Castle Tower School

Anti Bullying Policy

Date Ratified by Board of Governors	February 2025
Review Date	February 2027

Castle Tower welcomes pupils aged 3-19 who face a wide range of barriers to learning. Educational opportunities are provided within our Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Post 16 departments.

Our Vision

Vision:
To be a leading light in special education through educating, nurturing and inspiring all our school community.

Mission:
Castle Tower School is committed to creating a community which:
- Ensures everyone is safe and included
- Always learns
- Promotes independence and resilience
- Celebrates achievements
- Looks forward with hope to the future

Everything we do is driven by our core values:
- Child-centred
- Nurturing
- Fun
- Team work
- Inclusive
- Independence

Our Ethos
Castle Tower strives to create a caring community in which every member feels valued, supported and happy. All staff work to maintain an ethos in which fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness permeate all relationships within the school community. High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal, academic and social goals. The safety, welfare and development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance to all staff and Governors.
At Castle Tower, there is continued development of the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Resources are used efficiently. Opportunities are created for learning in co-operative and interactive settings. Pupils are presented with challenging as well as stimulating teaching and learning opportunities. Staff at Castle Tower seek close working relationships with other providers and services throughout each stage of our pupil's education and through the transition stage to further education and life after school.

The purpose of this policy is to define bullying type behaviour, outline roles and responsibilities, preventative curriculum, processes for reporting, recording and effective responses to bullying type behaviour.
Bullying type concerns relating to school staff, other staff or parents is managed through our Complaints Policy.
If you are unsatisfied with the school response regarding a bullying type concern, complaints should be managed in line with our Complaints Policy.

DEFINITION
The legal definition taken from The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (N.I) 2016 states. Bullying includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of:
- any verbal, written or electronic communication,
- any other act, including physical or by omission, or
- any combination of those.

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

Castle Tower School uses this definition to develop an awareness and understanding that socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying type behaviour, when based on the information gathered, the criteria listed below have been met:
- The behaviour is Targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils.
- The behaviour is Repeated.
- The behaviour is Intentional.
- The behaviour is causing Physical, emotional or psychological harm.

AIMS
The ethos of Castle Tower School is important in helping to address the issue of bullying type behaviour and in minimising its incidence. However, bullying type behaviour must also be addressed in more specific ways. Preventing and countering bullying type behaviour requires an awareness and a collective vigilance on the part of all members of the school community.
This Anti-Bullying Policy aims to:
- help in the understanding of what constitutes bullying type behaviour.
- indicate approaches to preventing and responding to bullying- type behaviour

What is Bullying?
Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour that is never acceptable in Castle Tower School. Bullying can include any sort of physical or psychological intimidation of a person, by another or a group, that causes anxiety or stress to the victim. This can be a single incident, or repeated over a period of time, and may include:

- Physical: Kicking, punching, pushing, nipping, hair-pulling.

- Verbal: Name-calling, threats, teasing, etc.

- Psychological: Exclusion from the group, intimidation, sneering, rude signs, name-calling, teasing, etc.

- Cyber-Bullying : The misuse of technology to bully or harass.

- Racist: Bullying relating to race, religion, or colour.

- Homophobic: Bullying relating to gender or sexual orientation.

- Omission: Where a pupil is deliberately left out and where there is a wilful failure to include a pupil.

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (N.I.) 2016 gives schools the explicit power to take action to prevent cyber bullying which is taking place outside school, but which is likely to have an impact on the pupil's education in school. While this gives schools the option to take action, it does not place a duty on schools to do so. Any incidents of online bullying which take place in school during the school day, while travelling to or from school during the school term, while the pupils is in the lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school, or while in education provision on behalf of the school away from the school premises must be addressed through the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Preventing Bullying Type Behaviour
Each member of the school community has a role to play in helping to prevent bullying type behaviour and in creating an atmosphere in which it is not allowed to develop. Castle Tower School will work proactively, seeking to prevent bullying type behaviour in the following ways:

- By promoting and maintaining an ethos which encourages consideration and respect for others.
- By educating pupils about the boundaries of appropriate behaviour towards others and addressing bullying type behaviour and related issues
- By ensuring effective supervision of locations within School where bullying type behaviour is likely to occur.
- By ensuring that pupils and parents are aware of school policy on the use of mobile phones within School and on the use of the internet within School (through the eSafety Policy and the Acceptable Use Policy).
- Through staff training and ongoing professional development to highlight awareness of antibullying strategies.
- By liaising with other agencies as appropriate
- Through marking events such as Anti-Bullying week and Safer Internet Day in School.
- By having clear procedures for responding to bullying type behaviour, which are kept under regular review.
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing
- By using school assemblies to target contemporary issues and to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Responsibilities and Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour
Bullying type behaviour is unacceptable and a culture of openness is the best way to counter such behaviour. It is the responsibility of each member of the community – pupils, staff and parents - to report instances or suspicions of bullying type behaviour, in the understanding that all such reports will be listened to and taken seriously

Teachers:
•   Be aware of procedures in relation to bullying;
•   Listen to children and take all reports seriously;
•   Attempt to deal with issue and investigate;
•   Log all incidents;
•   Liaise with staff and Designated Teacher/feedback;
•   Follow-up/monitor all incidents continuously.

