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1. Scope

This policy aims to:

- Define what the school understands as bullying;
- Set out the school’s position on preventing bullying behaviours;
- Set out the school’s arrangements for the reporting of bullying;
- Set out the school’s arrangements for managing reports of bullying.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. An academy is required to ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented;
- Advice published in ‘Working together to Safeguard Children’ (adopted July 2018);
- Advice published in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (adopted September 2022);
- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998;
- The School Information Regulations 2008;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- The School Behavior Regulations 2012.



3. Statement of Intent

Thomas Keble is a school in which young people flourish both academically and socially. We aim to foster a healthy and safe community where individuals take responsibility for themselves and show respect for others, emphasising the importance of positive relationships amongst all members of the school community.

Having an anti-bullying policy does not suggest we have a bullying issue – bullying can happen anywhere, however a robust policy ensures that pupils, staff and parents and carers are clear on our expectations and on how we tackle bullying as a community.

Thomas Keble School is committed to ensuring 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. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell an appropriate member of the school community and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

As a school, we seek:

- To **prevent**, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour;
- To **react** to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way;
- To **safeguard** the student who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support;
- To **support** both the victim and perpetrator.

4. Definition

Bullying is any behaviour, which is deliberately intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person or group of people. It is repeated and usually unprovoked and can continue for a prolonged period of time. It always reflects an imbalance and abuse of power.

It is important to recognise that students fall out with each other and we cannot instruct or impose friendships on young people who have fallen out. We work hard with students to mediate friendship issues; part of growing up is the ability to make the correct friendship choices.

Situations where friendships breakdown can lead to bullying behaviours. For example, if a student incites others to exclude or mock another. Conflict between students does not necessarily constitute bullying, even where it results in one-off verbal or physical confrontation or assault. Bullying can, though, arise from conflict. Conflict can arise due to personal differences between individual students or groups of students, problems



from outside School becoming interwoven with School life or from difficulties arising from the breakdown of relationships between individuals or groups of students. Sanction for issues arising from conflict between students may lead to sanctions in line with the School behaviour policy.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting;
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Homophobic – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality;
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing;
- Cyber – all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities;
- Disability/SEN – because of, or focusing on a disability or special educational need;
- Home circumstance – targeting individuals who are looked after children or because of a particular home circumstance.

5. Reporting Procedures

Students and parents/carers are encouraged to share any concerns about bullying with a member of staff at the School. That member of staff would log these onto CPOMS for the attention of the relevant Head of Year of the student reporting the bullying. If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be taken seriously and dealt with as quickly as possible by the member of staff who has been approached. A clear account of the incident will be recorded and logged.

The Head of Year will assess the information available and determine the actions that need to take place. Those actions will typically include:

- Talking to the reporting student about the situation in a quiet and safe place, not overheard by others, typically taking a written statement;
- Reassuring the reporting student that the School takes bullying very seriously and explaining to them the next steps to be taken, e.g. adding to the CPOMS system;
- Taking the wishes of the reporting student into account. The student has the right to ask for no further action to be taken, however the student's welfare will be taken into consideration. If inaction would



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lead to clear and detrimental effects to the student's emotional and mental well-being, the student's wishes may be overridden;

- If further action is required, gathering additional information, including interviewing, and taking statements from witnesses, reported student(s) and staff;
- Recording the incident on CPOMS (the School's online information management system for Child Protection and pastoral issues) under the Bullying category (with all statements and other evidence attached to it);
- The Head of Year deciding on the next steps to take (once they have a clear and thorough understanding of the incident). This includes deciding on whether a formal sanction should be given to the reported student;
- Where appropriate, informing parents/carers of both reporting and reported students, usually via a telephone call, of the incident and outcomes from it;
- Informing relevant members of staff.

Each incident of actual or alleged bullying will be unique in its representation and its level of impact on the individuals concerned. Therefore, it is important the school is given the opportunity to tailor a strategy to address the situation and to support the bullied student according to the particular incident/s.

