



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy was written with regard to the DfES publication 'Bullying, Don't Suffer in Silence'

1. Definition

Bullying can be defined as "a deliberate act done to cause distress....It can be an unresolved single frightening incident or a series of such incidents."

It is difficult for victims to defend themselves against bullying.

Bullying can be

- Physical:- hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal:- name calling, insulting, offensive remarks, threats
- Indirect:- spreading rumours, exclusion, ostracising

It may be directed at an individual or it may arise out of the victim's ethnicity, nationality, colour, sexual orientation or some form of disability and thus affect a wider group.

2. Aims

At Thomas's London Day Schools our aim is that staff, children and parents work together to create a happy, caring learning environment. We will not tolerate bullying and have a whole school approach to ensuring safety, security, openness and confidence.

3. Objectives

- To communicate effectively to all members of the school community the school's stance on bullying
- To communicate effectively to all members of the school community the school's policy and procedures
- To promote an open atmosphere in which victims and witnesses know that it is right "to tell"
- To work with staff so that they can identify different sorts of bullying and know how to deal with cases sensitively and effectively
- To work with children in a range of ways to equip them with skills and knowledge to counter and deal with bullying

4. Strategies **Staff**

- Discuss the school's definition of bullying at least annually to ensure common understanding
- Appoint and publicise an Anti-bullying Co-ordinator
- Train all staff, including non-teaching staff, to recognise types of bullying and signs of possible victims

- All staff are to follow these 5 key points taken from the DfES pack 'Bullying, Don't Suffer in Silence':
 1. Never ignore suspected bullying.
 2. Do not make premature assumptions.
 3. Listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same thing does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth.
 4. Adopt a problem-solving approach which moves pupils on from self-justification.
 5. Follow up repeatedly, checking that bullying has not resumed.
- All cases of suspected bullying must be reported to the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator.

Pupils

The Anti-bullying Policy is re-introduced to all pupils at the beginning of each academic year.

Teachers should be aware of the opportunities within the curriculum to create an anti-bullying ethos and to develop self-esteem and peer power.

Children will learn through a combination of direct discussion about bullying and indirect strategies in teaching and other aspects of the school.

- Code of Conduct
- Assemblies and church services
- PSHE and Citizenship lessons
- Circle Time – a specific cycle of sessions on anti-bullying
- School Council
- Displays, including Anti-bullying board

An anonymous Worry Box is made available for pupils to raise concerns discreetly.

Parents

- Information about the school's policy and procedures will be published in the Homework Diary and in the Parents' Handbook.
- Any concerns raised by parents will be sympathetically heard and investigated.
- Parents of both victims and bullies will be supported.

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.
- All reported cases of bullying will be recorded and the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator will a) keep records confidential and secure b) allow access to the records only to the Senior Management Team and the Principals.
- The Anti-bullying Co-ordinator will report annually to the Senior Management Team on the number and type of cases recorded and the trend of cases over the previous three years.
- The Anti-bullying Co-ordinator will report to the Vice Principal annually, using monitoring information and feedback from staff, pupils and parents, on any required changes to the policy or procedures.

PROCEDURES

The Anti-bullying Co-ordinator will lead staff discussions, using 'Bullying, Don't Suffer in Silence' as a key resource, in order to

- share understanding of different types of bullying
- consider children's reactions to bullying
- heighten awareness of signs of bullying
- explore issues around racist, sexual, gender and disability bullying,
- confirm a common purpose in promoting kindness and tolerance

Staff responsibilities:

1. Department Heads will identify opportunities in their schemes of work to support Anti-bullying strategies.
2. Form tutors present and discuss the policy with their form at least annually.
3. Emphasise the message **'It is right to tell.'**
4. Teachers of PSHE follow the Anti-bullying scheme of work.
5. If you witness or suspect a case of bullying:
 - a. Talk to the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator
 - b. Keep dated notes
 - c. Talk discreetly to the suspected victim and encourage a dialogue
 - d. If bullying is involved, follow the procedure below
 - e. If none is admitted but you are still suspicious, monitor, suggest that the form tutor uses Circle Time to explore/support.
6. If a case of bullying is brought to your attention:
 - Listen sympathetically and take it seriously but do not make assumptions
 - Do not promise unconditional confidentiality; you may have to tell others in order to ensure the well-being of the victim
 - Make notes and talk to the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator. Agree who will take the next steps/further action. (see No 8, Strategies)
7. In the case of bullying the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator will:
 - Ensure that the parents of all children involved are informed
 - Record details of the incident(s) and action taken
 - Identify the nature of the incident(s) and implement appropriate strategies. These could include:
 - a) mediation by an adult (See p 29 Bullying, Don't Suffer in Silence)
 - b) assertiveness training for the victim
 - c) group meetings to analyse problems and develop solutions co-operatively
 - d) meetings with parents to ensure complementary and effective measures to support children and solve the problem
 - e) following the cycle set out below
 - Where children do not respond to strategies and bullying is persistent or violent, sanctions in line with the school's Discipline Policy will follow.

8. **Strategies** for dealing with bullying:

The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, believe, act.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Form Tutor, the anti-bullying co-ordinator and the Head in each case.
- Discussions with the bully. Discuss with them the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at Thomas's.
- If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Code of Conduct.
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts.
- Hold separate discussions with the parents of victim and bully.
- Tell the victim that he/she must report any further instances of bullying. Tell the bully that the victim has been given this instruction. This helps to prevent recurrence.
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, loss of break-times, exclusion from school depending on the perceived severity of the incident(s).
- Through on-going discussions, help the bully to face and understand the consequences of his/her actions, take responsibility and move on
- Continue monitoring the situation.
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc. can be reinstated.
- Where groups of children are involved or a culture of bullying is perceived to be developing in a class, the Form tutor will address the issue through Circle Time and through general pastoral care. Other subject teachers will be made aware of the situation in order to be able to assist through the broader curriculum.
- Records of bullying incidents will be maintained and scrutinised by the Senior Management Team to check on the effectiveness of this policy and to identify and rectify or eliminate common “hot-spots” of time, place or opportunity.

This policy will be reviewed annually.		
Reviewed: December 2007	By:	Jill Kelham Vice Principal
Next Review: December 2008	By:	Jill Kelham, Vice Principal