



Thriftwood School & College

Anti-Bullying Policy

September 2025



Our Approach to Creating Safe Environment

Thriftwood aims to develop an ethos that supports achievement, creates a broad and balanced curriculum (which is responsive to individual needs and gives learners opportunities to experience continuity and success), to feel good about themselves and achieve their full potential.

Through our linked policies of: Promoting Behaviour for Learning, Equal Opportunities, Anti-Bullying and Child Protection, we aim to create a safe, supportive and open environment for both staff and learners which facilitates the development of our whole academy ethos.

We are committed to providing a happy and secure school and college where issues of bullying are dealt with in a consistent and effective manner. Bullying as a principle is not acceptable in our community and learners will be encouraged to report and talk about any incidents that occur. Incidents will be managed in line with our Promoting Behaviour for Learning Policy. The use of the internet and social media and potential issues about cyber bullying will be managed in line with our Acceptable Use of ICT policy. All learners will be aware that:

‘THRIFTWOOD IS A TELLING SCHOOL’

What is Bullying?

There is no standardised or universally accepted definition of school bullying, and the most frequently used definitions are not inclusive of the experiences of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Non-inclusive or incomplete definitions of bullying behaviour can lead to poor recognition of the roles within a situation which can leave some individuals without the correct acknowledgement of their experience, and without adequate support from teachers and peers.

At Thriftwood, we recognise both **bullying** - intentional behaviour that hurts someone else. We also recognise **counter-connecting** - when a child is trying to connect either with someone else, or their own emotions (for example self-regulation), but their uncertainty on how to do this results in someone else being negatively targeted. There is a victim, but not a bully.

Bullying definition

- Involves a pattern of behaviour repeated over time, *from the same or different people, and in the same or different methods.*
- Can take many different forms, including physical contact, words, mean gestures, exclusion from a group *or negative contact via a digital device or platform.*
- Involves an imbalance of strength or power, *including age, strength, size, intellectual capacity, social skill understanding and emotional stability.*
- The victim has difficulty defending themselves *or is unaware of being bullied.*
- Harm is being inflicted intentionally.



Counter-connecting definition

- Involves a pattern of behaviour repeated over time.
- *Can occur peer-to-peer but also between pupils and teachers.*
- Can take many different forms, including physical contact, words, mean gestures, exclusion from a group, *or negative contact via a digital device or platform.*
- *An act that causes unintentional victimisation of another. There is a victim.*
- *Harm may be inflicted unintentionally.*

It is important to note, however, that a situation may occur when both bullying and counter-connecting are at play from different individuals targeting the same person at the same time.

Aims

Thriftwood uses both these definitions—bullying and counter-connecting—to accurately identify and therefore manage negative interactions at school and college. Supporting both the perpetrators and victims to understand, identify and thereby reduce their involvement in bullying situations and increase awareness for bystanders to confidently intervene. In turn, this can support better mental health for all pupils.

Educating Learners about Bullying and Counter-connecting

This policy will be made clear to learners in their PSHCE lessons, FFF and ICT lessons and will be reinforced through departmental and whole School/College assemblies.

Through the curriculum learners will be given opportunities to develop behaviours and attitudes that empower them to combat negative behaviours e.g.:

- **Making Friends**
- **Assertiveness Training**
- **Saying 'No'**
- **Positive Body Language**
- **Social Skills**
- **Play Skills**
- **Development of Resilience**



Identification of Bullying Situations

All staff and learners will be encouraged to anticipate where there are risk areas for negative incidents, key places such as corridors, toilets, dinner queues, playground areas, changing rooms, will be carefully monitored by staff at key times of the day such as lunchtimes, breaktimes and lesson change overs. Staff on duty at key times will check these areas during the course of break or lunch times. Learners will know exactly where they are allowed to go during these times.

Each situation / incident will be investigated and considered taking into account the learners SEN needs and disabilities.

Procedure for Managing a Potential Bullying or Counter-Connecting situation

This policy is to run in conjunction with the **Promoting Behaviour for Learning Policy**. Incidents should be managed as usual with all reports put on to Arbor and given an appropriate 'tag' to denote incident type. Incidents are monitored closely by the School and College Leadership Teams.

Identification of participants, antecedents and assessment of the situation. Consideration of the learners SEN.

Concerns reported to College / School Lead and pastoral teams. Situation/trends monitored by SLT. Follow-up work/individual support will be provided if necessary. A supervised reconciliation meeting between learners may be necessary if the negative behaviour continues. Serious incidents will be reported to parents by the School / College lead. Further sanctions, such as suspension of privileges or fixed term suspensions may be considered appropriate dependent upon each individual case.

If there are concerns regarding individuals that are not specifically incident-related such as cyber-bullying, on-line victimisation, name-calling, verbal abuse, the same procedure will be followed.