

'With Jesus we can achieve what we dream and believe'



Anti-Bullying Policy

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Policy Date: October 2024

Next Review Date: October 2025

Principles and Values

At St. Michael's we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not be tolerated. The school will seek ways to counter the effects of bullying that may occur within school or in the local community. The ethos of our schools fosters high expectations of outstanding behaviour and we will challenge any behaviour that falls below this.

At St Michael's we nurture and encourage a climate where all children feel safe and confident. Through the curriculum and ethos of the school we promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and emotional development of each child. Throughout their school life, we seek to prepare children for the responsibilities and experience of adult life. We do this by reinforcing positive behaviour and providing a caring and responsive attitude to their needs.

Objectives

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour used by an individual or group that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly mocking and damaging personal belongings excluding tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing spitting stealing personal belongings kicking biting hitting / punching or any use of violence
Racial	racial taunts graffiti, gestures religious intolerance
Sexual	unwanted physical contact sexual gestures sexually abusive comments
Homophobic (LGBT)	because of accusing on the issue of sexuality
Direct or Indirect Verbal	name-calling sarcasm spreading rumours teasing threats
Cyber Bullying	abusive email and internet chat Twitter, Facebook and other social media misuse Mobile threats by text messaging and calls Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, I- pad, games consoles

Types of Bullying

Many different kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying and can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual-orientation, home life, culture, disability, or special educational needs are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is not:

- Minor disagreements between friends, although these may need some strategies to help the children if one or more is upset by them.
- Hot-headed situations when a child lashes out in anger or frustration
- Bossiness

What are the signs and symptoms of bullying?

A person may indicate by signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if the person;

- Is unwilling to go to school
- Feels ill in the morning
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Becomes aggressive, abusive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Performance in school work begins to drop
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Changes in eating habits
- Gives improbable excuses for their behaviour
- Comes home with clothes torn, property damaged or 'missing'
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Bullying others
- Afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Nervous or jumpy when a cyber-message is received
- Starts stammering
- Threatens or attempts self-harm
- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Threatens or attempts to run away

What causes Bullying?

People bully for different reasons.

The reasons could be:

- to feel powerful
- jealousy
- to feel good about themselves
- to be in control
- because they want something (attention, possession or friends)
- to look good in front of other people
- to feel popular
- because of peer pressure
- to be big/clever
- for fun
- because they are being bullied themselves (in or out of school)
- because they see and pick on an easy target (small, won't tell anyone, lonely or different in some way)

At St. Michael's we all aim to:

- respect and value other people, their property, beliefs, feelings, work and abilities
- directly teach children about positive behaviour as part of the PHSE & RHSE curriculum
- deal with all matters in a sensitive and, where appropriate, confidential manner
- deal with incidents of bullying behaviour immediately
- be aware and considerate of the situations of both the victim and the bully
- listen to the children and hear their points of view
- develop children's self-esteem and empower them to confront and deal with issues independently e.g. (teach them to say "stop it, I don't like it!")
- be good role models to the children through the Gospel Values
- listen to parents' concerns and worries and deal with the matter in an appropriate manner
- deal fairly and consistently with all reported incidents of conflict and bullying and inform parents about any action taken in view of their concerns. It is vital that there is follow-up action as this will further help reduce continued incidents of bullying
- complete online bullying record sheets when incidents arise
- be in charge and maintain order so that everyone benefits from a positive environment
- correct bullying behaviour in a way that avoids humiliation
- work for repairing and rebuilding attitudes and relations through resolution
- Play an active role and highlight specific initiatives and celebrations inviting in guest speakers and performances e.g. Anti-Bullying Week, Internet Safety Day, Aspire & Achieve Week

Working with Parents

Our children need your confidence and understanding. This can be gained by:

- listening to your child and let us know of any small worries
- trusting your child but bear in mind that s/he may not give you the full story and may use emotive language
- working with the school to ensure your child achieves high standards of behaviour and letting your child know what is expected of them. All children will all be made aware of their class and the school rules
- not telling your child to "hit back" at school. We are committed to showing them other ways of sorting out difficulties and arguments, if you are not happy with the way things have been resolved or discussed, please let us know.

Stages of Action taken by the school

Depending on the nature of the incident, a reported and/or witnessed incident of bullying would initially be dealt with by the class teacher. The incident would be discussed with the children to ensure that both parties fully understand the seriousness of what has occurred. Attempts would be made to understand why the incident arose and appropriate action taken.

