



Striving together for excellence and enjoyment'

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy updated: February 2024
Policy Review: February 2028

Signed (Headteacher)

Signed (Chair of Governors)

Aims and objectives

Bullying is unacceptable and damages children. We therefore do all that we can to prevent it. This is primarily achieved through the development of a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as totally unacceptable. This policy aims to produce a consistent attitude and response towards bullying from all members of the school community, adopting a restorative approach to those who may have suffered bullying and those who use bullying behaviour choices.

At Pirton School everyone is valued for their own personal worth and contribution. This fosters a sense of self-esteem in the individual, therefore increasing self-respect and a good self-image, which helps develop respect and understanding of others. Every child has the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment free from intimidation, threat or harm from any other person. With regard to any discriminatory incidents, our policy is zero tolerance. We aim to educate all children and staff to have regard and respect for all people.

The policy on preventing and responding to bullying embraces the principles of 'Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps' which is an inclusive approach. Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps encourages the development of internal control as a way of supporting children to make the right choices. It also promotes a positive focus on improving young people's engagement motivation and well-being.

Definition

This taken from <https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition>

There is no legal definition of bullying.

However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name-calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger)

Both school and parents should be aware that there might be behaviour that is hurtful but is not intentional. Such behaviour should be treated seriously with support given to all parties. Offenders should be made aware of their actions.

Young children starting school are learning to socialise and integrate with a wide variety of people from different lifestyles and backgrounds. It is part of the school's responsibility to encourage and help children in their individual development to become responsible citizens of the future.

The role of the school

School staff must:

- be aware of the nature of bullying
- be ever-vigilant to the potential of cyber-bullying
- ensure that practices are in place to enable children to address their feelings and responses e.g. protective behaviour and peer mediation
- investigate promptly, fully and act upon all concerns or incidents of a discriminatory nature
- ensure that all matters regarding bullying are to be dealt with in a sensitive, firm and positive manner
- be alert to signs of bullying and act promptly (they need to be sensitive to and aware of the needs of each individual child, recognising changes in a child's behaviour)
- teach children to behave and act responsibly
- promote a culture where bullying behaviour will be dealt with appropriately and will not be tolerated
- support and help those children who are found to have been bullied to deal with the situation (involvement of parents and outside agencies as appropriate)
- make those who have displayed bullying behaviour aware of their actions and the consequences these have on others. Sanctions, according to the behaviour policy, may need to be applied
- support the child to overcome this form of behaviour
- act as positive role models for children by demonstrating respect to all members of the community.

Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps

Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps is the local authority's preferred approach to supporting positive behaviour management in schools and settings. The Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps approach forms part of the authority's behaviour strategy.

The Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps approach is based on the following principles:

- shared focus on inclusion of all children within the community
- a shared set of values and beliefs
- open and shared communication between children, parents and staff
- a shared commitment to strategies that will divert and de-escalate should incidents arise
- shared risk management
- shared reparation, reflection and restoration.

Strategies for reporting and following up incidents

Our procedures for responding to alleged or witnessed bullying incidents in schools are taken from [Search - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning \(thegrid.org.uk\)](https://thegrid.org.uk) (Updated 7th October 2020)

Step One: An incident is reported or witnessed

An alleged or witnessed incident is reported to a member of staff or by a staff member who witnessed the incident.

Step Two: An investigation begins

The incident is investigated by the appropriate member of staff e.g. class teacher, Key Stage Coordinator, Deputy or Headteacher, who undertakes to establish the nature, roles and seriousness of the incidents and those involved and completes Form 1.

Staff should look for evidence that the behaviour:

- has occurred before or by its nature has caused repeated experience or the fear of it e.g. cyberbullying or serious incident
- was deliberately intended to cause distress and/or harm
- has created a sense of powerlessness on the part of the individual being targeted and consider
- whether any aggravating factors such as equalities issues have been taken into account and been addressed

Step Three: Possible outcome 1 - Hurtful behaviour has occurred but evidence of bullying/racist incident has not been satisfied.

Further action school staff should take:

- Ensure Form 1 has been completed
- Provide support to those involved
- Inform parents/carers of those involved
- Decide if any sanction needs to be ensured at each stage they understand the applied in accordance with the school's behaviour policy (Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps)
- Provide extra learning and skill practice opportunities if needed
- Engage and inform external agencies if necessary

Step Three: Possible outcome 2 – Evidence of bullying/racist incident is found

Further action school staff should take:

- Ensure Form 2 has been completed (Bullying and Racist Incident Record)
- Provide support to those involved
- Inform parents/carers of those involved, ensuring at each stage they understand the action school will be taking
- Decide if any sanction needs to be ensured at each stage they understand the applied in accordance with the school's behaviour policy (Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire Steps)
- Provide extra learning and skill practice opportunities if needed
- Engage and inform external agencies if necessary e.g. the local authority about serious incidents
- Inform the police e.g. for online safety matters that reach a threshold

In addition, our approach to tackling and investigating bullying incorporates the following measures:

- all incidents will be recorded and logged on CPOMS
- concerns of parents with regard to individual children will be logged on CPOMS and investigated
- all staff will be made aware of any incidents or concerns so that they can monitor inappropriate behaviour
- children will be spoken to separately and/or together where appropriate
- repeated situations in which the children continue to use bullying behaviour, following an investigation, will in all instances be the concern of the Head Teacher
- children will be encouraged to speak to staff freely if they witness a bullying incident
- parents of children causing an incident will be notified and appropriate action agreed
- parents with concerns about other individual children must contact the school rather than deal with the matter themselves

Staff welcome close contact with our parents and take any concern by parents seriously. We have a whole school philosophy on sharing information about the children in our care. We encourage our children to be truthful and share any concerns with us as soon as they can.

Role of children

It is important that children should:

- be involved in discussing their behaviour and actions and how they treat one another
- understand that rules are there to protect them
- learn about what constitutes bullying and racism and what to do about it
- be aware that bullying and discriminatory remarks are wrong.

Role of parents/carers

Parents, carers and families have an important role to play in helping schools to deal with bullying.

They should

- have a clear understanding about what constitutes bullying
- take an active interest in their child's school life
- watch out for signs that their child is being bullied, or is bullying others
- contact the school at the first sign of their child being bullied or bullying others
- discourage their child from using bullying behaviour at school, at home or elsewhere
- monitor their child's use of the internet for signs of being bullied or of bullying others.

Role of the Governing Body

The governing body has an important role to play in ensuring that the school has a policy, that the policy is operated by all staff and that it is effective.

The governing body should

- review this policy regularly
- consult all interested parties in revising the policy as necessary
- help to explain and comment on the policy to all interested parties
- monitor the implementation and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that incidences of bullying are reported termly to the LA.