

ST. MICHAEL'S C.E. MIDDLE SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



'Children are at the heart of this school and it is for them alone that it exists. Each child, uniquely made in God's image, merits the best we can give.'

Aspiration Belief Creativity

Article 29 (Goals of education): Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures.

Date guidance adopted	Tbc (drafted Jan 2017 – approved by School Council March 2017) Reviewed July 2020
Next Review	July 2022

Mission Statement

Children are at the heart of St Michael's. We believe that every child is uniquely made in the image of God and deserves unconditional respect and worth. In practice this means that every child has the right to be safe and happy at school and to be supported and protected when he or she feels vulnerable. St. Michael's C.E. Middle School is intent on providing a caring, safe and healthy environment within which all pupils can flourish. Bullying is regarded as unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

St Michael's upholds the core British Values of respect and rule of law. We also uphold the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child which affirms the right for all children to leave free from violence in Article 19 and to be supported in growing to their full potential in Article 6. It is therefore a basic right of all children and young people that they receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

Purposes

This policy document was produced by the Headteacher, in consultation with the Governing Body and the whole school staff. We have sought guidance from the Department for Education's publication on 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying' (July 2011). It enables all those working at St. Michael's C.E. Middle School to:

- have a common understanding of what is meant by bullying;
- know and understand their and others' roles and responsibilities in this area;
- know and understand how they can help deter bullying;
- know and understand what has to be done if bullying takes place.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years and amended where required according to advice/guidelines set out by the Department for Education.

Definition

At St. Michael's C.E. Middle School, we have negotiated our definition of bullying with our school council:

- When someone uses words, spoken or written, and/or physical force to make you feel bad on several occasions. They probably have some power over you and may also use that to influence peers to act negatively towards you.
- To be bullying it usually:
 - Happens more than once or twice
 - Upsets or hurts you and causes you to worry
 - Means your bully *appears* to have the power to keep doing it- often using others too but without grown-ups really knowing

Bullying can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racial	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
Indirect	by persuading others to be involved or controlling friendships
Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber	All areas of internet, such as email, internet forums and platforms, and apps e.g. Facebook
Mobile threats	by text messaging and calls and other associated technology , i.e. camera and video facilities, Ipad, games consoles,

Prevention

To prevent bullying occurring at St. Michael's C.E. Middle School we:

- Develop a shared understanding of what is and what is not bullying through our school council, in Collective Worship, working with partner schools in the Trust;
- Raise awareness of bullying and why some people bully in Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education lessons (PSHCE) and Collective Worship. Also educate all pupils that there is no such thing as a bystander- you are either part of the solution or part of the problem. We believe in a 'Tell Someone' culture;
- Use Theatre to explore themes in ways that relate more closely to pupils;
- Provide easy ways for pupils to share their concerns including a post box and the use of Buddy+ Year 8 Peer Mediators;
- Ensure there is adequate supervision of all school areas;
- Survey pupils annually and interview a sample termly to understand what their perspective on current bullying patterns is;
- Provide support for all members of the school community who may be involved in a bullying situation; both the bully and the injured party(s) will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately in order to ensure the change in behaviour is lasting;

- The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher highlight key aspects of this policy in an assembly early in the autumn term of each academic year;
- Deal promptly and carefully with all incidents identified. In all cases, the parents of both the bully and the victim are kept informed about what has happened and any actions taken. All incidents of bullying are recorded so patterns of behaviour can be monitored and appropriate action taken;
- The school's ultimate responsibility is the safety and wellbeing of the majority and, therefore, reserves the right to use fixed-term or permanent exclusions if all else fails.

Response to Bullying

The adult (teacher, librarian, T.A., ELSA etc) or Buddy+ Year 8 Peer Mediator who has observed an incident or to whom the incident has been told/written should:

- 1) **Listen** to the upset party(s) and give them the opportunity to describe what has happened. Reassure the upset party (s), give support by telling them we will **act**.
- 2) **Record** incident on SIMS and pass to Class Teacher/ HoY. In the case of Buddy+ they will record in their official notebook and share with HoY.
Record: time; place; names of the accused and upset; any specific allegations
- 3) Class teacher or HoY then to **interview** those involved to assess severity and most appropriate response (see below).
- 4) In most cases families will be informed and certainly if any pupils involved as perpetrators or injured parties have been previously identified.
- 5) After *two weeks* the HoY should speak to those involved to **review**. If there has been no further episode the SIMS record can be closed and if not, the HoY can escalate the response as per guidance below.

Consequences:

It is important to stress that in a school setting the goal is to protect pupils from bullying and to teach bullies to change their behaviour. For most children learning that their behaviour is bullying and knowing that they will get caught if they do it again is enough to prevent the behaviour reoccurring. This is the starting point for all incidents.

Depending on the HoY's judgement the following sanctions/responses can be considered:

- Sincere apology to the injured party(s)
- Lunch and/or break detentions to ensue
- Circle of named friends for injured party(s) and maybe also perpetrator so ensure eyes and ears are supporting everyone
- Referral to the school Well-being Team for injured party(s) or perpetrator
- Informing parents of all involved

If the bullying persists then further actions are necessary.