Ancillary Staff:
•   Be observant in all supervisory situations;
•   Report any incident of concern to the class teacher;
•   Follow all school rules and reinforce positive behaviour at all times.

Parents:
•   Be familiar with and support school's Anti-Bullying Policy;
•   Listen to their children if they express any worries regarding school;
•   Discourage any tendency towards bullying behaviour;
•   Suggest to their child non-aggressive strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour;
•   Inform school if they suspect bullying.

Pupils:
•   Avoid any behaviour which could be considered as bullying;
•   Tell if being bullied (Teacher/Designated Teacher);
•   Tell parents;
•   Do not react aggressively;
•   Respect one another.

Governors:
•   Appoint a designated Bullying Governor / Child Protection Governor;
•   Report in Minutes any incidents of bullying reported or recorded.

In each instance, the priority should be that the pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour feels supported and that the individuals displaying bullying type behaviour are made aware that their behaviour is socially unacceptable, and the bullying type behaviour stops.

It is accepted that the precise action taken will vary from incident to incident. However, the broad guidelines below apply:

- Instances or suspicion of bullying type behaviour (whether in school, at a school event or on transport) should be reported by pupils, parents or other members of staff to the class teacher in the first instance. However, it is recognised that on occasion, the report may be made to a Key Stage Managers, Directors of pastoral care Vice-Principals or Principal.

- The key stage manager will investigate, in liaison with the senior leadership team and the Vice-Principal/Principal and A Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF) will be opened

- Pupils directly involved may be asked to give a written account of the incident.

- Parents of all pupils involved will be contacted promptly by telephone.

- If necessary, referrals to outside agencies will be made.

- The pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour will be given practical advice and support

- The situation will be monitored by the class teacher and members of the senior leadership team to ensure the welfare of all pupils involved has been maintained.

- Teachers of the pupils involved will be informed so that they can contribute to monitoring the situation.

- Any behaviours that do not meet the legal definition will be regarded as socially unacceptable behaviours and will be dealt with in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy.

- Any response to allegations of bullying type behaviour will be cognisant of the child's individual needs, including SEN.

- Report back promptly to parents/carers informing them fully of actions taken/to be taken and outcomes achieved.

Reporting Procedures
Pupils Reporting a Concern
Pupils are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. Any pupil can raise a concern about bullying type behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. All pupils are encouraged to get help if they have a concern about bullying type behaviour that they are experiencing or is experienced by another.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern
We ask parents/carers to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying type behaviour and not retaliate.

The process for parents/carers to report bullying concerns is outlined below:
- All bullying concerns should be reported to the class teacher.

- Where the parent/carer is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Key Stage manager, Directors of Pastoral Care or Vice-Principals.

- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Directors of Pastoral Care/Vice Principals to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Principal.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's Complaints Procedure should be followed. It should be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Recording of Incidents
Under the 'Addressing Bullying In Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016', schools are required to assess one-off incidents in order to make a decision as to whether or not it is classed as bullying. The school shall consider the following criteria:
•   Severity and significance of the incident;
•   Evidence of pre-meditation;
•   Impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional);
•   Impact of the incidents on the wider school community;
•   Previous relationships between those involved;
•   Any previous incidents involving the individuals.

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.
Should an incident be deemed to be bullying behaviour, parents will be informed that the incident will be recorded by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in the form of the 'Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)'.
This record is added to the record of the child displaying bullying behaviour on SIMS and will remain on their record for the duration of their time at school.

The Bullying Concern Assessment Form (see Appendix 1), includes the following:
Part 1 – Assessment of concern (Is it bullying or socially unacceptable behaviour?)
Part 2 – Clarification of the nature of the bullying behaviour.
2.1 Who was targeted by this behaviour?
2.2 In what ways did the bullying behaviour present?
2.3 Motivation (any underlying themes?)
Part 3 – Record of support and interventions for:
•   pupils experiencing bullying behaviour;
•   pupils displaying bullying behaviour.
Part 4 – Review of the bullying concerns and actions.

Review of Incidents
Incidents of recorded bullying will be reviewed within an agreed timeframe set by the SLT. Following this review, an agreement will be reached on the following basis:
Fully – an end to bullying behaviour;
Partially – interventions are working but more time is needed to ensure an end to bullying behaviour;
Further Intervention – interventions unsuccessful and further incidents have occurred.

