



Thameside Primary School: Anti-Bullying Policy

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New policy written by:	Christina Calvert, Anti-Bullying Lead
Key Changes:	Updated flow chart Changed Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to WFA (new scheme to be introduced in September) Removed out dated appendices
Key Updates:	Anti-bullying leadership statement added on p.2 Update to flowchart Appendix 2 to support speaking with children about suspected bullying (Conversation Guide: Staff Prompt Sheet)



Rights Respecting Schools

We are a Rights Respecting School (RRS). This policy links to:

Article 19: Children have the right not to be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe

Article 28: Children have the right to a primary education. Discipline in schools should respect children's dignity.

Article 29: Children have the right to become the best that they can be.

Purpose of the anti-bullying policy

This policy seeks to:

- Ensure the whole school community has a shared understanding of what bullying is and the detrimental impact it can have on wellbeing and achievement
- Ensure staff, parents, carers, and pupils work together to ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment for all and to safeguard pupils who experience bullying
- Prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour
- Ensure all bullying behaviours and prejudiced based incidents are taken seriously, recorded and responded to in a proportionate and consistent way
- Encourage shared solutions so that those reporting bullying have an appropriate say in what happens next
- Ensure those using bullying behaviour are supported to change their behaviour
- Outline the consequences for those who show bullying behaviour
- Ensure everyone is mutually valued and respected and that, in line with the Equality Act 2010, we aim to eliminate discrimination based on sex, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and belief
- Encourage pupils to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of right and wrong and the ability to take responsibility for their own actions.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Thameside Primary School including senior leaders and the board of governors, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Separate documents set out:

- our code of behaviour for children, young people and adults
- our policies and procedures for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment that takes place between adults involved with our organisation

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in the UK. The NSPCC provides summaries of the key legislation and guidance on:

- bullying - [learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying)
- online abuse - [learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/online-abuse)
- child protection - [learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system)



This policy should also be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges

Policy aims and beliefs

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

Anti-Bullying Leadership

- Thameside Primary School has a designated Anti-Bullying Lead, Christina Calvert (Assistant Headteacher), who has received specialist anti-bullying training and provides strategic leadership, guidance and oversight of anti-bullying practice across the school.
- However, preventing, identifying, recording and responding to bullying is the responsibility of all staff. All adults working within the school have a duty to challenge bullying behaviour, record concerns and take appropriate action to ensure concerns are investigated and addressed promptly. Staff should seek advice and support from the Anti-Bullying Lead whenever required.

What are risk factors for being bullied?

Those who are at risk of being bullied may have one or more risk factors:

- Identity-based bullying (eg. race, faith, gender, disability, sexual orientation or trans status)
- Appearance-based bullying where they are seen as different from their peers (e.g., overweight, underweight, height, wear their hair differently, wear different clothing or wear glasses, disfigurement)
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying
- Looked after children and those who have been in care
- Racist and faith targeted bullying; groups more likely to be bullied are Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, asylum seeker/refugee and mixed-race children
- Children with SEN, especially learning difficulties
- Young carers. These are children and young people under 18 years old who provide regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances
- Children who are seen as weak or not able to defend themselves
- Children who are depressed, anxious, or have low self-esteem
- Children who have few friends or are less popular



- Children who do not socialise well with others.

What is bullying?

In our school we use the definition of bullying outlined by the Anti-bullying Alliance: 'Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can be verbal, physical or psychological. It can happen online or face to face.'

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours, which may be combined and may include the behaviours and actions we have set out below.

Verbal abuse:

- name-calling
- saying nasty things to or about a child or their family.

Physical abuse:

- hitting a child
- pushing a child
- physical assault.

Emotional abuse:

- making threats
- undermining a child
- excluding a child from a friendship group or activities.

