



P29: Child on Child Abuse Policy

RATIONALE

All members of the Commonweal School community have the right to be treated with respect and consideration and to feel confident and safe to work and/or learn. Therefore, we are committed to the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child on child abuse both within and beyond the school. We recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. This can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

A child may not find it easy to report child on child abuse and we recognise that they might show signs or act in ways that they hope an adult will notice, including a change in behaviour. Even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, we recognise that abuse may still be taking place but not being reported. We understand that the pupil who is perpetrating the abuse may also be at risk of harm and we will make every effort to ensure that the perpetrator is supported appropriately.

AIMS of this policy:

That in order to protect children we should:

(a) be aware of the nature and level of risk to which our students are or may be exposed and put in place a clear and comprehensive strategy which is tailored to our specific safeguarding context; and
(b) take a whole-school community contextual safeguarding approach to responding to child-on-child abuse.

Regard the introduction of this policy as a prevention measure. We

(a) do not feel it is acceptable merely to take a reactive approach to child on child abuse in response to alleged incidents of it; and

(b) believe that in order to tackle child on child abuse proactively, it is necessary to focus on all 4 of the following areas; (1) systems and structures (2) prevention (3) identification (4) response and intervention.

Encourage parents to inform the school if their child is feeling unsafe so that we can ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken in response.

Sets out a strategy for improving prevention and identifying and appropriately managing child on child abuse.

Support all members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on child on child abuse

Recognises that abuse should never be passed off as “banter”, just “having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

Is compliant with the statutory guidance of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy, Child on Child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse and coercive control, exercised between children. Child on child abuse can take various forms, including (but not limited to):

1. Serious bullying (including Cyberbullying).
2. Physical Abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, pulling hair or anything else causing physical harm.
3. Relationship abuse, domestic violence and abuse.
4. Child sexual exploitation
5. Youth and serious youth violence
6. Harmful sexual behaviour including sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
7. Sexual Harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes or online sexual harassment which may stand alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
8. Up skirting which involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing.
9. Initiations/hazing type rituals
10. Prejudice-based violence including, but not limited to, gender-based violence.

Our School will:

- support staff to identify and respond to child on child abuse through an ongoing and rigorous programme of CPD
- make students aware that we listen, and all child on child abuse issues will be dealt with sensitively and effectively
- continue to work towards creating an anti- child on child abuse culture
- ensure that parents/carers expressing concerns about child on child abuse have been listened to and taken seriously
- learn from effective anti- child on child abuse work from colleagues and other professional agencies
- discuss, monitor and review incidents/s of child on child abuse

GUIDELINES

School Responsibilities

1. Everyone must be aware that child on child abuse will not be tolerated.
2. All members of the school community must clearly understand the school’s definition of, and procedures to deal with child on child abuse.
3. The school must have clear guidelines and procedures to deal with the prevention of, and incidences of, child on child abuse.
4. Regularly update and evaluate our approaches to take into account the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.

5. Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others which will be upheld by all.
6. Work with staff and outside agencies to identify all forms of prejudice-driven child on child abuse.
7. Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including their resilience.
8. Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
9. Challenge practice which does not uphold the values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
10. Consider all opportunities for addressing child on child abuse in all forms throughout the curriculum and supported with a range of approaches such as through displays, assemblies, child support and the school/student council.
11. Train all staff including teaching staff, support staff (including administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff to identify all forms of child on child abuse, follow the school policy and procedures (including recording and reporting incidents).
12. Proactively gather and record concerns and intelligence about child on child incidents and issues so as to effectively develop strategies to prevent child on child abuse from occurring.
13. Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
14. Work with other agencies and the wider school community to prevent and tackle concerns.
15. Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.
16. Be encouraged to use social media responsibly.

Staff Responsibilities

1. Staff will be vigilant in class, during tutorial time and whilst on duty, and deal with it, so that child on child abuse does not pass undetected.
2. Staff will investigate any allegations of child on child abuse and take the complainant's concerns seriously.
3. Staff will inform the Tutor / Head of House/ Deputy Head of House/Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Headteacher (Student Support) of any allegations received.
4. Heads of House will inform the Assistant Headteacher if the problem is difficult for them to resolve.
5. Through tutorial programmes, or curricular input, staff will seek to raise awareness of the school's firm stand against child on child abuse
6. Staff will, where possible, seek to enhance their skills in dealing with child abuse through specific training.
7. To create an environment in which reporting is made easier for the victim.
8. Child on child abuse will be recorded appropriately on CPOMS. The Student Support Team will carry out regular analysis of patterns and trends and react accordingly

Involvement of Students & Student Responsibilities

1. Students will treat other members of the school with kindness, consideration and respect.
2. Students should report any incidents of child on child abuse either of themselves or others.
3. Students should ask for help from the tutor, head of house or any member of staff in defusing a difficult situation. They should not retaliate.