Appendix 1

Bullying Concern Assessment Form (BCAF)

(To be updated through EDIS)

Incident Date:

Pupils Involved	Role	Incident Date	Gender	DOB	Year and Reg

Incident	Comments
Bullying Concern	

PART 1 - Assessment of Concern   Date:

Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 defines bullying as follows:

"bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of —

> *(a)   any verbal, written or electronic communication*

> *(b)   any other act, or*

> *(c)   any combination of those,*

by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

	Name(s)	Gender	DOB/Year Group
Person(s) reporting concern			
Name of pupil(s) experiencing alleged bullying type behaviour			
Name of Pupil(s) demonstrating alleged bullying type behaviour			
Check records for previously recorded incidents			

Outline of incident(s): Attach all written accounts/drawings of incident(s) completed by pupil(s) experiencing, displaying, witnessing (i.e. other pupils, staff) including date(s) events, SIMS record.

Date	Information gathered	Location (stored)

Socially unacceptable behaviour becomes bullying type behaviour when, based on the information gathered, the criteria listed below have been met: **The school will treat any incident which meets these criteria as bullying type behaviours**.	
Is the behaviour intentional?	**YES / NO**
Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	**YES / NO**
Is the behaviour repeated?	**YES / NO**
Is the behaviour causing physical or emotional harm?	**YES / NO**
Does the behaviour involve omission? (*may not always be present)	**YES / NO**

One-off Incident

When determining whether a one-off incident may be classified as bullying type behaviour, the school shall take into consideration the following criteria and use the information gathered to inform and guide the decision-making process:	
Criteria:	**Information gathered:**
severity and significance of the incident	
evidence of pre-meditation	
Significant level of physical/emotional impact on individual/s	
Significant level of impact on wider school community	
Status/nature of previous relationships between those involved	
Records exist of previous incidents involving the individuals	

YES, the above criteria have been met and bullying type behaviour has occurred.	**NO, the above criterial have not been met and bullying type behaviour has not occurred.**
The criteria having been met, proceed to complete Part 2 of this Bullying Concern Assessment Form	The criteria having not been met, proceed to record the details. Refer to the Positive Behaviour Policy of your school, continue to track and monitor to ensure the behaviour does not escalate.
Agreed by _____ Status _____ On ___/___/___	

PART 2

2:1 Who experienced this behaviour?

Select one or more of the following:

☐ Individual to individual 1:1 ☐ Individual to group ☐ Group to individual
☐ Group to group

2.2 In what way did the bullying type behaviour present?

Select one or more of the following:

☐ Physical (includes for example, jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property,

punching/kicking

☐ Any other physical contact which may include use of weapons)

☐ Verbal (includes name calling, insults, jokes, threats, spreading rumours)

☐ Indirect (includes omission, isolation, refusal to work with/talk to/play with/help others)

☐ Electronic (through technology such as mobile phones and internet)

☐ Written

☐ Other Acts

Please specify:_____-

2.3 Motivation (underlying themes): this is not a definitive list

Select one or more of the following:

☐ Age

☐ Appearance

☐ Cultural

☐ Religion

- ☐ Political Affiliation
- ☐ Community background
- ☐ Gender Identity
- ☐ Sexual Orientation
- ☐ Family Circumstance (pregnancy, marital status, young carer status)
- ☐ Looked After Status (LAC)
- ☐ Peer Relationship Breakdown
- ☐ Disability (related to perceived or actual disability)
- ☐ Ability
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Race
- ☐ Not known
- ☐ Other _____

Part 3a

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL EXPERIENCING BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOUR:					
Pupil Name:		**Year Group/Class:**			
REFER TO SCHOOL ADDRESSING BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOUR					

Parent/ carer informed:	**Date:**	**By whom:**	
Staff Involved:			

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcomes of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions
Pupil:
Parent/carer:
Other Agencies:

Part 3b ᴋ interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

RECORD OF SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR PUPIL DISPLAYING BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOUR:
Pupil Name:　　　　　　　　　　　**Year Group/Class:**
REFER TO SCHOOL ADDRESSING BULLYING POLICY AND TO LEVEL 1-4 INTERVENTIONS IN EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOUR
Parent/ carer informed:　　　　　　　　　**Date:**　　　　　　**By whom:**
Staff Involved:

Date	Stage on Code of Practice	Type of Intervention	Success Criteria	Action taken by whom and when	Outcome of Intervention	Review

Record of participation in planning for interventions

Pupil:

Parent/carer:

Other Agencies:

Continue to track interventions until an **agreed** satisfactory outcome has been achieved

PART 4 - REVIEW OF BULLYING TYPE CONCERN AND ACTIONS TO DATE

Date of Review Meeting:

4a- Following the Review Meeting, to what extent have the success criteria been met?