- Parents attending school for formal meeting
- Definite referral to the Well-being Team at School
- Separate playtime or play areas
- Referral to external support agencies including Social Care, Behaviour Support, CAHMS etc
- Pupil carrying a notebook to record incidents (this can be especially important for repeated subtle incidents in order to build a record and also helps pupils who are reluctant to talk to a teacher). The book should be reviewed each day before home time.

- Moving class or group
- Internal exclusion
- Placed on a Pastoral Support Plan
- Fixed Term exclusion or, in the event of continuous failure to change behaviour, Permanent Exclusion.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of everyone in School to prevent bullying.

Pupils

Directly and indirectly, pupils are taught and, therefore, need to understand:

- What bullying is; the definition, the causes and effects and methods of prevention.
- Their duty to themselves and to others to prevent bullying and to take the appropriate action should it occur.
- To always report bullying or potential bullying to an adult at school or at home but waiting till home time can hinder investigations.
- How to help prevent bullying by drawing adults' attention to anything which, from their point of view, may give the opportunity for bullying to occur.
- Pupils who tolerate bullies are supporting them. Pressure from other pupils can stop bullying. There is no such thing as a bystander- you are either part of the solution or part of the problem.

Parents and Carers

Parent and carers have a key role to play in the prevention and identification of bullying.

- Parents can help identify early signs of possible bullying.
- If parents think their child or another child is being bullied or is bullying, they should contact the school immediately. Children may show that they are being bullied by changes in behaviour which could include:
 - Frightened or unwilling to go to school;
 - Plays truant or runs away;
 - Pretends to be ill;
 - Begins to do less well in their school work;
 - Becomes withdrawn, very quiet;
 - Becomes distressed or easily cries;
 - Stops eating;
 - Becomes bad-tempered or aggressive;
 - Regularly has clothes or equipment damaged;
 - Has possessions go 'missing';
 - Starts stealing;
 - Has nightmares or sleeping problems;
 - Is frightened to say what is wrong

Teachers and other adults working in the school

Teachers and other adults in the school have a legal and moral duty to do all that they can to prevent bullying in school and to deal with it effectively if it does occur.

- All discovered bullying is to be dealt with effectively as soon as possible and is to be seen to be dealt with effectively. Not to act is to condone.
- All incidents of discovered bullying are dealt with according to the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and supporting advice documents.
- Teachers and other adults need to be aware of and extra-vigilant at the times and places of the greatest possible danger of bullying.

Senior Leaders in the School

The Headteacher and other senior managers have an important role to play in creating and maintaining the climate within the school that does not allow bullying to be tolerated.

- This school is one where all those who work there, adult and child, treat others, their property and the school with respect.
- The impact of the Anti-Bullying Policy is assessed through weekly reviews of the Buddy+ notebooks, termly pupil interviews and termly reviews of the SIMS record, and annual parent & pupil surveys.

The Governing Body

The governing body monitors the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

- The governing body must satisfy itself that the behaviour and discipline policies and practices help the school prevent bad behaviour, including bullying, and deal effectively with incidents when they occur.
- The governing body responds to the views of all those connected to the school and takes action, as necessary.

Bullying Outside School Premises

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher may consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the actions taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed.

Bullying by Mobile Phones or Computers

Bullying has become much more sophisticated with the arrival of mobile phones and the internet. Although these can be very useful items, parents need to be aware of the dangers and to monitor their children's use of both the internet and mobile phones. Unfortunately, children can be bullied at all times, even in the previously safe environment of their own home:

Mobile Phones

If somebody calls or sends a text message with the intention of threatening, scaring or upsetting someone, it is mobile phone bullying. You should discuss with your child the best way of dealing with this if it happens:

- tell someone it is happening;
- be careful when giving out their mobile phone number;
- never respond to abusive messages;

- save the messages and call records;
- you should let the mobile network provider know, they may be able to change the number free of charge and/or block incoming calls and texts from the bully;

Internet Bullying

This includes abusive emails or posts on message boards, e.g. Facebook. You should discuss with your child the best way of dealing with this if it happens:

- keep the emails and forward a copy to the sender's Internet Service Provider which can ban them from using their internet account;
- let their Internet Service Provider know what is happening.

It is essential parents monitor as far as possible their children's use of the internet.

The Internet Provider should be able to block the bully's email or, if the bullying is happening through a message board, they should be able to ask them to remove the insulting material or close the site. The victim themselves can block an email by going onto contacts and click on block. Please note that if the school's name appears on the site it does not mean that the school supports it.

The school's 'Acceptable Use' policy for computers is regularly evaluated and updated.

The following websites offer advice:

www.bullying.co.uk

<http://www.childnet.com>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

<https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Linked Policies

Trust Policies: Pupil Discipline and Behaviour Policy, Equality Act Statement,

School based policies: Safeguarding, Promoting Learning Behaviour