

CASTLE MANOR ACADEMY

RELATIONSHIPS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date Approved	9 th December 2021
Signed	(Chair of Local Governing Body)
Name	Justine Dawkins
Minuted	9 th December 2021
Date of Next Review	December 2023

General Information

Vision

We work hard, we are kind, we are PROUD.

Scope

This policy outlines actions to be taken by the leadership team, teachers, wider staff and governing body to build relationships at Castle Manor Academy. Student actions and behaviour are addressed in the Behaviour policy.

Principles

At Castle Manor Academy, we aim to place relationships at the heart of the work we do with children and young people. We encourage nurture, warmth and empathy when working with groups and individuals. We recognise that many people in our community have experiences of trauma and toxic stress and we know that school can be an important protective factor for personal growth and development. It is our aim, therefore, to maximise the protective factors and minimise the harmful factors of school by creating an environment of safety that has strong, positive and supportive relationships at its heart. We ensure that all our staff can access training and coaching which helps them to achieve these relationships. We want everyone in our community to have a sense of belonging.

All students and staff have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy, to work and study in an effective and well-ordered learning environment and to feel that they are safe and they belong. This includes having very high expectations and very clear boundaries. Within this, we consider individual circumstances when making disciplinary decisions, making reasonable adjustments where appropriate. We recognise that behaviour is one way of communicating a need and aim to identify and meet each child's needs as far as we can. We place restorative conversations at the heart of our work with young people each day, ensuring all staff have the training and expertise to support this approach.

We are committed to educational practices which support the healing of trauma and development of resilience.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour policy and the Safeguarding policy.

Building relationships

It is a professional responsibility for all our staff to build positive and supportive relationships with the students, parents and colleagues that they work with. This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the Teachers' Standards.

We commit to *preparing* good relationships by:

- Seeing each person in our community as an individual with individual strengths, needs and windows of tolerance
- Observing proper boundaries for professional relationships
- Understanding how the brain and the fight/ flight/ freeze responses work
- Ensuring we have a secure understanding of the factors which can inhibit pupils' ability to learn and how to overcome these barriers
- Ensuring we have an understanding of the social and emotional development of children, and the individual needs of all students, and can apply this to our relationships-led approach
- Ensuring that the physical environment of our school reflects our vision and values and represents a place of psychological safety for our children

We commit to *building* and *maintaining* good relationships by:

- Demonstrating that the relationship is safe, for example through meeting and greeting at the door, ensuring each lesson is a fresh start, and preparing in advance for changes such as different seating plans, or meeting agendas
- Demonstrating that the relationship remains safe, by explaining clearly why if a person has to be turned away at that time, or explaining clearly why if there has to be a consequence to behaviour
- Using the Castle Manor Way as a script to address behaviour concerns and reminders, to ensure consistency and a sense of psychological safety
- Being light-hearted, positive, joyful and kind in our tones of voice and our facial expressions, and avoiding harsh voices, shouting, put-downs and shaming of any kind
- Using our words, tones, facial expressions and non-verbal communication in ways which soothe and contain
- Applying the same approach to clear and kind communication with students, colleagues and parents, whether it is verbally, by email or across the radio
- Being accepting of other people's views, opinions, feelings and practices
- Being curious about other people's lives, behaviours, reactions and noticing when things are different or have changed
- Being empathetic and having compassion by being attuned as far as we can to other people's moods
- Ensuring consistency and fairness
- Providing opportunities across the curriculum and the school day to develop people's ability to see themselves, their relationships and the world more positively
- Modelling the positive attitudes, values and behaviour expected of everyone in the community
- Using our PROUD values to guide our decision making and communication

We commit to *repairing* good relationships by:

- Using restorative conversations to repair and restore when a relationship has been threatened
- Recognising when we have made a mistake and rectifying and apologising where possible
- Asking permission before other people are placed in new, different or challenging situations, such as having a restorative conversation
- Looking for the reasons behind difficulties

Active listening

All staff at Castle Manor Academy are trained and coached to develop active listening skills which support the building and maintaining of excellent relationships.

This means that we:

- Use non-verbal signals to show we are listening, such as smiling, making eye contact, using an open posture, mirroring and avoiding distractions
- Use verbal signals to show we are listening, such as using positive reinforcement, remembering, asking questions, reflecting, reframing, clarifying and summarising
- Do not make judgements about what is being said to us

These strategies support us to build and maintain strong one-to-one relationships with the other people we are working with.

Routines and boundaries

At Castle Manor Academy we place a strong emphasis on routines and boundaries because we know these provide psychological safety, containment and consistency for children and adults alike. We believe that strong relationships are supported by the predictability of routines and procedures. This is why we have our Castle Manor Way which clearly outlines how we do things in our school. (see the Behaviour policy for further clarification).

