



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation		
Created	1999	Vice Principal
Last Review	September 2023	School Pastoral Leads, Head of Compliance and Health & Safety
Approved	September 2023	Education Board

This Policy applies to all year groups at Thomas's Schools, including the EYFS.

Thomas's London Day Schools operates as a united group of schools with a similar ethos and values and as such is referred to as a singular body. However in some areas, it is appropriate for each school to adopt discrete procedures, acknowledging the individual identity of each school and its specific personnel and systems. These supplementary procedures can be found by clicking the name of the relevant school below the contents list of this Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Thomas's Behaviour Policy, Code of Conduct, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Online Safety Policy, PSHE Policy, Relationship and Sex Education Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy.

SCHOOL SUPPLEMENTS

[Thomas's Battersea Anti-bullying Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Clapham Anti-bullying Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Fulham Anti-bullying Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Kensington Anti-bullying Policy Supplement](#)

[Thomas's Putney Vale Anti-bullying Policy Supplement](#)

1. INTRODUCTION

Definition

'Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, ... that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring

responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.’ (Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, 2017)

Bullying can be:

- physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal: name calling, insulting, offensive remarks, threats;
- emotional: spreading rumours, exclusion, ostracising;
- online bullying: using technology – mobile phone, social networks, email, etc. – deliberately to hurt or humiliate another;
- sexual: unwanted sexual comments, suggestions or threats s.

It may be directed at an individual or affect a wider group. It is difficult for victims to defend themselves from bullying. Particular awareness should be given to the possibility of bullying towards pupils or members of staff with protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Thomas’s recognises the seriousness of bullying in causing physical and/or emotional harm. They recognise that bullying may result in long term psychological damage and even suicide.

The Heads of Thomas’s schools reserve the right, to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. This includes the inappropriate use of technology.

On-line bullying

Some features of online bullying differ from other forms of bullying. The key differences are:

- impact: the scale and scope of online bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying;
- targets and perpetrators: the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets;
- location: the 24/7 and anywhere nature of online bullying;
- anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them;
- motivation: some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- evidence: unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying may have evidence of its occurrence;

2. AIMS

At Thomas’s our aim is that staff, children and parents work together to create a happy, caring learning environment in line with our school rule ‘Be Kind’ and our School Values. Our aim is to make our schools ones in which bullying – of any kind – is not tolerated and to have a whole school approach to ensuring safety, security, openness and confidence. We aim for values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others to permeate the whole school environment.

This is reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

The school recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in children’s lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the

school community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To raise awareness of the school's expectations in terms of behaviour and to adhere to our Code of Conduct and School Values.
- To communicate effectively to all members of the school community the school's stance on bullying of any kind.
- To engage members of the school community in reaching a shared understanding of what bullying and online bullying is.
- To communicate effectively to all members of the school community the school's policy and to have clear procedures so that it is easy to report bullying, including online bullying and bullying outside school.
- To promote an open atmosphere in which victims and witnesses know that it is right "to tell" and feel safe to do so.
- To train staff to be alert to children who may be vulnerable and at risk from bullying.
- To train and work with staff so that they can identify different sorts of bullying and know how to deal with cases sensitively, supportively and effectively.
- To ensure all staff will challenge any abusive behaviour between pupils that comes to their notices and will report to the DSL any concerns of this nature. Refer to the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information.
- To identify low level disruption and adopt early intervention measures to help set clear expectations and prevent behaviours escalating.
- To have a recognised procedure of sanctions for bullying that is clear and consistent.
- To take appropriate action in cases of bullying and keep a detailed record.
- To work with children in a range of ways to equip them with social and emotional skills in order to reduce bullying and to be able to counter and deal with bullying, including online bullying.

4. PRACTICES TO PROMOTE AN ANTI-BULLYING CULTURE

Each of the Thomas's schools has appointed one or more Anti-bullying Co-ordinators who, with the support of Senior Leaders and the staff body will also develop their own school-specific range of strategies for involving children, staff and parents in anti-bullying measures. This will include prevention, communication, knowledge of sanctions and celebration of success. Details of these can be found in the School Policy Supplements. However the following procedures are common to all the schools.

4.1 Preventative Strategies

- The schools all have a clear ethos about how members of the school's community should be treated and members of staff provide good role models.
- The pastoral care and ethos of the school is designed to raise self-esteem and value the contribution of all children, therefore making bullying less likely.
- There are clear school rules known to all members of the school community which are applied as consistently as possible.

