

Anti-Bullying Policy

The vast majority of the pupils at St. Thomas' C of E Primary School conduct themselves very well, are well mannered and well behaved. There are occasions, however, when certain children's behaviour can be described as bullying. This policy describes our interpretation of bullying behaviour and sets out the expectations we have of our pupils and the methods we employ to modify behaviour if children are considered to be a bully. Our aim is to always reward good positive behaviour and to show zero tolerance of bullying as defined below. We feel however that in each case of bullying it is the **behaviour** and not the **child** that meets with our disapproval.

Equality Act 2010

St Thomas' CE Primary School strives to meet the aims of the above policy in all respects and adopt a consistent approach to all forms of bullying. The school aims to consistently eliminate discrimination, including discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The school will actively seek to protect the nine characteristics through a range of approaches identified in the above Act. These characteristics are:

Age
Marriage and civil partnership
Disability
Gender
Gender reassignment
Pregnancy and maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sexual orientation

Bullying

The staff and governors of St. Thomas' C of E Primary School accept the definition of bullying as:

- **Physical** Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, scratching and other forms of violence or threats.
- **Verbal** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- **Emotional** Excluding (sending to Coventry), tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.
- **Racist** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual** Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- **Cyber** Misuse of the internet, mobile phone threats by text message and calls, misuse of technology eg. camera and video facilities.

The use of intimidating or defamatory messages/ images both inside and outside of the school will not be tolerated. In order to combat cyber bullying, school will work with both the police and mobile network/ Internet service providers where appropriate.

In gaining an understanding of bullying staff attention is drawn to the following information:

- Bullying behaviour is often very subtle and when a group of pupils have established a bullying relationship with another pupil or group of pupils, they may only have to look threateningly to reinforce their fearfulness.
- Research shows that name-calling; being physically hit and being threatened are the most frequent direct forms of bullying. Being isolated or deliberately left out of friendship groups is the most common form of indirect bullying.
- National surveys indicate that most bullying occurs in and around school, the playground being the most common location. At St. Thomas' C of E Primary School we also need to be aware that bullying may also occur in the corridors. In primary schools, three-quarters of all pupils who are bullied are bullied during break or lunchtimes. The small group of persistently bullied pupils report that they are not only bullied in school but also on their way to and from school.
- It is acknowledged that everybody has the potential to be involved in bullying behaviour, either on the giving or receiving end.

The effects of bullying

Staff should carefully monitor the symptoms of bullying outlined below. If they think behaviour is related in any way to bullying discuss the issue with a member of the Senior Management Team.

Staff must be aware that if bullying is left unchallenged, other pupils can learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Bullying can pervade the relationships of children and become accepted as normal; this must not be allowed to happen at St Thomas' C of E Primary School.

Bullying can affect pupils in a number of ways:

- They may complain that their possessions are being stolen
- When pupils are bullied their lives are made miserable
- They may suffer injury, they may be unhappy about coming to school
- Over time they may lose self-confidence and self-esteem, they may blame themselves for inviting bullying behaviour.
- Bullying can affect the pupil's concentration and learning

- Some pupils experience stress-related illness; stomach aches, headaches, nightmares or anxiety attacks.

The aim of the school with regard to bullying

- St. Thomas' C of E Primary School aims to combat and challenge bullying behaviour in all its forms and to encourage co-operative behaviour at all times.
- We aim for all staff employed at the school to recognise and respond to bullying behaviour whenever encountered.
- Show zero tolerance of any form of bullying, whenever identified.
- Co-operation and care for others is fostered; and the school aims to provide a happy and caring environment in which all pupils and staff can thrive.

Action to prevent and deal with incidents of bullying

Our Behaviour Management Policy describes the importance for pupils to be given praise and recognition for co-operative behaviour. Teaching staff should use the school curriculum as a vehicle to deliver and reinforce our anti-bullying policy; assemblies, pastoral care groups, role-play and drama, literature, discussion-based activities and creative writing all provide opportunities for this.

The way our lunchtimes and playtimes are organised and the opportunities given to the pupils for constructive play are an important factor in the fight against bullying.

Middy Assistants are to be regularly made aware of the importance of their role in supervising and monitoring pupil interactions and, in particular, pupils who appear to be isolated from their peers or who show signs of distress.

All teaching staff should regularly check with Middy Assistants to ensure that children's behaviour has been acceptable. Staff should advise and update midday assistants appropriately when there is a concern about either bullies or their victims.

Staff should always listen to children and act upon any statements or complaints they make.

Individual pupils, who feel that they are being bullied, should be encouraged to approach their pastoral care teacher as their designated teacher. This teacher would be available to listen to and offer counselling on a confidential basis if necessary.

In addition, children can place a note in the 'bully box' that is located in the library. A member of the Senior Management Team will monitor notes written to this box on a weekly basis.

Parental involvement is a crucial factor in our fight against bullying; all parents are to be given a copy of our discipline and anti-bullying policy and, through our home – school communication links, we hope to promote an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding in support of all our children.

Vulnerable pupils

St. Thomas' C of E Primary School recognises the following groups as potentially vulnerable with regard to bullying.

- Children in care
- Traveller children
- Children with learning difficulties and/ or disability
- Children with SEN
- Gifted and talented
- Young carers

Staff and volunteers need to be aware of those children who may be vulnerable to bullying due to their individual needs and should ensure they are provided with appropriate means of support. Children with Special Needs and Disabilities may not always have the communication skills to report, effectively and in detail, specific incidents of being bullied and will need specific assistance with this.

The school's response to bullying

- In response to one-off incidents, which do not result in actual physical harm, a reprimand followed by an apology may be sufficient to deter a pupil from continuing with name-calling or mild teasing.
- The persistent bully will need help and firm guidance. When dealing with a child, who has bullied another, staff should be clear, honest and direct with their response avoiding the use of humiliation, sarcasm, aggression, threat or manipulation.
- In the first instance the response should, if at all possible, be immediate with possible follow up in the longer term.
- Children identified as bullying, will be dealt with in accordance with our Behaviour Management Policy.
- Incidents considered by staff to be serious or persistent must be brought to the attention of a senior member of staff. (KS1 Manager, KS2 Manager/ Deputy Head, Headteacher).
- Racial, physical and sexual abuse must always be reported to a senior member of staff.

- Staff must consider the needs of the 'victim' to be paramount and should in consultation with a senior colleague offer an appropriate form of counselling.
- Following an incident of bullying, the policy of the school is to provide the pupils involved with some form of counselling in order to enable the pupils to discuss with one another strategies for resolving the problem and avoiding further conflict.
- It is likely that perpetrators' and victims' parents will be informed of bullying at an early stage. Staff should consult with a senior colleague to decide how best to approach parents.
- Outside support from specialist agencies will be utilised if necessary.
- It is assumed that parents, who choose to send their child to St. Thomas' C of E Primary School, will support and co-operate fully with staff in maintaining high standards of work and behaviour.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher and the Governing Body monitor this policy. The Headteacher will report to Governors about the effectiveness of this policy upon request.

A record of incidents is located with the Headteacher. The record includes the following information:

- Date of incident
- Description of incident
- Action taken
- Signature of responsible person

This child policy is supported by other school policies, which are intended to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children. In order to understand how the anti-bullying policy reflects the intended ethos of the school it should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Race Equality
- Special Educational Needs
- Equal Opportunities
- Online Safety
- Whistle-blowing
- Healthy schools Status
- Safer recruitment procedures
- Health, Safety and Welfare
- PSHCE and SRE
- DFES 'Don't suffer in silence 2003'
- School Improvement Plan

- School Mission statement

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.