Anti-Bullying Policy

Agreed by Curriculum Committee: February 2017

Next Review: Feb 2019
Statement of Intent:
At Thames Ditton Junior School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Everyone needs to feel free from any threat of bullying or harassment and to know where to go and to whom to speak if bullying occurs. We recognise the effects that bullying can have on pupils’ feelings of worth and on their school work, and the school community will actively promote an anti-bullying environment.

We feel that it is important for pupils and parents / guardians to know that any bullying complaints will be dealt with firmly, fairly and promptly. All complaints of bullying will be taken seriously and will be acted upon according to the practices laid down in this policy.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff.

Aims of the Policy

1. To provide a learning environment free from any threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations.

2. To reduce and to eradicate, wherever possible, instances in which pupils are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy.

3. To create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.

4. To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.

5. To respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us.

6. To establish a means of dealing with bullying, and of providing support to pupils who have been bullied.

7. To provide support for pupils who are accused of bullying, who may be experiencing problems of their own.

8. To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of the policy and that they fulfil their obligations to it.

9. To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.

What is Bullying?
Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. By its nature bullying is likely to be secretive, unlike disruptive behaviour.
Bullying can be:
- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or homophobic comments
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Damage to property or theft: pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.
- Cyber-bullying (see below)
- Specific teasing and name calling which relates to a special educational need (SEND)
- Relational bullying (This can be silent treatment, excluding children, spreading rumors and taunting)

A useful acronym to help pupils understand is STOP: When bullying occurs it is:

- Several
- Times
- On
- Purpose

Prevention
Our response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied; we want to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community and in which we proactively consider issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.

We aim to create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. Bullying is discussed with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens.

Staff should be able to identify children who may be vulnerable and who could fall victim to bullying as well as those who may demonstrate bullying behaviour. Research shows that some children are provocative victims – this means that they actively seek responses from others, often using their own behaviours to incite a reaction from others to either bring attention to themselves or to get others into trouble.

Some specific strategies that we use to prevent bullying include:
• Undertaking regular questionnaires and surveys to monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
• Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
• PHSE (Personal, Health & Social Education) scheme of work from Year 3 to Year 6 used to teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others
• Circle time on bullying issues
• Children being read stories about bullying
• Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
• Prominently displaying anti-bullying posters produced by the children around the school
• Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
• Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
• Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another

Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying
When dealing with incidents of bullying and making decisions about consequences, staff must refer to the school behavior policy. Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians. In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the pupils involved, in an attempt to get a full picture of what has happened. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all the pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide useful information in this way.

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why, setting an example in dealing effectively with the conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually and then the individuals are met as a group. Each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said. Other pupils may also be interviewed to get a clearer picture.

Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour will keep a written record of their discussions with those involved. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident. These records, together with an incident report from, are kept by the headteacher.

Incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Behaviour Policy. Our behavior policy focuses on restorative approaches where we aim to help the
children to understand the impact of their behaviour and we aim to help them look for better resolutions to issues and challenges that arise.

Disciplinary measures must be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

Reports of bullying will be logged by the member of staff who witnessed it, or to whom it was reported. These reports will then be filed by the headteacher and a summary will be included within the Headteacher’s Report to Governors. Where bullying is of a racist nature, we will report this to the Local Education Authority using the Racial Incident Report Form.

**Working with Victims of Bullying**

Work with children who have been bullied could involve some or all of the following:

- They will be reassured that they do not deserve to be bullied and this is not their fault.
- We will assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We will encourage them to talk about how they feel.
- We will try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We will engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved.
- We will try to ensure that they feel safe.
- We will discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe.
- We will ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us.
- We will affirm that bullying can be stopped and that our school will persist with intervention until it does.
- We will involve their friends in peer support or mediation

**Strategies to Follow**

We may then adopt strategies from the following list as appropriate:

- We will interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying separately.
- We will listen to their version of events.
- We will talk to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying.
- We will reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable, and that we expect bullying to stop.
- We will seek a commitment to this end.
- We will affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
• We will adopt a joint problem solving approach where this is appropriate, and ask the pupils involved to help us find solutions to the problem. This will encourage pupils involved to take responsibility for the emotional and social needs of others.

• We will consider sanctions under our school’s Behaviour Policy.

