



# SIR THOMAS BOTELEER

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

THROUGH GOD, WE CARE

**Policy Title:** Anti-Bullying Policy

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## **RATIONALE**

Our Mission Statement states that 'Through God, we care'. We will not tolerate bullying and will deal with it quickly and effectively if it occurs. Our school strives to create an environment where children feel safe and supported.

Bullying is not welcome in our school.

## **DEFINITION AND AIMS**

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical - e.g. assaulting a person or property
- Verbal - e.g. name-calling or teasing
- Indirect - e.g. damaging the reputation of the character of the victim or socially excluding them from games or conversation
- Cyber-bullying - e.g. using technology, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else
- Social media or gaming – this could include videos, images or various communication streams
- Disability related – name calling, using gestures, tormenting, threatening, because of, or focusing on, the issue of disability or special need.

Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example, on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the School's first priority, but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen anytime, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click (DfE July 2017). Support from parent/carers is necessary to limit this form of bullying, with all incidents being dealt with seriously and the appropriate measures taken.

Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School recognises that serious bullying can also occur as a one off incident as well as repeated over time. Bullying incidents are sometimes complex issues which require full investigation of root causes in each instance.

## OUR SCHOOL AIMS

The school aims to:

- prevent bullying behaviour in school so far as reasonably practicable
- Promote tolerance and fairness
- Deal effectively with incidents of bullying
- Ensure all students are safe in school
- Support victims of bullying and educate the perpetrator
- Ensure proportionate sanctions and support are in place for bullies.

### **The strategies that our school will adopt to achieve our aims and prevent bullying are:**

- Promotion of our Christian Values of Hope, Compassion, Endurance and our mission statement, 'Through God, We Care'.
- Providing a caring community in which students are encouraged to work together with each other in line with our school rules of being Ready, Respectful and Safe (RRS).
- Raising awareness (at all levels) of bullying behaviour through a range of activities. This includes all staff being aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer to peer abuse and will follow the school safeguarding procedures. All staff must complete the Hays online safeguarding module.
- Improving students' social skills and dealing effectively with bullying should it occur.
- Improving staff skills in dealing consistently and effectively with incidents of bullying.
- Identified student anti-bullying champions to support the work of the school in preventing bullying.
- Strategies to promote parental engagement, including advice and guidance in the Boteler Bulletin.
- Involving the parents/carers of the victim and the bully, when appropriate. A range of communication strategies will be adopted, including parent meetings, letters and phone calls. Communication with SEND students, who struggle to express themselves may need different ways (e.g. An advocate) to help them get their opinions heard and understood.
- Disablist language, homophobic or racist language are taken seriously and challenged.
- Differences are actively and visibly celebrated and welcome across the whole school.
- Utilise positive student role models as mentors for victims and participants.
- Assemblies are used to encourage students to reflect on the issues surrounding bullying.
- Student friendly posters and advice displayed throughout school to encourage students to report incidents.
- Using outside agencies to help support the school around bullying, including Warrington Youth Club, Safer Schools Partnership and the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent, particularly where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- Actively promoting Anti-Bullying Week, E-Safety Week and similar initiatives to reduce the risk of bullying.
- Regularly evaluate and update approach to take account of developments, including that of technology.

Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School will provide staff training as part of the on-going whole school approach to create a safe and nurturing environment. We will invest

in specialised skills, when needed, to help staff understand the needs of their students, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or disability (SEND) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+) students.