We will:

1. Regularly speak to children and get young people's views on the extent and nature of child on child abuse.
2. Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about child on child abuse.
3. Offer support to pupils who have experienced child on child abuse and to those who are are alleged perpetrators in order to address the problems they have.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

It is essential that all concerns and allegation of child on child abuse are handled sensitively, appropriately and promptly.

Step 1

- Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) (and any other children involved/impacted upon).

Step 2

- Record the incident using the school's safeguarding recording procedures and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/ Deputy in line with safeguarding and child protection procedures, as soon as possible. Is information about the incident first hand or do other individuals need to be spoken to, to confirm?

Step 3

- The DSL will consider the following: -
 1. The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. Victims should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and support they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with the school's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.
 2. Has a criminal offence been committed? If yes, contact the police (See also '[When To call the Police](#)' (NPCC)).
 3. Ages of pupils / developmental stage.
 4. Whether there is a power imbalance between the children.
 5. Whether the alleged incident is a one off incident or there is a sustained pattern.
 6. Any on-going risks to the victim, other children, or staff.
 7. Other related issues and the wider context, including whether there is evidence of the victim/s being exploited, criminally and/or sexually.

Step 4

- If there is no evidence to suggest that a criminal offence has taken place the DSL will consider next steps, in discussion with parents/carers unless to do so would increase the risk to the pupils involved.
- If there is evidence to suggest that a criminal offence has taken place the DSL will follow the guidance on pages 109-111 of KCSIE. Any report to the police will be in parallel with a referral to children's/adults' social care.

This will typically involve:

1. Considering support, including Early Help support for both the victim and perpetrator (does the perpetrator have unmet needs?)
2. Making a referral to children's/adult's social care if the victim has been harmed, or is at risk of harm.
3. Making a referral to children's/adult's social care if the perpetrator is at risk of harm /

- being harmed (under-lying welfare and safety concerns which may have triggered behaviours).
4. Writing a risk assessment for pupils, who have been identified as being at increased risk of child on child abuse (considered for both the pupil perpetrating the abuse and the pupil who is the victim) to include protection and support.
 5. Considering targeted education about healthy relations for the perpetrator and any additional sanctions under the school's behaviour policy.

Additional guidance for responding to consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images, videos and/or livestreams

Step 1

- Report to your DSL immediately.
- **Never** view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – **this is illegal**.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- **Do not** delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- **Do not** ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).
- **Do not** share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- **Do not** say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- **Do** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

Taken from [UKCIS guidance](#)

Step 2

- The DSL will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. This may include the staff member who was initially made aware of the incident/concern and the leadership team.

The following risk factors will be considered:

1. Significant age difference between the sender/receiver involved
2. If staff recognise the pupil as more vulnerable than is usual (ie at risk)
3. If the image is of a severe or extreme nature
4. If the situation is not isolated and the image has been more widely distributed
5. If this is not the first time the pupil has been involved in a sexting act
6. If other knowledge of either the sender/recipient^[1] may add cause for concern (ie difficult home circumstances)

Step 3

- A referral will be made to children's/adults' social care (and/or the police immediately if there is a concern that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of immediate harm at any point in the process.

Step 4

- Interviews will take place with those involved.

Step 5

- Parents/carers should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process in order to best support the child or young person, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put the child or young person at risk.

Step 6

- Safeguarding records will be updated using the school's safeguarding recording procedures, including actions taken / not taken and the justification for these decisions (linked to the points above).

SANCTIONS

Any Sanctions must be balanced against any police investigation, the child/children's unmet needs and any other action intervention planned regarding safeguarding concerns. Before deciding on appropriate action, the school will always consider its duty to safeguard all its students in its care from harm; the underlying reason for a child's behaviour, any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the child; the risk that the child may pose to other children and the severity of the child on child abuse and the causes of it.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed by the Personnel and Welfare of Students committee every three years or sooner required by legislation.