Cyberbullying/online bullying:

- excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Sexual and sexist bullying:

- Sexual comments, taunts, and threats; 'banter' of a sexual or sexist nature; sexualised and sexist language
- Non-consensual physical contact (this can include hugging and kissing); interfering with clothing
- Upskirting
- Distributing sexual material (including pornography); sending photos or videos of a sexual nature
- Making phone calls or sending texts, messages, or films of a sexual nature; inciting others to share sexual imagery
- 'Games' with a sexual element (e.g. taking clothes off, kissing, or touching games)
- Pressure to spend time alone or apart from others with another person, or people (e.g. behind school buildings in the toilets or changing rooms, in the field)
- Pressure to be in a relationship with another person, or to engage in a sexual act with another person – both inside and outside of school
- Spreading rumours about another person's alleged sexual activity



- Sexism in all its forms; pressure to conform to particular gender 'norms' (e.g. pressure on boys to have multiple partners, or pressure on boys and girls to be heterosexual)

More detailed information about bullying is available from NSPCC Learning: learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying

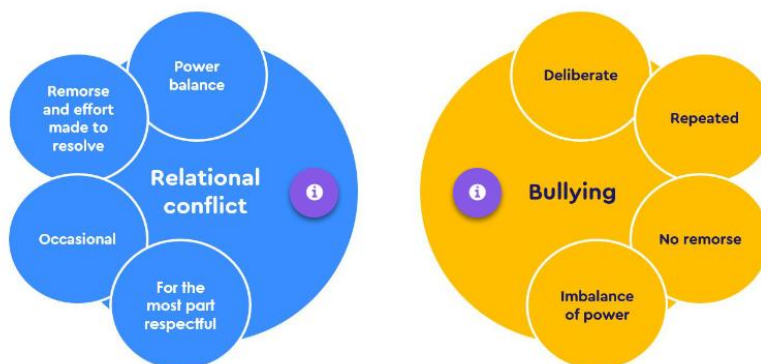
Bullying is not one-off acts of aggression or nastiness; such behaviours if repeated, however, may be viewed as bullying. In this policy and in our anti-bullying work we try to avoid referring to bullies and victims as these label pupils in unhelpful ways.

Friendship issues, relational conflict and bullying behaviour:

We acknowledge that friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting both for pupils and parents and carers, but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Pupils will fall in and out with each other, have arguments, stop talking to each other and have disagreements. This relational conflict can be a normal part of growing up. During a relational conflict or friendship problem groups of pupils may disagree, be very upset and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. This is less likely however, to be repeated behaviour, and may even be unintentional. Pupils are more likely to make the effort to resolve the problem and will want to do so.

However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems or relational conflict can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour, particularly when there is an imbalance of power (when a group acts against an individual for example).



We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- The school values of belonging, resilience, assurance, independence and integrity and no limits are promoted across the school day and the curriculum
- PSHE education and other curriculum subjects are used to promote social and emotional skills including those needed to work together, show empathy, build friendships, get support and help others
- PSHE education lessons are used to develop understanding of safety and how to stay safe



- PSHE education lessons are used to develop understanding of bullying, its impact and ways to respond to bullying situations. PSHE education is also used to develop understanding of similarity and differences and the unacceptability of all forms of prejudice and bullying
- Small group work interventions are used to support those who need extra help to develop their social and emotional aspects of learning
- E-safety is taught across the curriculum and through assemblies and visual reminders around the school community
- Regular whole school assemblies are also used to develop understanding of bullying, its impact and to encourage reporting
- The whole school participates in annual activities for anti-bullying week and a rolling programme of other events such as Black History Month, LGBT History Month, International Women's Day, Refugee Awareness Week, UK Disability History Month etc
- The whole school participates in Diversity week celebrating differences
- Training and supporting World Friendship Ambassadors (WFAs) who promote kindness, inclusion, positive friendships and pupil voice across the school. WFAs act as peer role models and encourage children to seek support from trusted adults when concerns arise.
- Celebrating differences though ensuring all pupils are 'seen' and represented in artwork around school, visuals in lessons and assemblies
- The School Council provides a forum for discussing any bullying issues and for the pupils to decide ways of preventing it and supporting those who are bullied
- We regularly survey pupils' wellbeing and use this to inform developments
- Holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it. These discussions will focus on:
 - group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
 - practising skills such as listening to each other
 - respecting the fact that we are all different
 - making sure that no one is without friends
 - dealing with problems in a positive way
 - checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well
- Providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children e.g. Positive play at lunchtimes
- putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- making sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:
 - the needs of the person being bullied
 - the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour



- needs of any bystanders
- our organisation as a whole.

