



## Anti-Bullying Policy – Updated November 2025

‘Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards’.

### **Scottish Government (2017) – Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland’s Children and Young People.**

#### **1. RATIONALE**

The vision for all Scotland’s children and young people is that they should be confident individuals; effective contributors; successful learners; and responsible citizens. In order for these outcomes to be achieved, children should be: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible and included. Castle Douglas High School is fully committed to the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) agenda.

Dumfries & Galloway Council is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments.

The council’s Education Service is committed to supporting and promoting children’s rights. There are UK and Scottish laws which provide a framework for policy development which informs practice and should therefore provide a culture and ethos of inclusion and respect for all in our schools. Staff pupils and parents all have a duty in relation to bullying, and expectations in this regard are indicated in:

- **GIRFEC** – Getting it Right for Every Child <http://dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=12709> promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people underpinned by shared principles and values in line with the UN Convention and Rights of the Child.

In Castle Douglas High School we work together with young people, their parents/carers and partnership agencies to meet the needs of all to ensure our young people reach their potential. GIRFEC promotes a shared approach and accountability that:

- Builds solutions with and around children, young people and families
- Enables children and young people to get the help they need when they need it
- Supports a positive shift in culture, systems and practice
- Involves working together to make things better

- **The Human Rights Act 1998**

Places a public duty on authorities to carry out their functions in a matter that is compatible with the right to life, the prohibition of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to respect for private and family life, the right to education.

- **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Is concerned with the promotion and upholding of the rights of children and young people and states that all education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. Children's voices should be heard and their wishes respected without discrimination of any kind.

- **Curriculum for Excellence – Health and Wellbeing**

The Education Scotland 'Principles and Practices' document states that:

'Children and young people should feel happy, safe, respected and included in the school environment and all staff should be proactive in promoting positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and the wider school community. Robust policies and practice which ensure the safety and wellbeing of children should already be in place. In addition, there are many ways in which establishments can assist young people. These include peer support, buddies, breakfast or lunch clubs, safe areas, mentors, pupil support staff and extended support teams.'

- **GTCS – COPAC (Code of Professionalism and Practice)**

'You must treat sensitive, personal information about pupils with respect and confidentiality and not disclose it unless required to do so by your employer or by law'

- **The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on schools to:**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 put legislation in place to prevent direct or indirect discrimination against persons due to their:

- Disability
- Sex (Gender)
- Gender reassignment (Transgender)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

- **HGIOS 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion**

‘A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements.’

## 2. AIMS

Here at Castle Douglas High School, our aims are as follows:

- To provide the highest quality educational experience for **all** of our pupils
- To challenge, nurture and inspire
- To create a caring environment where **everyone** feels valued, respected and included
- To ensure that **everyone** reaches their full potential (personally, academically and vocationally)
- To develop closer partnerships with and a strong sense of community towards the wider community
- To prepare our pupils for life and work after school

Our school values are **Compassion, Determination, Honesty and Self-belief**. These values are encompassed by **Respect and Resilience**. We understand that bullying is never acceptable and that children and young people have the right to learn in a safe, secure environment where they feel valued and included.

## 3. DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

In Scotland bullying is defined as:

“Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person’s sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in. “The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.” (*Respect for All National Guidelines November 2024*)

Bullying Behaviours can include:

- Being called names, teased or put down or threatened
- Discriminating against anyone with a protected characteristic listed under the 2010 Equalities Act including homophobia, bi-phobia or trans-phobia
- Being hit, tripped, poked
- Having belongings stolen or damaged
- Being intimidated, ignored, left out or having rumours spread
- Abusive messages or images being sent via text or online
- Making you feel like you are being bullied or fearful of being bullied

- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be
- Being targeted because of others you are associated with

**This is not an exhaustive list.**

Something need only happen once for a child or young person to feel worried or scared to go to school. It is important to take into account the impact on the child or young person. Actions can affect people in different ways and this should be taken into consideration.

#### **4. ONLINE BULLYING**

In the digital world, online bullying, or cyberbullying, is a significant concern affecting children and young people in Scotland. This form of bullying involves the use of digital technologies, such as social media, messaging platforms, gaming forums, and mobile devices to intimidate, isolate or humiliate individuals. In our school, we have banned the use of mobile phones within the school building and have a 'see it, hear it, lose it' policy. This encourages pupils to interact positively in person with each other and supports positive mental health. If an online bullying issue is brought to our attention in school, we address it in the same way as any other bullying. Some behaviours, when conducted online, may constitute criminal offences and we may involve our youth engagement officer.

