Anti-Bullying Strategy

Purpose and background

This strategy and the Anti-Bullying Improvement and Development Plan are based on the premise that every member of the Theale Green School Community, adult and child, has the right to feel safe and secure and relates to incidents that occur on the school premises, on the way to and from school or on school trips.

However, the school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its students and the Headteacher is empowered by law, to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of students when they are off school site... *"this can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre*

At Theale Green School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and will not be tolerated in any form.

If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell someone and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively**.** Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff or an Anti-Bullying Ambassador. Everyone who reports bullying will be listened to.

Strategy objectives:

- To fulfil the school's statutory responsibility with regard to the rights of children and to safeguard and promote their welfare;
- To promote the school's safe and caring ethos and to create an environment in which bullying is seen as inappropriate and unacceptable;
- To ensure that as a school, we take bullying seriously. Bullying will not be tolerated and parents and students should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported;
- To ensure that all staff, governors, students and parents have an understanding of different types of bullying;
- To ensure that all staff, governors, parents and students know what the school policy is and what to do if bullying arises;
- To demonstrate that certain behaviour is unacceptable at our school and to reassure those affected that action will be taken to keep them safe and secure.

Practice and procedures

This strategy recognises that all members of the school community have a role to play in effectively managing anti-bullying within Theale Green School. It is essential that this policy is brought to the attention of all existing staff, and that they are informed of any significant revisions to it. This policy must also form part of the induction process for all new staff and be available to all parents of the school.

Associated documents

This policy, and related strategies and guidance, are drawn up in accordance with legislation and Government guidance. Relevant legislation and documentation includes:

- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Communications Act 2003
- The 2004 Children Act which requires Children's Services Authorities to improve the well-being of children in their area through partnership with others, and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018
- The 2006 Education and Inspections Act which places duties on school
    - governing bodies and head teachers to promote good behaviour and the wellbeing of students, and institute measures to prevent all forms of bullying among students;
- The Children's Plan: Building brighter futures (2007).
- 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' (DCSF, 2007).
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- Preventing and tackling bullying, DFE, updated July 2017
- Supporting Children and Young People who are bullied, DFE factsheet, 2014 (merged July 2017 with "Preventing and tackling bullying", DfE)
- Cyberbullying: advice for Headteachers and school staff, DFE factsheet, Nov 2014
- PREVENT guidance for schools , DFE , June 2015, update 2019
- Behaviour and Discipline in schools, DFE, January 2016, updated 2020
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DFE, updated Sept 2020

The Government's guidance "Preventing and tackling bullying" issued by the Department for Education and which was last updated in July 2017 replaces "Safe to Learn" and outlines in one place the powers schools have to tackle bullying. We acknowledge the advice to schools contained therein. Legislation relating to Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment is also relevant to this policy.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

• Deliberately hurtful

• Repeated, often over a period of time

• Difficult to defend against Bullying can include:

Type of Bullying	Definition
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical (or threat of)	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites
Intimidation	Frightening or pressuring someone to do something they do not want to do in order to protect themselves or loved ones.
Relational Aggression	Harm is caused by damaging someone's relationships or social status e.g. excluding from a group or activity, withdrawing attention or friendship, or humiliating them.
Involving friends or peers	Influencing others to bully someone on your behalf.
Sexism	Prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination against someone's gender.
Homophobic/ Transphobic	Making comments about gender or sexuality that deliberately make people feel uncomfortable, calling names, making sexual comments, or asking sexual questions.

Bullying of staff

All adult members of our school community are entitled to support in instances of bullying and cyber bullying. Instances of harassment or bullying of staff will be dealt with by the Headteacher.

ANTI BULLYING PROCEDURES

This table broadly describes the stages employed in the management of friendship issues through to bullying. Friendship issues are a normal part of growing up and most children will fall out with friends during their school career as they develop and change as people; this is not uncommon and self-management is an important skill to develop. The table below is not definitive, and different strategies may be tried in one particular stage; equally, each stage is not compulsory. How this guidance is used will depend on the child and the circumstances. Formal Bullying records must be kept for safeguarding purposes for any intervention at Stage 3 and onwards.

