

Child on Child Abuse Policy

Introduction

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 states that ‘Governing Bodies and Proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the organisation, and ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.’

Furthermore, ‘Where there is a safeguarding concern, Governing Bodies, Proprietors and company leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The organisations safeguarding policies and procedures should be transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, clients, parents and carers. Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report, any form of abuse, exploitation or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.’

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of a social club (Doodles) and online (extra familial harm). It is important that all staff recognise indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports

All staff understand that even if there are no reports of this type of harm, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they will speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead- Kathrynne Mason (or deputy)

This means that ALL staff will take a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to any unacceptable behaviour including ‘banter’ and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and a safe environment for all children

All staff must ensure that they reassure any victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe

No victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including online bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- hate incidents and hate crimes which may also include an online element;
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as teenage relationship abuse);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- racism;
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element);
- harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) which is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive. HSB can occur online and/or face to face, and can also occur simultaneously between the two – and includes, for example:
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- online sexual harassment this may be stand-alone or part of a wider pattern of sexual violence and/or harassment. It may include; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery); sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media, sexual exploitation, coercion and threats, and coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they are not comfortable with online.

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