St Michael's Catholic Primary School
Anti- Bullying Policy

Approved by:	LGC
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Anti-Bullying Policy

"All children are a gift from God. They are all special and should be allowed to grow in a nurturing environment secure in the knowledge that they are cherished."

At St Michael's we endeavour to create a safe and stimulating environment where everyone knows that they are valued. A person has the right to be treated with respect and has the responsibility to treat others in the same way. Children are given the confidence and strategies to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences, knowing that positive action will be taken.

Aims and objectives

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat or harassment
- To create a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps maintain a bullying– free environment.

What is bullying?

Bullying is a conscious and wilful repetitive act of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people. It is also an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying, which is designed to cause harm. If bullying is allowed it harms the perpetrator, the target and the whole school community and its culture of safety and wellbeing in the school.

The Nature of Bullying

Bullying is considered to be:

- deliberately hurtful (including aggression)
- repeated and often difficult for individuals who are being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can take many forms:

- physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- verbal: name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- indirect: spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours pupils may use the tool of cyberbullying (e.g. text messages, e-mail or using social networking sites)

People may bully others because of varying perceived differences: sexism, racism, religion or belief, academic ability, gender identity, homophobia, disability, perceived characteristic (e.g. hair colour or weight) or because of an associate (family member or friend).

Our Approach to Bullying

We believe that if children are encouraged to be good citizens in an environment where they feel stimulated and excited by their learning, it will minimise the occurrence of bullying. We feel it is important to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to and where their problems and worries are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity.

Bullying is always unacceptable and always serious.

We are committed to creating a safe environment where children can learn and play, can talk about their worries, confident that an adult will listen and will offer help. Through a variety of planned activities across the curriculum such as circle time, roleplay, class performances, sharing assemblies, our children gain in self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions. Encouraging children to take responsibility by becoming a member of the school council or becoming a play leader promotes children's self-confidence. In having this approach, we believe this helps to reduce a code of secrecy where children feel too scared to speak up and tell of any bullying experiences.

Our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum will ensure that each year group addresses issues related to bullying. This may take the form of an explicit approach or maybe implicit, in terms of looking at friendships and valuing each other, appreciating differences, to develop individual self-confidence. In addition to this, the issue of bullying in its many forms is the focus of circle time discussions.

Incidences of bullying brought to the attention of the class teacher are investigated as soon as possible. Information is gathered from pupils and any staff concerned. Any relevant observations are recorded in the teacher's records and the leadership team

member with the responsibility for the day to day running of the school is kept informed. They will log the investigations on CPOMS.

We have two aims when reacting to incidents of bullying:

1. to make the child who has been bullied feel safe
2. to encourage better behaviour from the child who has displayed bullying behaviours, colluders and bystanders.

In order to achieve this, we use a range of strategies appropriate to the nature, severity and history of the bullying.

- If the bullying is a recently established, behaviour by an individual or a group which involves regular name-calling, intimidation or social exclusion (but not gross physical violence) a problem-solving approach is adopted. The underlying intention is to change the dynamics of the situation, to raise the awareness of the participants about bullying, and to support the peer group in taking responsibility for bullying.
- If the bullying involves an individual or group, who have been involved in bullying on a previous occasion and the school has previously implemented the above problem solving approach, then the following procedure will be followed:

    1. The Leadership member with responsibility for the day to day running of the school is informed
    2. The pupil who has been bullied is interviewed and their comments recorded
    3. The pupil or pupils who have displayed bullying behaviours is/are interviewed and comments recorded
    4. The parents of the individual who has shown bullying behaviour are contacted and invited to a meeting; a meeting between the Leadership lead, pupil and parents is held; the incidents are outlined and the sanctions are detailed.
    5. Individual Behaviour Plans to set targets to improve and monitor behaviour are set up which may involve calling upon the expertise of outside agencies.
    6. The parents/carers of the pupil who has been bullied are kept informed throughout the whole process

    In persistent circumstances sanctions may include:

    - permanent exclusion
    - temporary exclusion
    - exclusion from the school premise at lunchtime
    - exclusion from the playground at lunchtime

- arrangements for parent to supervise pupil to and from school

The Role of the Governing Body

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. This will be done through monitoring CPOMS and through the sample parental questionnaire which is conducted annually.

The governors require the Head Teacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the Head Teacher and asks her/ him to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

Monitoring the Policy

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Head Teacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. To discover the extent to which bullying exists in school and to monitor the extent to which our anti-bullying policy is effective the log and strategies will be reviewed alongside the questionnaire. The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying records and by discussion with the Head Teacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnicity, perceived sexual orientation and any other characteristic/ background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

Appendix 1: Problem Solving Approach

Step 1: The child who has been bullied is interviewed. Once it has been established that a child has been bullied, the child is interviewed. The main focus of the interview is to understand the effect the bullying has had upon the child. If appropriate the child may be asked to draw a picture or write something to outline the effect the bullying has had on them. The child is then asked who he or she would like to attend a meeting who might help to make their lives much safer at school.

Step 2: A meeting is convened with people involved. A small group of pupils is asked to meet with the teacher or the person who is handling the incident. This will include those who have displayed the bullying behaviour, others who have witnessed it but have not taken part, and other members of the peer group who may not have been involved at all but who could make a positive contribution.

Step 3: The problem is explained to the group. The bullying is explained to the children and is emphasised that the bullying makes the person being bullied feel really bad. Solutions are sought.

Step 4: The responsibility is taken. The act of bullying has to be acknowledged so the group can move onto the next stage.

Step 5: The group is asked for its ideas. The group is asked what they feel should be done. After discussion, individuals suggest solutions - how they feel they can help and what they will do. Good, positive suggestions for making things better are sought. At this stage sanctions may be applied in line with the school behaviour management policy.

Step 6: It is left up to the group. The responsibility for carrying out their suggestions is left up to the group. They go away feeling they will do something positive that is supported by the teacher who has conducted the session and in conjunction with the effects of the peers.

Step 7: A review meeting with the child who was bullied. A week or so later the teacher meets up with the child to find out what improvements have been made.

Step 8: The group meets again .The group meets again to discuss what they have done and what effect they have had and have some feedback from the meeting the teacher has had.