



ST THOMAS
CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Reviewed on:	October 2025
Policy to be reviewed on:	October 2027

The School Ethos



Children enter St Thomas School, eager to make sense of their world. Our aim is to facilitate their exploration by providing a stimulating and secure environment where they can safely reach their potential, learn to value themselves and relate to others with consideration.

We believe that all children have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of the differences between them in age, gender, race, sexuality, religion, culture, language or disability.

St Thomas Primary school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school and beyond. We are fully committed to safeguarding our pupils through prevention, protection

and support.

We are also committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

It is our duty to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent terrorism. Any concerns should be referred to the Designated Child Protection Person who have local contact details for PREVENT and Channel referrals.

In order to ensure that we comply with the spirit of the Single Equality Act 2010 and the nine protected characteristics in the act, we will endeavour to make as many reasonable adjustments as is appropriate.

Aims and objectives

At St. Thomas Primary School bullying is unacceptable and can damage children's individual and educational needs. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is not tolerated under any circumstances (see behaviour policy).

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

Our School:

- Discusses, monitors and reviews our Anti-Bullying Policy on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensures that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deals promptly with complaints. Parents/ carers in turn work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate

A Definition of 'Bullying'

In order to gain clarity when working with younger children, it is vital that we define the term 'bullying'. Younger children may not know the difference between a mean peer and a bully, or the difference between a 'fall out' and deliberately targeted behaviour.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

The school recognises that although anyone can be bullied for almost any reason or difference, some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others.

Research has identified various different types of bullying experienced by particular vulnerable groups of children. These include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture
- Bullying related to special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities
- Bullying related to being of higher ability ? Bullying related to appearance or health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation
- Bullying of young carers or looked-after children or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual or transphobic bullying.
- Derogatory language – relating to race, religion, culture, special educational needs, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, appearance, health conditions, family/home circumstances (including same sex partnerships).

The school recognises that bullying is a complex type of behaviour occurring between individuals and groups.

Different roles within bullying situations can be identified and include:

- The ring-leader, who through their position of power can direct bullying activity
- Assistants/associates, who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader)
- Reinforcers, who give positive feedback to those who are bullying, perhaps by smiling or laughing
- Outsiders/bystanders, who stay back or stay silent and thereby appear to condone or collude with the bullying behaviour
- Defenders, who try and intervene to stop the bullying or comfort pupils who experience bullying.
- Some children can adopt different roles simultaneously or at different times e.g. a bullied child might be bullying another child at the same time, or a 'reinforcer' might become a 'defender' when the ringleader is not around.

We positively encourage all pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences and to make a commitment to take action to end the bullying and provide support for the bullied pupil. Research shows that bullying will stop in less than 10 seconds nearly 60% of the time when peers intervene. (Pepler, Bullying in Schools: How Successful Can Interventions Be? (2007) At St. Thomas Primary School we encourage the bystander to get involved and not just watch and collude, to report incidents or support someone getting bullied

Types of bullying

Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbal -by being teased in a nasty way; insulted about their race, religion, culture, sexual orientation; called names in other ways or having offensive comments directed at them.
- Physical - by being punched, pushed or hurt; made to give up money or belongings; having property, clothes or belongings damaged; being forced to do something they don't want to do.
- Emotional-by having nasty stories told about them; being left out, ignored or excluded from groups.
- Online (cyberbullying)- Refers to bullying through information and communication technologies (text messages, instant messenger services and social network sites, email, videos or images posted on the internet or spread via mobile phones or other electronic devices). The nature of cyber-bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' well-being beyond the school day.
- Racist bullying: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- Homophobic and biphobic bullying: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- Transphobic bullying: Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- Sexist bullying: Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- Sexual bullying: Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- Ableist bullying: Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.
- Prejudicial bullying: Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.
- Relational bullying: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

- Socioeconomic bullying: Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a report of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

The role of the teacher:

- Teachers in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep a record on CPOMS of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.
- If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Head teacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.
- A record is kept on children's individual records on CPOMS, of bullying that occurs outside lesson time, either near the school or on the children's way home or to school or online. If any adult witnesses an act of bullying, they should inform the Headteacher who records the event on CPOMS.