### **Strategies for dealing with alleged incidents of bullying:**

- All students, including those with SEN and disabilities, are included, valued and participate fully in all aspects of school life. All students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying and are aware they can do so to another student, their form tutor, a teacher or staff member, any member of the Pastoral team or their parents/carers.
- All incidents will be investigated fully and sensitively. Both the victim and alleged bully will have the opportunity to explain how he/she feels and will forward their account of the incident.
- Staff are alert to deal with any incidents of bullying and will report any cases that need further investigation to the pastoral team.
- Where staff are concerned that peer to peer abuse may cause harm to a student, the incident must be reported to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Should a friend or parent have a concern about bullying, they are advised to promptly report this to an appropriate member of staff.
- Students can report any bullying incidents anonymously via TOOT TOOT. Mr Leonard (Assistant Headteacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare) and the Pastoral team will be alerted to this report.
- The victim, victim's parents, the bully and the parents of the bully will be fully involved and consulted on how the problem is dealt with.
- A record of the incident is kept on the student file, logged on SIMS and recorded in the Bully File using the incident pro-forma.
- Report incidents of bullying and racism to the Local Authority via the data collection form and incident report forms (for racism)
- Alternative provision will be available to ensure the victim feels safe and continues to attend school.
- Dealing severely with bullying as appropriate through the disciplinary system. Serious incidents could lead to internal exclusion, fixed term exclusion or, in extreme cases, permanent exclusion.
- Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the students may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable students.

### **Supporting the victim**

The nature and level of support for the victim of bullying will depend on individual circumstance and the level of need. This could range from a quiet word from a member of staff, support from the pastoral team, to formal counselling or referral to the local authority's children's services. Appropriate provision will always be put in place to meet the young person's needs.

### **Students who have bullied**

Our school recognises the importance of providing help and support for the bully to prevent further incidents occurring. The intervention or sanction will depend on individual circumstance.

## **Beyond the classroom**

All duty staff must wear a high-visibility vest to ensure they can be easily seen by the students. They should keep on the move and be proactive. All staff should be aware of CCTV coverage. They should remain vigilant, even while socialising with youngsters. All staff need to be able to distinguish bullying from rough-and-tumble play. Students who are being attacked or physically bullied, often:

- Frown or look unhappy or angry
- Try to move away from the aggressor
- Do not take turns, the aggressor maintaining the dominant role
- Draw a crowd.

Staff also need to watch for students who seem isolated, at the same time recognising that some students are quite happy being by themselves.

Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". 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. Therefore, where Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School have information to suggest bullying has taken place involving members of our school community, an investigation will take place and appropriate measures will be taken to resolve the matter. Where appropriate, the school will notify the police.

## **Cyber bullying**

School leaders, teachers, school staff, parents/carers and students all have rights and responsibilities in relation to cyberbullying and should work together to create an environment in which students can learn and develop, and staff can have fulfilling careers free from harassment and bullying.

Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School will follow the DfE guidance on preventing and dealing with cyber bullying. Staff will promote and develop a culture of confident technology users and e-safety.

The student's family may need to contact the police if the cyber bullying is serious and if a potential criminal offence has been committed, particularly outside of school hours.

Bullying through the use of mobile phones will also be taken seriously and an investigation will take place in line with other reported bullying incidents.

## **The Law**

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police. For example, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which

is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender (DfE 2017).

We will follow the guidance from the DfE document, 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (2017), regarding material on devices that may be a breach of school discipline.

## **COHERENCE WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

This policy complements the school's policies on **Behaviour**, **E-Safety** and **Acceptable Use of ICT** and should be read in conjunction with them.

### **This policy will be communicated:**

- Internally to staff throughout the school in the policies handbook and staff training
- Internally to students through a variety of channels
- Externally through the school's website and bulletins for all members of the school community including parents and carers.

## **REVIEW**

The policy will be reviewed for effectiveness after one year and will be reported back to the Governing Body.

Useful links:

- Preventing Bullying: A guide for teaching assistants: <http://bit.ly/1VAZHtP>
- Involving Disabled Children and Young People and Those with SEN in Your Response to Bullying: <http://bit.ly/1VAZVRJ>
- Tackling Disablist Language-based Bullying in School: A teacher's guide: <http://bit.ly/1pe8iEM>
- Anti-Bullying Tool for Parents: <http://bit.ly/1Ssov72>
- Top tips to stop bullying for teachers, six-minute YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/1SipHEu>
- You can sign up to the ABA's free SEN/disability bulletin at [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/send-programme](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/send-programme)