

## St Michael's RC Primary School and Nursery



### Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

#### School Mission Statement



**St Michael's RC Primary School is a Catholic family of faith, following the teaching of Christ. We strive to create an environment where all members of our school community become caring, independent and resilient individuals who fulfil their potential.**

**"I came so that you may have life, life in all its fullness" John 10:10**

#### **What is bullying?**

Bullying can be difficult to identify. It is defined as

"Persistent, deliberate, unprovoked, psychological harm by a more powerful child or person or group, against a weaker child or group"

(Psychologist journal 1991 P.Smith Volume 14 chapter 6).

#### **What is harassment?**

Harassment is a type of bullying where the intention of the act is to cause insult or injury for specific reasons connected to the identity of the victim. This includes incidents of a racist nature. Attitudes and behaviour which are discriminatory because of prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping fall into the category.

Bullying and harassment can sometimes be perceived as "minor incidents" but may be constant so having a significant cumulative effect.

It may consist of:

- ◇ Verbal harassment – name calling, insults, taunts or constant criticism.
- ◇ Written harassment – insults , taunts, letters, text messages or e mails.
- ◇ Graffiti on walls, books, desks, school bags.
- ◇ Vandalism of property.
- ◇ Refusal to co-operate or work with particular pupils, excluding pupils from the social group.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. In determining whether an incident constitutes bullying or harassment, the context in which the incident occurs needs to be considered as well as the victim understanding of the perpetrators motives.

Whilst dealing with the behaviour is important, it is also necessary to challenge the perpetrators beliefs and values.

Incidents of bullying can take place in any school but particularly within vulnerable groups, these include refugees, and pupils newly arrived in the country and those with an obvious “difference”.

It should be noted that children who bully may have been, or still may be victims of bullying/abuse themselves.

At St.Michael’s children have a right to feel welcome, safe and happy.

### **How bullying, harassment and racial incidents can be avoided?**

At St.Michael’s we aim to:

- Prevent bullying at the school.
- Raise pupils awareness of bullying behaviour and the schools anti bullying policy.
- Challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.
- Improve play facilities so that we provide an interesting and stimulating environment for pupils alongside quiet seating areas that can be supervised.

St.Michael’s RC Primary school as a Catholic and caring community has a duty to ensure that all members of the community are protected against bullying, harassment and racist incidents occurring in the first place.

This is the responsibility of all governors, teachers, support staff, parents/carers and pupils. The following strategies can be put in place:

#### Governors must:

- Become familiar with the school's current position on anti bullying, harassment and equal opportunities.
- Attend training opportunities for governors on these issues.
- Support the head teacher in establishing appropriate mechanisms for monitoring incidents.
- Establish a clearly communicated mechanism by which parents can communicate concerns with the school and to the governors. Such concerns should receive an adequate response.

#### Teachers must:

- Ensure that they know the content of the school's equal opportunities and anti bullying policies.
- Ensure that they know and follow the agreed policy for discipline and behaviour.
- Have regular opportunities for whole class or small group discussion where the topic of bullying is raised and all pupils should be encouraged and supported to give their views and express their feelings. It is important to establish a climate and atmosphere where it is safe and acceptable to "tell". Circle time is one way this can be established.
- Intervene when incidents are observed outside and inside the classroom so that pupils do not feel unprotected during particular parts of the day.

#### Support Staff must:

- Ensure that they know the content of the school's equal opportunities and anti bullying policies.
- Ensure that they know and follow the agreed policy for discipline and behaviour.
- Intervene in any incident around the school.
- Remain calm and avoid getting into confrontations with pupils.
- Keep a watch out for pupils who may be vulnerable and try to involve them in games with the other children.

#### Pupils must:

- Value pupil difference and treat other people with respect.
- Be alert to any incidents of bullying, especially in places where there may be less adult supervision such as in the playground, the toilets etc. Always report these incidents to an adult in the school immediately.
- Provide good role models to peers in regard to behaviour and conduct towards others in our school community.

Parent/Carers must:

- Be aware of opportunities offered for formal and informal meetings between themselves and the school.
- To inform either the head teacher or class teacher of any changes in the home circumstances of a child which may influence a change in behaviour in school. This will be handled in confidence.
- To discuss school incidents at home and to encourage children to share feelings and anxieties, discussing issues relevant to friendships and relationships both in and out of school.

In summary, children are encouraged to approach and confide in staff. They should feel confident that cases of bullying will be dealt with sympathetically.

All reports of bullying will be investigated thoroughly in order to ascertain, as best we can, the truth. It is important that we act against bullying, harassment and racism as part of our Catholic and caring ethos.

### **What action is taken if an incident of bullying, harassment or racism should occur?**

At St. Michael's RC Primary school we do not accept bullying, harassment or racism in any form. All members of staff in the school whether teaching or non teaching realise that it must not be overlooked or condoned. Some children and parents are reluctant to report instances of bullying. To counter this, incidents where bullying takes place must be dealt with swiftly and firmly. This is to impress upon children and parents that the school treats such behaviour extremely seriously.

Children are encouraged to approach and confide in staff whether that be their class teacher, teaching assistant, midday meals supervisor or another adult in the school community that they feel they can trust.

Once a serious incident has been reported it must be:

- Investigated thoroughly.
- The adult involved must listen to both parties in an impartial way.
- Once investigated, the responsible adult must decide upon the sanction to be employed.
- The incident must be recorded on the school incident form (Red Forms).
- If the incident occurs during the break or lunch time, the person on duty must inform the class teacher so that he/she can deal with any issues.

If the incident is deemed serious enough, the head teacher must be informed.

A note of the incident will be made on the relevant form (Red Forms). Depending on the nature of the incident, the head teacher will either speak to the children involved or inform the parents of both parties.

In the case of a serious incident the head teacher may ask the parents to come into the school to discuss the matter in a more formal setting. Though the school will seek to avoid this action, there may be no choice but to exclude a child who perpetrates bullying, harassment or racist behaviour either on a fixed term exclusion or in extreme cases permanently. The involvement of governors and the LA is necessary at this stage.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed in the light of internal and external monitoring and consultation that we conduct with all school stakeholders on an annual basis.

This policy was formally adopted in the **Autumn Term 2011**.

**Next Review Date: November 2017.**

Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_