



## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Our Mission Statement**

Each child is unique and will be valued, nurtured and inspired. They will learn in a caring, happy and safe environment where they will be challenged to reach their goals for the future.

### **Introduction**

At Thornton Primary School we aim to encourage self-discipline in all children and to provide an effective environment for all children to learn and for teachers to teach through the school's positive behaviour management approaches.

It is important that this policy is understood and supported by pupils, staff, parents and the community.

We acknowledge that in order to fulfil such aims it is very important that our children enjoy coming to school and are not subject to bullying behaviour. We are committed to developing a strong ethos which encourages respect and self-esteem for all. It is intended that this policy, along with the Behaviour Policy, Equalities Policy, SEND Policy and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy form part of our strategy to achieve this aim.

### **Aims and objectives**

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We, therefore, do all we can to prevent it through this policy by aiming to:

- Develop a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. This closely links to our school's core values of Love, Respect, Ambition.
- Produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.
- Produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- Make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying. We also make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to their response to bullying in our school.

### **Definition of Bullying Behaviour**

The following definitions are given so that they can be shared and understood by all members of the school community including pupils, parents, staff and governors.

The DFE (Department for education) definition of bullying behaviour is:



Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of governors**

The governing body supports the Headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the Headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies. This will be done through the Standards and Effectiveness Committee.

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

It is the overall 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 identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Headteacher reports to the governing body, through the Standards and Effectiveness Committee about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy as part of behaviour reports. All bullying incidents are recorded using CPOMs and reported to governors in the Headteacher's Termly report.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished. They may also choose to speak to individual children or groups of children. Parents of those children involved are then informed of the outcome and the situation is monitored closely by staff.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff receive information and support to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.



The Headteacher sets the school climate using a positive discipline approach, 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. Our school is a very inclusive one that values all children. This view was reflected in the school's most recent Ofsted Inspection in December 2017.

## **The role of the teacher and support staff**

All teachers have a 'legal duty of care towards pupils' and will endeavour to take reasonable steps to protect the welfare, health and safety of pupils. All staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place.

If staff witness an act of bullying, they will record it, investigate it themselves or refer it to the Headteacher or another senior leader. If a child discloses that they are being bullied, staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied and ensure that the anti-bullying policy is followed in response to the disclosure.

All members of staff are informed through staff meetings and relevant training of appropriate strategies, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

## **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 immediately, who will deal with the situation and investigate the incident.

Parents/carers will be informed of the outcome of any action taken as a result of their concerns by either the Headteacher, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or their child's Class Teacher. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure. A copy of which is available on the school website or a hardcopy can be requested from the School Office.

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 community.

## **The role of pupils**

Pupils are encouraged and regularly reminded to talk to an adult if they have concerns about bullying. This may be bullying towards them or bullying they have witnessed.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying. This may take place in curriculum activities, through the school council or by speaking to a member of staff such as the Family Learning Mentor.



## **Application of the Policy**

This policy applies to both child to child bullying and child to adult bullying. Separate procedures exist for adult to adult bullying in the school setting. Where adult to child bullying is suspected, separate staff discipline procedures will be applied. The policy can be applied to all areas and all aspects of the school. In appropriate cases, the school has the ability to extend the policy to out of school bullying. The most recent DFE advice makes it clear that the jurisdiction of the behaviour and anti-bullying policy can be extended to include the conduct of pupils when they are not on the school site and not under the control of a member of staff.

## **Preventative Measures**

At Thornton Primary School we aim to provide a strong ethos and a safe and secure environment which will prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This positive ethos is driven by a system of regularly rewarding good behaviour with rewards such as certificates, stickers and incentives. In addition to this, assemblies and lessons in class focus on our core and enrichment values to help ensure children understand the importance of being kind and considerate to one another. Preventive measures and lessons which educate children about the importance of looking after one another and treating each other in a respectful, kind manner help to reduce incidents of bullying.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. The PSHE curriculum supports children's understanding of how to make good choices and show tolerance towards others.

To target the prevention of bullying specifically, we organise a wide range of activities throughout the year. All staff, including support staff, are given regular and appropriate continuing professional development to support the anti-bullying policy.

Staff are also able to speak to the Headteacher about any issues they feel they may need support on.

## **School Response to Bullying Behaviour**

### **Reporting and dealing with bullying behaviour**

We encourage children that 'it's good to talk to adults if they feel that they are being bullied'. Through developing a caring ethos in the school, children should be confident in approaching any adult in school whether it is their Class Teacher, a member of the support staff or the Headteacher. Whoever a child discloses to that they are being bullied the adult will listen carefully and deal with the incident immediately. A member of support staff must report any incidents to the Class Teacher straight away. Teaching staff will, in the first instance, consider the facts and speak to those involved. If they consider that the bullying has indeed occurred then he/she will support the victim of the bullying, and sanctions for the child who has carried out the bullying will be discussed with the Headteacher or member of the Senior



Leadership Team. The teacher will also take time to talk to the child who has bullied: explaining why his/her action was wrong and that child is encouraged to change his/her behaviour in the future. If the behaviour is repeated, a range of sanctions can be applied according to the severity of the incident and professional judgement of the member of staff. A member of staff will contact the child's parents/carers in all cases to make them aware of the issue. This may then result in the parent/carer of the child carrying out the bullying being asked to come into school to meet with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies, and children will be given an Individual Behaviour Plan to support the work of the school. This will be discussed with the child's parents/carers so that work can be carried out collaboratively to support the child.