- reviewing the plan developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

We will seek to prevent sexual or sexist bullying by:

- Talking about sexual bullying and harm: Sexual bullying thrives in a climate of secrecy. We are open and honest by creating time and safe spaces to explain sexual development, harmful sexual behaviour and gender inequality in an age and development appropriate way with children and young people. Children are able to share worries about what is happening inside and outside of school through class worry boxes, which are then followed up by safeguarding leads.
- Training staff: Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are trained and supported to take a lead in preventing harmful sexual behaviour and bullying. All staff are trained in how to identify and respond to incidents and time is given for open discussion.
- Teaching consent: All children and young people, regardless of their age, developmental needs, or disability, need support to understand the importance of respecting another person's body, feelings and physical space, and that if someone says no to them, they must respect this at all times – even if they are in a romantic relationship with this person. Staff are supported to report behaviours that they find uncomfortable or inappropriate.
- Teaching and modelling respectful relationships: Relationships and sex education is now compulsory and provides an opportunity to explore consent as well as challenging all forms of sexism, healthy and respectful relationships and not judging someone else for their experience or preference.
- Not allowing sexual name-calling or comments: Children are taught that sexual name-calling and comments are not accepted and are a form of sexual harassment. We work with children and young people to explain what this means, and the types of words or comments this could include (e.g. swear words, slang words for body parts, sexual innuendo, sexual advances or comments). We challenge all forms of casual sexism that put pressure on children to behave in a particular way, or to have a particular identity.
- Discussing online behaviour: We talk about sexual harassment online and the challenges and risks of romantic and sexual relationships online. Children are given the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of sharing sexual messages or images. The law is shared and we communicate what action we will take if it comes to light that personal messages, images or videos have been shared without consent.
- Being approachable: Any child may feel hesitant to share concerns about sexual behaviour and bullying. However, children with complex needs and impairments may find it even harder to communicate how



they are feeling and what has happened. An appropriate member of staff will be available for them to share any worry or concern they may have, and also to ask any questions with confidence.

- Being alert: We are aware of developing relationships between the children and young people that we work with. Staff are trained to look out for any behaviour that could cause concern – for example, any power imbalance within relationships such as age difference and developmental difference. Staff are aware of 'learnt' sexualised behaviour that seems inappropriate (e.g. does not seem appropriate to the age or development of a child).
- Communicating with parents and carers: We work with parents and carers if they or we have any concerns about a child's behaviour. We are sensitive to the fact that parents and carers might be embarrassed to talk about these issues; there may be cultural barriers or they may be unaware of their child's own sexual development – we aim to be discreet and respectful but always put the safety of children first.

Challenging and dealing with bullying at Thameside:

Any concern, allegation, disclosure or suspicion of bullying must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as possible. This includes incidents which may initially appear to be friendship difficulties or relational conflict. Recording concerns allows staff to identify possible patterns, establish whether bullying is occurring and ensure appropriate support is provided.

The Anti-Bullying Lead provides oversight and guidance; however, responsibility for investigating and responding to concerns remains with the member of staff managing the incident, supported by their Team Leader and other relevant staff where required.

Early identification of bullying is the most effective way of minimising bullying behaviour and the effects on the person being bullied. We also acknowledge that the pupil doing the bullying needs to understand that their behaviour is unacceptable and will need support to change their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for bullying.

Parents/carers will be informed of bullying concerns by the member of staff managing the incident. This communication will normally take place alongside the relevant Team Leader or another appropriate member of staff, such as the Family Hub Lead, to ensure consistent support and effective partnership working with families. Communication with families should be timely, supportive and focused on resolving concerns collaboratively.

Our stated commitment is that when a pupil or parent or carer speaks out about bullying:

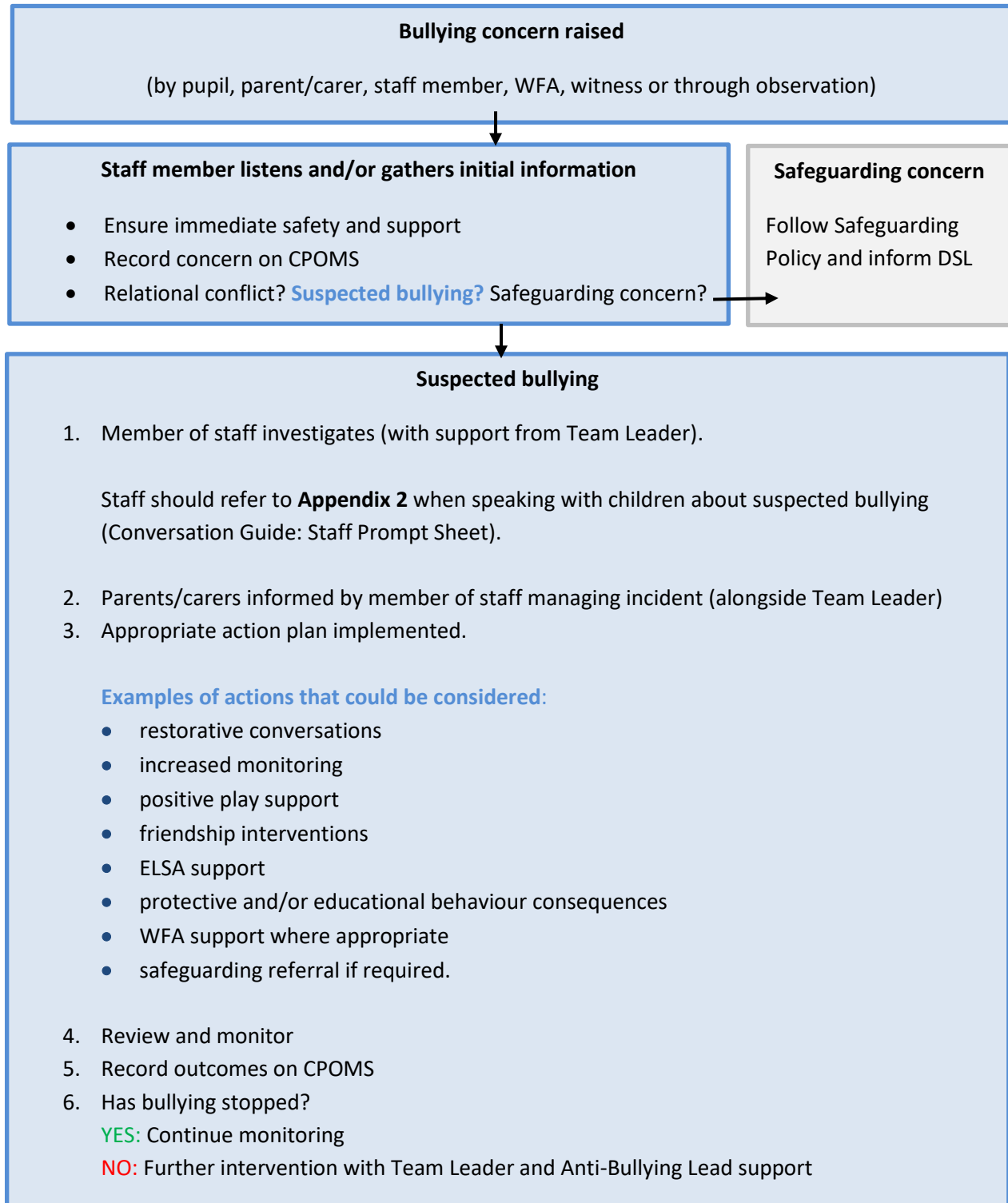
- they will be listened to
- their concerns will be taken seriously
- the matters will be investigated
- together we will find a way to tackle it
- someone will be there to help and support them

The following flow chart details how incidents of bullying are dealt with at Thameside:



