



Saint Michael Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Anti-Bullying Policy

Mission Statement:

Excellence • Enrichment • Enjoyment

Date policy accepted by the Governing Body: September 2024

Updated: July 2026

Date for review: July 2027

Introduction

At St Michael Catholic Primary School & Nursery we believe that pupils will learn best in a safe and calm community that is free from disruption and in which education is the primary focus. The school works to promote an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know this is the right way to behave. We aim to create an inclusive environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination and where pupils are not afraid to challenge and stand up for what they know is right. We will challenge derogatory and discriminatory language whenever we hear it.

At St Michael Catholic Primary School & Nursery we are aware of the importance of educating pupils to keep themselves safe in different situations. Also, of the pressures and dangers that may present through new technology including use of mobile phones / instant messaging devices / use of social media etc. This policy links directly to the policies on 'Acceptable use of the internet' and 'Internet safety'.

This policy sits within the school behaviour policy and supports the school values of promoting equality and ensuring safeguarding for all members of the school community. It is communicated to all staff, parents and pupils on an annual basis and reviewed / updated biannually. This policy is communicated to prospective parents as part of the school's behaviour policy.

The school is aware of the statutory responsibility to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises.....' this can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises.....'

Policy links

The Anti-Bullying Policy links to our policies on:

Behaviour, Single Equality Scheme, Safeguarding, Curriculum, SEN, School Improvement, Complaints/Parental Concerns, E-Safety and Acceptable use of the Internet

Definition of Bullying

'Behaviour by an individual or group usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

'Advice for School Leaders, staff and Governing Bodies on Preventing & Tackling Bullying'
DfE (July 2011)

How does bullying differ from teasing / falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate.
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves.
- It is usually persistent.

Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or because a child has been adopted or has caring responsibilities. It may be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

What does bullying look like?

Bullying can include:

- **Physical bullying** eg physical assault (hit, punched, pushed), spitting at, pulling hair, taking or damaging property or belongings
- **Verbal bullying** eg name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, threats, made to feel bad
- **Relational bullying** eg left out of games, deliberately ignored, has rumours spread about them, is stalked or intimidated
- **Cyber bullying** eg via chat rooms, online, instant messaging, on a mobile phone or within e-mails
- **Emotional abuse e.g** made to feel bad

Bullying may occur due to:

- **Actual differences or perceived/prejudices differences:** Special Educational Needs or disabilities eg dyslexia; gender eg sexist comments; transphobic, transgender eg when an individual has or is undergoing gender reassignment; homophobic eg towards gay individuals who may be gay, lesbian or bisexual; situation eg, young carers or children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances; appearance eg particularly in girls who mature at different times; work ethic / behaviour eg 'Geeks'
- **Race** eg differences in race, religion or culture

Although bullying can occur between individuals, it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'.

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Bullying can take place between:

- pupils
- pupils and staff
- between staff
- individuals or groups
- certain groups of pupils are known to be particularly vulnerable to bullying by others: these may include pupils with special educational needs such as learning or physical disabilities; young carers, Looked After Children, those from ethnic and racial minority groups and those young people who may be perceived as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning their gender role.

Reporting and Responding – Within the School

Responding - Proactive

All school staff are aware of the need to prevent bullying and to challenge unacceptable behaviour or language. They will proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict in order to develop strategies to prevent bullying happening in the first place.

The school ensures pupils understand what bullying is and the school's approach to anti-bullying. Also that they are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying including when they find themselves as bystanders.

As part of our on going commitment to the safety and welfare of our pupils we at St Michael's Catholic Primary School & Nursery have developed the following 'Whole day' school curriculum activities to promote positive behaviour and discourage bullying behaviour. These include:

- Proactively seeking to celebrate success to create a positive school culture
- Effective training and development for all staff to support a culture of mutual respect and support.