• We will advise pupils responsible for bullying that we will be checking to ensure that bullying stops.

• We will ensure that those involved know that we have done so.

• When bullying occurs, we will contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.

• We will keep records of incidents that we become aware of and how we responded to them.

• We will also work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they themselves need.

There is a tendency, often quite a natural one, to want to investigate an incident and “get to the bottom of it.” Sometimes this will be entirely appropriate. There will be other occasions where an extended investigation is actually unhelpful and where a problem solving approach will be the most effective response.

Our policy will be to use our discretion to respond flexibly and in an appropriate way to each incident.

If necessary, we will invoke the following range of sanctions that are in line with the school’s Behaviour & Rewards Policy.

**Action for Teachers**

- **Be available** Break the code of secrecy and make it known that you are ready to listen. Provide immediate support.
- **Be alert** to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- **Listen to the child.** Ask the bullied child how he/she is feeling and reassure him/her that they have done the right thing by telling an adult; take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- **Talk to the bully** Discuss what has happened, to discover why they became involved. Make it clear that bullying is not tolerated at Thames Ditton Junior School.
- **Respond** Ensure that your response is non-aggressive and provides models of positive behaviour. Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.
- **Record.** Ensure the incident is recorded (Appendix 2- using an incident referral report form) and that the headteacher or deputy head is informed;
- **Follow up** any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken. Parents need to feel confident that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child,
- **Review** progress and evaluate interventions
School staff are role models for pupils and should always act in a respectful and supportive way towards each other.

The role of governors
The governing body support the Head Teacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. The governing body monitors the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter via the school’s complaints procedure. In all cases the governing body notifies the headteacher and asks him to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

The Responsibilities of Pupils
We expect our pupils to:

- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.
- Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.

What can children do if they are being bullied?
As incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies:

a) Remember that your silence is the bully’s greatest weapon.
b) Tell yourself that you do not deserve to be bullied and that it is wrong.
c) Be proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
d) Try not to show that you are upset. It is hard, but a bully thrives on someone’s fear.
e) Stay with a group of friends/people. There is safety in numbers.
f) Be assertive – say “No!” Walk confidently away. Go straight to a teacher or member of staff.
g) Fighting back may make things worse.
h) Generally it is best to tell an adult you trust straight away. You will get immediate support.
i) Teachers will take you seriously and will deal with the bullies in a way which will end the bullying and will not make things worse for you.
j) Tell your parents or somebody that you trust.
k) Don’t blame yourself for what has happened.

What do you do if you know someone is being bullied (bystanders)
a) Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if you are on the side of the bully. It makes the victim feel more unhappy and on their own.
b) If you feel you cannot get involved, tell an adult immediately. Teachers will deal with the bully without getting you into trouble.
c) Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Role of Parents
All schools are likely to have some problem with bullying at one time or another. Parents have an important part to play in our anti-bullying policy. Parents need to watch out for signs that their child is being bullied, or is bullying others and should contact the school immediately if worried.

We ask parents to:

a) Look out for unusual behaviour in their children – for example, they may suddenly not wish to attend school, feel ill regularly, not complete work to their usual standard, become withdrawn or particularly quiet.
b) Always take an active role in their child’s education. Enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent their time with, etc. Care must be taken to ensure that this does not become intrusive or an interrogation of daily actions.
c) Inform the school immediately if they feel their child has been a victim of bullying behaviour. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
d) Not approach another child in the playground if their child is being bullied or involve someone else to deal with the bully.
e) It is important that you advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse!
f) Tell your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied.
g) Reinforce the school’s policy concerning bullying and make sure your child is not afraid to ask for help.
h) If you know your child is involved in bullying (either as a victim or a perpetrator of bullying), please discuss the issues with them and inform school. The matter will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately.

Parents should discourage their children from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere and should show them how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Bullying outside the School Premises
Schools are not directly responsible for bullying that occurs off the premises but we know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the Headteacher of another school whose pupils are bullying.
- Talk to the police.

The DfES says that, “exceptionally failure to take disciplinary steps to combat harmful behaviour outside the school might breach the school’s common duty of care.” Legal Services advise that schools can take disciplinary action against pupils for incidents that occur outside of school.
Cyberbullying
Cyber bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

It is crucial that children and young people, who are particularly skilful at adapting to new technology, use their mobile phones and the Internet safely and positively, and that they are aware of the consequences of misuse.