- The Anti-bullying Policy is re-introduced to all pupils at the beginning of each academic year.
- Through the curriculum, an anti-bullying ethos is developed and self-esteem and peer power enhanced. Respect for others, tolerance and kindness are promoted at every opportunity.
- There are open discussions about differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and different family situations.
- Children learn through a combination of direct discussion about bullying and indirect strategies in teaching and other aspects of the school. These include:
 - Code of Conduct
 - School Values
 - Assemblies and church services
 - PSHE lessons
 - Circle Time
 - School Council
 - Anti-bullying Committee
 - Displays, including Anti-bullying board
 - Special awareness-raising days or events
 - Signing an ICT (Acceptable Use) Policy (from Year 3) before they use the internet in school
- Through the Anti-bullying Committee and the School Council, pupils' views on the subject are heard and their ideas on improvement encouraged.
- Pupils are involved so they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- Pupils are regularly reminded they can report bullying of any kind to any member of staff and it is made easy for pupils to report bullying, so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on.
- In cases of online bullying, pupils are advised not to retaliate or reply but to keep any evidence and report the matter to their parent or a member of staff.
- Specific organisations or resources are used for help with particular problems.
- All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying. They are required to read the school's policy as part of their induction.
- Effective on-going staff training is provided for all staff, including non-teaching staff, to enable them to recognise all types of bullying including online bullying, signs of possible victims and how to respond appropriately.
- Time is set aside in staff meetings to discuss children who may be causing concern which allows more experienced staff the opportunity to offer advice and disseminate good practice.
- The Thomas's welfare log aims to identify those children who may be having difficulties at a very early stage.
- Records of all incidents are kept by the Anti-bullying Coordinator in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified and monitored, in particular with relation

to any protected characteristics. These records also allow an evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy.

- Parents are involved and informed to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied.

4.2 Online bullying – preventative measures

Thomas's also operates a number of specific preventative measures to deter online bullying. This includes:

- making positive use of technology across the curriculum;
- ensuring all pupils know they are expected to adhere to the Acceptable Use policy for the internet;
- blocking certain sites and monitoring pupil use, by the IT department;
- applying sanctions where appropriate for any breaches of the Acceptable Use Policy or misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet;
- giving pupils specific guidance on the appropriate use of social networking and messaging sites and what constitutes online bullying;
- supporting pupils in safe and responsible use of the internet including understanding the importance of password security, the need to log out of accounts and keeping other personal details safe;
- educating pupils about the risks of sexting and sharing or forwarding sexual image;
- involving pupils in developing and communicating a code of advice on protecting themselves from getting caught up in online bullying and on reporting cases they experience;
- regularly evaluating and updating approaches to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'Acceptable use' policies for computers;
- using a filtering system to alert the IT staff if children's emails contain specific vocabulary;
- providing information on external reporting routes e.g. mobile phone company, internet service provider, Childline.

4.3 Parents

- Information about the School's policies and procedures are published online and in the Parents' Handbook.
- Parents are expected to follow the School's Code of Conduct and support the school's stance on bullying
- Parents are encouraged to tell the school of concerns, including those relating to incidents out of school, as soon as possible.
- Any concerns raised by parents will be sympathetically heard and investigated
- The school aims to support parents of children who are either bullying or being bullied. We support parents by discussing the problems and offering help and advice as soon as the situation becomes apparent.
- Parents are provided with information on e.g. internet safety via literature, talks etc

5. PROCEDURES IN RESPONSE TO A REPORTED CASE OF BULLYING

5.1 Members of Staff

In dealing with reported cases of bullying members of staff undertake to:

- never ignore suspected bullying;
- not make premature assumptions;
- listen carefully to all accounts;
- protect and support children who have been bullied or have been accused of bullying;
- help the child who has bullied to recognise the effect of their behaviour and to take responsibility for it. Apply appropriate sanctions and support the child in changing their behaviour;
- recognise that a child who bullies may also have been the victim of bullying and/or has other issues that need to be explored and resolved;
- inform and involve parents;
- involve outside agencies where necessary;
- keep detailed records of occurrences with information from all involved;
- follow up repeatedly, checking that bullying has not resumed.

Further details on how each school responds to a reported case of bullying can be found in the School Specific Policy Supplements and Behaviour Policy.

5.2 Safeguarding

A bullying incident will be addressed as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this is the case, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and will not investigate further before advice has been sought from Children's Services and/or the police.

