
Thomas Estley Community College

ANTI BULLYING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

At Thomas Estley Community College, we strive to promote an ethos of anti-bullying. We believe that every person in the school community has the right to be part of an environment in which he or she feels safe and secure. Bullying of any form is not acceptable. We will actively work to eliminate bullying in all its forms. Mrs Cornelius (Vice Principal) and members of the Pastoral team have overall responsibility in the college to investigate and address any bullying incidents.

DEFINITION

"Bullying may be defined as: 'An abuse of power by one or more people through repeated hurtful or aggressive behaviour with the intention to cause emotional or physical harm to another person.'

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual, or a group of individuals, that intentionally sets out to hurt, harm or humiliate another person or group of individuals by physical (including sexual), verbal, Cyber bullying (including email, chat room and SMS messages), and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can also take various forms:

- Race, religion or culture.
- Sexual (i.e. talking to or touching someone in a sexually inappropriate way – Peer on Peer abuse).
- Gender identity (transphobic bullying)
- Sexual orientation (e.g. homophobic/biphobic bullying).
- Disability/SEN
- Appearance/health conditions
- Related to home circumstances

It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

The hurtful behaviour may be repeated over a period and, if allowed to continue in the social context of a school, can become an established and accepted form of behaviour, thus making it extremely difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

At Thomas Estley, we ensure a clear definition of what bullying constitutes. Incidents of unkind behaviour for example, a falling out between two students or a hurtful comment, we would not define as a bullying incident. Our school approach to the recording of all 'unkind' behaviours enables us to track closely all unkind incidents and to identify patterns for both the target and the perpetrator.

CYBERBULLYING

"Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others." (Refer to E safety and Child Protection policy)

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, emails and mobile phones used for SMS messages and as cameras.

It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying. It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people. It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted. It can draw bystanders into being accessories. Cyberbullying can take the forms of threats, sexting (when young people, either voluntarily or under duress, exchange or forward sexual images of themselves or others. Most of the participants are unaware that sending such images is usually a criminal offence), intimidation, harassment or cyberstalking (where, for example, unwanted messages or texts are sent repeatedly), unauthorised publication of private information or images.

There is a strong link between cyberbullying and sexualised communication or sexual harassment. The pressure to participate, particularly for girls can be strong and can manifest itself as bullying.

SIGNS OF BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Diminished levels of self-confidence
- Frequent sickness with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches etc.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiencing nightmares etc.
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

ANTI BULLYING COMMITMENT: PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

We will actively promote this policy throughout the school

Ensure that all members of the staff promote a safe bullying – free environment within their classroom and the wider school. We have a zero tolerance to all forms of bullying which includes of staff whether by students, parents or other staff within the school.

All new students are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. Student know to report any incidents of unkind behaviour to a member of staff. We guarantee that bystanders who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.

All new members of staff are given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and given detailed guidance on how to record any allegations of bullying as part of the introductory CPD. Whole school training is provided at the start of the academic year as part of the safeguarding updates and this is also revisited at several points through-out the school year through whole school training or pastoral meetings.

Our SRE and modules programme is structured to give students an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce our core values and vision statement. There is also a series of lessons, which deals with friendship issues and bullying.

We aim to educate students about bullying within curriculum and during tutor time.

This will include strategies to resist bullying and to be supportive of their peers.

Endeavour to provide assemblies/workshops that aim to raise awareness around bullying.

Endeavour to provide alternative opportunities for students to discuss concerns about bullying with staff, non-teaching staff and through our peer-to-peer support programme.

Actively tackle prejudice by promoting diversity and acceptance.

Tackle bullying in a fair and consistent way, by adhering to the guidelines within this policy.

Advice on where pupils can seek help, including details of confidential helplines and websites connecting to external specialists, such as Child line, Kidscape, Get Connected, Samaritans etc. are displayed around the building. We have also introduced our own school system (Talk@) which allow student an alternative way of raising concerns.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING

Thomas Estley Community College has clear systems to report any type of bullying for the whole school community. This includes the student being bullied (the target) and the perpetrator. PARS system is used to report all incidents of 'unkind' behaviours. This allows us to build a picture of each individual it has a clear system of consequences for each incident of any unkind incident.

Students should report bullying to their tutor. The sooner the school knows about it; the sooner it can be resolved. Fear of reprisals for reporting bullying should not be considered; the school will take appropriate action to control this.

Parents or carers should report their concerns about possible bullying to their child's Tutor or team leader.

Visitors or bystanders should report bullying at the school reception and it will be passed on to the appropriate member of staff.

The bullying log (PARS) will be coordinated by our team leaders and used to ensure that individual incidents are followed up. It will also be used by our Pastoral Support Manager to identify trends and inform preventative work in school and the development of the anti-bullying policy. Updates are provided each half term to SLT and the Governors.

The management of bullying incidents will involve dialogue between the relevant combination of staff and students.

In more persistent or serious cases, the dialogue will include parents and/or supporting agencies, (e.g. Police, Education Psychologist, SEN, school nurse).

Parents of any child involved in bullying will be contacted and kept informed.

When a child has been a target, efforts will be made where appropriate to help him/her confront the situation, to rebuild his/her confidence and to establish a better relationship with those involved.

Responses to bullying are varied, depending upon the context and the needs of all parties involved.

Some strategies used are:

- Wellbeing Zone
- RSE lessons
- Counselling
- Meeting with parents
- Students may be placed on report
- Loss of free time in school
- Placed in Isolation
- Fixed term exclusion from school (Behaviour policy)
- Permanent exclusion from school

We will work with both the perpetrator and the target to repair the harm caused and try to ensure that the target feels safe from further harm.

All teachers seek to outlaw bullying behaviour in their responses to a students' behaviour and in the content of lessons, tutorials and assemblies, and encourage students to support each other and show disapproval of any incidents of unkind behaviour.

Efforts will be made regularly to identify areas where problems are occurring and staff will always be informed. During unstructured times (break and lunch) duty staff ensure that outside areas are supervised to ensure there are no incidents of bullying type incidents. We have

support systems in place in school (Nurture club, TECC Squad) to support our more vulnerable students.

BULLYING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL PREMISES

Teachers have the power to discipline students for misbehaving outside the school premises to such extent, as it is reasonable. Students may do the bullying from our own school, by students from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where bullying outside is reported to staff it will be investigated and acted on. We may decide to notify the police of the action taken against the student.

This policy is subject to a two-year review.

Next review: September 2023