



Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

St Michael's Primary School takes the issues of bullying and harassment very seriously. Recent Australian research suggests that up to 50% of young people who are bullied, may not always tell adults, as they may be afraid or ashamed. This may result in a student being victimised for a prolonged period of time before it is discovered and carries the potential for serious short, medium and long-term side effects. (Carr-Gregg)

The National Safe Schools Framework's Guiding Principles:

- affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfill the school's child protection responsibilities
- encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe
- commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach.

Aim

At St Michael's Primary School we aim to:

- reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable;
- alert everyone within the school community to the signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim; and
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately; and that support is given to all people involved.

Implementation

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by one person towards another which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset, or discomfort that person. It can be:

- physical aggressions;

- the use of put down comments or insults;
- name-calling;
- damage to the person's property;
- deliberate exclusion from activities; and
- the setting up of humiliating experiences.

Our vision statement is: *A People of Harmony, a Place of Challenge*. One of the aims of St. Michael's School is to develop in each child a sense of the value and dignity of others and to live in harmony with everyone. We support the parents in preparing their children to take a responsible place in the wider world, reaching out to others and working for peace and justice for all. Therefore, St Michael's does not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind.

At St Michael's School we will:

- Openly talk about bullying - what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.
- Teach our children the skills including 'The Three Step Process' that will build their self-esteem and empower them to take the responsibility for themselves - and give them the opportunity to practice these skills.
- Formulate a policy that clearly states what actions we will take to deal with bullying behaviour.

THE THREE STEP PROCESS

At St Michael's the children are taught the Three Step Process of assertive behaviour. This process has been put in place to give the children a powerful strategy to be assertive if bullying arises.

Step 1: If someone does something to you that you do not like, turn to the person and say, "*Name*, I don't like what you just did to me. Please stop touching my hair (putting me down)."

If the same person or people continue to do the same things to you take Step Two.

Step 2: When a person or persons continue to do the things you do not want them to do to you, walk away from them after you have said to them, "I don't like (when you put me down) what you are doing to me."

If the same person or people continue to do the same things to you take Step Three.

Step 3: Go to the nearest teacher and get his/her help. Explain the situation to the teacher.

WHAT DOES RESEARCH TELL US ABOUT BULLYING?

Research (Olweus 1993), (Roland & Munthe 1989), (Mellor 1990); tell us:

- Bullying happens in all schools;

- Approximately half of all pupils report having been bullied at some time;
- The reported incidence of bullying decreases with age;
- Boys are more likely to be involved in physical bullying than girls; and
- Bullying takes many different forms.

School Procedure for Bullying:

1. At regular intervals throughout the year the School keeps the families informed about the implementation of our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program (SWPBS) and the behavior management policy which includes anti bullying strategies. This information is also on the website.
2. Parents, staff and students are made aware annually of the St Michael's School Anti- Bullying Policy;
3. A consistently high level of vigilance with staff looking for signs of bullying, and dealing with incidents of bullying without over-reacting is emphasised;
4. Parents or guardians of victims or bullies will be informed of incidents early by the Principal so that they are given the opportunity of discussing the matter;
5. A clear account of the incident (including interviewing both sides) will be recorded by the Principal or Assistant Principal;
6. Teachers and parents will be informed (either by telephone or by a letter going home via Student Management Policy); and
7. Consequences will be used appropriately in accordance with the St Michael's Student Management Policy.

CYBER-SAFETY

St Michael's recognises that the presence in the learning environment of technologies can also facilitate anti-social, inappropriate, and even illegal, material and activities. The school has the dual responsibility to maximise the benefits of these technologies, while at the same time to minimise and manage the risks.

The school's computer network, Internet access facilities, computers and other school ICT equipment/devices bring great benefits to the teaching and learning programmes at St Michael's Primary School, and to the effective operation of the school.

Our school has rigorous cybersafety practices in place, which include cybersafety use agreements for all school staff and students.

All students will be issued with a use agreement and once signed consent has been returned to school, students will be able to use the school ICT equipment/devices.

Related Policies

St Michael's Student Management Policy

School Wide Positive Behaviour Policy

Cyber-safety Policy & User Agreements

Catholic Education Policy on Discipline:

<http://www.ceo.cg.catholic.edu.au/policies/discipline.htm>

References

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg: <http://www.michaelcarr-gregg.com.au>

National Coalition Against Bullying: <http://www.ncab.org.au/>

Anti-Bullying Network website: www.antibullying.net

National Safe Schools Framework

<http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/teachers/nssf/index.html>

Approved by: St Michael's School Community Council

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