



St Michael's Prep School Anti-Bullying Policy

Date of Last Review:	October 2018	Review Period:	
Date of Next Review:	As required	Owner:	JAI,FWI,EMA,ZLE & Governors
Type of Policy:		Board Approval	

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

We at St Michael's Prep School aim to ensure: -

- that all pupils and adults in the School share a common understanding of what is meant by bullying
- that all pupils know exactly what to do if they are being bullied and feel confident that something will be done to stop it
- there is a clear procedure to follow, that it deals with incidents of bullying, and that it is understood by all staff, pupils and parents.
- the prevention of bullying by providing opportunity for discussion by pupils and staff within the school's Pastoral and PSHE programme.
- that all pupils have access to an adult in school to whom they may talk in confidence in the knowledge that something will be done immediately and that the matter will be handled discreetly and sensitively.
- that the unacceptable nature of bullying and the consequences of any repetition is clear to the bully and his or her parents.
- pupils understand how bullying feels to the victim.
- that each case is followed up and that the victim and the bully are given as much support as possible in order to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.
- it is made clear to parents of victims and bullies the actions that are being taken, the reasons for doing so and what they, the parents, can do to reinforce those actions.
- pupils enjoy, celebrate and respect diversity and to feel good about themselves
- This policy acknowledges fully the School's responsibility to adhere to all points held within the Equality Act (2010) and has regard for Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (Jan 2016) and Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2014). KCSIE (2018) and The Data Protection Act (2018)

2. STATEMENT OF INTENT

2.1 At St Michael's Prep School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed; but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

2.2 St Michael's prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Ours is a diverse community, with pupils from a variety of cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Some pupils require additional support and help. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and home have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. Much of the content of this policy is delivered to the children through PSHE lessons and assembly content. The policy itself is available to children and adults via the school website. It is our expectation that parents report to the school (Form Teacher/ Head of Year/ Deputy Head or Head Teacher) as soon as possible if they suspect their child of being bullied or of being the perpetrator of bullying.

2.3 Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. Where necessary, we will apply the sanctions described in our Behaviour Policy for behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment of any kind. It is also important that the children understand the need to stand up for those unable to defend themselves and through PSHE lessons, the role of the bystander is explored through scenarios such as 'What would you do.....?'. All children, at the start of each year, sign an A5 anti-bullying declaration that is then laminated and put up on the form notice board.

2.3 It is important to recognise that there is an actual or potential bullying problem in every school. It is recognised that being bullied can have a devastating effect on victims, ranging from absenteeism and under-achievement to depression and suicide. Bullying affects seriously both the victim and the perpetrator. It also affects other children who may witness violence and aggression and the distress of the victim. It can damage the atmosphere of a class and even the whole school. Less aggressive pupils can be drawn into group bullying through pressure or a desire to be popular with a certain group.

3. Definition

3.1 All children must understand that bullying is *any behaviour or action repeated over a period of time, which knowingly causes hurt to another pupil, especially through the abuse of power or strength*. It can be physical (including sexual intimidation or issues such as hair colour or body shape), verbal, cyber (including chat room, email, social networking, photo chat websites and apps, mobile phones, e-photos and SMS messaging) and emotional means (by excluding, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours). It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexist, homophobic, special educational needs or disability related bullying. It usually involves the elements of *threat* and *fear* and can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

3.2 Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time. It can cause serious and lasting psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws

which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. We always treat it very seriously. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with its social and moral principles.

4. Characteristics

Those engaged in bullying often find it difficult to control certain aspects of their character. They are likely to lack empathy or guilt about their behaviour. They may be the victims of bullying themselves, possibly at home.

Victims may be pupils who are:

- new to the school or class
- are different in appearance, speech or background from other pupils
- suffer from low self-esteem
- demonstrate 'entertaining' reactions when bullied
- more nervous or anxious than their peers.

These are possibilities but the victim may just be a child who is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

5. Identifying and Helping Victims of Bullying

Watch for early signs of distress in pupils. These may include:-

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary)
- Psychological damage and diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Centre with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance, late arrival to class
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares
- Talking of suicide or running away

Although there may be other causes for some of the above symptoms, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

Staff have regular INSET on Anti-Bullying. These sessions highlight the requirement on staff to be pro-active in the observation of pupils, especially those at higher risk. The protocols for recording and reporting concerns are reinforced at these training sessions. There are specific noticeboards displaying 'Children on Watch' in both the Prep and Pre-Prep staffrooms. These are updated and monitored by the Safeguarding Lead in the relevant parts of the schools.

In addition to the emotional signs of distress, outlined above, staff should also be aware of the physical signs, including:

- Bruising (PE/ Games staff should be observant of bruising that is normally hidden by clothing)
- Cuts/ Grazes

Parents should complete an injury form (available from the school office), and submit it to the school office if their child has sustained an injury that would present as bruising, fracture, cuts/ abrasions. This allow for a record of injuries to be maintained and staff can refer to these forms if they feel an injury is new or unexplained.

