

**St Michael's CE Primary School  
Sydenham**



**Anti-Bullying Policy**

Agreed by the Governing Body on: *September 2023*

Signed (Chair): *Beryl Fielder*

Review Date: *September 2024*

# Anti-bullying Policy

## The aims of this policy

At St Michael's, we expect pupils to feel safe and act safely in school, ensuring that they understand the issues relating to all forms of bullying and that they can feel confident to seek support from school should they feel they or others are unsafe. We also want parents/carers to feel confident in the knowledge that their children are safe and cared for in school and that incidents are dealt with promptly and successfully. We regard bullying as very serious and we do not tolerate bullying. We are committed to minimising incidents of bullying, effectively dealing with any bullying that occurs and promoting tolerance and kindness throughout the school.

This anti-bullying policy aims to set what St Michael's perceives to be bullying and the risk factors associated with bullying. In addition it also sets out how the school aim to prevent bullying, how we will deal with bullying at both a whole school level and for individuals associated with bullying behaviour and our reporting and recording procedures.

This policy has been impact assessed, to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality. It has been written in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality Policy

## National legislation influencing the policy

**UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989):** This protects children by setting out their basic human rights. These include children's right to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation and their right to participate.

**Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998:** This requires head teachers to take steps to encourage good behaviour and respect for others, and to prevent all forms of bullying between students.

**The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000:** Schools must tackle racial discrimination and promote equal opportunities and good relations among people from different racial groups. They must also set out how they will deal with racist incidents within a race equality policy. Schools are required to provide reports to the local authority and their school governors about racist incidents that occur in the school.

**Education Act 2002:** Governing bodies have a duty to safeguard the welfare of students and will make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. All state schools must have a behaviour policy in place which includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. The policy is decided by the school. Staff, parents and pupils must be made aware of it.

**Education Act 2005:** Schools are required to adopt safe practices and evaluate the extent to which learners feel safe, including whether students feel safe from bullying and racist incidents, and the extent to which they feel confident to talk to staff and others when they feel at risk.

**Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 (forms part of the Public Order Act 1986):** The Act makes it an arrestable offence to display threatening language, behaviour or written material in a public place, with the intention to threaten or stir up hatred.

**Childcare Act 2006:** An Act to make provision about the powers and duties of local authorities and other bodies in England in relation to the improvement of the well-being of young children.

**Education and Inspection Act (EIA) 2006 (Amendment 2011):** This Act states that head teachers must determine measures on behaviour and discipline that form the school's behaviour policy, which include rules, rewards, sanctions and behaviour management strategies. The policy determined by the head teacher must include measures to be taken with a view to 'encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, preventing all forms of bullying among pupils'.

**Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2007:** Schools must treat bullying on the basis of sexual orientation as seriously as that grounded in race, gender or disability. Organisations need to ensure that young people have full access to education, benefits, facilities or services, regardless of their sexual orientation or that of their parents/carers.

**Duty to Promote Community Cohesion:** Since September 2007 governing bodies have been required to promote community cohesion by ensuring that there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities, the diversity of people's backgrounds is appreciated and valued similar life opportunities are available to all strong, positive relationships exist and are developed.

### Definition of bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying, but at St Michael's we believe bullying is the wilful conscious desire to hurt, harm, threaten or frighten someone else by the use of physical or psychological intimidation. It is usually based on the imbalance of power and it is intentional and repetitive. It can be physical, verbal, emotional and/ or psychological. It can be face-to-face or through electronic means/ "cyber bullying" (e.g. email, posting, messages, text mobile messaging).

St Michael's recognises that bullying occurs across all backgrounds, religions, cultures, races and genders and it may be experienced by child-to-child, adult-to-adult (staff or parent/ carer), adult-to-child, or child-to-adult. It can be linked to SEN or disabilities, health conditions or appearances, sexual orientation, sexist or sexual bullying or home circumstances. Bullying can occur outside of the school day.

However, at St. Michael's we are also mindful that not all conflict between children is bullying. Children and young people of a similar age and size can find themselves in disagreement, having an argument or even fighting, without imbalance of power, repetition and/or intent. These experiences of conflict can be upsetting for those involved, but they are not bullying. We are fully committed to dealing quickly and effectively with any conflicts in order that situations do not escalate and bullying does not develop.

### Discrimination

There are various types of discrimination which are monitored through our Anti Bullying Policy and procedures. Our code of conduct promotes respect, dignity and equality and therefore we have a zero tolerance policy for all types of discrimination.

*Racism:* A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. It is important to clarify to all members of staff, pupils and parents that racism is always unacceptable. Incidents often include verbal abuse and name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry or physical threats or attacks.

*Gender:* Incidents often include abusive name-calling and comments about appearance (including those that are transgender related), attractiveness and emerging puberty. Interactions involving inappropriate and uninvited touching or graffiti with sexual content can be forms of sexual bullying.

*Sexual Orientation:* Sexual bullying can also be related to sexual orientation. Some pupils may be subject to homophobic name calling and teasing. Pupils must be encouraged to understand their inappropriate use of homophobic language so they may understand the impact such discrimination may have.

