



# **Beckfoot Thornton Anti-Bullying Policy 2018**

**enjoylearnsucceed**

# **BECKFOOT THORNTON** **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

## **School Statement**

Bullying can be defined as ‘the abuse of power in a physical, verbal or psychological form, in order to cause discomfort or distress for gain or gratification’.

All members of the school have a right to be free from bullying. It is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that the school experience takes place in a safe, caring and protective environment. Consequently, all pupils, parents and staff should be aware that bullying is totally unacceptable at Beckfoot Thornton Academy. Therefore, it is everyone’s responsibility to inform a member of staff immediately if they feel this is happening. A member of the Beckfoot Thornton Support & Challenge or Safeguarding team will then act on this as a priority.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is negative behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. A one-off mean or nasty comment can be very hurtful but it is not bullying. Bullying is action repeated over time.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/Transphobic: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

## **Cyber Bullying**

This is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets.

Social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites and chat rooms such as Facebook, Xbox Live, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and other chat rooms can be great fun. Unfortunately, online bullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so it can be particularly distressing. The misuse of social media resulting in (cyber) bullying is taken very seriously by Beckfoot Thornton. Where necessary, the school will involve their Safer Schools Police Officer in all serious cases.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

A young person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a student:

- is suddenly very reluctant to use their normal method of travelling to school
- is very reluctant to go to school
- begins to truant
- starts to lack confidence
- becomes withdrawn
- attempts, or threatens suicide
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- frequently feels ill in the morning
- school grades decline
- arrives home with damaged uniform
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home hungry (money/lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- has become unpleasant to other children or siblings
- stops eating or has sudden weight loss
- is very reluctant to discuss feelings
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and symptoms may be indicative of bullying but could also simply be a result of other less concerning factors. However, any concerns should be raised ASAP and investigated to ensure the wellbeing of all students and their families.

## **What to do if you Suspect Bullying**

- Discreetly inform the nearest member of staff
- Inform your Support & Challenge (S&C) staff
- Use the Anti-Bullying 'drop boxes' if you wish this to be anonymous
- Talk to one of the Anti-Bullying Champions around school, identified by the 'stronger together' badge.
- Talk to a family member

*Whatever you do, talk to an adult and make sure school become aware of the issue ASAP!*

## **What Will Happen When Next?**

1. Once a member of staff has been informed of a concern, they will inform a relevant member of the S&C or Safeguarding team.
2. They will investigate this as a priority and will aim to do this as sensitively as possible.
3. A fair and accurate conclusion will be drawn ASAP from the investigation with actions being made in accordance to the 'Behaviour for Learning' policy.
4. Parents will be informed at the earliest convenience of any conclusion. If investigations are ongoing, parents should be informed by the end of the first day.
5. Where deemed necessary, our Safer School's Police Officer, PC Beck will also be informed.
6. Support will be given to the victim throughout.
7. Once relevant sanctions are finalised, support and guidance will also be provided to the 'bully' and their family.
8. The situation will then be monitored in the future and follow up meetings will occur.

## **Who gets bullied?**

Anyone can be bullied. It is not that person's fault. Some people are particularly vulnerable at certain times - for example students new to school or those with special needs. Some people are targeted because of their appearance, gender, ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, health or ability. There is never an excuse for bullying behaviour. There is nothing wrong with being different.

## **Raising Awareness of Bullying at Beckfoot Thornton**

The school will use every opportunity to discuss and to raise awareness on issues of bullying. These will include:

- Tutorials
- Assemblies
- School Council
- Anti-Bullying Champions
- Staff Meetings
- Parents'/Open Evenings
- Local School's Committee meetings
- Support & Challenge meetings
- Beckfoot Trust Climate for Learning meetings

Pupils and parents will need to know that:

- They can talk confidentially to any member of staff
- All incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and acted upon sensitively
- The victim will be given full support and the parents kept fully informed
- Action will be taken towards the perpetrator (to include counselling) and parents kept fully informed
- All pupils and staff have a responsibility to prevent bullying, there are no innocent bystanders.

School will:

- Create a caring, controlled, and safe environment.
- Treat all information seriously, nothing is trivial as it may be central to that person's life.
- Report all incidents to the appropriate Safeguarding or Support & Challenge member of staff in order that an up-to-date file may be kept.
- Treat incidents sensitively to ensure that the victim does not feel either threatened or inadequate. The same consideration should also be shown towards the perpetrators.
- Be watchful for signs of anxiety, changed behaviour, and take appropriate action.

### **Who are the Anti-Bullying Champions?**

The 'Anti-Bullying Champions' are a set of volunteers that have initially been selected from the Student Council. These students are keen engineers in shaping the future of the school and firmly believe there is no place for bullies at Beckfoot Thornton.

Each Anti-Bullying Champion can be identified by wearing the badge below on their blazer.



We are very proud that our student and Anti-Bullying Champion, Jovairia designed the school's badge.

We firmly believe that it is everyone's responsibility to tackle bullying by 'speaking out' and making sure everybody understands what it is, why it occurs and what must be done to stop it.

Each Anti-Bullying Champion has been involved in assemblies on bullying and will visit tutor groups to offer support and guidance to every student. There will also be drop boxes for students to complete anonymously if they so wish. The boxes will be checked by staff each day.

All Beckfoot Thornton students know the serious impact that bullying can have on their peers and what must be done if they see it happening. Our message to all is stand up, speak out, and together we are stronger.

## **Useful contacts**

School reception: 01274 881082

Year 7 office 01274 881082 ext.1205

Year 8 office: 01274 881082 ext.1220

Year 9 office: 01274 881082 ext.1203

Year 10 office: 01274 881082 ext.1214

Year 11 office: 01274 881082 ext. 5009

VI Form office: 01274 881082 ext. 1245

Safeguarding office: 01274 881082 ext. 1115

Behaviour Management office: 01274 881082 ext.1106

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0300 011 5142

Children's Legal Centre 0120 671 4650

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0207 730 3300

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222

Youth Access 0208 772 9900

Bullying Online [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Young people under the age of 18 who are being bullied, or who know someone that is being bullied can call the Child Line Bullying Line on 0800 44 1111 for advice. This is a free service that is open Monday to Friday from 3.30pm - 9.30pm.

Outside of these hours you can call the main Child Line number 24 hours a day on 0800 444.