- All staff will challenge any abusive behaviour between pupils that comes to their notices and will report to the DSL any concerns of this nature.
- The school also understands that a child exhibiting bullying behaviour may be an indicator that he/she is experiencing abuse and/or being bullied.
- Any allegations against staff bullying children will be handled following guidance in the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The Heads of Thomas's schools reserve the right, to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. This includes the inappropriate use of technology.

5.3 Sanctions

Sanctions for bullying will be in line with Thomas's Behaviour Policy and in cases of serious or persistent bullying could result in a fixed or permanent exclusion. Refer to the Behaviour Policy for further details.

Sanctions will also take into consideration the age and level of understanding of the child.

5.4 Next steps

- The alleged victim will be encouraged to adopt self-help, i.e. to be assertive in a non-violent way
- The incident should be kept 'open'. The support of other children in the class may be vital to ending the bullying behaviour
- By-standing will be discussed with the class so all children understand that it is unacceptable to watch bullying taking place and do nothing about it.
- It will be explored why the bully has behaved this way and appropriate support strategies offered to prevent a repetition in the future
- There should be consideration that a child may possibly be a provocative victim and may also need additional support in this respect.
- In the case of online bullying the school will assist in removing any hurtful or embarrassing content from the web, either by contacting the person who posted it (if known) or by contacting the host provider and making a report to get the content taken down.
- In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services. Appendix 2 contains information on what service providers can do and how to contact them
- Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, it may be advisable to change their information e.g. mobile phone number.

The steps outlined above will need to be modified according to the needs, age and level of understanding of the child.

6. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- The school will undertake an audit of 'hot spots' in the school, the grounds and in off-site facilities to identify areas and times where children feel vulnerable or at risk.
- The school will undertake regular audits of parents' and pupils' views of the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Policy and procedures.
- The school will regularly evaluate and update their approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating "acceptable use" policies for computers
- All reported cases of bullying will be recorded, including online bullying, and the Anti-bullying Coordinator will:
 - keep records confidential and secure;
 - allow access to the records only to the Senior Leadership Team and the Principals.
- The Anti-bullying Coordinator will report formally to the Senior Leadership Team at the end of the academic year on the number and type of cases recorded and the trend of cases over the previous three years.
- The Anti-bullying Coordinators will review this policy annually with the Compliance Manager, using monitoring information and feedback from staff, pupils and parents, on any required changes to this policy or procedures or to any other related policy.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be discussed, monitored and reviewed on a regular basis

7. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice.

DfE guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2022)

DfE Statutory Guidance: 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (2019)

DfE guidance 'Preventing and tackling bullying' (July 2017)

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2021)

DfE non-statutory guidance: 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' (2022)

DfE guidance 'Cyberbullying: 'Advice for headteachers and school staff' (2014)

Part 3, paragraph 10 of the Independent Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations (2014)

The Equality Act (2010)

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Some useful agencies/resources

Appendix 2: Advice on contacting a service provider

APPENDIX 1: Some Useful Agencies/Resources

Helplines

ChildLine: ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. Whenever and wherever you need them, they'll be there. Call **0800 1111**. They have a designated page for bullying issues that includes a new video about building up your confidence after bullying.

EACH: EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment: **0808 1000 143**. It's open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm.

Victim Support: *They offer support to young people affected by crime. Their Children and Young People's (CYP) Service also deals with cases of bullying; offering advice and working with professionals to ensure young people get the support they need. You can call their Supportline for free on 08 08 16 89 111.*

Websites

Websites and resources that offer support guidance and strategies for children, young people, schools and parents/carers to prevent all forms of bullying:

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Childnet International: Childnet's mission is to work in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. They work directly with children and young people from the ages of 3 to 18 on a weekly basis, as well as parents, carers, teachers and professionals, finding out about their real experiences online, and the positive things they are doing as well as sharing safety advice.

