

Anti-bullying, Racism and Homophobia Policy

Document Summary

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FYI: Version control should be used for all formal documents and managed as:-

- ▶ 0.1 (1st draft version)
- ▶ 0.2 (2nd draft and so on..... 0.3. 0.4 etc)
- ▶ 1.0 (Once document has been approved)
- ▶ 1.2 (during review/approval of a lifecycle document i.e. policies)
- ▶ 2.0 (2nd approved document) and so on.

Amendment History

Version	Amendment Date	Author	Amendment Summary
1.1	130922	Jo P	Reviewing current policy and placing new top sheet on.
2.1	041125	PB and MF	Updated with references to relational policy, updated links at the end and took out links that didn't work
2.2	021225	PB and MF	Answered Gov comments and updated policy

Rationale

At St Michael's Primary School we believe in the uniqueness of every individual, and base our treatment of everyone in accordance with our four core values: love, joy, hope and forgiveness. We aim to create a safe and secure learning environment where all forms of bullying, homophobic, sexist and racial harassment, or other racist/homophobic incidents are regarded as completely unacceptable.

Aims

- To create a positive ethos within the school based on mutual respect where differences are explored and respected.
- To recognise what bullying is, and to provide effective measures for combating bullying.
- Establishment of clear procedures for dealing with any incidents of racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour.
- The creation of a climate where child affecteds of any racist/sexist/homophobic incidents feel able to report them as well as pupils who witness bullying.

Bullying

What is bullying?

Most definitions of bullying refer to the following elements:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour.
- It is repeated often over a period of time.
- It can be difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying can take the following forms:

- Physical - hitting, kicking or taking belongings.
- Verbal - name calling, teasing, insulting, racist, sexist or homophobic remarks.
- Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone or excluding someone from social groups.
- Extortion - demand for money or favours.
- Cyber- bullying – name-calling, teasing, insulting, racist or homophobic remarks made using an online forum or device. This can include messages on a mobile platform such as Whatsapp or Snapchat (although school recognises both these platforms are recommended for children 13+).

Not all aggression is bullying, nor all name-calling. It becomes bullying when it is exercised through the use of power rather than an exchange between equals. This power might be due to:

- Greater physical strength
- Greater number (e.g. a group of children calling an individual child names)
- Use of psychological power

Who bullies?

Both boys and girls can bully others. Studies show that a significant amount of bullying takes place in the playground. Reasons for being a bully may include:

- Previous experience of being bullied
- Feeling of inadequacy

- Enjoyment of power/creating fear
- Copying behaviour from home/television

Who can be bullied?

Any child can be bullied. There are however certain risk factors which will make the experience of bullying more likely. These include but are not limited to:

- Lacking close friends in school.
- Being shy.
- Coming from an over-protective family environment.
- Being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority.
- Being different in some obvious respect from the majority (e.g. family type)
- Having Special Educational Needs or a disability or anyone who has protected characteristics under the Equalities Act
- Someone who has challenging or dysregulated behaviour.

Establishing a Positive School Ethos

The most important aspect of our strategy to combat bullying is the creation of a positive and inclusive school ethos. This begins with how adults in the school treat each other, parents, and pupils: with respect and understanding, even in difficult situations. Concerns expressed by pupils and parents are always listened to carefully and taken seriously.

We have a very clear Relational Policy which states the behaviours we want to promote, and the rewards which go along with those behaviours. These behaviours are promoted at all times in our daily lives. Within the school curriculum there are many opportunities to promote the understanding of feelings and emotions, most specifically through PSHE lessons. We also combine elements of the SEAL programme (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning), within our PSHE and values work. This includes specific teaching on bullying. One of our aims is to create a school community based on good relationships. In this way, by ensuring everyone is in the school community, it is much less likely either that children will become a focus for bullying, or that others may resort to bullying.

Our Approach

Where a case of bullying has been identified, our principal aim is to restore the child affected's sense of happiness and well-being. Our approach is based on the widely accepted understanding that the most effective strategies to combat bullying include the following:

- Involvement of the wider school community in finding a solution to the problem/s
- Consistency in prevention and response
- Taking all issues seriously
- Not seeking in the first instance to apportion blame
- Involving parents at an early stage

The most successful intervention strategies all involve a problem-solving approach.