- Work with the wider community such as the police / children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent to send a strong message that bullying is unacceptable within our school.
- PSHCE / class time activities / assemblies that promote respect, inclusion, e-safety and healthy relationships/ Religious Education
- Lunchtime activities for the more vulnerable children
- Identification of 'hot spots' and duty rotas to ensure pupil safety
- Raised staff awareness for lesson planning promoting an anti-bullying / e-safety culture across the taught curriculum and include differences such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality eg 'issues' based Art / dance projects, English / literacy texts to promote cultural awareness and celebrate differences /Golden Rules and Virtues
- E-safety across the school to include safe practice involving the use of: online chat rooms / social networking sites / mobile phones
- Involvement in 'Healthy Schools'
- Friendship week annually but also across the rest of the school year.
- Pupil voice
- Playground Buddying
- Parent information / events
- Restorative Justice
- Counselling and/or Mediation schemes
- Prominent expectations displayed across the school-We are all part of God's family

Restorative Approaches

Restorative Approaches inspired by the philosophy and practices of restorative justice, puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment.

The key values of Restorative Approaches create an ethos of respect, inclusion, accountability and taking responsibility, commitment to relationships, impartiality, being non-judgemental, collaboration, empowerment and emotional articulacy. (Belinda Hopkins – Transforming Conflict)

Responding - Reactive

There are clear strategies for responding to bullying incidents.

These may include: the school sanction system as detailed within the behaviour policy, restorative approaches etc. The consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident. All sanctions will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

The school is aware of supporting both the victim and the perpetrator. This may be through circle time, 1:1 work or restorative conversations, referral to outside agencies if required etc. Specific groups or organisations may be drawn on for expertise / help with certain forms of bullying.

Reporting

Pupils - the school has a variety of reporting systems so that they are reassured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. These may include: a worry box, an intentions box and Pastoral Carers

Parents / carers - the school ensures that parents / carers are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. The school will report incidents of bullying to parents / carers. The school will deal promptly with any complaints in line with the school complaints policy.

Staff – the school ensures that all staff understand the principles and purpose of the anti-bullying policy, the importance of challenging and naming bullying behaviour, the school's legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support.

Staff will use the school system (CPOMS) for recording and reporting bullying incidents.

The school will seek advice from / involve the police if the bullying could be a criminal offence eg under the Malicious Communication Act 1988, 'it is an offence to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety.....or which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender'.

The school will work with the wider community, such as the police and children's services, where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed. The school will also work with other schools, agencies and the wider community to tackle bullying that is happening outside the school.

Reporting and Responding – Outside the School

When bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The head teacher will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police / outside agency in the local authority of the actions taken against a student. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher – Has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation and liaising with the governing body, parents/carers, LA and outside agencies and appointing an Behaviour Lead who will have general responsibility for handling the implementation of this policy.

Their responsibilities are:

- Evaluating impact of the policy which will include: development, implementation and review
- Coordinating strategies for preventing bullying behaviour
- Leading on / managing bullying incidents to ensure consistency of approaches used
- Managing the reporting and recording of bullying incidents and ensuring consistency of the monitoring
- Providing effective training and support for staff in both challenging bullying and promoting E-safety
- Working with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence has taken place.

The Governing Body will appoint one governor to have special interest in school behaviour.

Recording Bullying and Evaluating the Policy

DfE guidance, Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2011) notes:

“Staff should develop a consistent approach to monitoring bullying incidents in their school and evaluating whether their approach is effective. For some schools, that will mean recording incidents so that they can monitor incident numbers and identify where bullying is recurring between the same pupils. Others do not want to keep written records. We want schools to exercise their own judgement as to what will work best for their pupils.”

If the school chooses to record information then the following may help:

Bullying incidents will be recorded by the member of staff who deals with the incident and this will be stored by the Behaviour Lead.

The information stored will be used to ensure consistency and to evaluate whether the school approach is effective. It will also identify trends and inform preventative work in school and evaluation of impact of the policy.

This information will be presented to the governors as part of the annual report.

The policy will be reviewed and updated annually. The policy review will be linked to the School Improvement Plan, working towards a more inclusive ethos across the school community.