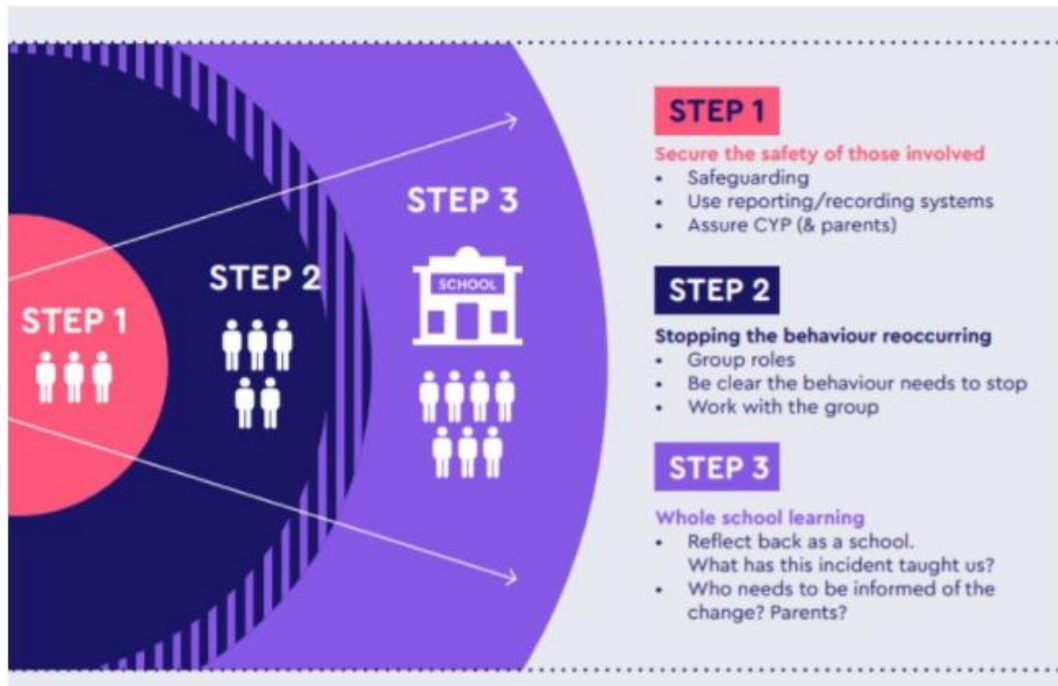
Flow chart for dealing with incidents of bullying at Thameside

Seek advice from the Anti-Bullying Lead where necessary.



Investigating and responding to sexual bullying

ABA has a three step approach to responding to all bullying incidents:



Key questions we ask when investigating sexualised behaviour between children and young people:

- Is this a safeguarding issue? If this is the case, consult with your Designated Safeguarding Lead and your Safeguarding policies
- Is the behaviour age appropriate and appropriate to the level of development of the children involved – or could the person have been coerced?
- Is there a power imbalance between those involved (e.g. age difference, physical strength and capability, emotional development)?
- Are those involved equipped to describe their wants and desires and to give consent?
- Is the behaviour potentially harmful or risky? (e.g. the distribution of sexual photos or video content).
- Is the behaviour appropriate to the school environment (regardless of whether you consider it to be consensual)?

At Thameside, we will:

- Listen and take complaints seriously: Children and young people frequently report that they are not listened to or believed when they try to report bullying – this is particularly the case for disabled young



people and those with SEN. We take every complaint seriously, talk to the young person about action they would like us to take and respect this as far as it allows us to keep the young person safe.

- Put consequences in place as appropriate whilst taking every opportunity to educate.
- Record and report: Report all incidents to the designated safeguarding lead and keep a record of incidents on CPOMs.
- Maintain confidentiality as far as we are able, according to our Safeguarding policy.
- Not forget incidents outside of the school environment: Sexual bullying can also happen online, on the journey to and from school and on school trips.

Government guidance to support us in our anti-sexual bullying work:

- [Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for all schools and colleges in England.](#) Includes advice for professionals in the education sector on how best to respond to harmful sexual behaviour.
- [Tackling and preventing bullying guidance:](#) Guidance for schools on preventing and responding to bullying.
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges:](#) Advice for schools and colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children.

