



Osborne
Co-operative Academy Trust



Anti-Bullying Policy

Thameside Primary School

Last reviewed: March 2021
Next review date: March 2023

Thameside Primary School

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT) incorporated around the principles and values of the international co-operative movement. These are Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility and Solidarity, along with the ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others. These values and principles underpin all our actions.

This document sets out the Anti-Bullying Policy for Thameside Primary School, in consultation with the pupils and staffs views.

We believe that challenging bullying effectively will improve the safety and happiness of our children, it also shows that the school cares and makes it clear to bullies that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Aims of the Policy

We aim:-

- to nurture an environment in which our children feel safe and positive interaction is valued and rewarded
- to ensure that all pupils will be taught what is meant by bullying, including cyber bullying
- to teach that bullying is unacceptable inside or outside of school, through special focus days (Anti-Bullying week), visits, assemblies, discussions, role play, stories and circle time etc.
- develop a culture in which telling someone about bullying is seen as positive
- to ensure that all adults are aware of the possible signs
- to deal with bullying swiftly and when it occurs fully support children who are being bullied
- to help bullies to change their behaviour by providing support and advice in a range of ways, depending on the individual.
- to protect vulnerable children and be aware that they could be more susceptible to bullying
- to monitor and review systems to develop effectiveness and keep pupils, parents and staff informed of the School's approach to bullying and the School's Anti-Bullying Policy

Why are we against bullying?

"Every Child Matters".....because

- Everyone has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy.
- We should treat everyone with consideration.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberate harassment or an aggressive act, repeated, often over a period of time, which causes hurt to someone else. The hurt can be either physical or psychological and can be inflicted by one child or a group. It is usually difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can also be electronically or online through cyber-bullying.

Some individuals may feel they are being bullied, even when there is no intention from others to cause them distress. Such perceptions of bullying should nevertheless be taken seriously as a reflection of the individual's vulnerability.

It is not bullying when two children of approximately the same age and strength have the occasional fight or quarrel.

Bullying, either verbal or physical, will not be tolerated at Thameside Primary School. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent it happening and, with this in mind, guidelines have been laid down as part of the Trust's Behaviour Policy.

Different Types of Bullying

- Emotional (being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, threatening behaviour)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing)
- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence)
- Extortion (demanding money/goods with threats)
- Cyber (all electronic or internet misuse including: texting, email, internet chat rooms or gaming chat rooms)
- Mobile threats by text messaging and calls.
- Misuse of associated technology i.e. cameras and video facilities including those on mobiles.
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality)

Factors significant in any bullying activity

- Is deliberate and persistent hurtful behaviour
- Is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- Occurs over a prolonged period of time, rather than being a single aggressive act.
- Involves an imbalance of power, the powerful attacking the weak.
- Can be verbal, physical or psychological
- Can be racist or sexual harassment.

Victims are usually vulnerable children who may be from one, or more of the following categories:-

- new to the class or school
- nervous and anxious nature
- different in appearance, speech or background from the other pupils
- children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

As SEND children are particularly vulnerable, it is vital for us as a school to ensure that we support and develop their skills so that they can recognise, report and deal with any alleged bullying. In some cases a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) will need to be drawn up to meet the needs of the individual.

What are the possible signs and symptoms of Bullying?

Vulnerability is not always visible to an adult and the victim can be any child. Some signs that are particularly indicative of bullying include:-

- Reluctance to come to school or an insistence on being collected/delivered by Parents. Also, arriving or leaving school at different times to the other children
- The child's possessions e.g. pens, books etc. are lost, their work books destroyed or defaced, clothing going missing or spectacles being broken
- A reluctance to go out at break time / lunchtime and, if persuaded to, staying close to an adult supervisor
- The child is continually in need of money and says that it has been lost or used for unlikely reasons
- The child suffers from low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, sadness or lacking in confidence.
- The child becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable
- The child suffers from imaginary illness
- The child's performance in school begins to drop
- The child becomes nervous or jumpy
- The child changes their usual routine

Unfortunately, the signs may not always be as overt and teachers and other adults within the school, must try to be aware of less obvious clues e.g. child may ask to sit next to someone else in class or carefully avoid contact with certain other pupils.

How can we prevent Bullying?

- Regular work in school which develops empathy and emotional intelligence through a range of ways including:
 - Special focus days/weeks
 - assemblies,
 - Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) lessons
 - cross-curricular lessons
 - circle time
 - role play
 - Social skills training
 - activities linked to books.
- Pupils are taught what bullying is, what they should do and who they can tell. They are made aware that some vulnerable pupils are unable to recognise signs of bullying for themselves and therefore it is everybody's responsibility to report any concerns.
- The School Council includes bullying on its agenda.
- Preventative measures such as adaptation and improvement of the school environment are made wherever possible to reduce the risk of bullying.
- The local governing body and SLT monitor bullying via audit strategies, annual pupil and parent questionnaires.
- Regular staff training to refresh staff knowledge on the procedures for dealing with bullying incidents.
- The policy is distributed to all new staff.

Policy in Practice - Procedures

When an incident of bullying has been either witnessed or reported on, staff will:-

- Take the incident or report seriously
- Have discussions with the victim, bully and any witnesses separately and record conversations. If older children you could ask them to write a statement.
- Re-assure the victim and offer support and advice
- Give a clear message to the bully that bullying will not be tolerated
- Informing a member of the Senior Leadership Team/Pastoral team
- Inform the parents of all involved of the action taken or intended to be taken for both pupils
- Create an action plan with details of support and monitoring of the plan outlined.
- Use the schools' sanctions to punish the bully, explaining the consequences clearly and why it is being used. Sanctions could include:
 - Bridge sessions
 - withdrawal of playtime/lunchtime
 - internal exclusion
 - withdrawal from certain privileges or activities
 - exclusion from school (fixed term or permanent)
- Provide support for the victim and perpetrator as appropriate, this could include
 - 1:1 mentoring
 - circle of friends
 - pastoral support.
- Victims (where appropriate) should be made aware of the sanctions that are being used
- All incidents of bullying or alleged bullying will be recorded centrally in the bullying file and on the child's file.
- Inform Governors of recorded incidents and action taken on a half termly basis.

If a teacher is in doubt as to what should happen immediately following an incident, he or she can always "buy time" through non-specific responses such as, "We'll talk later." This approach also allows the pupils involved a chance to reflect. However, all incidents will be followed up.

When faced with bullying staff should not:-

- Ignore it
- Play it down
- Allow other children to sort it out
- Threaten the bully
- Do anything which may lead to an escalation of violence

Other factors which must be examined:

- The nature of the bullying
- The severity of the bullying
- The frequency of the bullying
- The motivation of the bullies
- The number of bullies involved

Monitoring

Monitoring procedures can be used for 2 purposes:

1) **To enable the school to follow up and record progress.** Individual incidents which are, on the surface, seemingly isolated occurrences, may be part of a much larger pattern of bullying behaviour. Monitoring will help the school identify such patterns. Staff will need to take account of:-

- Who was involved (or alleged to be involved)
- Where and when it happened
- What happened
- What action was taken
- How it was followed up

2) **To identify whether or not the anti-bullying policy is really being effective.** Records of incidents can show whether bullying is becoming less frequent or changing in nature. The results can be used in evaluating the policy and can provide insight into ways in which practice resulting from the policy (or the Policy itself) needs to be adapted or changed.

Refer to our Equality Policy for more information.

Incidents outside of school:

Head teachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, cyber bullying, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre. Where bullying outside the school is reported to staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Head teacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. Once investigated appropriate procedures and actions will take place.

Implementation Strategies

The following strategies will be used consistently to support this Policy and to address bullying at our school:

- A school policy known and supported by teachers, pupils, parent/carers and governors
- Regular training for all staff linked to Anti-Bullying
- Recording and reporting of all incidents to governors on a termly basis
- Whole school ethos and school values promote positive behaviour
- Dedicated pastoral team available for children and parents.
- Involve pastoral, mid-day assistants & LSAs in training and discussion of how to affect better behaviour in the playground.
- The use of lunchtime clubs to provide positive activities to work with children.

- Detailed and structured PSHE curriculum across the school which teaches children how to develop necessary skills linked to conflict resolution. The scheme also addresses issues linked to bullying, as well as promoting and celebrating individuals.
- Individual, group and whole class discussions to explore the reasons behind incidents of bullying and to raise awareness of the consequences of such actions for themselves and others;
- Early involvement of parents and carers. Parents and carers will be involved immediately and sensitively and helped to support their children whether they are the bully or the victim;
- Support and guidance will be sought from outside professional bodies where appropriate.

References

Preventing and talking bullying (Advice for Head teachers, staff and Governing bodies)

- October 2014 -Department for Education Guidance

The Education Act 2002

The Equality Act 2010

The Special Educational Need and Disability Act 2001

The Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

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| Turn Your School Around | - | Jenny Mosley |
| Bullying – don't suffer in silence | - | Department for Education |
| Tackling Bullying | - | Faye Howe, Jim Tuthill (NSPCC Publication) |