The advent of cyberbullying adds new dimensions to the problem of bullying. Unlike other forms of bullying, cyberbullying can follow children and young people into their private spaces and outside school hours; there is no safe haven for the person being bullied. Cyberbullies can communicate their messages to a wide audience with remarkable speed, and can often remain unseen and unidentifiable. We have a duty to ensure that:

- teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyber bullying in school
- the curriculum teaches pupils about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely
- all e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored
- Internet blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites blocked
- teachers work with pupils and parents to make sure new communications technologies are used safely, taking account of local and national guidance and good practice
- security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- they work with police and other partners on managing cyberbullying.

Evaluating the policy
The following may give evidence to show the effectiveness of this policy:
- How many incidents of bullying are reported?
- How many pupil absences are there that may be a result of bullying?
- Is there a change in the school ethos as a result of dealing effectively with incidents of bullying?

The annual questionnaire ascertains the views from pupils, staff and parents about bullying in school. This information will drive necessary changes and feed into the school improvement plan.
APPENDIX 1

Signs of Bullying
A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school (School Phobic) or begins truanting.
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill in the morning.
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions going "missing".
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Why Don't Children tell?
- They believe that parents and teachers can't do anything about it
- People expect you to stand up for yourself
- Child feels ashamed of being unpopular
- Child feels guilty about not being able to stick up for himself/herself
- Child is too frightened to tell

Why does bullying thrive?
- Adults say nothing can be done
- It is considered normal behaviour
- Because there is no private way to get help
- Because telling is discouraged
- Because the anti-bullying policy is ineffective

How can bullying be reduced?
- By creating a supportive environment
- By encouraging co-operation
- By involving all people in the school community
• By having clear guidelines

**Suggestions for activities**
• Kindness campaign
• Poster competition
• Kidscape programmes
• Art and drama
• Debates
• Assembly
• Circle Time

**Characteristics of a victim**
Victims may:
• Have low self-image
• Be oversensitive
• Lack a sense of humour
• Be slow to settle in
• Be jumpy and wary
• Believe that no-one likes them
• Find bullying reassuring
• React by crying or withdrawing
• Have an obvious difference
• Be unlikely to retaliate
• Be lonely and isolated
• Have special educational needs

**Characteristics of a bully**
Bullies may:
• Feel insecure and inadequate
• Be bullied at home
• Be scapegoats
• Be under pressure to succeed
• Not be allowed to show feelings
• Feel they are different
• Aggressive towards others
• Want to be in charge
• Be physically strong
• Be manipulative
• Be used to being centre of attention

**How bullies react after hurting someone**
• Justify the hurt
• Suppress guilt and become irritated
• Avoid atonement
• Point the blame at the victim
APPENDIX 2 Incident Referral Form

Guidance on completing Incident Referral Form

It is important that we keep a record of all incidents that are deemed to be of a serious nature. Incidents which should be recorded are those in which:

- A child needs first aid attention as a result of a deliberate aggressive act by another child.
- A child is involved for whom it has been decided that all incidents should be recorded (e.g. when there are child protection issues, when allegations of bullying have been made, when a parental complaint has been made.)
- A member of staff is verbally or physically abused
- A member of staff has needed to physically restrain a child.
- A theft or deliberate damage to property takes place
- Any other incidents or matters of a serious nature

The person completing the sheet should make it clear if he/she witnessed the events described directly, or if he/she was informed by another member of staff or pupil.

If a member of staff is unsure whether to record the incident he/she should consult the Headteacher or Deputy for further guidance. The class teacher should also be informed verbally of the incident as soon as possible.

When first aid treatment is given, this should also be recorded in the Pupil Accident Book.

The incident form should be completed and given to the Headteacher within 24 hours.
Incident referral form
Please complete this form and return it to the Headteacher when a significant incident takes place (see notes below for guidance)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of child/ren involved including class;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date and time of incident:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your account of the incident:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(what was said, observed, reported and by whom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action you have taken as a result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your response:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of incident <em>(please tick one or more as appropriate)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural       Racial       Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your name:       Your signature:        Your position in school:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and time of this recording:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action and response of Headteacher / Deputy / class teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: ........................................ Date.........................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>