Anti-Bullying Policy

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Adopted by LGB:	
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Publication Scheme	Trust & Academy websites
Version	3
Lead	Headteacher

Key Contact Personnel in School

Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:

Mr Paul Watson

Designated Safeguarding Lead (s):

Mrs Paul Watson

Mrs Kath Allen

Named Governor with lead responsibility:

Mrs Allison Potter

Date written: **September 2025**

Date approved by the Governing Body: **October 2025**

Date of next review: **Autumn 1 2026**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures

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Thorntree Academy Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy based on DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" September 2017
Account taken of DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2022, "Searching, screening and confiscation" 2018
All school staff have read Childnet's "Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools".

1) Policy objectives:

This policy outlines what Thorntree Academy will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
The policy has been adopted with the involvement of the whole school community.
Thorntree Academy is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated in any form.

2) Links with other school policies and practices

This policy links with a number of other school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Acceptable User Agreements (N-Y3; Y4-Y6; Staff & Visitors)
- Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for School Employees
- Complaints Procedure
- Curriculum policies, such as: SMSC Policy, Computing Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

3) Links to legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):

- **The Education and Inspections Act 2006 & 2011**
- **The Equality Act 2010** – including duties to prevent discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on protected characteristics
- **The Children Act 1989**
- **The Protection from Harassment Act 1997**
- **The Malicious Communications Act 1988**
- **The Public Order Act 1986**
- **The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024** – outlines updated expectations for pupil wellbeing, behaviour, and safeguarding in schools
- **The Human Rights Act 1998** – where relevant, particularly in relation to dignity, respect, and freedom from degrading treatment

4) Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.

- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
- Children to abide by the policy.

5) Definition of bullying

- Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
- Bullying can be a form of peer on peer abuse and can be emotionally abusive; it can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

6) Forms of bullying covered by this policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying including:

- Bullying related to race, religion, nationality or culture
- Bullying related to SEND (Special Educational Needs or Disability)
- Bullying related to appearance or physical/mental health conditions
- Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic bullying)
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying
- Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying.

This policy also recognises bullying that targets any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Thorntree Academy is committed to ensuring that all pupils, staff, and members of the school community are educated about these characteristics and protected from discrimination and harassment related to these characteristics.

7) School ethos

Thorntree Academy recognises that bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing. By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our schools can help to create safe, disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.

Our school community:

- Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
- Supports staff to promote positive relationships, to help prevent bullying.
- Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
- Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
- Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Reports back to parents/carers regarding concerns on bullying, dealing promptly with complaints.
- Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
- Utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

8) Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the child being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- The headteacher/ designated safeguarding lead or nominated member of the senior leadership team will interview all parties involved.
- The designated safeguarding lead will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will inform other staff members, and parents/ carers, where appropriate.
- Sanctions (as identified within the school behaviour policy) and support for individuals will be implemented, in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as: the police (if a criminal offence has been committed) or other local services including Early Help or children's social care (if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm).
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded by the school on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Monitoring System) The record will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.
- Curriculum adaptations would be made to address issues that arise to further educate the children to be better community members.

Cyberbullying

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the child who has been cyberbullied and work with the child who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the child being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the child/person responsible. This may include:
    - Looking at use of the school systems;
    - Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
    - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
    - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
    - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law. (**NB:** Thorntree Academy should ensure they access the DfE ' Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet Cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the schools powers are used proportionately and lawfully)
    - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.

- Ensure that sanctions are applied to the child responsible for the cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
- Provide information to staff and children regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
    - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
    - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
    - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting pupils

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Listening to the child and providing continuous support.
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice.
- Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate.
- Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or Child and Adolescent Therapy Solutions (CATS).

Pupils who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
- If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
- Sanctioning, in line with school Behaviour Policy.
- Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist Children's Services, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as appropriate.

Supporting adults

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.

Adults (staff and parents) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.

- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools behaviour and discipline policy.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

9) Preventing bullying

Environment

The whole school community will:

- Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
- Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference. Also children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Challenge practice and language which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
- Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media positively and responsibly.
- Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
- Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

The whole school community will:

- Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.

- Regularly update and evaluate our practice to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
- Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying bought to the schools attention, which involves or effects children, even when they are not on school premises;.
- Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
- Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

The school community will:

- Train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
- Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, Rights Respecting Ambassadors, etc.
- Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

To ensure pupils are equipped to navigate the digital world safely and respectfully, Thorntree Academy embeds cyberbullying prevention into both the **Computing** and **PSHE** curriculum:

- **Computing Curriculum:**
  - Pupils are taught about responsible online behaviour, privacy settings, and the consequences of sharing personal information.
  - Lessons include recognising and reporting cyberbullying, understanding digital footprints, and how to block/report inappropriate content.
  - Age-appropriate discussions on social media, gaming platforms, and messaging apps are included to reflect current pupil usage.
- **PSHE Curriculum:**
  - Cyberbullying is addressed within broader themes of relationships, respect, and emotional wellbeing.
  - Pupils explore scenarios involving peer pressure, online conflict, and digital resilience.
  - Role-play and discussion activities help pupils develop empathy and strategies for managing online challenges.
- **Whole-School Approach:**
  - Assemblies, themed weeks (e.g. Safer Internet Day), and pupil-led campaigns reinforce key messages.
  - Staff receive regular updates on online trends and safeguarding risks to ensure teaching remains relevant and effective.

10) Involvement of pupils

We will:

- Carry out regular pupil voice to canvas children and young people's views on the extent and nature of bullying.
- Ensure that all children know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
- Ensure that all children are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Involve children in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
- Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
- Offer support to children who have been bullied and to those who are bullying in order to address the problems they have.

11) Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

We will:

- Take steps to involve parents and carers when developing policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
- Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats.
- Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
- Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for children, both on and offline.
- Ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

12) Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's improvement plan.
- The headteacher will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Safeguarding Governor, Mrs Allison Potter, will report on a regular basis to the Governing Body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

13) Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Cyberbullying

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Tell Mama:www.tellmamauk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com/
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational

LGBT

- Barnardos LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Sexual harrassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- A Guide for Schools: www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAW- Coalition-Schools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: advice for school staff and professionals about developing effective anti-bullying practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/sexual-and-gender-related

NB: Additional links can be found in 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2017) www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying