



The Castle School Anti-Bullying Policy

The Purpose of this Policy

We at The Castle School are committed to providing a safe, secure environment for all of students so that everyone is able to engage, develop and learn. We recognise that bullying can exist in a range of forms in all contexts. We understand the long term harmful effects of bullying. Any form of bullying is not tolerated at The Castle School and will be responded to in a timely and appropriate manner ensuring that all students have their individual needs met.

The students at The Castle School have a wide range of complex needs. We recognise that resulting from the complex needs of our students, bullying in this context can have additional subtleties and individualised support is vital. Our aim is to maximise protective factors of school by creating an environment of safety and strong, positive and supportive relationships at its centre.

The Castle School is a Therapeutic Thinking school, promoting pro-social behaviours and positive relationships within a supportive and inclusive environment. As such all forms of behaviour are known to be a communication of need or response to emotional dysregulation, bullying is responded to as unsocial or antisocial behaviour as part of the Behaviour Policy/Therapeutic Thinking Handbook.

This policy should be read and considered alongside

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy/Therapeutic Thinking Handbook
- Online Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- SEND Policy

Defining Bullying Behaviours

There is no legal definition of bullying, but the Department for Education (DfE) defines bullying as **behaviour by an individual or group**, repeated over time, that is intended to hurt or harm another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021).

The NSPPC Protecting Children from Bullying and Cyber Bullying 2022 states that;

It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using online platforms and technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time.

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which may be combined and may include the behaviours and actions we have set out below.

Verbal abuse:

- name-calling
- saying nasty things to or about a child or their family.

Physical abuse:

- hitting a child
- pushing a child
- physical assault.

Emotional abuse:

- making threats
- undermining a child
- excluding a child from a friendship group or activities.

Cyberbullying/online bullying:

- excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Bullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a person's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that actions in response to bullying are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
- Governors to monitor and review this policy.
- All staff, including: governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school. To communicate concerns to the school around issues of bullying and online bullying and to work with the school to support their children in understanding and addressing bullying as appropriate.
- Adults working with students to support the development and learning of students to understand positive relationships, bullying and how to respond to it and how to get help to deal with issues of bullying.

Responding to and reporting about bullying

The following steps will be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern. Immediate protective consequences may be necessary as information is collected.
- The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
- A member of Senior Leadership Team or Extended Leadership Team will interview all parties involved depending upon the severity and/complexity of the bullying and harm caused.
- The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
- The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
- The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with the safeguarding policy.
- Protective and educational consequences, as identified within the school Behaviour Policy/Therapeutic Thinking Handbook, and support will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned. All responses and consequences will take into account the specific needs of all individuals and are likely to vary from person to person as are all personalised support plans and Therapeutic Thinking plans.
- Restorative conversations can be facilitated, which can be low level or students can be supported to prepare for a full restorative discussion.

Individual needs will always be considered when planning restorative responses and these can be 1:1 or can include all parties.

- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing protective and educational consequences in school in accordance with this policy and the school's Behaviour Policy/Therapeutic Thinking Handbook.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded on MyConcern by the member of staff who is made aware of the incident, this will always be responded to and responses overseen by DSL in accordance with existing safeguarding procedures. This will include recording of all students involved, the wronged and the wrongdoer and appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

Prevention of bullying, our proactive approach

- As a Therapeutic Thinking school, priority is given to the development of positive relationships, communication and development of sustained prosocial behaviour. All adults are a role model for prosocial behaviour.
- Emphasis is placed upon the development of emotional literacy, emotional regulation through daily 'check-ins', 1:1 support sessions as needed.
- Personalised Therapeutic Plans are created for students to support their emotional regulation, communication, prosocial behaviour and positive relationships.
- Students will have a PSHE programme of learning that develops awareness and understanding of healthy relationships and friendships, promotes positive values and diversity in society and actively challenges stereotypes, discrimination of any kind including racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and misogyny.
- Students will have a PSHE programme that develops awareness and understanding of online safety and online bullying.
- Students will be supported to understand and be able to access help and guidance about all issues of bullying, online safety and online bullying.
- Parents are offered help and guidance to understand issues of bullying, online safety and online bullying and how to support their children and gain support for themselves.
- Student-voice is valued highly and termly sessions through 'Pupils4PositiveChange' regularly seek opportunity to raise issues of bullying and students work with staff to co-create a Student Charter for Anti-Bullying and actively promote 'speak out'.

- Time and focus is given throughout the year to 'anti bullying' agenda and anti-bullying week, through collective experiences, displays, discrete learning sessions and curriculum enhancement.
- School staff are given training to identify child on child abuse and bullying and how to respond to all incidents in line with the school safeguarding policy.

Last review: Summer 2023

Next review: Summer 2024

Supporting Organisations and Guidance

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Beat Bullying: www.beatbullying.org • Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-healthwithout-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net Cyberbullying
- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk LGBT
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Pace: www.pacehealth.org.uk
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk SEND
- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice0-to-25> Racism and Hate
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational