



St Michael's Parish Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of Faith:

Our schools are communities of faith, learning and transformation founded upon the person of Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, where the Gospel is proclaimed and lived within the communion and the rich tradition of the Catholic Church.

Our Mission Statement - to provide excellence in education.

- *Through quality teaching and learning*
- *By providing a safe and creative learning environment*
- *By challenging students to strive for academic excellence*
- *By being a place where faith and values are enriched and shared within the Catholic Tradition*
- *By creating a valued partnership with staff, parents, carers, parish and the wider community*

At St Michael's School we are Safe, Respectful Learners.

At St Michael's School, we believe that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and we, students, staff and parents, all share a responsibility for preventing it.

This policy builds on the school's Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management Policies to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

Policy Framework

Flowing from the Christian vision expressed in the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy, schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing Christian values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

Definition

The National Safe Schools Framework (2011) defines bullying as **repeated** verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

By contrast, conflict between equals and single incidents of social rejection or dislike, single episodes of acts of nastiness or spite, random acts of aggression or intimidation, mutual arguments, disagreements and fights are not defined as bullying although such incidents may require intervention by the school. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term physical and psychological effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Cyber-bullying involves the use of any information and communication technology involving deliberate, isolated or repeatedly hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others or is undertaken recklessly, without concern for its impact on others. By virtue of its nature, technology facilitates repeated access to harmful content.

Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:

- *Physical* - hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others etc
- *Verbal* - teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours etc
- *Non-Verbal* - writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures, facial expressions etc
- *Exclusion* - deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone, not handing out a person's books etc
- *Extortion* - threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money etc
- *Property* - stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property etc

The school response to bullying is:

- **Driven by a Christian imperative.** The school is motivated by and responds according to the imperatives *Love one another* (Jn 13:34) and *Love your neighbour* (Mt 19:19).
- **Holistic.** The school adopts a complete and holistic approach to both preventing and responding to bullying in all its forms including cyber- bullying . *Eg guidance and support for 'bystanders', 'supporters' and witnesses of the bullying (eg intervention strategies etc)*

- **Driven by the principle of “Duty of Care.”**
- **Responsive to foreseeable events.** The school plans for and responds to events which are foreseeable and takes prompt and active steps to eliminate actual conduct which either constitutes or provides notice of bullying.
- **Effective and proportionate.** School level responses to bullying are effective, realistic in terms of the incident and clearly intended to dissuade bullying behaviour. *Eg age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the student who bullied (eg consistent with School Code of Conduct Policy) interventions and support for the student who bullied included in a Behaviour Support Plan (eg specific interventions developed to reduce the bullying behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reinforcers, conflict management, Restorative Practices)*
- **Properly recorded and documented.** Timely reporting and documentation of all bullying incidents (both alleged and actual) enable early intervention, effective case management and the provision of support for all involved students. Reporting and documentation is essential for risk management and accountability.
- **A priority for the victim.** Emphasis is placed on caring and supporting the victim of misbehaviour. Using the Restorative model.
- **Support for the offender.**
- **Case focused.** The response of the school provides for adaptive models of case management together with ongoing monitoring of response actions and appropriate feedback for stakeholders.
- **Inclusive.** Key stakeholders are involved through appropriate information dissemination and participatory decision making. *Eg where appropriate informing parents as stated in the policy and involving them in any action and follow up*

How do we prevent bullying at St Michael’s School?

We believe, based on research, that prevention strategies through education that involve the whole school community [students, staff and parents] are more likely to reduce bullying. Therefore, at St Michael’s we recognise that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying. The Catholic Worldview which represents the antithesis of bullying will be taught explicitly, continually modelled, clearly demonstrated and generously affirmed across all facets of school life. Students are explicitly shown and read through the School’s Code of Conduct to understand their rights and responsibilities. Positive Behaviour Posters are located and referred to in every classroom. Our Peer Support programme is based on Making Jesus Real, No Bullying and our Positive Behaviour Posters.

Monthly meetings are also held for students representing their class attend SRC Meetings.

Members of the community including parents and students are involved in the development, implementation and regular review of the school’s anti-bullying plan and procedures through completion of surveys, input at Parents and Friends meetings and student discussion.

Other ways the community is involved include

- Issues that arise are addressed with the principal at the Captain’s Morning Tea.
- All students at St. Michael’s have a buddy.
- Mini Vinnies Meet each term.
- In PDHPE and ICT lessons, cyber-bullying is embedded.
- ‘RESPECT’ Posters displayed in classrooms and in the playground

Staff will be encouraged to access professional learning and reading in Anti-Bullying procedures and it will be a regular agenda item at staff meetings. i.e. Restorative Practices.

At St Michael's we adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying:

- Wide dissemination of anti-bullying procedures to appropriate stakeholders/members of the school community
 - Through newsletter articles, school assemblies, P and F meeting, Information Sessions Expected standards of student behaviour included in enrolment forms and regularly in newsletters under the Restorative practice heading.
 - 'RESPECT' Posters displayed in classrooms. Explicitly explained to all students.
- Collection of reliable data on incidences of bullying
 - Reports of bullying, surveys, audits, letter from students, anecdotal notes by Principal, Monitoring R&R Folder, teacher records, electronic roll, correspondence through emails, letters from Parents, letters to parents.

Anti-Bullying Policy Inclusion Restorative Practices

Priorities for the victims

- Emphasis is placed on caring for and supporting the victim of bullying as well as challenging and supporting new behaviours for the offender.
 - The Restorative Practices Framework will include a formal, facilitated circle or conference where those harmed are able to speak about how they have been affected.
 - Those causing the harm begin to understand the effect of their actions and in the
 - Circle/conference they begin the process of making things right and repairing the harm.
 - All stakeholders are kept informed of the status of the restorative intervention.
- Explicit teaching of positive behaviours embedded within the curriculum addressing positive relationships, conflict resolution, resilience, bystander action, as taught in Religion, HSIE, English, PDHPE, and using Restorative Practice.
 - Peer Support, Buddy system, Mini Vinnies, Talking Circles, Restorative Practices, SRC, School Mantra, 'RESPECT' posters.
 - Regularly recognising and acknowledging students who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore right relationships eg Positive Behaviour Awards, Making Jesus Real Awards, Honour Cards, Buddy Reading, Kids Lunch time clubs, Principal's awards, Principal Commendations, dojo positive rewards in classrooms etc
- Vigilant classroom, playground and transition supervision
 - Designated play areas
 - Teachers and Aides are to actively supervise children at all times..
 - Classrooms locked.
 - Structured play for additional needs children, Kids Clubs, Choir, Library, extra supervision
- Provision of safe and structured playground spaces and activities at break times
 - Structured play, Library times at lunchtime, Kids Club, Choir.
 - Timetable for the equipment due to safety and number sizes
- Keep safe members of the school community who report bullying
 - Maintaining confidentiality, Records / Anecdotal, notes kept in Principal's office.
 - Consult with person who reported incident at a later date.

- Acquire resources to support school-wide implementation of anti-bullying procedures and learning and teaching practice
 - PDHPE / Religions budget allocation of resources.
 - Restorative Practices, school mantra, posters.

At St Michael's, students are encouraged to:

- report the bullying incident to a teacher as soon as possible
- make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted
- refer to the playground signs (Restorative Practice)

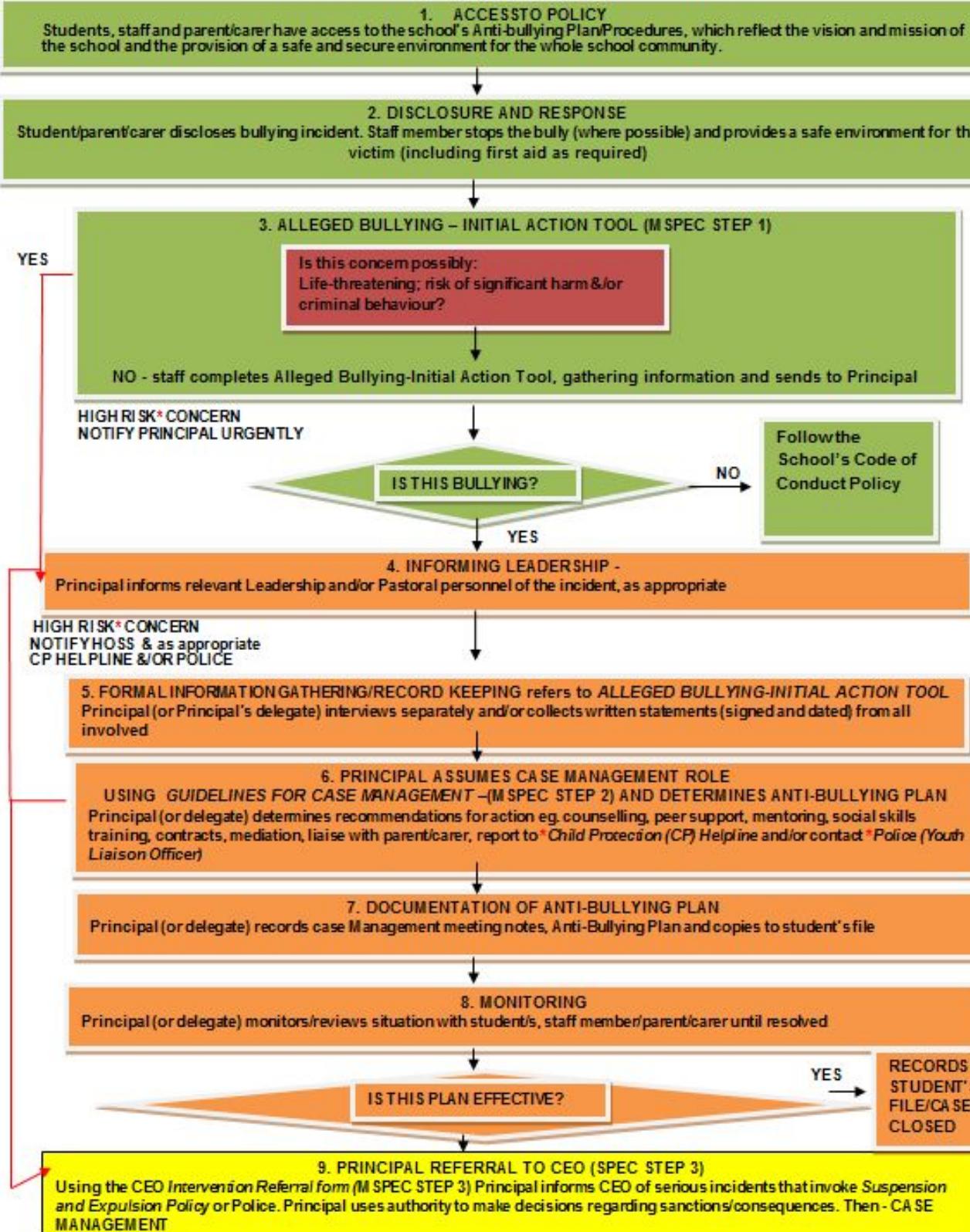
At St Michael's, staff are expected to have a response commensurate to the issue and take a common sense approach to the application of these rigorous formalities. They will:

- take some positive action to stop the bullying when they observe an incident
- pass on information about any reported or observed bullying behaviours to the Principal / Assistant Principal / Classroom Teacher / for further action
- Use restorative practice approach, record in the monitoring R&R folder
- Executive's discretion used to contact parents of the aggrieved and/or aggressor

At St Michael's, parents and carers are encouraged to:

- listen to their child and encourage their child to speak to their teacher at school about an issue that concerns them
- contact the school if they have a concern (eg Principal , Assistant Principal; Classroom Teacher).
- Read Restorative Practice insert in weekly newsletters.
- Attend information sessions

ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURES FOR ST MICHAEL'S SCHOOL



Procedures for investigating bullying and follow up.

- All school employees are required to report alleged violations and every serious act of bullying will be duly investigated and parents/carers informed if required.
- The Alleged Bullying Initial Action Tool is to be used when an alleged bullying incident is reported. The document is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the National Catholic Education Commission and National Council of Independent Schools' Association's Privacy Compliance Manual, December 2011. Upon completion, the Alleged Bullying Initial Action Tool is to be filed securely in the appropriate student records.
- Preliminary interview(s) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying. These interviews should be with individuals initially (ie student being bullied, students witnessing bullying, student engaging in bullying behaviour, staff etc)
- The initial interviews should focus on the safety of individuals. This should include:
 - a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying continues or if there are any reprisals as a result of the reporting of the incident
 - immediate preventative actions that will be implemented to avoid further incidents.
- Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and whether the parents of those involved need to be informed.
- Follow up interviews should focus on appropriate strategies to assist and support all involved within a Behaviour Support Plan. This Plan will specifically identify the inappropriate behaviours, name the replacement behaviours, outline strategies to support the replacement behaviours and reinforcers (both negative and positive) when behaviours occur.
- A record of the separate interviews will be kept.
- Regular monitoring and follow up with the students involved is necessary. (for example daily, prior to and after break times etc)
- Review of the Behaviour Support Plan will take place to modify strategies and supports.
- Any further recurrence of bullying may result in an issue of warning re suspension and could lead to the implementation of suspension procedures and, if necessary, removal of the student from the school through:
 - Suspension pending negotiated transfer,
 - Negotiated transfer
 - Expulsion

Related Policies and Guidelines

Student Code of Conduct Policy

Complaints and Grievances

Restorative Practices

Work Health and Safety

Use of Digital Technology

Policy Administration

This policy has been ratified by St Michael's Parish Primary School staff and will be reviewed every three years, or in the event of any information or incident that indicates the need for review, or following relevant legislative change.

Appendix 1. Staff member completes *Alleged Bullying-Initial Action Tool*, gathering information and sends copy to the Principal (NB:Look for repeated offences, intent to harm and an imbalance of power)

5. Alleged Bullying Initial Action Tool

Bullying is a serious offense and is not acceptable in our school. All school employees are required to report alleged violations and every act of bullying will be duly investigated, and parents/carers informed.

Directions:

The Alleged Bullying Initial Action Tool is to be used when an alleged bullying incident is reported. This document is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the National Catholic Education Commission And National Council Of Independent Schools' Association's Privacy Compliance Manual, December 2011. Upon completion, the Alleged Bullying Initial Action Tool is to be filed securely in the appropriate student records. Guidelines for Case Management are appended to this document.

School: _____

Investigating Teacher: _____

Name of Student/s involved: _____

Date and Time of Incident: _____

Is the incident life threatening or is the target a high-risk concern? If yes, immediately inform the principal and as appropriate:

Seek Medical Assistance	Inform Parent or carers	Contact the Police	Inform the Child Protection Helpline	Inform the CEO
-------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------

If the incident is not life threatening or the child is not a high-risk concern continue to completing this document.

Where did the incident occur: _____

Who reported the alleged incident? (eg. alleged victim, parent, member of the community etc)

Describe the incident in detail:

Identify the nature of the alleged bullying incident: Please circle

Written eg notes, letters

Social eg rumours, nasty jokes

Verbal eg name calling

Physical

Cyber

Psychological

Damage to Property

Accessory eg person who assisted

Bystander

Is there evidence that this behaviour was deliberate or planned? _____

According to the alleged target has she/he experienced other or repeated incidences of bullying from the alleged perpetrator?

Does the alleged target fear for their safety or their property?

Is there concern the alleged incident may have been influenced by any of the following? Please circle

Race or Culture	Disability	Gender	Socio-Economic status	Other
-----------------	------------	--------	-----------------------	-------

Is there any relevant background or history to this alleged incident?

What effect is the situation having on the alleged target's well being including self-esteem, physical health, relationships with peers, ability to learn, absenteeism etc?

Were there any witnesses to this incident? (Identify student names and classes).

Description of the incident, according to the witness.

Did this student play an active role in the incident?

Indicate other investigative procedures carried out.

Please circle:

Interviewed parents/carers of alleged target (s)

Date and Time: _____

Interviewed parents/carers of alleged perpetrator (s)

Date and Time: _____

Interviewed parents/carers of witnesses/bystanders

Date and Time: _____

Annotations on interviews with parents/carers

After investigation was the allegation of bullying confirmed? Yes /No

If NO, please sign below and place a copy of this document in student(s) file and refer to school's Behaviour Management Policy, as required.

If YES, please sign below, place copy of this document in student(s) file and refer incident to the Principal or Principal's delegate with a copy of Guidelines for Case Management.

Signed..... **Date.....**

Appendix 3. Sample Letter to Parents/Carers of Perpetrator of a Bullying Incident

Dear.....

On (insert date) information was presented to the school alleging that your daughter/son (insert name) had been involved in a bullying incident.

Careful investigation of this information confirmed that unfortunately, (insert name) has taken part in a bullying incident.

I would like to inform you of the following action taken, in accordance with the school's Anti-bullying Plan and Positive Behaviour policy:

Please do not hesitate to call me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

I trust that (insert name) will not take part in any further incidents of this nature.

Thank you for your support with this matter.

Yours sincerely,

_____ (Principal)

-----(Tear Here)

I acknowledge receipt of this letter and support the school's actions to address incidents of this nature.

Name.....(Please Print)

Signature.....

Date.....

Please return to _____ by _____

Appendix 4. Sample Letter to Parents/Carers of Target of a Bullying Incident

Dear _____,

On (insert date) information was presented to the school alleging that your daughter/son (insert name) had been involved in a bullying incident.

Careful investigation of this information confirmed that unfortunately, (insert name) has been the target of a bullying incident.

I would like to reassure you that the school has a plan in place to support (insert name).

Please do not hesitate to call me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

If you become aware of any incidents of this nature occurring again, I would ask that you alert the school as soon as possible, so that appropriate action can be taken.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

_____ (Principal)

.....(Tear Here)

I acknowledge receipt of this letter and support the school's actions to address incidents of this nature.

Name..... Please Print

Signature.....

Date.....

Please return to _____ by _____

Policy Administration

This policy has been ratified by St Michael's Parish Primary School staff and will be reviewed every three years, or in the event of any information or incident that indicates the need for review, or following relevant legislative change.

Date of Last Review: ***June 2016***

Date of Next Review: ***June 2019***