

Thomas Clarkson Academy

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



Aim

As a school we are committed to providing a safe, friendly and caring environment for all our students, so that they can learn in a relaxed and safe atmosphere, free from threats and harassment. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and all students should feel able to report any incidence of bullying so that it can be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is repeated behaviour, by an individual or group, which is intended to hurt another individual or group, either emotionally or physically. It may involve an abuse of power or use of intimidation.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – excluding, tormenting, being unfriendly, spreading rumours,
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal – name-calling, teasing, sarcasm
- Cyber - all areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera and video facilities
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

- Racial bullying – taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Homophobic bullying – because of or focussing on issues of sexuality
- Bullying based on disability, gender, appearance or circumstances

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose. Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Why we need to respond to bullying:

Bullying can happen anywhere – in school, in the home and in the wider community. It damages a young person's physical and mental health, their ability to learn well and also their ability to build and sustain relationships. Self-esteem can be destroyed, the effects of which may continue into adult life. No-one deserves to be bullied. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and those who bully should be taught different ways of behaving.

Objectives of this policy are that:

- All staff, governors, students and their parents/carers will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

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School approach to bullying:

Bullying in any form, by adults or children, will not be tolerated at Thomas Clarkson Academy. Incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Taking into account our students different degrees of special educational needs and their levels of understanding, bullying incidents will be dealt with on an individual basis.

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or Student Services informed.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded on 'student statement'.
- An investigation will take place and all those involved will be interviewed and a record kept.
- Class teachers will be kept informed and the appropriate subject teachers will be advised.
- Parents will be kept informed, detailing the incidents and explaining the consequences.

Consequences will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned. These may include:

- Apologies – verbal or written
- Restorative practice
- Mediation
- Detention
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed term exclusion
- Police involvement if a crime has been committed
- Work will take place with the children involved to support them to change their behaviour.
- The children involved will be monitored closely by all staff.
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded on Formal Log.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Ensuring that there are clear pathways for reporting bullying.
- Offering the opportunity to discuss the incident with their chosen member of staff.
- Reassuring the student
- Putting strategies in place to support individual needs (e.g. working with mentors to restore self-esteem and confidence)
- Ensuring victims are consulted, kept involved and informed.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Offering them the opportunity to discuss the incident and to acknowledge that they are sometimes themselves victims of bullying and abuse
- Discovering why they have become involved.
- Putting strategies into place to support individual needs (i.e. to understand the wrong doing and the need to change).
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of their child.

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Prevention of Bullying

We will use the following methods to prevent bullying and will monitor and review these via the school council and student questionnaires:

- Assemblies on bullying, racism, friendship and conflict
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week
- Cyber-bullying workshops and drama activities
- PSHE curriculum
- Lunchtime clubs for vulnerable students
- Specific lessons/workshops delivered External organisations
- Regular training for staff and governors
- Mentoring and behaviour management groups

Bullying Outside of School

Bullying can take place outside the school gates and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be of or by students at Thomas Clarkson Academy, or students from other schools or people not at school at all. Where a student tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Identify who is involved in bullying
- Identify where the bullying is taking place
- Talk to local police (PCSO at TCA) about the problem if necessary
- Map a safer route to school and tell students about them
- Talk to students about how to avoid or handle bullying situations outside the school premises
- Notify and inform parents.

Cyberbullying

Cyber bullying is, unfortunately, on the increase and most young people will experience it or see it at some time. Cyber bullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and it can go viral very fast, with the bullies often able to act anonymously:

THOMAS CLARKSON ACADEMY HAS 'NO PHONE' POLICY

- All incidents of cyberbullying reported to the school will be recorded and passed on to school's PCSO
- Pupils, staff and parents/carers will be advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence. If a child receives any offensive message or e-mail they are taught to save the message immediately and show this to their parents or a member of staff as soon as it is possible.
- The school will take steps to identify the bully, where appropriate, such as examining system logs, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

Sanctions for those involved in Cyberbullying may include:

- The bully will be asked to remove any material deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.
- A service provider may be contacted to remove content.
- Parent/carers will be informed.
- The Police will be contacted
- PCSO will be requested to speak to students involved.

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How to report bullying:

To ensure any type of bullying is followed up quickly and efficiently, please look at the below listed procedures of reporting bullying:

- Speak to a teacher
- Speak to your Form Tutor
- Inform parents / carers
- Report to Student Services (complete student statement)
- Email helpme@thomasclarksonacademy.org

If you are worried about bullying and would like advice, the following organisations may be able to help:

Childline: www.childline.org.uk 0800 11 11

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Parentline Plus: www.parentlineplus.org.uk 0808 800 22 22

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk 0800 50 20 20
(Homophobic Bullying)

Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk 0808 800 22 22

Contact a Family www.cafamily.org.uk 0808 808 35 35
(For parents/carers of disabled children)