On occasion, adults in school may witness bullying behaviour or have concerns about behaviour around school or in the playground. All staff are briefed during their induction about how to report these concerns. Adults in school should report concerns to the child's Class Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Parents are also encouraged to report bullying behaviour to the school. If a child tells their parents that they think they are being bullied parents should re-assure their child that help can be provided. Parents should try to stay calm and listen carefully encouraging their child to talk about their concerns. If a parent still has concerns then they should talk to the Class Teacher in the first instant. Parents should be aware that the teacher may have no idea that the child is being bullied, but can be reassured that the relevant steps will be followed.

### **Procedures for recording bullying behaviour**

All members of staff report incidents of bullying using CPOMS. This is an electronic format for reporting concerns about a child. The information about bullying is then sent to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the child's Class Teacher. However, it is likely that the member of staff reporting the incident will speak directly to a member of staff first so that action can be taken immediately.

The school has adopted the local authority's guidelines for dealing with and reporting racist incidents and this may be used in addition to bullying procedures.

The recording procedures above are used to report on the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy to governors. Information gained as part of these procedures may also be used to investigate allegations of bullying and parental concerns and complaints.



## **Support for children and parents after incidents**

Immediately after a disclosure, a child will be supported. Children can expect to be listened to and have the opportunity to discuss the experience with a teacher or with an adult of their choosing. They can also expect to be told what the outcome of any investigation and action that has been taken. Teachers will inform parents/carers, if it is found that a child is being bullied. The school has a range of literature, pamphlets and weblinks that can be used to discuss the issues with parents/carers and children.

Long term support can be implemented to help raise a child's self-esteem and confidence; this may include time with the Family Learning Mentor or a nominated member of staff to support them and develop stronger links with other peers. In more complex cases, the school may seek the advice of other professionals to offer appropriate support.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by discussing what has happened and why, giving them time to reflect on their actions and the effect on the other child. Their parents/carers will be informed to help discuss how their behaviour can be improved.

## **Range of actions and intervention strategies that may be applied:**

There are a range of actions that the school can take to tackle bullying behaviour. The school will decide which are appropriate and reasonable in light of the severity of individual incidents. Possible actions include:

- Parental involvement
- Discussion between all parties
- Opportunities to reconcile their action – verbal or written apology
- Removal of privileges e.g. playtime etc.
- Planned individual behaviour modification plan
- Referral to outside agencies
- Short internal exclusion
- Longer internal exclusion
- Fixed term exclusion
- Pastoral Care System

In addition to the above, At Thornton Primary School are willing to try new intervention and restorative methods suggested by other professionals in order to improve relationships and reduce incidents of bullying.



## **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying. Guidance from the DFE defines cyberbullying as: 'the use of Information and Communication Technology particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.'

There are some aspects of cyberbullying that are different to other forms these being:

- It can be an invasion of home and personal space and can be perpetrated at anytime
- The audience can be large and reached rapidly
- People who cyberbully have a perception of anonymity
- Bystanders to cyberbullying can easily become perpetrators by passing on messages
- The profile of the bully and the target can be different; cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations. Teachers can also be targets.

## **Prevention of Cyberbullying**

The school aims to prevent cyberbullying through discussions with pupils about their responsibilities in their use of ICT. These discussions not only take place in Computing lessons, but also form part of the PSHE curriculum. The school has an Online Safety Policy, an Acceptable Use Policy and Acceptable Use of Google Classrooms Policy. These policies give guidance to staff, pupils and visitors on the acceptable use of the internet and when elements of online safety are taught.

The school shares information about the safe use of technology through school newsletters and social media. We aim to promote a positive view of technology in school, where it is used to support engaging, positive and effective learning. We aim to use computers in a safe manner to support pupils' self-esteem, participation and to develop friendships. As we do this, we will always refer back to appropriate use of the internet, online safety and digital literacy. Attention will be drawn to appropriate use of mobile phones, instant messaging, chat rooms, e-mail and social networking sites. The use of unrestricted chat rooms and social networking sites is not allowed in school. Any e-mail and use of the schools virtual learning environment will be closely monitored by staff.

The Anti-Bullying policy and the Online Safety policy will be reviewed in response to any incidents of cyberbullying.

## **Responding to Cyberbullying**

In light of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the school has a responsibility to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site, particularly relating to forms of bullying. Therefore, any incidents or concerns over cyberbullying whether in school or out will be dealt with in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy. It is particularly important that parents/carers are informed about cyberbullying incidents to ensure that children remain safe and their behaviours monitored at home.



## **Inclusion and Racism**

The diversity of our society is addressed through our schemes of work, which reflect the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Class Teachers are flexible in their planning and offer appropriate challenges to all pupils, regardless of ethnic or social background. Any racist incidents are recorded and reported to the governing body and the Local Authority by the Headteacher. The school contacts parents/carers of those pupils involved in racist incidents. Further details are to be found in the school's Equality Policy

## **Monitoring and review of Anti bullying Policy**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy. The Headteacher and governing body will use information from recording of bullying incidents, information from pupils and parent/carers questionnaires and other sources to update this policy as required.

This Anti-Bullying Policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this via discussion with the Headteacher.

Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

**Signed: Mr David Ashcroft, Headteacher**

**Date: September 2025**

**Review Date: September 2026**

**To be agreed by the Standards and Effectiveness Committee on 04/11/2025**