Involvement of pupils / students in our Anti-Bullying policy:

We will:

- Regularly canvass children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying; this will be done, for example, by the Inclusion Manager as well as by teachers in PSHCE lessons and through conversations with children
- Ensure students know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying, e.g. using the worry box
- Ensure all students are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
- Involve students in anti-bullying campaigns in schools
- Publicise the details of helplines and websites
- Offer support to students who have been bullied
- Train and support World Friendship Ambassadors (WFAs) to promote positive relationships, inclusion and belonging throughout the school community.

Liaison with parents and carers :

We will:



- Ensure that parents/carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying. Concerns may be raised with any member of staff. Contact details for our Team Leaders and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are available in the school newsletter and on the school website.
- Ensure parents know about our complaints procedure (located on our school website) and how to use it effectively
- Ensure parents/carers know where to access independent advice about bullying
- Work with parents and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying e.g. through our 'Travelling to and from school alone' policy
<https://www.thamesideprimary.co.uk/page/?title=Anti-Bullying&pid=143>

More information about responding effectively to bullying is available:

- protecting children from bullying and cyberbullying learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying
- recognising and responding to abuse learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse

Key areas of behaviour to report:

- Inappropriate behaviour including bullying
- Sexual harassment

All incidents of bullying and sexual harassment must be recorded and reported. It is vital that such incidents are recorded in order that there is a method for noting the pattern and frequency of incidents. This data, plus action taken, will be reported annually to the Governing Body, parents and the Local Authority.

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures including:

- Anti-Racism policy
- Child protection/safeguarding policy statement
- Procedures for responding to concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing
- Dealing with allegations made against a child or young person
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Online safety policy and procedures for responding to concerns about online abuse
- Equality and diversity policies

More information about what these policies and procedures should include is available from NSPCC Learning: learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection



Monitoring & review, policy into practice

Alongside the Designated Safeguarding Leads, the Anti-Bullying Lead will regularly review CPOMS records, pupil voice, parent feedback and reported incidents to identify patterns, emerging trends and vulnerable groups. Findings will be used to inform staff training, preventative work and reports to governors.

We will review this Policy at least once every two years and more often if incidents occur that suggest the need for review. The school uses the guidance by the DfE to inform its action planning to prevent and tackle bullying.

Contact details

Nominated Anti-Bullying lead

Name: Christina Calvert

Email: assistanthead@thameside.reading.sch.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name: Sophie Greenaway

Email: head@thameside.reading.sch.uk

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000



APPENDIX

1. Our 'Thameside School Behaviour and Safety Charter' (below) which is created with the children.



2. Investigation Conversation Guide (Staff Prompt Sheet)

"Thank you for talking to me. I want to understand what has happened so we can help."

Establish the Facts

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Where and when did it happen?
- Has this happened before?

Explore the Child's Experience

- How did it make you feel?
- What worries you about it?
- Has it affected school, playtimes or friendships?



Explore Frequency and Patterns

- Has it happened once or more than once?
- How often does it happen?
- Does it happen in particular places or with particular people?

Explore Power Imbalance

- Do you feel able to stop it?
- Have you asked them to stop? What happened?
- Do you feel safe around them?

Consider: age, size, popularity, group versus individual, SEND needs, vulnerability, or online influence.

Support Already Sought

- Have you told anyone before?
- Has a teacher or parent helped?

Identify Next Steps

- What would help you feel safe?
- What would you like to happen next?
- Is there anything else you want me to know?

Staff Reflection

Consider:

- Was the behaviour deliberate?
- Has it been repeated?
- Is there a power imbalance?
- Is the child distressed or intimidated?
- Is there prejudice-related or online bullying?
- Are there any safeguarding concerns?

If concerns indicate possible bullying, record on CPOMS and discuss with Christina Calvert (Anti-Bullying Lead) as appropriate.

Closing

“Thank you for telling me. I’m glad you spoke to an adult. I will make sure this is looked into and we will check in.