We encourage children, parents and staff to report any suspected instances of bullying to one of the teaching staff or to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Children in particular need to be assured not to keep worries to themselves, but to tell their parent and/or a teacher. The whole school community needs to be assured that all instances are taken very seriously, and investigated thoroughly.

It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the child affected and informs the member of staff nominated to deal with bullying as soon as possible. Currently the nominated people (NP) at St Michael's are the Headteacher, Deputy Heads, or two Assistant Heads. One of the NPS will then take the following steps.

The 'Problem-Solving' Approach

Step One - Interview with the child affected

When the NP finds out that bullying has happened they start by talking to the child affected about what the child affected sees as the problem, and how they feel about it. The NP makes notes about the bullied child's feelings/symptoms – e.g. not wanting to come to school etc. - as well as the version of events as described by the child. They will then obtain permission from the child to arrange a meeting with the bully/bullies/spectators. A list of those involved is drawn up by the NP. The NP then tells the child affected that they will arrange a meeting with this group of children.

Step Two - Convene a meeting with the people involved

The meeting takes place led by the NP. Those present will be the child affected and the children identified in Step 1. The first point made, even as the meeting is being set up, is that it is a meeting - not a telling off. The tone set should be a friendly one:- we have a problem here in school, let's see if we can solve it. It is important to say that the people invited to the meeting are there because they may be able to help and that nobody is in trouble.

Step Three - Explain the problem

The NP tells them about the way the child affected is feeling, mentioning what has been told to him/her at the previous meeting. If appropriate, an example of the behaviour that led to these feelings may be mentioned, and the group invited to comment on their perceptions. At this stage, no blame is to be ascribed. With very young children it can be told almost as a story.

Step Four - Share responsibility

The NP does not attribute blame but states that s/he knows that the group could help resolve the situation.

Step Five - Ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the child affected could be helped to feel happier. The NP gives positive responses, and guides the discussion as appropriate. A commitment to change from the group may be one outcome.

Step Six - Leave it up to them

The NP ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. The NP arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step Seven - Meet them again

About a week later the NP discusses with each child including the child affected, how things have been going. This allows the NP to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process. Further reviews may be decided on as necessary including possibly updating parents again.

Additional Guidelines

Communication

It is important that there is on-going communication during this process between the NP and class teachers of all children involved. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher should also be informed, if they are not involved at this stage already. Other members of staff (e.g. Lunchbreak Supervisors) are also likely to need to be kept informed. All alleged incidents of bullying will be logged on CPOMs and investigated by the Head or Inclusion leader.

Involving Parents

Parents of all children involved should be informed at the earliest opportunity, so that their support can be encouraged. Parents are encouraged to:

- Listen carefully to their child, and reassure them that action will be taken
- Stay calm whatever the concerns
- Discuss issues with the school at the earliest opportunity, and review actions regularly
- Give the school time to address the issues

Monitoring

Informal monitoring should continue for some time after the initial identification of the problem. Appropriate further support should be offered to both child affected and bully – e.g. help in developing friendships, learning assertiveness skills or self-esteem training. Circle Time can also be used as a vehicle to prevent further problems arising. The rewards detailed in our Relational Policy can also be used to reinforce positive behaviour and to raise self-esteem.

All incidents are recorded on CPOMS. This ensures there is clear chronology.

Training

All staff are to have regular training in the development of anti-bullying strategies. Lunchbreak Supervisors will receive training aimed at developing their skills in promoting positive playground behaviour.

It is essential that staff and children are both involved closely in:

- The development of an attractive playground environment
- Supervision of any 'hidden corners'
- The development of playground games
- Developing alternative lunchtime activities, e.g. clubs or using the courtyard as a quiet area
- Involving older children with younger children

Looked After Children or Children with a Social Worker

Where children involved are looked after by the Local Authority, it is essential that their Social Worker is involved at the earliest opportunity.

Bullying by Adults

Where an instance of adult or child bullying by a member of staff is reported to the school, appropriate measures should be taken in accordance with the School Complaints Policy and will be reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). This is also referenced with the Staff Code of Conduct and is signed by each staff member every year.

