



Castle School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Preface

Northumberland Church of England Academy Trust is a Christian learning environment at the heart of its communities. We promote care and respect, and expect high standards in all aspects of our Trust life.

As a Church of England Academy Trust, we aim to build communities clearly based on the Christian values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation, integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution, protect the weak and are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy Trust.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

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Anti-Bullying Policy

1.0 Introduction

Castle School will not tolerate bullying in any form. We firmly believe that every pupil should feel safe, secure and valued when attending this school. Therefore, bullying is regarded as a very serious matter. There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's 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)

Whatever type of bullying behaviour happens, three factors are usually common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour;
- It is a form of abuse which happens more than once and over a period of time;
- The person being bullied cannot defend themselves.

As part of our Anti Bullying strategy, we actively support and promote the following guidelines and information:

2.0 Aims

- To create a climate where bullying is not accepted;
- To enable students to develop / practice appropriate social skills;
- To teach the values which render bullying to be unacceptable; • To ensure that all school staff, students and parents/carers know how they can both prevent bullying from starting and respond if it happens;
- To empower victims of bullying to seek help and support'
- To help students who bully to change their behaviour;
- To involve every – staff, students, parents / carers and governors in acting against bullying and wherever it occurs.
- Objectives:
 - Providing students and parents / carers with information and advice;
 - Providing staff with relevant training as necessary;
 - Discussing bullying issues within the curriculum;
 - Regularly using assembly time to raise the issue of bullying;
 - Displaying anti bullying messages around school;

- Recognising the achievements of all our students and celebrating success publicly;
- Affording students opportunities and responsibility for shaping our school community and practices;
- Regularly reinforcing the importance of the school rules;
- Treating every reported incident of bullying seriously;
- Continually monitoring the incidents of bullying and conducting surveys of students and parents/carers.

3.0 Ways of preventing bullying

We believe that everyone can help to prevent bullying from starting in the first place and can take action if they find out this is happening

Staff will:

- Ensure victims of bullying are listened to, taken seriously and informed of what action will be taken. Give reassurance that all possible steps will be taken to ensure their safety;
- Act discreetly to ensure that problems are dealt with sympathetically;
- Ensure that parents/carers are contacted and kept informed on what action the school decides to take;
- Contact parents/carers of those carrying out the bullying and inform them of the school's actions; Inform parents/carers of students involved in bullying of possible future action.

What can a pupil do if they are being bullied?

- Do not retaliate by becoming a physical or verbal bully yourself;
- Do not keep it a secret.
- Talk about it to a staff member, family or friends;
- There are many adults in school who want to help – they can help to decide how to handle the situation and take necessary action;
- Tell the bully to stop.

Guidelines for parents/carers:

Parents/carers are reminded of the importance of taking an active interest in their child's school / social life – discussing friendships, the school day, break and lunch times, journeys to school, etc.

If parents/carers think their child is being bullied or have reason to believe their child is bullying another student, contact the school immediately. School staff will listen to any concerns and where necessary arrange a meeting to discuss.

4.0 Anti-bullying procedures

Any member of staff who observes or whom a bullying incident is reported to should:

- Listen carefully to the student, give them sufficient opportunity to discuss their concerns, describe what it is, has been happening and treat what they say seriously.

- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing and thank them for either reporting the bullying themselves and/or agreeing to discuss the matter. Give them the support by assuring them that school will take appropriate action.
- If it is established that the incident was a one off then it should be dealt with accordingly. A note should be made on the student's diary that they have reported an incident as bullying.
- If a pattern of bullying behaviour is established then the member of staff should record the details on an incident sheet and report this information to the safeguarding team

A senior member of staff will then:

- Interview the bullied student and ask them to talk about their feelings and worries, avoiding direct questions about incidents, though trying to establish all involved.
- Contact parents/carers and inform them of the situation and the intended course of action. This will enable better communication with their child when they return home and may assist with gathering further information.
- Explain to the bullying student/s how the bullied student/s is feeling without discussing the details of the incidents or allocating blame. The bullied student/s may be present if they wish.
- Clarify with the bullying individual or group that they are responsible and can do something about. The focus is continually upon a solution to the problem rather than apportioning blame.
- Ask the bullying individual or group in turn to identify ways in which they could help the bullied student/s feel happier in school. Approving of suggestions but not seeking promises of exactly how, when and what they are going to do.
- Conclude the meeting by re-emphasising the individual's or group's responsibility to solve the bullying problem.
- Arrange to meet again to review how successful the remedial actions have been.
- After an agreed period of time see all concerns individually to see how things have been going. The objective being is to establish that the bullying has stopped and the bullied student/s is satisfied and feeling better,
- Record the actions of the process and further action should this prove necessary.

If bullying situations do not improve and bullying behaviours continue then school will consider:

- Involving parents/carers directly and inviting them in for a meeting;
- Devising a behaviour management plan;
- Rearranging class groups or dynamics;
- Referring for counselling/therapy;

5.0 Bullying in the community

We are very aware that bullying is also an issue for many young people outside of school. Students may experience bullying behaviour within their home or communities. If this matter

is reported to us then we regard this equally as serious as bullying occurring in school. We will support where possible.