☐ 1 – Fully

☐ 2 – Partially

☐ 3 – Further intervention/support required

Give details:

_____

_____

Part 4b- If the success criteria have not been met, continue to:

☐ Re-assess Level of Interventions and implement other strategies from an

appropriate level

☐ Track, monitor and review the outcomes of further intervention

☐ Keep under review the Stage of Code of Practice each pupil is on

☐ Follow Safeguarding Policy

☐ Seek multi-agency input (EA, Health and Social Services etc.)

☐ Engage with Board of Governors

Agreed by:	**Signed by:**	**Date:**

Appendix 2 Statuatory Process Flowchart.

Statutory Process Flow Chart
SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO EXPERIENCE OR DISPLAY BULLYING OR ALLEGED BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOURS

Enhanced Accountability for BoG, schools and supporting agencies to deliver timely, individualised, multi-disciplinary support to identify and address need.

Learner Centred Approach with pupil and parent/carer voice listened to, valued, and reflected in the plan.

Behaviour reported as alleged Bullying Type Behaviour

Maintain clear chronological records - If a young person is educated off-site, ensure effective sharing of information for accountability

Ensure all support complies with relevant legislation and guidelines such as: The Children (NI) Order (1995), Code of Practice (1996), Freedom of Information Act (2000), Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001), Welfare and Protection of Pupils ELB (NI) Order (2003), SENDO (2005), The Education (SDP) Regulations NI 2010, SEN Resource File (2011), SEND Act (NI) (2020), Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) (2016), EOTAS Centre's Guidance in the Use of SIMs (2017), GDPR (2018), Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (2020), A Fair Start Report (2021), CYPS Emotional Health and Well-being Strategy (NI) (2021), Guidance on Remote Learning (2022), Revised PEP (2023), Guidance on Parental Responsibility (2023) etc.

Process to be followed

In every case when an alleged bullying type of concern is raised a record must be kept e.g BCAF and should be attached as a document to a digital record (e.g. SIMS or C2k Private Folder)

Gather information regarding the current incident and review records of previous incidents.

A record must be kept of the assessed outcome aligned to the legal definition/criteria: TRIP (targeted, repeated, intentional, psychological, or physical harm) e.g BCAF part 1.

Positive Behaviour Policy

Record/BCAF Parts 1 indicates criteria for Bullying Type Behaviour has NOT been met. Inform parent.

Select, implement, and record individualised, solution-focussed, interventions and responses to socially unacceptable behaviour. Maintain records. Ensuring that within the SEND COP, appropriate behaviour and support interventions and processes are implemented effectively using for example Emotional Health & Wellbeing Framework

SENCO/LSCo pastoral lead, to consider initiation of PLP, PEP, RRAP, Calm Plan, UNOCINI etc to address presenting SBEW

Key staff assess the information gathered against the criteria derived from the legal definition -TRIP/one off.

If YES, follow AB Policy If NO, follow SBEW Policies

All behaviour is communication. Schools must ensure that behaviour is analysed, supported, and responded to consistent with all pastoral policies- SEN, CP, PB, Nurture, EHWB, SG rather than sanction-led.

Addressing Bullying Policy

Record on BCAF Parts 1 and 2 indicates criteria for Bullying Type Behaviour HAS been met. Engage with parent(s) and agree support plans for pupils involved- Complete a support plan/Part 3 BCAF

Select, implement, and record individualised, solution-focussed, effective interventions and responses to bullying type behaviour. Update Support Plan /BCAF

Part 3a Consult with Parents /Carers to agree support for the pupil experiencing bullying type behaviour. Update Support Plan/BCAF

Part 3b Consult with Parents /Carers to agree strategies for pupils displaying bullying type behaviour. Update Support Plan / BCAF

Track, monitor & assess progress aligned to SEND COP, to determine the efficacy of the interventions & outcomes for all pupils involved, whether displaying or experiencing socially unacceptable or bullying type behaviours. Ongoing review of support plans, interventions and/or Parts 3 & 4 in consultation young people and parents/carers, to achieve agreed

Consider timely referral to CYPSP agencies to support plan. Update records.

Review & digitally record OUTCOMES

Outcomes used to inform summary reporting to BOG.

Review & digitally record OUTCOMES on BCAF Part 4

Consider timely referral to CYPSP agencies to support plan. Update BCAF

The duty of the Board of Governors is to: Ensure that incidents of bullying type behaviours feature as a standing item on every agenda.

Oversee reported incidents of bullying or alleged bullying type behaviour involving a registered pupil at the school.

Analyse statistics and patterns of alleged or confirmed incidents of bullying type behaviour and respond with agile policy review detailing the preventative curriculum to address changing needs.