Additional Sanctions/Continuation of Bullying Behaviour

Additional sanctions may also be taken, if deemed appropriate, particularly where bullying involves a physical assault or has been repeated. These sanctions will follow the school's Relational Policy for more serious offences and may involve exclusion as a last resort. External advice may also be sought as appropriate (e.g. from the Behaviour Support Team).

Racial Incidents/Homophobic Incidents/Sexist Incidents

Definitions

'A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the child affected or any other person. Racial Harassment is defined as any form of behaviour which has the effect of intimidating, humiliating or undermining the confidence of a person/group of people due to their colour, nationality or ethnic group.' (South Glos Guidelines).

Homophobic incidents relate to behaviour where the sexuality of an individual is made the subject of abuse, particularly in relation to being gay or lesbian.

Sexist behaviour denigrates an individual on the basis of their gender.

Type of Incidents

Types of incident might be any of the following (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Racist/sexist/homophobic comment or verbal abuse
- Ridicule of an individual for cultural difference (e.g. food, music or dress)
- Refusal to cooperate with an individual because of their race, sexuality, family set up, ethnicity, language etc

Procedures

The procedure for any incident should be as follows:

- Incident to be reported to the Headteacher/Deputy (the designated person) immediately.
- Headteacher/Deputy investigates incident as quickly as is practicable: written report made (on CPOMS)
- Headteacher/Deputy reports incident to child affected's and perpetrator's parents.
- Support offered to the child affected and action taken to address the perpetrator's behaviour. The approach is usually the 'problem-solving approach' (as outlined above), and may include further disciplinary sanctions in accordance with the school's Relational Policy. Outside agencies may be involved as necessary (e.g. Education Inclusion Officer/ Behaviour Support Service).
- Incident reported to Local Authority for monitoring purposes.
- Situation is monitored closely over ensuing weeks.

NB: Appropriate confidentiality is to be maintained at all times.

Promotion of This Policy

It is essential that all governors, staff, parents and children are aware of this policy.

Governors

The Foundation and Pastoral Committee have a specific brief to monitor the policy on a regular basis. Incidents are reported to the Full Governors in the Head's Report.

Staff

New staff should be made aware of the policy as part of their Induction process. The policy and procedures will be discussed with staff and revised as necessary. Training in these issues is to be carried out periodically as required.

Parents

All parents will be informed through the newsletter when the policy has been reviewed. Copies of the policy will be available on request, and on the school website. Comments from parents are very much welcomed. Parent survey results linked to questions asked around bullying will also be reported to parents via the newsletter.

Children

The School aims through its curriculum to provide varied opportunities for pupils to learn about differing cultures, and so respect individual and group differences. Assemblies and the PSHE/SEAL curriculum are also very important aspects in promoting respect and understanding. All children need to be made aware of the contents of this policy, on a level appropriate to their age and understanding. A child-friendly version of our Anti-bullying policy is produced and visible for children to refer to in class. Pupils will also be regularly asked for their views on bullying through PSHE lessons, the annual pupil survey, school council meetings and through events such as 'Anti-bullying Week'.

Complaints

Any complaints in respect of this policy should be addressed in the first instance to the Headteacher (see also Complaints Policy).

Recording, Monitoring and Reporting.

Written records of all incidents are kept on CPOMS. This ensures there is a clear log of all actions taken. Incidents are reported to Governors via the Headteacher's report. Notifiable incidents are reported to the Local Authority.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher monitor the Policy on an ongoing basis. The School's Senior Leadership Team receive a report on any incidents at the start of each term.

Key References

This policy draws heavily on the Local Authority (LA) Policy Guidelines on Combating Bullying. Copies of this are available from South Gloucestershire Council. A full list of further references can be found at the back of the LA guidelines.

Specific note should be made of:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/625ee64cd3bf7f6004339db8/Preventing_and_ackling_bullying_advice.pdf
-
- Childline 0800 1111 Confidential free helpline for children
- <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/advice-and-support/advice-parents-and-carers>
- <https://life.southglos.gov.uk/kb5/southglos/directory/advice.page?id=lwdSuOOu2cc>

