

Thirsk Community Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy

Our Mission Statement

At Thirsk Community Primary School, we are committed to developing and celebrating the individual strengths of each child, actively encouraging them to achieve their full potential in a safe, secure and caring environment. Everyone is an individual and everyone is important.

As a prerequisite of our mission statement, bullying is considered wholly unacceptable and will not be tolerated within our school. We understand that bullying is hurtful and harmful, so all incidents of bullying are taken seriously. We acknowledge that bullying does happen, and ensure that it is dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is taking place is expected to report it.

Aims of the Policy

- to ensure all members of the school community understand what bullying is and what their responsibilities are when it arises.
- to try to prevent any behaviour deemed to be bullying.
- to address any behaviour deemed to be bullying.
- to maintain a school environment which is safe, secure and caring.
- to ensure that everyday practice is effective and takes account of legislation: Children Act 1989, SEN and Disability Act 2001, Every Child Matters 2003, Equality Act 2010, Education and Inspections Act 2006.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour **by an individual or group repeated over time that** intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally, and is repeated over time. (**STOP: Several Times On Purpose** helps pupils remember this definition.) Bullying is often difficult to stop without help, with the victim feeling that they cannot defend him or herself, because of an imbalance of power. Victims of bullying experience fear, pain, anxiety and distress.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unkind, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation.
- Verbal (**Direct or indirect**): name-calling, teasing, making threats, spreading malicious stories.
- Physical: hitting, kicking, pinching, throwing things at someone, taking or hiding someone's belongings.
- Racial: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, ridiculing culture or religion.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, or sexually abusive or sexist comments.
- Homophobic: because of or focussing on sexuality.
- Cyber: using technology to cause offense, e.g. sending offensive text messages or misusing Internet chat rooms.
- Disability-related: negative remarks, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational need.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

Pupils who bully others need to learn different ways of behaving.

Bullying can take place anywhere: in any part of the school building or grounds, out of school on an educational visit and within the community.

Bullying is not:

It is important to note that bullying is not *an occasional* falling out of friends, name-calling, arguing or physical encounter. Bullying is when such a behaviour takes place several times on purpose (STOP). All children fall out or say things when they are upset. This is a natural response and learning how to mend friendships is an important part of growing up and developing social skills. It is important to acknowledge that it is natural for occasional problems of this type to occur and that these are not classed as bullying.

Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone involved in the life of the school is expected to take responsibility for promoting an anti-bullying approach by: being supportive of each other; providing positive role models; conveying a clear understanding that we disapprove of unacceptable behaviour and being clear that we all follow our school rules (see Behaviour Policy).

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to report incidents of bullying and concerns they may have that someone is being bullied.

Governors will

- support the Headteacher and staff in the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher will ensure that

- bullying behaviour is addressed in the school's behaviour policy
- bullying is addressed as an issue in the curriculum
- the governing body is provided with information regarding behaviour management, including bullying
- a senior member of staff is responsible for the policy and anti-bullying strategies.

Staff will

- provide children with a good role model
- take prompt action when there are concerns about bullying
- record all allegations of bullying using a 'Record of Significant Event' and report them to the Headteacher
- ensure pupils and parents are given feedback on action which has been taken.

Parents are expected to

- take an active role in their child's education, talking to them about their school day
- be aware of unexplained changes in their child's behaviour
- inform school immediately if they feel their child may be a victim of bullying behaviour and work in partnership with the school to bring about an end to the bullying

- provide their child with a good role model by following the school's advice about how to manage the situation
- contact school if they know or suspect that their child is bullying another pupil
- share with the school any suspicion they may have that bullying is taking place, even when it does not concern their child.

DO NOT:

- Attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the child whom you think may be the bully or by speaking to their parents.
- Encourage your child to be a 'bully' back.

Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

Pupils are expected to

- be actively involved in creating a safe, secure and caring school environment
- tell a member of staff or a parent / carer if they or are being bullied
- act to stop or prevent bullying by telling a member of staff or a parent / carer that they know or suspect that someone else is being bullied.
- follow the 'Bystander Code' (know that being a 'bystander' is not acceptable and understand that their silence makes them in part responsible for what happens to the victim of bullying).

Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Incidents of Bullying

All staff will take seriously any report of bullying behaviour, responding calmly, but with concern. Reports will be dealt with promptly and impartially, ensuring that a thorough investigation is carried out. All those involved will be given the opportunity to be heard, supported and protected.

1. Report all allegations of bullying to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim feels safe.
3. Staff will make a written record of the account and circulate a copy of this to all appropriate staff.
4. Advice will be given to support the victim.
5. Staff will speak to all those involved, giving them an opportunity to share their account of events.
6. The problem will be identified and solutions managed, using Restorative Practice strategies where appropriate.
7. Action will be taken to end the bullying behaviour.
8. Staff will ensure the bully realises that their behaviour is unacceptable.
9. If the victim consents, the pupils will be reconciled.
10. Support will be given to the bully to help him / her understand the consequences of his / her behaviour and to change it.
11. In serious cases, parents will be informed and will be invited to come to school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
12. Following an incident, the pupils involved will be monitored to ensure that there is no repetition of the bullying behaviour.

Consequences which may be used to support the perpetrator in understanding the implications of their actions are explained in the Behaviour Policy.

Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Bullying

At Thirsk C. P. School, we aim to provide a positive learning environment which minimises opportunities for bullying to take place. **We use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying:**

Strategies and initiatives used by the school include:

- clear and consistently reinforced school rules and behaviour policy
- regular Circle Time
- regular opportunities to discuss difference and celebrate diversity
- PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education, **Citizenship lessons**)
- use of SEAL to develop key skills (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- Restorative Practice approach to conflict resolution
- a worry/***suggestion** box is given an important status in each classroom and is checked daily by a teacher or teaching assistant ***Suggestion Box - a 'Worry Box' may be viewed as a platform to report only bullying - children may be reluctant to use or be seen using it**
- participation in National Anti-bullying Week
- assemblies focussing on bullying and how to respond to it
- displays of child friendly definitions of bullying and the school's 'Bystander Code'
- annual pupil survey
- analysis of data related to reports of bullying
- promotion of respectful relationships, noting that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but must be respectful of everyone else's feelings.
- individualised programmes to support victims and perpetrators of bullying
- whole staff understanding of the importance of their role as 'someone to turn to'

Useful Contacts

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| • Kidscape | 020 7730 3300 | www.kidscape.org.uk |
| • Childline / NSPCC | 0800 1111 | www.childline.org.uk |
| • Anti-bullying Alliance | 0207 843 1901 | www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk |
| • NSPCC | 0800 1111 | www.nspcc.org.uk |
| • Family Lives | 0808 800 2222 | www.familylives.org.uk |
| • North Yorks. Parental
Anti-bullying Helpline | 01609 538960 | |
| • Advisory Centre for
Education (ACE) | 020 7354 8321 | |
| • Children's Legal Centre | 0845 345 4345 | |
| • Parentline Plus | 0808 800 2222 | |
| • Bullying Online | | www.bullying.co.uk |

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