



**The Castle School**  
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**Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Date: February 2024**

CEO: Lorraine Heath

Headteacher: James Lamb

Due for review: Spring Term 2025

To be operated in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy and the Online Safety Policy.

## **PURPOSE:**

- To help every member of the school feel secure and able to learn effectively

## **KEY POINTS:**

- Every individual has a right to a secure school environment in which they feel safe and happy; no student should be subjected to harassment, discrimination or victimisation.
- It is the responsibility of every member of the school to help create and maintain this environment.
- All reported cases of bullying will be investigated fully and appropriate action taken.
- The House System is designed to encourage older students to help younger members of the House.
- Students who join the school after the normal start time (as an in-year admission, or partway through their education) are closely monitored and support is available to ensure they feel safe and secure.
- Various places are offered for more vulnerable students at social times, to allow presence in spaces that are less busy, quieter and calmer than other parts of the school may be during break and lunch.
- Students are actively encouraged to report bullying incidents to staff. Help to do so will be provided through the House system, with students and various staff linked with children to give opportunities to talk to somebody.
- All incidents of investigated bullying are recorded on the whole school bullying log.
- Communication with home and school is important in resolving bullying incidents.
- Our whole school approach to ensuring everyone is treated fairly and appropriately is around #NotAtOurSchool. This is writ large across aspects of the personal development curriculum, including the assemblies programme.

## **What is Bullying?**

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

It takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyberbullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example email, social networks and instant messenger).

Supporting documentation - Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2017 – (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>).

Bullying might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways. It may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – could be a criminal offence, for example under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986. If school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they should seek assistance from the police.

### **Cyber-bullying**

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or to send an electronic communication which conveys a message which is indecent (sexting, or sharing nudes) or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

(Definitions taken from Preventing and tackling bullying; Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2017)

### **Reporting bullying**

Children who are subjected to or witness bullying are encouraged to report it to any member of staff in school. This is more likely to be: tutor, Head of House, member of SLT on duty or a member of pastoral support staff. Children are encouraged to go to the Pastoral Hub to seek support for bullying if they need to report something that has affected them or somebody else. Children are also able to write a statement or letter themselves at home and bring it in to school, or to email [safe@castle.bep.ac](mailto:safe@castle.bep.ac) or [wellbeingsupport@castle.bep.ac](mailto:wellbeingsupport@castle.bep.ac) These email addresses are publicised through the electronic screens in the school, through social media, through PSHE lessons and on the website. Children are encouraged to speak with their peers if they feel unable to speak to a member of staff. Student surveys conducted at intervals through the year ask about bullying, allowing children to feedback and staff to respond as appropriate.

Students who report bullying will be spoken with to ensure that they are aware how the situation has been resolved, which is likely to involve communication with their parents/carers. Heads of House and Pastoral Support Officers will regularly check the Bullying Log and speak with families who report bullying to ensure that there have been no further issues. Students who have previously reported bullying are also followed up with the next term, to check that they are happy reporting and also that no further issues have arisen.

### **Proactive approach to bullying**

The Castle School places 'belonging' at the heart of its practice and culture. Belonging is a focus of all strands of work in school. The assembly calendar ensures that kindness and the way we treat others is a focus through the year, particularly within weekly House assemblies. Our PSHE curriculum map includes work that proactively supports children as individuals, as does the tutor time curriculum. We have introduced #NotAtOurSchool as a mechanism to focus all work around equality.

## Anti-Bullying Pathway

### First Incident

Statement completed with pastoral support team  
Recorded on Bullying Log and check that no previous reports have occurred  
Sanction at appropriate level according to the Behaviour Policy  
Action taken recorded on ClassCharts and Bullying Log by Head of House (HOH)/Pastoral team  
Statements kept on record  
Parents/carers of both victim and perpetrator informed  
Victim spoken to and actions discussed, with a follow up check in  
Students given an opportunity to meet and explore some work to resolve situation

### Second Incident

Statement completed with pastoral support team  
Recorded on Bullying Log, check how previously managed to ensure escalation  
Sanction at appropriate level according to the Behaviour Policy  
Action taken recorded on ClassCharts and Bullying Log by HOH/Pastoral team  
Statements kept on record  
Parents/carers of victim informed  
Parents/carers of perpetrator to meet with tutor and/or HoH to plan actions  
Victim spoken to and actions discussed, with a follow up check in  
Students given an opportunity to meet and explore some work to resolve situation  
HoH adds student(s) to the House Student Focussed Meeting agenda

### Third Incident

Statement completed with pastoral support team  
Recorded on Bullying Log, check how previously managed to ensure escalation and analyse trends  
Sanction at appropriate level according to the Behaviour Policy, likely level 3 minimum  
Action taken recorded on ClassCharts and Bullying Log by HOH/Pastoral team  
Statements kept on record  
Parents/carers of victim informed  
Parents/carers of perpetrator to meet with HoH to plan actions  
Victim spoken to and actions discussed, with a follow up check in  
Students given an opportunity to meet and explore some work to resolve situation  
HoH adds student(s) to the House Student Focussed Meeting agenda and graduated response initiated

### Fourth Incident

Statement completed with pastoral support team  
Recorded on Bullying Log, check how previously managed to ensure escalation and analyse trends  
Sanction at appropriate level according to the Behaviour Policy, likely level 3 minimum. Where a suspension is issued, the reason will be stated as 'bullying'  
Action taken recorded on SIMs (if suspension) and ClassCharts and Bullying Log by HOH/Pastoral team  
Statements kept on record  
Parents/carers of victim informed  
Parents/carers of perpetrator to meet with HoH and SLT to plan actions – formal letter to follow  
Victim spoken to and actions discussed, with a follow up check in  
Students given an opportunity to meet and explore some work to resolve situation  
HoH adds student(s) to the House Student Focussed Meeting agenda and graduated response developed further

## Bullying outside school premises

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable”. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport or outside the local shops. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The school may involve the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) assigned to the school if the behaviours are entirely out of school.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Students	<p>To behave in such a way that they do not cause offence, injury or emotional upset to other students.</p> <p>To refrain from homophobic, racist or sexist behaviours.</p> <p>To support other students in a responsible way by encouraging them to report bullying to staff.</p> <p>To report bullying if it is happening to them.</p>
Teachers	<p>To deal with any incidents of bullying behaviour within their classrooms with an appropriate sanction.</p> <p>To report incidents/concerns to Heads of House.</p> <p>To ensure students feel safe in their lessons.</p>
Tutors	<p>To monitor the well-being of members of their tutor group.</p> <p>To deal with issues of bullying in the first instance.</p> <p>To liaise with Heads of House in cases of persistent bullying.</p> <p>To be the first line of communication with parents/carers in terms of student well-being.</p> <p>To encourage positive behaviour among members of their tutor group.</p>
Pastoral Support Team	<p>To liaise with Tutors and Heads of House in matters of well-being.</p> <p>To offer support to those who are being bullied.</p> <p>To provide restorative justice if appropriate.</p>
Heads of House	<p>To deal with persistent cases of bullying.</p> <p>To liaise with parents/carers and students.</p> <p>To determine appropriate actions and sanctions.</p> <p>To liaise with SLT in difficult cases.</p> <p>To involve other agencies if appropriate.</p> <p>To promote positive behaviour through assemblies.</p>
SLT	<p>To monitor the implementation of the policy and ensure it is being followed.</p> <p>To liaise with external agencies where appropriate (and ensure appropriate support is being offered to students and sanctions applied consistently).</p> <p>To support Heads of House, parents/carers and children in persistent cases.</p> <p>To remind students about positive behaviours through assemblies.</p> <p>To design, implement and then review surveys which seeks feedback on bullying and how it is dealt with.</p> <p>To monitor the Bullying Log, tracking trends and patterns and planning strategic next steps.</p>
Parents/carers	<p>To support the school in the implementation of the policy.</p> <p>To inform school of any concerns of bullying, whether involving their children or others.</p>
Governors	<p>To ensure the policy is being adhered to by reviewing at Governors’ meetings.</p> <p>Conducting student feedback sessions.</p>

All staff must ensure that if bullying is in the form of ‘sexting/sharing of nudes’ or a student is at risk of harm, it must be reported to the Safeguarding Team immediately. This should be logged on MyConcern.

All staff must abide by the Staff Code of Conduct (within the Trust Safeguarding Policy) in terms of their interactions with students.