6. Preventing Bullying

We take the following preventative measures:

- Regular pastoral meetings afford the pastoral heads the opportunity to raise awareness of potential bullying issues with staff. Records are kept of children's wellbeing and involvement and can be reflected upon as an early warning system to identify potential bullying.
- See the Pastoral Care Policy for further details about raising the awareness of bullying.
- Sanctions and behavioural policy also reflect school attitude to bullying and highlight consequences of being involved in bullying.
- We use appropriate Assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce the message about community involvement and taking care of each other. It specifically tells pupils whom they should inform if they are being bullied, or are worried that another pupil is being bullied.
- Other lessons, particularly PSHE, RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable and by developing social skills.
- Kent Mediation training for all pupils in Y6
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of the teaching or pastoral staff at once if they know that bullying is taking place. Every member of staff is trained on how to respond to such allegations as part of their induction training.
- All reported incidents are recorded and investigated at once. We always monitor reported incidents.
- We have a strong and experienced pastoral team of Form Teachers, Year Coordinators who each support the Deputy Head Pastoral who are trained in handling any incidents as an immediate priority, and are alert to possible signs of bullying.
- Our pastoral team gives support and guidance to other staff on handling and reporting incidents, and on the follow-up work with both victims and bullies.
- Staff are always on duty at times when pupils are not in class and patrol the school site, particularly areas where bullying might occur. They are trained to be alert to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- We provide leadership training to our Head Boys/Girls and their team of prefects/heads of House which specifically covers the importance of offering support and assistance to younger and to vulnerable pupils.
- We reserve the right to investigate incidents that take place outside school hours, on school visits and trips and that occur in the vicinity of the school, involving our pupils
- We welcome feedback from parents and guardians on the effectiveness of our preventative measures.

7. Cyberbullying

The school will not tolerate cyber bullying against either pupils or staff. Sending inappropriate, suggestive or abusive messages is forbidden and anyone who is found to have sent a message of such content will be disciplined. For more information on the school's disciplinary sanctions read the school behaviour and reward policy.

CYBERBULLYING – DEFINITION

Mr Bill Belsey, the creator of the web site: <http://www.cyberbullying.org/> defined this unpleasant phenomenon in the following terms:

“Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.”

Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Bebo, SnapChat, Instagram, Pinterest, What's App and Myspace, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras. Because it can be spread with a click and reach many people and go viral it can be a much more damaging thing than face to face bullying. It can also be anonymous or fake another's email or ID.

Advice from the Kent County Council website on Cyberbullying can be located via this link: http://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/29731/Response-to-an-incident-of-concern-flowchart.pdf

CYBERBULLYING – PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

St Michael's School

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its Acceptable Use Agreement for safe use of the internet. Blocks certain sites by our filtering system.
- May impose sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse of the internet.
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school e-mail address. Access to sites such as “Hotmail” is not allowed.
- Adheres to the DfE, Kent County Council and UK Safer Internet guidelines regarding E-teaching and the internet.
- DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying October 2014 guidelines.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444862/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyber bullying in PSHE lessons.
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe.
- Does not permit pupils to have mobile phones or iWatches in the school.

8. Procedures for dealing with reported bullying.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted:

If an allegation of bullying does come up, the school will:

- Take it seriously

- The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation will take appropriate action to reassure and support the pupils involved.
- Act as quickly as possible to establish the facts
- The staff member will inform the form teacher as soon as possible.
- The form teacher will intervene and investigate, keeping senior leaders aware.
- With cyberbullying it may be necessary to examine school systems and logs or contact the service provider in order to identify the bully
- Record and report the incident
- All incidents, whether bullying or not are logged in pastoral logs.
- Bullying incidents are tracked by the DH pastoral.
- Provide support and reassurance to the victim. The victim will be interviewed on his/her own and may be asked to write an account of events. He/she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself.
- The bully, together with all others who were involved, will each be interviewed individually and may be asked to write an immediate account of events. It will be made clear why his/her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour, together with any appropriate disciplinary sanctions.
- HODs Year will make it clear to the 'bully' that this behaviour will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions and the school will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions.
- Where appropriate parents are involved.
- They may be invited into school to discuss the matter.
- A way forward, which may include disciplinary sanctions or counselling, should be agreed. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for children who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with appropriate disciplinary measures.
- A meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, could be helpful in developing a strategy for all concerned to close the episode.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place.
- In very serious and persistent cases, and only after the Head has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to the Social Services. However, it is the policy of St Michael's to attempt to resolve such issues internally under the school's own disciplinary procedures, unless the matter is of such gravity that a criminal prosecution is likely.

9. Recording incidents of bullying

Following on from reporting procedures highlighted in the previous section, Incidents of bullying are recorded in the Data Management System by the Deputy Head. All follow up action including sanctions are also recorded. Victim records are cross-referenced with those of the perpetrator in an attempt to easily identify patterns and recognise them early. Where a recognisable pattern emerges, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and senior staff would respond accordingly to the pattern that has emerged. This may take the form of increased supervision, observation of certain individuals, removal of certain spaces for unstructured time, etc.

Incidents are currently recorded with names of victim and aggressor in both children's files where this is known. The right 'to be forgotten' may conflict with the school's obligations for compliance records and in this scenario, we will be unable to delete such records.

Policies that inform this document are:-

- Pastoral Care Policy
- PSHE Scheme of Work
- Behaviour and Reward Policy
- E-Safety
- Safeguarding Policy

Useful Guidance

- **Kent County Council** - <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/child-protection-and-safeguarding/e-safety>
- **DfE (UKCCIS)** - <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>
- **UK Safer Internet Centre** - <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

DS March 2013 Reviewed JAI and FWI November 2013

Reviewed and amended July 2016

Updated Nov 2016 FWI

Updated October 2018 FWI and JAI