When incidents of bullying or conflict have been reported early, it is often the case that a positive resolution can quickly be achieved through a restorative conversation, to help the reporting student move forward and reduce the likelihood of incidents recurring. Where issues are more serious and/or more persistent a higher level of support and a sanction for the reported student is usually required.

Support for reporting students may include:

- Follow –up “check-ins” agreed with the student e.g. next day, same week, following week;
- Tutors to monitor for “signs and symptoms” and verbal check on student's well-being;
- Regular 1:1 meeting with Head of Year or Pastoral Support Hub to develop strategies;
- Making a safe area available to vulnerable students;
- Referral to School Nurse, School Counsellor or outside agencies;
- Checking with parents/carers as to progress following the reported incident. Vulnerable students may perceive a series of unrelated low-level instances of conflict as bullying. Students in such situations will require support of specific and continuous pastoral interventions from staff.



6. Work with Bullies may include:

- Regular 1:1 meeting with Head of Year or Pastoral Support Hub to develop strategies to understand the causes and consequences of their actions especially if racist, religious, sexual, cultural, disabled, or gender abuse is involved;
- Possible referral to School Nurse, School Counsellor or outside agencies;
- Check with parents/carers as to progress, following the reported incident;
- Use of restorative justice;
- Implementation of an appropriate Support Plan.

7. Sanctions that may be given include:

- Official warning to cease offending;
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises or certain activities;
- Issuing of behaviour points;
- Breaktime or lunchtime detention;
- After School detention;
- Internal suspension;
- Fixed term suspension;
- Permanent exclusion;

8. Pupil responsibilities

- To not become involved in any bullying incidents;
- To be aware of the school anti-bullying policy and the support available;
- To call out bullying behaviours;
- To tell a member of staff if they think bullying is taking place;
- To talk to their parents or carers about their worries;
- To support pupils who may be subjected to bullying;
- To value pupil differences and treat others with respect;
- To provide good role models to younger pupils and to support them;
- To report honestly about any incidents of bullying they have seen when questioned;
- To respond honestly on the pupil questionnaire about the way they feel bullying is dealt with in the school;
- To contribute to any classroom discussion or tutor group assemblies which may tackle the issue.



9. Responsibilities of parents/carers

- To be fully aware of the school policy on anti-bullying;
- To sign the school-home agreement and abide by that agreement;
- To work in partnership with the school on encouraging positive behaviour, valuing differences and promoting sensitivity to others;
- To be alert and inform the school about significant behaviour changes and signs of distress in children;
- To discuss regularly with their children their feelings and any anxieties about school work, school life, friendships and relationships;
- To inform the school of any changes in individual pupil circumstances which may affect the ways in which pupils respond to school life;
- To alert the school to information reported by pupils on incidents or any concerns about other pupils' behaviour and attitudes;
- Parents/carers are asked not to challenge any incidents of bullying directly, and to report them as soon as possible.

6. Prevention

A wide range of strategies will be used in order to ensure all members of the School community have the awareness to ensure that they:

- Can identify bullying;
- Are clear that bullying behaviours are always unacceptable;
- Will feel confident to report bullying if it is happening to them;
- Will feel confident to intervene (or report it to someone else) if they witness bullying happening to someone else.

Proactive strategies to prevent bullying typically include, although are not limited to:

- Effective school leadership that promotes an open and honest anti-bullying ethos;
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular tutor periods and PSHE classes where issues of diversity is promoted and discussed, anti-bullying messages are drawn out;
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to



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raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying, e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year

- Whole school assemblies;
- Pupil surveys;
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas;
- Peer mentoring and Buddy Schemes (Mentoring Masterclass);
- Student Council with clear student voice on this topic;
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti-bullying policy and practice of the school.

7. Development, Monitoring and Review

We plan to:

- Monitor, evaluate and review our anti-bullying policy on a regular basis led by the Assistant Head in charge of the Pastoral Care Team and report regularly;
- Support our staff to identify and tackle bullying appropriately;
- Ensure students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively and seek feedback from students via the Student Council and annual student questionnaires;
- To learn from anti-bullying good practice elsewhere and work with the NSCPP to inform our practice.