all pupils, to develop the skills to avoid similar situations and prevent them from occurring;
- where appropriate, we will implement a support group using a 'no blame' approach. This will be co-ordinated by the Pastoral Care Manager.

## **9. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of governors**

The Governing Body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the Governing Body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the Governing Body on a termly basis about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies, termly incident returns, entries into the Worry Box and the annual parental and student questionnaire.

The Governing Body responds within ten days to any written request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

### **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Full Governing Body on a termly basis.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. They set the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The Headteacher also ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

### **The role of the members of staff**

Staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen relating to children in their class in an 'Amber Book'. If a member of staff witnesses or receives a report of an act of bullying, including incidents that occur outside lesson time, either near the school or on a child's way home, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. They will also inform the Headteacher who will then contact the child's parents/carers. Teachers' training enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

### **The role of the children**

We teach the children strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour for example, by providing support for a victim, showing their disapproval to the bully or telling an adult. Children are aware that by being a bystander and not taking action, they may be contributing to the bullying.

Children are encouraged to use a range of different strategies:

- Tell a friend;
- Tell your School Parliament Rep or Playground Buddies;
- Tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust;
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust;
- Discuss it as part of your PSHE time

### **The role of parents/carers**

Parents/carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher or the Headteacher immediately. It is advised that parents/carers do not approach any other person who they believe to have been involved. Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

## **10. Accessing the Anti-bullying policy**

The anti-bullying policy will be made available to all members of staff and parents via the school website.

## **11. Monitoring and Review**

The monitoring of this policy is delegated to the Headteacher. This policy was drawn up with reference to the 'Governors Statement of Principles for Behaviour and Discipline' and will be reviewed in line with the policy review schedule.