Whenever we remind students of a boundary or consequence, we seek to de-escalate situations using the words of our Castle Manor Way. We remind each other, as staff, of the routines and boundaries which support us all.

Teaching and assessment

Our approach to teaching and assessment relies on the same consistency and containment. Lessons always begin in the same way, with a do now activity, so they

are predictable and promote a sense of psychological safety. Low-stakes quizzing is used to allow students to have a clear sense of their progression. The curriculum is planned in all subjects to be interleaved, which helps to ensure a sense of mastery.

Formal assessments are clearly planned and communicated in advance and children are actively taught how to approach assessments, including rehearsing the use of the exam hall.

Changes in the classroom are prepared for, for example, changes of seating plan would not normally happen without forewarning.

Learning relies on excellent feedback. We ensure that feedback is given, whether to the whole class, or to individuals, with kindness, using the principles of this policy as our guide.

Curriculum

We want all our children to grow up to be healthy, happy, safe and responsible citizens of the modern world. This is why they all study health, relationships and sex, citizenship, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Our curriculum is designed to equip our children with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions and choices as they move towards a confident and self-assured adult life. The world for young people looks very different to how it did when their parents and teachers were young so this curriculum is designed to be relevant to the 21st century.

The content of the subjects listed above is covered in many different ways, in specifically designed lessons, in tutor times and interwoven through other subject areas. The common thread is the strong focus on our motto and values: the lessons are designed to make it explicit how our students can be kind, work hard, be resilient and driven and how they can be professional, have empathy and optimism. The curriculum is designed so that common threads and ideas are revisited, meaning that knowledge can be deepened as the children grow older. We aim to bring this knowledge to the real world for our children, giving them opportunities to discuss and explore difficult and new ideas in a place of psychological safety.

In particular, all of our children access a curriculum named “My Growing Brain” which introduces them to, and develops ideas around, relationships, how our brains work, how we can improve and sustain our mental wellbeing and how to notice and respond to mental health difficulties. We explicitly teach children about the fight, flight, freeze responses and specific technique to manage these. We teach about healthy and unhealthy relationships and bullying and their effects on our mental health.

Interventions for wellbeing and mental health

At Castle Manor Academy we recognise that everyone might need help with their wellbeing, relationship building and mental health sometimes, and that some children need support to develop age-appropriate skills in these areas, due to their past life experiences. This is why we offer a range of interventions to support. These include, but are not limited to:

- Daily meet and greet
- Supported transitions
- Adult engagement at unstructured times
- Lego and games club after school
- “I wish my teacher knew” discussions and information sharing
- Big empathy drawings and other trauma-informed interventions
- Assessment and trauma-informed plans using motionial
- School chaplain appointments
- ELSA
- My Big Life group interventions
- Wellbeing appointments- drop-in and scheduled
- Referral to, and drop ins with, school nursing service
- Referral to Mental Health Support Team (individual and group)
- Referral to Emotional Wellbeing Hub
- Referral to counselling providers
- Breaking the barriers to learning intervention with OM Health and Wellbeing

Information on accessing this support can be found in the Early Help section of the Child Protection Procedures.

Staff wellbeing

At Castle Manor Academy we encourage and support staff to collectively recognise the importance of their own wellbeing. Many of the sections of this policy apply equally to our relationships between staff as to building relationships with students and we seek to apply these principles in all aspects of our work together, including in line management meetings and performance reviews. We encourage staff to use the safe spaces and wellbeing services on offer. We ensure that high-quality training allows them to place relationships at the heart of the work we do. We recognise that sometimes it is very difficult for staff to be emotionally-available to students and we support each other to step back when we need to.

We are kind

At Castle Manor Academy, we are kind. This means that we all, staff, students, parents and other members of the community, challenge rudeness, meanness and bullying when we see it. If we are told we have been rude or mean, we listen, apologise and correct our behaviour.

In particular, we will challenge the use of racist, disablist and other prejudiced language in all circumstances. It is unacceptable for any member of our community to use words, even in casual conversation, which are discriminatory.

We never dismiss any behaviour as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

Bullying

Bullying is the repetitive and intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group. This means when someone says or does something intentionally hurtful, and keeps doing it more than once, and after they have been told it is unkind. It can happen online (cyberbullying) or face-to-face. Bullying happens when there is an imbalance of power between individuals or groups. For example, they may be in a smaller or minority group, they may be physically smaller or weaker, or they may be younger. An imbalance of power happens when someone says ‘no’ to a behaviour and is ignored.

Any form of bullying is unacceptable at Castle Manor Academy.