*Religious:* Incidents often include verbal abuse and name-calling, religious jokes and offensive mimicry or physical threats or attacks.

*Disability:* Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities may not be able to articulate experiences as well as other children. However, they are often at greater risk of being bullied. Staff must reflect on how teachers' behaviour might unintentionally trigger bullying. Avoiding undue attention to specific differences between SEN children and their peers may help reduce this.

*Adult bullying:* If any parent or member of staff feels that they are being treated inappropriately within our school community, they must report this to the Head Teacher immediately. If the Head Teacher has behaved inappropriately, they should contact the Chair of Governors and, if substantiated, the matter would be handled by the school's Whistleblowing Procedure. If children are experiencing problems with other children, parents must not try to take matters into their own hands. Parents confronting other parents or children in the playground is not acceptable and could be viewed as bullying. Additionally, using social media to negatively comment on / discuss people involved in the school could also be viewed as bullying. We should be informed immediately of any concerns so that we may intervene to resolve the problem to ensure our community remains happy, safe and an enjoyable place, where everyone wants to be.

### Preventing bullying

As a school, we are committed to not only dealing with bullying, but to doing all that we can to minimise and help prevent it. This includes:

- Valuing relationships: All members of the school community are expected to show respect, tolerance and trust towards each other. Through these behaviours we will show that we value each other.
- The curriculum: We provide opportunities through circle time to discuss issues related to the class and their interactions. Learning through Health and Relationships Education provides opportunities for activities and role play. These can be used to encourage children to identify how they would feel if they were isolated themselves.
- Opportunities outside the curriculum: We recognise that one of the most successful ways to combat bullying is to have an inclusive school. We use events, such as Collective Worship and Anti-Bullying Week, to share our experiences, address issues and celebrate our success.
- Behaviour Policy: Using the Restorative Justice Approach to help children reflect about their choices and the consequences of their actions
- Having peer led initiatives such as Playground Leaders and Buddies in our school to help pupils support each other
- Questionnaires and pupil interviews: These are carried out at various times of the year to ascertain children's well-being and then actions are taken.

- Training sessions: These are held for all teachers, administrators, school staff, pupils and parents about bullying behaviours, strategies and available resources.

### Responding to incidents of bullying

Why it is important to respond to bullying?

- Bullying hurts and makes people unhappy.
- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.
- Pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work.
- Some pupils avoid being bullied by not going to school.
- Pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour are likely to copy this anti-social behaviour.
- Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.
- Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

All incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly.

Any bullying incident must be reported to a member in the senior leadership team, who will make a decision about the best way to proceed and who is best to deal with the incident.

The incident will be fully investigated, which will include:

- An identified member of staff talking to the targeted child and their parent.
- An identified member of staff talking to child who caused harm and their parent.
- An identified member of staff talking to witnesses or bystanders.
- Staff will update the school system incident log at each point of investigation.
- A full 360 degree picture of the incident issues should be established before making decisions on outcomes.

Our response to incidents of bullying will be sensitive to SEND or other difficulties such as issues at home, and we are committed to challenging prejudice driven bullying, through our school ethos and positive environment.

If bullying or malicious or threatening comments are posted using technology either inside or outside of school time about a pupil or a member of staff:

- Inform the parent/carer
- Advise the child/adult not to respond to the message.
- Advise parents to secure and preserve any evidence. If requested by a parent, the school will offer technical support in preserving evidence.
- Advise parents to inform the sender's service provider and request the comments be removed.
- Advise parents to consider informing the police depending on the severity or repetitious nature of offence.

### Possible outcomes once the bullying incident has been investigated:

The senior member of staff will contact all parents and carers involved, initially inform them and also subsequently report back outcomes and actions.

The bully/bullies will receive a consequence as deemed appropriate by the senior management and according to our Restorative Justice Approach. The severity of the consequence will depend on many aspects including:

- Age of those involved.
- Persistence/repetition of incidents.
- Knowledge of individuals past experiences, abilities and disabilities.

- Level of distress caused.
- Context of the incident.

The consequences could include the following, but the list is not exhaustive and will be determined by the senior manager, on a case-by-case basis:

- Receiving a red card, which includes a letter to parents, in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- Making amends for the harm that has been done, such as writing a sincere letter of apology.
- Signing a behaviour contract.
- "Give back in kindness", by doing school community service, such as helping out in the dinner hall during lunch time.
- Being excluded from playtimes and/or lunchtimes for a fix period of time, to give the person who has been affected time and space away from the child that caused the harm This will be an opportunity for the child who caused the harm to reflect about their choices and how their choices affect other people.
- Restorative Justice conference
- In serious cases or persistent cases, the headteacher may make the decision to either internally exclude or do an external fixed term exclusion.

The support from the SLT will continue until the issue is fully resolved.

If the incident involves a member of staff, then advice will be sought from the LADO and the incident may need to be reported.

If the incident raises safeguarding concerns then this may need to be reported to MASH in Lewisham and this will be done in line with our safeguarding policy.

If the incident raises concerns over a criminal nature, then we will work with parents on deciding the best route to report any such crime.

#### Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year and adapted when necessary.  
The Anti-bullying Policy supports the St Michael's behaviour policy.