<http://www.childnet.com/>

CEOP: (Child Exploitation Online Protection): The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) maintains a website for children and young people, and parents and carers about staying safe online: [Think U Know](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

www.ceop.gov.uk

ChildLine: This provides a 24 hour helpline for children and young people being bullied in the UK. Children and young people can call 0800 1111 to talk about any problem. It is a major charity that is now housed with NSPCC. It provides training in peer support for pupils and schools and has a range of publications and downloadable resources for children, parents and teachers.

www.childline.org.uk

Kidscape: Kidscape is committed to keeping children safe from abuse. It is the first charity in the UK established specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse it provides information, good resources and training for children and young people under the age of 16, their parents/carers. It offers a range of courses for professionals. It also provides courses in assertiveness training, ZAP, for children and young people and develops their confidence and skills to resist bullying and forms of abuse.

www.kidscape.org.uk

NSPCC: The NSPCC works tirelessly and promotes public campaigns to stop cruelty to children. There is advice on a number of issues related to bullying, child protection, and abuse. Kids Zone which contains details for their child protection helpline for young people who have problems at home or are being bullied.

www.nspcc.org.uk

Family lives: This is a charity dedicated to support parents on all issues related to parenting and has a very helpful section on bullying.

www.familylives.org.uk

Young Minds: Young Minds aims to promote the mental health of children and young people through a parent's information service, training and consultancy, advocacy and publications. Its site provides basic information on a range of subjects including bullying.

www.youngminds.org.uk

BOOKS

Primary

"A Volcano in my Tummy" written by Warwick Pudney and Éliane Whitehouse

The book begins with a little insight into anger itself as well as the "rules" of anger. Anger is okay. It's okay to feel anger, to talk about anger, to express anger in an appropriate way. It's not okay to hurt yourself and other people, animals or things when you are angry. This is an excellent practical resource with imaginative ideas for lessons to help children to manage and deal with the emotion of anger.

"The Huge bag of Worries" written by Virginia Ironside.

For younger children this is a compelling picture book which can be used as a spring board into what worries children today

Secondary

"Adolescent Volcanoes" by Warwick Pudney and Éliane Whitehouse

Helping Adolescents and their Parents to Deal with Anger. This is an engaging and practical resource to help adolescents deal with their anger and for their parents to understand and to help their child. Ideal for counsellors, teachers, parents and social workers working with adolescents. It has a section for adolescents and one for adults giving useful activities and exercises that can be adapted to help young people to deal with anger, set boundaries and communicate appropriately.

APPENDIX 2 : When and how to contact the service provider

Mobile Phones

All UK mobile operators have nuisance call centres set up and/or procedures in place to deal with such instances. You can ask for their phone number to be changed. As cyberbullying is an offence under the Communications Act, your network provider can supply caller information to the police if necessary (data protection law means this information cannot be shared directly with you).

Internet Matters provides easy to follow advice on setting controls on phones as well as gaming consoles, mobile networks and search engines.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

Social networking sites (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat)

If your child is using social networking sites to chat to friends and family, or share photographs, Internet Matters provides guidance and instructions for setting controls for many platforms including Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/>

It is normally possible to block/ignore particular users on social networking sites, which should mean the user can stop receiving unwanted comments. Users can do this from within the site.

Many social network providers also enable users to pre-moderate any comments left on their profile before they are visible by others. This can help a user prevent unwanted or hurtful comments appearing on their profile for all to see. The user can also set their profile to 'Private,' so that only those authorised by the user are able to access and see their profile.

It is good practice for social network providers to make reporting incidents of online bullying easy, and thus have clear, accessible and prominent reporting features. Many of these reporting features will be within the profiles themselves, so they are 'handy' for the user. If social networking sites do receive reports about online bullying, they will investigate and can remove content that is illegal or breaks their terms and conditions in other ways. They may issue conduct warnings and they can delete the accounts of those that have broken these rules. It is also good practice for social network providers to make clear to the users what the terms and conditions are for using the service, outlining what is inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, as well as providing prominent safety information so that users know how to use the service safely and responsibly.

Instant Messenger (IM)

It is possible to block users, or change Instant Messenger IDs so the bully is not able to contact their target any more. Most providers will have information on their website about how to do this. In addition, the Instant Messenger provider can investigate and shut down any accounts that have been misused and clearly break their terms of service. The best evidence for the service provider is archived or recorded conversations and most IM providers allow the user to record all messages. It is also good practice for Instant Messenger providers to have visible and easy-to-access reporting features on their service.

Email providers (e.g. Hotmail and Gmail)

It is possible to block particular senders and if the bullying persists an alternative is for the person being bullied to change their email addresses. The email provider will have information on their website and how to create a new account.

Video-hosting sites

It is possible to get content taken down from video-hosting sites, though the content will need to be illegal or have broken the terms of service of the site in other ways. On YouTube, for example, it is possible to report content to the site provider if inappropriate.

Chat rooms, individual website owners/forums, message board hosts

Most chatrooms should offer the user the option of blocking or ignoring particular users. Some services may be moderated, and then moderators will warn users posting abusive comments or take down content that breaks their terms of use.