Castlehead High School

Equalities Policy

UPDATED AUGUST 2023

Just as our **Nurturing Relationships Policy** promotes a positive school ethos, focussing on the conditions which enable us to build strong relationships, to develop nurture, to exemplify our new school values of **kindness, respect** and **ambition**, so too does our new Equalities policy which has our new school vision at its centre:

Cultivating a community of respect, equity, and kindness, fuelling ambitious minds to thrive and make a positive impact in our world

All stakeholders within Castlehead High School are unequivocally opposed to bullying. We fully recognise the damage which bullying can do to young people's lives – both those who bully and those who are bullied – in the short and long term. We are therefore committed to reducing and preventing bullying throughout our school and providing appropriate support when bullying does occur. This policy sets clear expectations regarding how these goals will be achieved.

The definition that is used in this policy is:

'Persistent intentional behaviour which causes stress to a person emotionally, physically or mentally, where a person is made to feel insecure, threatened or inadequate'

Bullying may take the form of:

• Physical or verbal abuse.

• Name calling.

• Facial expressions, words or actions which intimidate, harass, isolate, threaten, humiliate, lower self-esteem or lead to feelings of insecurity.

• Inappropriate use of ICT, such as mobile phones, social networking sites and instant messaging.

What do we mean by bullying? Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened, and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online. This behaviour can harm people physically or emotionally and, although the actual behaviour may not be repeated, the threat may be sustained over time, typically by actions, looks, messages, confrontations, physical interventions, or the fear of these.

This behaviour can include:

Being called names, teased, put down or threatened face to face/online	Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked	Having belongings taken or damaged
Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online)	Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phone	Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives
Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be	Being stereotyped or left out	

EXPECTATIONS

The Castlehead Community are expected to follow the ethos of We are Safe, We are Ready, We are Respectful. Each individual community member is expected to take responsibility for, and contribute to, this ethos by following the Nurturing Relationships Policy. The reporting of situations of conflict or bullying are encouraged from all members of the community.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

"Children have the right to protection from all forms of violence (physical or mental). They must be kept safe from harm, and they must be given proper care by those looking after them."

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19]

PREVENTION

it is important that all pupils feel safe at Castlehead High School. The topics of relationships, managing conflict and bullying are explored in detail through Personal and Social Education classes. Through this, the areas of understanding others, making positive choices, and creating resolutions are explored.

We are also developing our Pupil Voice in the school using the Senate and Pupil Parliament as platforms for pupils to have their say. Peer monitoring programmes such as MVP, Befrienders and Paired Reading provide opportunities for pupils to support each other. We will challenge any signs of conflict or bullying and will respond. We hope to establish a network of pupil buddies who work with younger pupils as a

support system. We aim to promote kindness through our school community and create a positive ethos and environment where all pupils can thrive.

PREJUDICE BASED BEHAVIOURS

At Castlehead High School, we recognise equality and diversity and the need and responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of all pupils who may be vulnerable to bullying because of real or perceived difference affecting them or any member of their family, as identified as protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010:

- AGE
- DISABILITY
- GENDER REASSIGNMENT (including identity and transphobic bullying)
- MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP
- PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY
- RACE
- RELIGION OR BELIEF
- SEX
- SEXUAL ORIENTATION (including perceptions of orientation for the child, parent/carer and sexist attitudes)

We also identify that prejudices and marginalisation can also extend to the following groups:

- ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS
- ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES
- BODY IMAGE AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
- CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE
- TRAVELLING COMMUNITY
- YOUNG CARERS
- POVERTY
- FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

INTERVENTIONS

Instances of bullying or conflict, reported by any Castlehead High School stakeholder such as a pupil(s), member of staff, parent/carer, are investigated by the most appropriate person to the situation – usually a Principal Teacher of Pupil Support. The approach taken by staff when addressing these instances can be seen below. We will always, take account of the pupils' past experiences and any additional support needs.

Support planning will encompass the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators for all the young people involved in the incident.
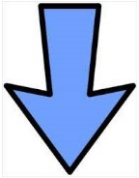
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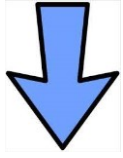
REPORTING AND RECORDING

When an allegation is made, the Principal Teacher of Pupil Support is notified and the information is recorded on pastoral notes.
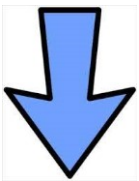
STAGE TWO

INVESTIGATION AND DECISION

Full investigation undertaken and decision made over bullying or conflict. Allocation of supports and measures agreed to create a resolution. Bullying cases are recorded on SEEMIS and in the Bullying Log.

STAGE THREE

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Communication plans are agreed for the young people and their parents/carers. This is followed up no more than two weeks later to ensure matter is resolved. Additional support avenues can be explored if necessary.

INFORMATION FOR PUPILS

If you are worried that you are being bullied, or you know someone who is, report this to your Pupil Support Teacher, a trusted member of staff, or pupil buddy, who will advise you on the process. It is ok, not to be ok and want to chat over issues.

For more information and practical support, click on the link below :

https://respectme.org.uk/page-3/page-4/

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Bullying situations can be a stressful time for all involved and there are times when young people do not want to discuss it. It is worth remembering that if there are changes to your young person's behaviours, it may be communicating that there is something underlying that is not right.

There is a wealth of information on the signs of bullying and practical tips on how to advise your young person to build their resilience and ability to cope with difficult situations on the RESPECTME pages, click on the link below for more help.

If you are concerned about your young person, do not hesitate to contact the school to discuss your concerns with your young person's Pupil Support teacher.

https://respectme.org.uk/adults/bullying-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers/

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

If your child is being bullied and would like to speak to an adult in confidence, they can contact:

ChildLine: ChildLine's website has a bullying section for young people and adults. www.childline.org.uk or call 0800 1111

If you are worried about your child and would like to talk to someone in confidence, call:

ParentLine Scotland on 08000 28 22 33

Childnet International: Childnet International works in partnership with other organisations to help make the internet a safe place for children and young people. www.childnet.com

Cybermentors: A social networking place where children and young people can talk about bullying with mentors their own age. www.cybermentors.org.uk

CEOP: The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre website provides information and advice for online safety. www.ceop.police.uk

LGBT Youth Scotland: www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

Families on the Outside: www.familiesoutside.org.uk