Castle Manor Academy is a “telling school”. We expect all students to report any issues related to bullying, whether the target is themselves or someone else. It is also unacceptable to be a bystander or an assistant to bullying. We recognise that “telling” can be very difficult and all staff will therefore be trained to be curious and vigilant to signs of bullying within the school community. Under the Equality Act, all staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation in school. Students and parents can report bullying face-to-face to any member of staff, by reporting in person in R&R or by sending an email to the learning mentor team: CMA-RandR-Learning-Mentors@castlemanor.org.uk

At Castle Manor Academy we understand that bullying often begins with unresolved relational conflicts and we therefore are proactive identifying and responding to relational conflict as part of our anti-bullying strategy. We identify not only the target of possible bullying, but also the ringleader, the bystanders/ reinforcers and the assistants of bullying so that all parties can change their behaviour.

We also recognise that there are groups and individuals within school who are more at risk of bullying than others, such as, but not exclusively, those with disabilities or special educational needs, young carers, looked-after children, those who identified or identify themselves as being LGBTQ+ and those of minority faiths and races within the community (further information can be found at: www.anti-

bullyingalliance.org.uk). Staff are trained to be especially vigilant in these circumstances.

Being a target of bullying can be very traumatic and a cause of toxic stress. This is why we have a robust system of support and after-care for children who have been the target of bullying of any kind. These children become allocated to a member of our wellbeing team for support and weekly check-ins for as long as they are needed. Where a child is at immediate risk of harm, we follow the guidance laid out in our safeguarding policy and child protection procedures, recognising that severe bullying can be seen as emotional peer-on-peer abuse.

All reports of bullying are investigated fully by the learning mentor team and the leadership team person 'on call' in line with the Expectations for Learning policy. All incidents are logged on CPOMS and analysed by the leadership team for patterns and repetition. After investigation, and where necessary, a suitable and escalating sanction is given to the perpetrator, ranging from a restorative conversation to formal exclusion.

For serious, extreme and/or repeat offences permanent exclusion may follow.

The Academy retains the right to report incidents to the Police.

Note - bullying and other negative acts committed via social media will be investigated where possible but the school is not always able to issue sanctions for incidents if they happen outside of school. The school will work with parents to involve the police where necessary.

Racist and Prejudice Incidents

Racism and prejudice at Castle Manor Academy are completely unacceptable. Castle Manor Academy is a "telling school" and we expect students to report issues related to racism and prejudice straight away.

All reports are investigated fully by the Behaviour Team and are logged. After each investigation and where necessary a suitable punishment is given to the perpetrator. Depending on the nature of the incident, and its classification, the punishments can range from restorative conversation to formal exclusion.

For serious, extreme and/or repeat offences permanent exclusion may follow.

The Academy retains the right to report incidents to the Police and logs all racist and prejudice incidents.

After a racist/prejudice incident the parents/carers of both the victim and the perpetrator are informed.

Any incidents that are racist or prejudiced are recorded on CPOMS.

Peer-on-peer abuse

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust Safeguarding policy and Castle Manor Academy's Child Protection Procedures.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils can be dealt with using the Expectations for Learning policy and this anti-bullying policy. However, the safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns, such as where the alleged behaviour is potentially a criminal offence, could put students at risk, involves students being forced to use drugs or alcohol or involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse.

All staff are aware that bullying and relational conflicts can be a safeguarding concern, usually referred to as peer-on-peer abuse. Examples are, but not limited to, bullying and cyberbullying, physical abuse such as hitting or kicking, harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) such as sexual violence or sexual harassment, up skirting, and sending 'nudes' or 'semi-nudes'.

Incidents must be reported to the DSL immediately, in line with the Child Protection procedures.

The DSL will ordinarily ensure a risk assessment takes place to prevent repeated incidents, as well as working with parents and supporting parents to work with the police where needed or desired. Children in these circumstances will be given weekly support from our wellbeing team for as long as it is needed.

Relational conflict and friendship difficulties

Conflict in relationships between students is common. These are characterised by unkindness which is accidental and occasional, and where remorse is felt, and where the power in the relationship is balanced.

Where students are happy to try to resolve these conflicts, staff in school will support them to take part in restorative conversations.

Where these conflicts become more persistent and deliberate, but are still two-sided, 'cooling-off contracts' may be used which support students to have no contact for a limited period of time to allow conflicts to settle down. These contracts will always involve parental contact and advice.

Where these conflicts become one-sided, or where an imbalance of power has developed, they will be considered bullying and will be dealt with accordingly.

Any student can ask for help with relational conflicts by emailing the learning mentor team on CMA-RandR-Learning-Mentors@castlemanor.org.uk.

After-care

If a student has been a victim of bullying or another peer-related incident, a member of staff will be nominated to support their after-care. This will normally involve check-ins after one week, two weeks and one month, but will be tailored to individual needs. All check-ins will be recorded on CPOMS and will involve parental contact.