



# Thorpe Acre Infant School

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Approved by : Chair of Governors

Signed :

Date: February 2024  
Next review due by: February 2027

Reaching High, Learning and Growing Together

## **Safeguarding Statement**

At Thorpe Acre Infant School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Thorpe Acre Infant School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

## **GDPR Statement**

The school has arrangements in place to ensure that all personal data records held by the school are obtained, processed, used and retained in accordance with the eight rules of data protection (based on the Data Protection Acts).

## **Equality Impact Statement**

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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## **1. Objective of this Policy**

The key objective of this Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure all school staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and visitors will have an understanding of what bullying is and what the school policy and procedures are.

## **2. Statement of Intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

## **3. What is Bullying?**

DFE guidance (2012) defines bullying as “behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally”. It is also defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or online (Source: Anti-Bullying Alliance).

Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being ignored or not spoken to). It results in pain and distress. There is a difference between targeted bullying and the ‘falling out’, that both children and adults can experience. Bullying is the systematic and persistent use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unkind, excluding, tormenting
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Prejudice-based: racist, sexist, faith-based, disability-based, homophobic, transphobic
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

### **What kind of behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour?**

- Hitting, kicking, pushing and threatening
- Nudging, whispering, sniggering, facial expressions, gestures
- Making someone do something they don't want to do
- Putting someone down by belittling, embarrassing or humiliating them
- Being domineering or controlling
- Forcing someone to be your friend and making it uncomfortable or risky for them if they are not
- Making fun of someone's race, ethnic origin, faith, culture, religion, name, appearance, accent or family
- Making sexist or sexually abusive comments
- Using homophobic language as insults, putting people down on the basis of sexuality or the sexuality of family members
- Online or cyber bullying eg posting offensive messages on websites or chatrooms, sending offensive text messages or emails or bullying someone through their mobile phone. Our school Acceptable Use of Internet and the curriculum will provide opportunities for children to learn about safe use of the internet and social media

- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs (SEN)
- It is often accompanied by a threat to not tell
- It is not always obvious who the bully is or might be
- It can be a group of people, sometimes led by a bully
- It is often subtle and not easily detected by adults who could respond
- The bully is usually seen to be more powerful or empowered than the target (either by being stronger, bigger, older and cleverer or by belonging to a majority group).

### **What kind of behaviour is not bullying?**

Often, incidents happen between children which cannot be deemed as bullying, although the children involved (and their parents/carers) may have a different perception of the situation/event. Where appropriate, such incidents will be addressed by encouraging the children to discuss misunderstandings or disagreements to achieve a way forward for both parties. Our shared understanding of what bullying means is vital and is addressed through assemblies, PHSE and the consistent demonstration of our core values throughout every aspect of school life.

Bullying is not:

- An occasional loss of temper
- Hurting by accident
- Teasing or having a joke which is received in good spirit
- Falling in and out with friends
- Minor disagreements
- Not being friends with someone, not inviting someone to your party
- A disagreement or battle between two people of equal strength or qualities.

If an allegation of bullying is made, and following an investigation it is clear that bullying has not taken place, there may still be a consequence for any unacceptable behaviour.

#### **4. Why is it Important for School to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying causes mental and/or physical pain. No-one deserves to be a target of bullying and everybody has the right to be treated with respect. As a school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to any issues of bullying.

#### **5. Prevention**

The systems in school encourage expected behaviour and this is supported in our Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) lessons and through assemblies. Anti-bullying procedures are also in place to prevent, detect and manage such unacceptable behaviour effectively.

#### **6. The Role of Governors**

The Governing Body supports the school to eliminate bullying. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying in, or related to, the school setting. Any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. The

Governing Body monitors any incidents of bullying and regularly reviews the effectiveness of this policy. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

## **7. The role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the Anti-Bullying Policy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher sets 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.

Each term the Headteacher will assess any incidents of bullying with SLT updating all bullying records, to ensure that no further bullying involving the pupils in the record has taken place. This will include interviews with the pupils involved.

## **8. The role of school staff**

All staff will receive training on the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy annually. The policy is available in full on the school's website and on the Staff Hub. Staff induction materials include the Anti-Bullying Policy. The staff in school take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place. The school's values are continually referred to: in assemblies, PSHE lessons and when dealing with any inappropriate behaviour in school and are also displayed throughout the school. Through the PSHE curriculum and all other areas of the curriculum, including Anti-Bullying Week, all staff will support each pupil's learning about how to make and maintain friendships, and how to mend damaged friendships. Staff, through their professional responsibilities, model positive behaviour and actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property.