Stage 1 • Most friendship and relationship issues resolve	• 1:1 Intervention by staff. Discussions will take place with relevant students. • Parents may not be informed at this stage as most situations are resolvable and self-management is an important life skill. The member of staff will make a judgement based on knowledge and experience.
Stage 2 • Some friendship and relationship issues extend further and need more structure to resolve	• An informal Restorative meeting with a member of staff. • Parents informed by phone or in person but preferably in writing that a Stage 2 Restorative meeting has been held and the behavioural expectations made clear
Stage 3 • Rarely friendship issues get to this stage, but may still be resolved this way. • Sustained behaviour (bullying) is now a consideration	• A formal Restorative meeting supported by a trained practitioner. • A written record sent to all parents concerned. • Relevant staff are informed of local actions / guidance.
Stage 4 • Sustained behaviour is now the likely cause	• A meeting with the parents of the bully(ies) to educate and support the bully to change their behaviour. • Clarity of sanction should a change in behaviour not be seen.
Stage 5	• Sanctions implemented

During the stages, any of the following approaches identified in the policy may be considered:

- Co-operative group work
- Circle of Friends
- Support Groups
- Peer mediation
- Peer counselling
- Buddy systems
- Self-esteem support for the victim or the bully

A child may be requested to keep a diary of Who, What, When and How?

PREVENTION OF BULLYING

- Students will work alongside staff and the School Anti- Bullying Ambassador Team to discourage bullying;
- Students are encouraged to make their voice heard and participate as active members of the school community;
- Younger students are made aware of the Peer Mentoring team, and how the team can help;
- A safe place is available at lunch times if they are feeling unsafe;
- School recognises that there are particular times when children may be more vulnerable to bullying – lunch and break times and the end of the school day. Arrangements will be made to ensure that at such times there is adequate supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents;
- Students will be made aware of what to do, where to go and who to go to if they are feeling unsafe. Such information will be publicised around the school site;
- Students will be encouraged to tell an adult or an Anti-Bullying Ambassador if bullying is occurring.
- The anti-bullying message will be reinforced throughout the year and will be addressed in Assemblies, tutor time as well as through Project 7, Project 8, RE and the tutorial curriculum. Students are made aware of the types of bullying which exist;
- Anti-bullying information is available on the school website;
- Education during PSHE and tutor sessions.
- Restorative approach will be used where appropriate
- Working with outside agencies including; West Berkshire LA, SAFE, KOOTH, EHA

All of these preventative strategies operate within a school ethos founded on equality, fairness and respect for others in which individual differences are celebrated and seen as a source of enrichment. In order to help children and young people learn and develop appropriate responses to others, all staff at all times will treat each other (and children, young people, parents and carers) with courtesy and respect and will model appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Theale Green School is firmly committed to working in partnership with parents and believes that the best outcomes emerge when professionals and parents/carers are able to work together when bullying occurs.

Theale Green School recognises the important influence which parents/carers have on their children and would wish, using the home/school agreement, to enlist their support when their child is involved in bullying – either as victim or a perpetrator.

If a child is involved in an incident of bullying, (either as a victim or a perpetrator) school will inform parents and will invite them to become involved in the management of the problem and the prevention of further incidents.

E SAFETY

Theale Green School takes matters of E-Safety extremely seriously. E-Safety encompasses not only Internet technologies but also electronic communications via mobile phones, games consoles and wireless technology. As a school we encourage the use of technology as an important part of our students' development, but always want them to spend their time online safely.

We are keen to stress to all students that they must be aware of how they treat others, and the responsibilities that they have, especially when using information technology.

Students will be educated in the responsible and safe use of the Internet through a range of strategies:

- Internet safety talks will be given to each year group
- ICT lessons will also be used to reinforce messages about safe use of the Internet;
- Acceptable use of the Internet will be explained to students at the start of each academic year via assemblies;
- Students will be made aware of different avenues and websites (ThinkUKnow (CEOP) and Kidscape) through which they can report cyber bullying.

Staff should reinforce e-safety messages across the curriculum.

Parents / Carers play a crucial role in ensuring that their children understand the need to use the internet / mobile devices in an appropriate way. Theale Green School will take every opportunity to help parents understand these issues – for example, through Briefings for parents via the Newsletter.

The school takes note of the guidance and its responsibilities outlined in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" document published by DfE for September 2020.

CYBER BULLYING

We note the search powers included in the Education Act 2011 which give teachers a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Cyber bullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or "cyber- stalking" (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification / defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images (including what are sometimes misleadingly referred to as 'happy slapping' images); and manipulation.

In cyber bullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators – by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, for example, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. All members of the school community should be aware that these actions have severe and distressing consequences and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated. "Bystanders" will be sanctioned where appropriate.

Responding to Cyber bullying:

- Theale Green School will respond to those affected by cyber bullying in the same way as for any other form of bullying. Students will be listened to and offered support;
- Those affected by cyber bullying will be encouraged to make a note of the date and time of incidents and to save a copy of abusive or threatening text messages or emails;
- Advice will also be given about steps they can take to avoid recurrence – for example, advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on 'blocking' or removing people from 'buddy lists'; and ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain;
- Once the person responsible for the cyber bullying has been identified, sanctions will be applied;
- Steps will be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as outlined earlier in this policy.