#### **5. IMPACT OF BULLYING**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened
- Doesn't want to go to school on the bus
- Asks to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn or anxious
- Feels ill in the mornings
- Withdraws from clubs or activities
- School work starts to suffer
- Stops eating
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Has possessions damaged or 'lost'

- Is afraid to use internet or phone
- Becomes aggressive, unreasonable or disruptive
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is unable to sleep
- Attempts or threatens suicide

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

## 6. PREVENTING, IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING

All members of the school community have a duty to prevent bullying behaviour by promoting positive relationships and respect for others. If staff become aware of any bullying behaviour, they should report any concerns to Pupil Support/SLT. Staff dealing with instances of bullying need to be aware of confidentiality to avoid outing a (LGBT) young person inadvertently to parents/carers. Young people or adults who know of bullying have a responsibility to report it. Where bullying is reported the young people involved can expect the matter to be taken seriously and dealt with in line with school and authority policy. People accused of bullying can likewise expect to be dealt with fairly, consistently and in line with school and authority policy.

### At Castle Douglas High School we will:

- Ensure that all members of the school community are aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and that identified staff have sufficient training to deal effectively and consistently with bullying.
- Provide opportunities to develop young people's understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour and how to react to such behaviour.
- Ensure that there are safe, supervised places, such as the House Offices, Learning Support Bases, Nurture Room, School Library and classrooms where pupils can go at lunch/break
- Provide opportunities to develop young people's social and emotional skills, including their resilience where possible.
- Raise awareness of mental health issues through 'See Me'
- Raise awareness of LGBTQ+ amongst young people and staff
- Promote our school aims of Respect, Compassion and Resilience through learning and teaching, extra-curricular activities and assemblies
- Involve pupils in positive peer influence programmes such as MVP
- Work with partner agencies where specialist advice and support is required.
- Promote inclusion and diversity through learning and teaching, assemblies and the PSE programme.
- Have a consistent approach to positive behaviour management.
- Work with parents, pupils and the local community to address issues out with school that give rise to bullying behaviour in school

### **What happens at CDHS if a Bullying Incident is Suspected or Witnessed:**

- Anyone who feels they are being bullied or suspects that someone is being bullied should report it immediately to a member of staff. This can be any teacher in the school but most likely to be a member of the Pupil Support team or Senior Management.

Kelton – Mrs Cathro

Solway – Mrs Fulton

Threave – Mrs Clive 0.6 (Pupils with surnames beginning K – Z)

Threave – Mr Ingram 0.4 (Pupils with surnames beginning A – J)

S1-S2 DHT – Mrs Cook

S3–S4 DHT – Mr Cathro

S4-S5 – Mrs Gillies (0.6) and Mr Williams (0.4)

Head Teacher – Mr Foster

When bullying behaviour is reported, the member of staff will investigate the allegation and gather as much information as possible in order to establish if bullying has occurred. This may involve speaking to the young person involved, other relevant staff and, where appropriate other young people. This can involve taking witness statements. **Where possible, it should be the same member of staff that carries out the entire investigation.**

- Alleged victim will be reassured and, if necessary, measures will be put in place to keep them safe.
- Whoever raised the issue should be kept informed of what is happening.

### **What happens at CDHS if a Bullying Incident is found to have taken place:**

A number of options are available to support both the victim of bullying and the perpetrator and will depend on the nature and frequency of the incident/s. There has to be a degree of professional judgement and agreement when imposing sanctions.

- Incident/s should be recorded on SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities with **full detail recorded in a pastoral note**
- Restorative Justice Practices can take place
- Lunchtime detentions, internal isolation or external exclusion
- Parental involvement
- Young people, staff or parents who have raised the concern should be kept informed of what is happening.
- Preventative measures in school; staff informed, seating plans changed, class discussions, anti-bullying lessons in PSE, assemblies, promotion of school values.
- Work in partnership with outside agencies such as CAMHS, Youth Engagement Officer, School Nurse, Educational Psychologist for support/advice.

- The police work in partnership with the school to deliver assemblies raising awareness of bullying issues. Advice may be sought from the police where there are implications with the law. Bullying is 'anti-social' behaviour and as such, in extreme circumstances, there are anti-social behaviour laws that may require the involvement of the Police.
- Victim will be supported by named member of staff.
- Situation will be monitored by named member of staff.

# CASTLE DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL

## Bullying Incident Flow Chart