Should incidents of bullying arise, teachers and support staff will record what has happened, who is involved and when, and follow the whole school agreed line of reporting to deal with these incidents, which is that it is recorded on CPOMS. Through CPOMS, the relevant staff members will be alerted to the incident. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is the target of bullying and the perpetrator of the bullying, ensuring that parents/carers remain informed. Incidents of bullying are followed up repeatedly at the weekly SLT meeting, so that senior leadership can check that the bullying has not resumed over time.

## **9. 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 in the first instance who will follow the school's agreed procedure for dealing with issues of bullying. Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school. Advice for parents/carers on bullying-related issues is available on our school website. Parent/carer representatives are encouraged to be part of the Anti-Bullying Steering Group, meeting regularly to provide input into how to move the school forward in its response to any incidents of bullying. A parent who attended a meeting wrote the following advice for fellow parents/carers:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in your child, eg they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, or are not completing work to their usual standard.
- Take an active role in your child's education. Ask them how their day has gone and who they have spent their time with during the day.
- If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying, inform the school immediately.
- Ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
- If you think your child is involved in bullying, inform the school immediately.

## **10. The role of pupils**

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they or someone else is being bullied. If the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

Pupil Voice will be obtained through "Smart School Council".

## **11. Vulnerable groups**

We are aware that in our school community there are a number of children who may be vulnerable to bullying because of a perceived difference by other members of the school community. These differences could be for a number of reasons: ethnicity, learning difficulties, disability, EAL or any other communication difficulties – these are examples, not an exhaustive list.

Our school gives children opportunities to celebrate diversity, develop acceptance of different cultures and faiths, and the different family units that exist in our community.

Teachers have professional development meetings where vulnerable groups are identified and their progress tracked.

Regular assemblies and PSHE lessons help to deliver information around anti-bullying, types of bullying (including cyber-bullying) and how to keep safe and identify issues.

## **12. Purpose**

It is important that the whole school community agrees what bullying is – both physically and emotionally. Children’s perception of bullying varies from child to child. Teachers regularly revisit what the definition of bullying is, and what it means to be bullied.

## **13. Signs and Symptoms**

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Staff in school should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a pupil:

- Is unwilling to attend school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Absconds from school/ educational visit
- Frequently reports they feel ill (where no known cause of illness is known or detected)
- Shows a deterioration in the quality of their work
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Doesn’t want to eat
- Is frightened when questioned to say what’s wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **14. Procedures**

Pupils are encouraged to report/discuss any incidents in school. Staff will deal with this in a supportive manner.

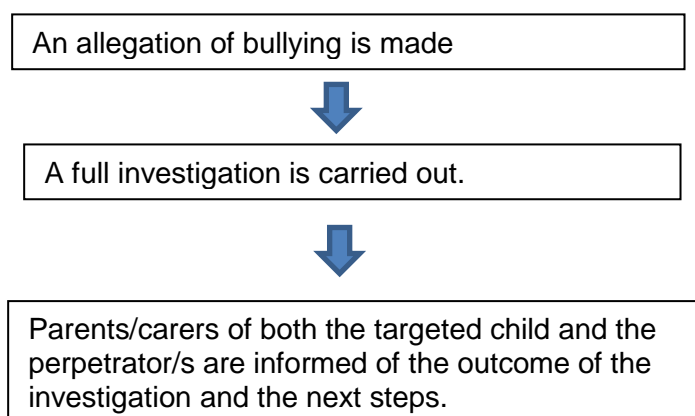
The following procedure will be used progressively to address the problem:

- Formal, noted talk with the pupils concerned (parents/carers notified verbally to allow any queries to be raised)
- Parents informed of all incidents
- Parents/carers of the pupils involved asked to attend a formal meeting at school
- Targets of bullying will be supported
- Attempts will be made to help the perpetrator/s change their behaviour.

Desired outcomes of such action:

- The perpetrator/s will be expected to apologise if this is acceptable to the target
- Consequences will be in place
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- Staff will monitor the situation, including checking in with the targeted child/ren and communicating with their parents/carers.

A diagram to show what happens:



## 15. Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the following:

- Pupil interviews and questionnaires
- Staff interviews and questionnaires
- Scrutiny of data – e.g. number and type of incidents of bullying
- Parental questionnaires
- Reports to governors.

## 16. Links with other policies

This policy has particular links with the Teaching and Learning; PSHE; Special Educational Needs and Disability; Inclusion; Race Equality; Physical Intervention; Behaviour and Equal Opportunities policies.