This might include some or all of the following: -

- keeping the perpetrator in at playtimes/lunchtimes
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the pastoral team
- speaking to both sets of parents or carers regarding the incident as appropriate.

Procedures to deal with serious persistent bullying

If the behaviour continues, or if the incident is more significant, the Head and the Pastoral co-coordinator will meet with victim/s and perpetrators/s separately. The matter will be discussed informally, involving both sets of parents/carers if appropriate. A clear verbal warning will be given to the perpetrator(s) of possible action if another incident occurs. This could include internal exclusion, fixed term exclusion or exclusion. The victim will be made aware of ways in which a further incident will be brought to the attention of staff. Attempts will be made to repair and rebuild relationships.

What about the victim?

We aim to support, protect and reassure by:

- setting in motion the agreed procedures including consequences
- working with our parents
- encouraging them to talk about their feelings
- teaching them coping strategies for low-level bullying
- reviewing their situation regularly

What about the perpetrator?

We aim to encourage the child to admit, acknowledge, apologise and atone by:

- explaining what is expected of the perpetrator, referring to our agreed school rules
- rewarding achievement when behaviour changes and praise
- having agreed procedures followed and making next steps clear to the child and the child's parents if the bullying is serious
- teaching and modelling correct behaviours

Prevention

At St. Michael's we use a variety of methods for helping children to prevent bullying through whole school and class assemblies, Collective Worship, PSHE & RSHE sessions, No Outsiders, SMSC Curriculum, Anti-bullying week focus. Play Buddies, Place2Be, E-Cadets and School Council.

Children are also consulted through gathering their voice and in-school pupil questionnaires. The results of these questionnaires are promptly responded to by staff. The ethos and working philosophy of St. Michael's means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Good and kind/polite behaviour is regularly acknowledged and rewarded. Staff will regularly discuss bullying. This will inform children that we are serious about dealing with bullying and leads to open conversations and increased confidence in children to want to discuss bullying.

Staff will reinforce expectations of behaviour as a regular discussion. Take part in Anti-Bullying week. Staff must be careful not to highlight differences of children or an individual child. This gives other children advocacy to use this difference to begin calling names or teasing. Staff must be vigilant regarding groups of friends together. Groups/gangs bring about the imbalance of power and must be broken up from around the central bully. Staff must reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else, but they must be respectful of everyone else's feelings.

Children are involved with the prevention of bullying as and when appropriate, these may include;

- writing a set of positive school or class rules (devised and agreed by the class).
- Writing a personal pledge or promise against bullying
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays about what to do through scenarios of bullying
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters that bullies are dealt with quickly
- creating an item for the school website. If a child feels that they are being bullied, then there are several procedures that they are encouraged to follow: (not hierarchical)
- tell a friend
- tell your School Council representatives
- tell a teacher or adult whom you feel you can trust
- write your concern and post it in the 'worry box' in class or online
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom you feel you can trust
- Discuss it as part of your PSHE /RSHE and circle time
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given
- Visit the school website for ideas of what to do next

At St. Michael's we ask children to always tell someone if they feel bullied it is not possible to help unless somebody knows what is happening.

Recording of Bullying Incidents

When an incident of bullying has taken place, staff must be prepared to record and report each incident. In the case of racist bullying, this must be reported to the Headteacher and Safeguarding Lead. Incidents of bullying should be recorded on CPOMS. This would include incidents where staff have had to become involved and speak with children, and/or where parents have raised concerns regarding bullying.

Confirmed cases of bullying must be recorded and forwarded to the local authority. All incidents of bullying will be discussed with all relevant staff and parents of the children involved, in order that everyone can be vigilant and that bullying may be prevented from happening in the future.

Role of the Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator

It is the policy of the school to have a named Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator. This is the Pastoral Co-ordinator Nicola Birch

- Oversee the anti-bullying policy and review it every year
- Give the issue of bullying a high profile across the school including holding a Friendship Week/Equality Week and Anti-Bullying Week every year.
- Attend training and feedback to staff
- Take into consideration the views of children through school council
- Provide resources and training to the school community
- Co-ordinate issues which arise and to keep everybody informed
- Meet with the Head teacher regularly to discuss class bullying records/data
- Deal with or delegate bullying issues as they arise
- Keep up-to-date with current practice
- Liaise with the LM re: the co-ordination of provision on the playground

Further information, support, links and concern form can be found on the school Anti-Bullying web site page.

This policy will be reviewed: October 2025

Approved by Governors: