St Michael's R.C Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed and revised – September 2025
Review Date – September 2027

Mission Statement

'Holding God's Hand, we nurture hearts, minds and spirits'

Our Trust Mission is simple, it is to make Christ known, making lives better for our communities, our children and young people

Virtues to Live by at St Michael's

St Michael's believes that all pupils are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment; this means being free from all forms of bullying behaviour. This policy outlines how instances of bullying are dealt with, including the procedures to prevent occurrences of bullying.

These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines several legal obligations regarding the school's response to bullying. Under section 89, schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures are part of the school's Behaviour Policy, which is communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents and pupils work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at the school. There is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying at the school.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011

This policy has been written in accordance with guidance, including, but not limited to:
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2021) 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:
Behaviour Policy

Roles and responsibilities of the Head, governors, other staff and pupils

- To develop whole school policies which meet the law and school inspection requirements;
- To promote a school climate where bullying and violence are not tolerated and cannot flourish;
- To continually develop best practice based on knowledge of what works;
- There is a review of the school anti-bullying policy every two years and, as a result, the policy and procedures are updated as necessary;
- To keep a log of all reported incidents on a Bullying Report Form, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected;
- Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying;
- All staff take part in relevant professional development and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying;
- All staff are aware of the importance of modelling positive relationships;
- To work in partnership with parents, other schools and with the local authority and community partners to promote safe communities.

For parents:
- They are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying;
- They are aware of procedures to use if they are concerned their chid is being bullied or does not feel safe to learn, including the school's complaints procedure;
- They have confidence that the school will take any complaint about bullying seriously and investigate / resolve as necessary and that the school system will deal with the bullying in a way which protects their child;
- They are clear about ways in which they can complement the school on the anti-bullying policy or procedures.

Why is there bullying?

Pupils are bullied for a variety of reasons – and for no reason. Specific types of bullying include: bullying related to race, religion or culture; bullying related to Special Educational Needs or disabilities; bullying related to appearance or health conditions; bullying related to sexual orientation; bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances; sexist or sexual bullying.

The children of St Michael's thought that bullying is:
- Hitting, tripping, kicking, taking / hiding / damaging belongings.

- Name calling, teasing, saying or writing nasty things, shouting, writing unkind notes and saying / displaying sexist, racist and homophobic actions.
- Being unfriendly, excluding, being ignored, tormenting, spreading rumours, dirty looks, differences are highlighted and made fun of, making someone feel uncomfortable or scared, playing unkind jokes.

<u>Therefore it can involve:</u>
- Verbal – for example name-calling, taunting, mocking,
- • Physical – for example kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings,
- • Cyber Bullying – text messaging, sexting, upskirting, prank mobile calls and inappropriate use of social networking site
- • Emotional – for example excluding people form social groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- • Causing physical or emotional damage (which may cause psychological damage) to a pupil or group of pupils and can be motivated by prejudice on grounds of race, religion, violent extremism or radicalisation, culture, sexual orientation, gender, homophobia including bi-phobic and transphobic comments, disability and special educational needs or because a child is a looked after child or adopted or is in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.
- Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
- - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
- - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
- - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
- - Bullying related to sexual orientation
- - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
- - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

Peer on Peer Bullying
All children are capable of abusing their peers. This can manifest itself in a whole spectrum of behaviours including –
- Bullying including cyberbullying
- Sexual violence and harassment
- Physical abuse
- Sexting
- Upskirting (now a criminal offence and has reporting requirements)
- Initiation /hazing type violence and rituals
- • Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting or youth produced digital imagery
- Upskirting
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate relationships
- Children who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines)

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At St Michael's we recognise that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of "banter" or "growing up". We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of peer on peer abuse within our school and beyond. In cases where peer on peer abuse is identified we will follow our child protection procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation. Technology can be used for bullying and other abusive behaviour Some of these behaviours will need to be handled with reference to other policies in school such as the behaviour policy, anti- bullying policy, child protection policy and online safety policy

<u>Cyber-Bullying</u>

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017)

When responding to cyber-bullying concerns, the school will:

- - Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- - Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyber-bullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- - Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- - Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
- o Looking at use of the school systems;
- o Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
- o Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

- - Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyber-bullying; 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 pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
- o Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
- o Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
- o Helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain

Bullying is when any of the above occurs more than once and is ongoing.

Several
Times

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On
Purpose
(STOP)

Bullying can happen directly or indirectly (text message, cyber-bullying etc) and all forms should be treated from the victim's perspective.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
St Michael's has a responsibility to respond quickly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Statutory duties of schools

Headteachers have a legal duty under the Education and Inspection Act of 2007 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying and to bring these procedures to the attention of the staff, parents and pupils.

The best way to deal with bullying is to prevent it in the first place and listed below are some ways that can help to do this:
1. Lessons on developing positive relationships and social skills with others during PHSCE , Circle time, RE and Caritas in Action lessons.
2. Lessons on bullying – **emphasise the need to tell a member of staff if they witness or experience any bullying.**
3. Modelling of positive relationships / behaviour by staff.
4. Praise and rewards for positive behaviour.
5. Posters around the school which informs what type of behaviour is expected.

Signs and symptoms
A child may show signs or behaviour that he / she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:
- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares

- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or 'go missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered and should be investigated.

Reporting systems for pupils and parents

St Michael's encourages pupils to report bullying in confidence using a variety of methods. However, if pupil safety is a risk then school staff cannot keep the information confidential. Staff will use their judgement as to how to speak to the pupil about this.

Pupils (See child-friendly pupil policy for Anti-bullying)
- Posters around the school which informs the pupils what to do when they have been or witnessed any bullying.
- Playground Buddy systems in the playground
- Teachers have an open door policy
- Report to someone they trust

Parents
- Phone school
- Speak to a member of staff – initially child's class teacher
- Report the bullying to the child's class teacher

Procedures to follow when an incident of bullying has occurred

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incidents will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the headteacher using the Bullying Report Form
- The teacher / headteacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident on the Bullying Report Form.
- The child's teacher will be kept informed and if necessary other members of staff will be told.
- Parents / carers will be kept informed and if necessary asked to come into school to discuss the situation.
- The behaviour policy will be followed and steps will be taken as appropriate and everyone will be told what is going to happen.
- Close and continual monitoring of the people involved in a bullying incident will take place and be recorded.

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:
- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experiences with a member of staff he / she feels comfortable talking to.
- Reassuring the pupil that none of it is his or her fault.
- Offering continual support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

Pupils who have bullied:
- The behaviour policy will be followed and appropriate steps will be taken.
- Talk about what happened
- Discover why it happened
- Counselling and if appropriate the bully will face his / her victim and hear how it affected him /her.
- Establish the wrong doing and need for to change
- Inform parents / carers to help change the attitude of the pupil.

The following steps can be taken in accordance to the behaviour policy:
- Parent / carer of the child will be informed.
- Time out
- Exclusion from certain areas of certain area of school premises
- Exclusion from certain activities
- Minor fixed term exclusion
- Major fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

The policy is linked to the:
- Safeguarding policy

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- Child protection policy
- Equality and diversity policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEN policy

Policy approved: September 2025

To be reviewed: September 2027

Bullying Report Form

This form will be sent to the headteacher upon completion.

Personal details	
Name of person reporting incident:	
Name of pupil(s) being bullied:	
Gender:	
Year group:	

Form group:	

How may we contact you (please circle)?	
At school	**At home**
Home address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

Incident details
What happened?
Where did the incident take place?
When did the incident occur?
Who has been suspected of bullying?

Did anyone else see the incident?
According to the victim, how often does the bullying take place?
According to the victim, how long has the bullying been going on?