

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date of Policy: June 2016

Date of Review: June 2018

### AIM

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. It is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The Headteacher has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents/carers and students.

### 1. DEFINITION

1.1 Bullying comes in many forms. The five main types of bullying are:

- Physical (pushing, hitting, kicking, theft or any use of violence).
- Verbal (name calling, sexist, homophobic or racist remarks, sarcasm, teasing or other hurtful remarks).
- Emotional (spreading rumours, excluding someone from a social group, tormenting, taunting, intimidation, extortion, mobile phone abuse; wilful destruction of someone else's work or property)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact or abusive comments)
- Cyber bullying – bullying , verbal, emotional and sexual , through the use of an electronic device (see appendix A)

1.2 Students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, and taking unusual absences. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or truanting from school. Students, family and peers must be encouraged to report bullying.

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION**

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the Student Support Team.
- A member of staff will interview all concerned, statements will be taken and the incident will be recorded on SIMs.
- Parents / carers and the appropriate staff will be informed.
- If the bullying is substantiated then it will result in a period of isolation or possible fixed term exclusion.
- Other strategies may be used such as restorative justice, managed by the Student Support Team, to try to prevent future incidents of bullying and a Learning Mentor might be assigned.
- Other agencies might be contacted to support the students involved, such as the school nurse, the Behaviour Support Service and the educational psychologist.

## **3. PREVENTION**

3.1 Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of bullying through inclusion in PSHE enrichment days, form tutorial time, assemblies, guest speakers, Theme of the Fortnight and subject areas when appropriate.

3.2 Regular staff training will be given on all forms of bullying and connected issues including Prevent Training, Safeguarding Training and E-Safety training.

## **4. WHAT CAN PARENTS AND CARERS DO?**

- Encourage positive, non-violent behaviour at all times.
- Be aware of signs and symptoms, particularly a change in normal behaviour.
- Calmly listen to and support your son/daughter.
- Encourage them to let you report it.
- Make a note of what, how, who and where.
- Be aware that ignoring or hitting back can make it worse.
- Support your son/daughter by working with those trying to help.

## **5. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The school will review this policy bi - annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **1. DEFINITION OF CYBER-BULLYING**

1.1 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 themselves.

1.2 By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones.
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation.
- Posting threatening, abusive, and defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, and social networking sites.
- Using e-mail to message others.
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts.

### **2. LEGAL ISSUES**

2.1 Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. The law applies to cyberspace.

2.2 It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including the internet. Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

It could also be classed an offence under the Public Order Act 1986 and the Malicious Publications Act 2003.

### **3. PRACTICES**

3.1 Thomas Gainsborough School regularly updates and trains its students and staff both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through PSHE, ICT lessons, Tutor time and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas.

3.2 Thomas Gainsborough School endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems. We audit ICT communications and regularly review the security arrangements in place.

3.3 We will support victims and act promptly and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved and will use the full range of sanctions available to correct, punish or remove students who bully fellow students or harass staff either in or out of school.

#### **4. GUIDANCE FOR STAFF**

If staff suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident they must report to a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately so that appropriate action can be taken.

#### **5. GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS**

If you believe you or someone is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, your tutor, teacher or Learning Mentor.

- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them.
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to an adult (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying).
- Do not give out personal details or your password.
- Never reply to abusive e-mails.
- Never reply to someone you do not know.
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms.

#### **IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED DON' T STAND AND WATCH GET HELP – DO SOMETHING – DO BE A FRIEND**

##### **Phone contacts**

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Child line      | 0800 1111      |
| Kidscape        | 0207 730 33 00 |
| Parentline plus | 0800 800 2222  |
| The Samaritans  | 01473 211      |