- If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately, in liaison with SLT and pastoral support team. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and consequences for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has been bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the Headteacher. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the Headteacher may contact external support agencies.
- Teachers routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.
- Teachers support all children in their class and establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

Reasons for challenging bullying behaviour in schools

There are a number of very important reasons for challenging bullying in our school:

- The safety and happiness of the pupils, when children are bullied their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury. They may be unhappy about coming to school. It can lead to a loss of self confidence and self-esteem, and in some cases, victims may blame themselves for "inviting" the bullying behaviour.
- Educational achievement. The unhappiness of pupils who are bullied is likely to affect their concentration and learning. Some children will avoid being bullied by making excuses not to go to school.
- It is important that children do not see bullying behaviour go unchallenged or they may think that this is acceptable or condoned by the school, and may even resort to bullying themselves to get what they want.
- As a Church of England school, we pride ourselves on our reputation as an effective caring school, as such children, parents and staff have an expectation that in our school bullying will not be tolerated.

Strategies to combat bullying

Our school is committed to tackling any potential bullying pro-actively and preventatively. It is important that children are made aware of the schools view on bullying, that it is not acceptable and repeated offences will be viewed as serious.

Our school provides the following systems and strategies to combat bullying:

- Annual, themed presentations addressing bullying.
- Fundraising and NSPCC multi-agency working.
- A robust PSHE/RSE curriculum with topical themes.
- Collective worship and quiet reflections to support emotional development.
- A clear behaviour management policy.
- Online worry box to report concerns.

- A full e-safety induction for each pupil.
- School virtual learning environment to safely interact and learn online.
- Relevant wall displays.
- Staff, Head teacher and/or Deputy Head teacher available informally each day.
- Learning mentors to provide pastoral intervention and support.

What do I do if I am worried about bullying?

It is crucial that the school has clarity regarding any concerns. If worries are shared quickly, then it can be much easier to resolve problems. We would always want to work in partnership to ensure that we address issues accurately and effectively.

- Children should report bullying incidents to available staff or someone who they can trust. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff on CPOMS as well as Arbor and investigated initially by the class teacher, followed by the DSL or a member of SLT if an incident is not resolved.
- Parents are advised to report any bullying incidences to school as soon as possible.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying addressed.
- Appropriate feedback will be given to the parent reporting the bullying in a timely manner.
- The school accepts that any child could display bullying behaviour and as a school we have a moral imperative to help those doing so to change their behaviour.
- If necessary and appropriate, external agencies will be consulted to provide support.

- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Although the school will not take direct responsibility for resolving issues outside of school hours, including cyber-bullying (unless this involves the online systems that St Thomas CE (VC) use such as Seesaw etc) and yellow bus incidents. We may feel it is appropriate to offer support to those involved. The school will support working in partnership with the appropriate third party to aid such cases.
- A Complaints Policy - Meeting Request Form is available from Reception and on our school website to assist parents or carers. You should include details which might assist the investigation. Resolution is the objective for this procedure and not retribution. Therefore, details of the school investigation and possible out-comes will not be shared.

Students If I am harassed I will:	Families / caregivers What should I do if I think <u>my</u> child is being harassed?	Staff
Use the WHISPER methods. Report the harassment to a staff member who will help me. Show persistence - never give up. Remember I have the right to feel safe. 	Keep calm and reassure your child Use the bullying definition to ensure that the situation is clear. Listen to your child and discuss safe ways to address the issue Talk calmly about the problem with your child's teacher. Make a time to talk to your child's teacher and keep in contact with school (Filling in a meeting form from reception may be required) Speak only with the staff at school – do not approach other children or families, or use digital media to express concerns or complaints. Talk with the school Head Teacher or leadership team for further support	Talk with the child / parent and listen to what is being said - repeat the issue back to check for clarification. Support the concern by expressing how you will investigate the concern, to fully gain the big picture. Let the parent know how the child has been behaving in school. Reassure the parent that you will speak to them later in the day to share your actions and the day's events. <u>Make arrangements</u> to talk comfortably with the victim. Speak to all people involved making the situation transparent Discuss the issue further with a senior leader or the Head teacher if required. Seek a resolution Speak to a member of the leadership team and document if bullying has been agreed. Apply the behaviour policy Facilitate victim support and restorative discussions.

Consequences

Incidents reported will be investigated and logged on CPOMS along with any Arbor incident logs. The 'bully' will be reminded in the first instance that this is not acceptable behaviour and of the consequences of repeating this type of behaviour. Further incidents or more serious incidents would lead to parents of both the victim and the perpetrator being notified and sanctions (as outlined in the behaviour policy) being followed.

The perpetrator and the victim will receive support in dealing with the consequences of the incident from class teachers and members of the Additional Needs Team. Both will be involved in 'Restorative Justice' where appropriate.

The school will continue use CPOMS/Arbor and check in to support the victim and to ensure further instances are logged for the perpetrator/s.