Thorpe St Andrew School and Sixth Form

Anti Bullying Policy - Students

Under Review

Reviewed - **December 2020**

Next Review - **December 2021**

Contents

Statement of Intent

Thorpe St Andrew School and Sixth Form believes that all students are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst students. These measures are part of the school's **Behaviour for Learning Policy**, which is communicated to all students, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and students work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

1.   Legal Framework

1.1   This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

1.2   This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:

- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'.

1.3   This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2.   Definition

2.1   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.

2.2   Bullying is generally characterised by:

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

2.3   Vulnerable students are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves.

2.4   Vulnerable students may include, but are not limited to:

- Students with SEND
- Students who are adopted
- Students suffering from a health problem
- Students with caring responsibilities.

3.   Types of Bullying

3.1   Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything.

3.2   Teasing another student because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

3.3   Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:

- Verbally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- Online (Cyber).

3.4   **Racist Bullying**: Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.

3.5   **Homophobic Bullying**: Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

3.6   **Transphobic Bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.

3.7   **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.

3.8   **Sexual Bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical , psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.

3.9   **Prejudicial Bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics, for example SEND or mental health issues.

3.10   **Relational Bullying**: Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone - usually through verbal and emotional bullying.

4.   Roles and Responsibilities

4.1   The **Governing Board** is responsible for:

- Evaluating and re viewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation 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.

4.2   The **Principal** 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.
- Analysing the bullying data at **termly** intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented. Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

4.3   The **Behaviour and Education Support Team (BEST)** are responsible for:

- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for students and parents, when more serious bullying incidents occur.
- Offering emotional support to victims of bullying.

4.4   **Teachers** are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for students who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the **BEST** of such observations via logging incidents on Bromcom. Any prejudice related incidents are to be logged onto CPOMS.
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of student groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying once they have been approached by a student for support to Bromcom.

4.5   **Parents** are responsible for:

- Informing their child's Head of House, BEST or Form Tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involved in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

4.7 **Students** are responsible for:

- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying,
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other students in incidents.
- Keeping evidence of cyber bullying and informing a member of staff should they fall victim to cyber bullying.
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5. Statutory Implications

5.1 .The school understands that, under the Equality Act 2010, it has a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

5.2 The school understands that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, it could have charges brought against it if it allows the right of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously.

5.3 The **Principal** will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the **Principal** understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

5.4 Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1998, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offense to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character, it is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.
- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include; violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

6. Prevention

6.1 The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying in the form of a written statement which is regularly promoted across the whole school.

6.2   All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of the BEST team.

6.3   Staff will encourage student cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work.

6.4   All types of bullying will be discussed as part of the PSHE and Form Time curriculum.

6.5   Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated through various lessons.

6.6   Seating plans will be organised and altered in a way that prevents instances of bullying.

6.7   Potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with other students who do not abuse or take advantage of others.

6.8   Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in special events, for example, drama productions, sporting activities and cultural groups.

6.9   All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.

6.10   All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.

6.11   A safe place is available for students to go to during free time   if they feel threatened or wish to be alone.

6.12   Students deemed vulnerable, as defined in **section two**, will meet with the BEST once per week to ensure any problems can be actioned quickly.

6.13   Form Tutors will also offer an 'open door' policy allowing students to discuss any bullying, whether they are victims or have witnessed an incident.

6.14   Before a vulnerable student joins the school the a member of BEST and the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will develop a strategy to prevent bullying from happening - this will include giving the student a buddy to help integrate them into the school.

6.15   The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst students, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour.

6.16   The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development is not negatively influenced by outside factors, for example mental health.

7.   Signs of Bullying

7.1   Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a student is a victim of bullying:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Asking to be driven to school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Missing dinner money
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts of bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Unwillingness to use the internet or mobile devices
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home.

7.2   Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

7.3   Students who display a significant number of these signs are approached by a member of staff, to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or other issues.

7.4   In addition, staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a person likely to have bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to the student becoming aggravated
- They have been the victim of domestic abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall, which has meant they are stressed.

7.5   If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify BEST, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

8.   Staff Principles

8.1   The school will ensure that prevention is a prominent aspect of its anti-bullying vision.

8.2   Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and they will not ignore signs of suspected bullying.

8.3   Unpleasantness from one student towards another is always challenged and never ignored.

8.4   Staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident; this applies to all staff, not solely teaching staff.

8.5   Staff always respect students' privacy, and information about

8.6   If a member of staff believes a student is in danger, for example of being hurt, they will inform the DSL immediately.

8.7   Follow-up support is given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents, to ensure all bullying has stopped.

9.   Preventing Peer-on-Peer Sexual Abuse

9.1   The school has zero-tolerance approach to all forms of peer-on-peer sexual abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

9.2   Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline.

9.3   Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes then feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence.

9.4   Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:

9.5   The school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** outlines our stance on addressing peer-on-peer sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence be uncovered.

9.6   To prevent peer-on-peer abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, the school will educate students about abuse, its forms and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

9.7   The school will also ensure that students are taught about safeguarding, including online safety, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum in PSHE lessons, Form Time and assemblies. Such content will be age and stage of development specific , and tackle issues such as the following:

- Healthy relationships
- Respectful behaviour
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
- Addressing cultures of sexual harassment.

9.8   All staff will be aware that students of any age and sex are capable of abusing their peers and will never tolerate abuse as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

9.9 All staff will be made aware that peer-on-peer abse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting and gender .issues, such as girls being sexually touched or assaulted, and boys being subjected to hazing/initiation type of violence which aims to cause physical, emotional or psychological harm.

9.10 All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of students with SEND, who are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

9.11 Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the student's SEND.

9.12 LGBT children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children.

9.13 The school's response to boy-on-boy and girl-on-girl sexual violence and sexual harassment will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

9.14 Students will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled - this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers.

9.15 If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS).

Managing Disclosures
Any disclosure to a member of staff regarding Peer to Peer sexual abuse must be logged onto CPOMS in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

9.16 Victims will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe.

9.17 Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed.

9.18 If a friend of a victim makes a report or a member of staff overhears a conversation, staff will act - via logging the allegation on to CPOMS.

9.19 If the DSL is informed, via CPOMS, of any allegations of abuse against students with SEND, they may, if appropriate work with the SENCo to decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the student in mind at all times.

Confidentiality

9.20 The school will only engage with staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation.

9.21 If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school will not make this promise.

9.22 Even without the victim's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm.

9.23 The DSL will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:

- Parents will be informed unless it will place the victim at greater risk.
- If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to CADS.
- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes - reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the police.

10. Cyber Bullying

10.1 The school has an **E-Safety Policy** in place. Section 6 outlines the school's approach to cyber bullying. The school has a zero tolerance to cyber-bullying and bullying.

10.2 The school views cyber bullying in the same light as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in **section 12** of this policy if they become aware of incidents.

10.3 The school will support students who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the student about their feels and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with **section 13** and **section 14** of this policy.

10.4 In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from students' personal devices, for example mobile phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

10.5 If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

10.6 If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the **Principal** will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policy.

10.7 The school's **Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy** will be followed at all times.

11. Procedures

11.1 Incidents concerning Cyber Bullying are logged as E-Safety on to CPOMS. The DSL will make a decision on who is best to investigate the incident. BEST Team will often investigate such incidents and set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator, logging this on CPOMS.

11.2 When investigating a bullying incident, the following procedures are adopted:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all interviewed separately.
- Members of staff take steps to minimise contact between students being interviewed, including electronic communication.
- If a student is injured, members of staff take the student immediately to the Student Welfare Officer for a medical opinion on the extent of their injuries.
- A room is used that allows for privacy during interviews.
- If appropriate, the alleged bully, the victim and witnesses, are asked to write down details of the incident, this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture.
- Premature assumptions are not made, as it is important not to be judgemental at this stage.
- Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, being non-confrontational and not attaching blame until the investigation is complete.
- All concerned students are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other students.

11.3 Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic and sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

12. Sanctions

12.1 If the BEST Team is satisfied that bullying did take place, the student will be helped to understand the consequences of their actions and warned that there must be no further incidents.

12.2 The BEST Team informs the student of the type of sanction to be used in this instance (detentions and service-based activities) and future sanctions if the bullying continues.

12.3 If possible, the BEST Team will attempt reconciliation and will obtain a genuine apology from the bully. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used here; victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.

12.4 The perpetrator is made to realise, by speaking once per week with BEST, that some students do not appreciate the distress they are causing, and that they should change their behaviour.

12.5 Parents are informed of bullying incidents and what action is being taken.

12.6 BEST informally monitors the students involved over the next half term.

13. Support

13.1 BEST will informally check whether the bullying has stopped.

13.2 After the initial complaint of bullying, BEST holds an informal discussion, on a weekly basis, to check whether the bullying has stopped. They will continue to monitor until they are satisfied that the bullying has stopped.

13.3 If necessary, group dynamics are broken up by members of staff by assigning places in classes.

13.4 The victim is encouraged to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.

13.5 The victim is encouraged to broaden their friendship groups by joining lunchtime or after-school club or activity.

13.6 The school, particularly the BEST Team, will work with the victim to build resilience, for example by emotional therapy.

13.7 The school realises that bullying may be an indication of underlying mental issues. Perpetrators will be required to attend a mandatory counselling session, to assist with any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

13.8 The school will work with the perpetrator regarding any underlying mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.

14. Follow-Up Support

14.1 The progress of both the bully and the victim are monitored by BEST.

14.2 One-to-one sessions to discuss how the victim and bully are progressing may be appropriate.

14.3 If appropriate, follow-up correspondence is arranged with parents one month after the incident.

14.4 Students who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to.
- Having an opportunity to meet regularly with BEST or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being reassured.
- Being offered continued support.
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate.

14.5 Students who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions.
- Being able to discuss what happened.
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved.
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour.
- Appropriate assistance from parents.

14.6 Students who have been bullied will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the DSL will, if necessary, refer the victim of bullying to CADS.

14.7 In cases where the effects of bullying are so severe that the student cannot successfully reintegrate back into the school, the Principal and DSL will look to manage move the student to another mainstream school.

14.8 Where a child has developed such complex needs that alternative provision is required, the student who has been the victim of bullying, their parents, the Principal and DSL will meet to discuss the use of alternative provision.

15. Bullying Outside of School

15.1 The Principal has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Principal the power to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

15.2 Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. 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.

15.3 Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it is investigated and acted on.

15.4 In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only discipline the student on school premises, or elsewhere when the student is under the lawful control of the member of staff, for example on a school trip.

15.5 The Principal is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a student.

15.6 If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police are always informed.

16. Monitoring and Review

16.1 This policy is reviewed every two years by the Principal and the DSL.

16.2 The scheduled review date for this policy is May 2022.