Child on child abuse policy

This document is the policy for: child on child abuse at

The River Peck Federation



It was developed during the:

Summer Term 2023

Child-on-child abuse/sexual harassment and violence

Introduction

Bellenden and Pilgrims' Way Primary School recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take such abuse extremely seriously. This includes verbal as well as physical abuse. Child on child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as part of "banter" or "growing up".

We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child on child abuse within our school and beyond.

In cases where child on child abuse is identified we will follow our child protection procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation.

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting or youth produced digital imagery
- Upskirting
- Bullying
- Radicalisation
- Children who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines)
- Technology can be used for bullying and other abusive behaviour

Some of these behaviours will need to be handled with reference to other policies in school such as the behaviour policy, anti- bullying policy, child protection policy and online safety policy.

This policy concentrates on child on child abuse in the context of sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is compliant with the statutory guidance on p child on child abuse as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021) and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

Policy Development

The policy has been developed in consultation with senior leaders, staff and governors.

Aims

The policy will: -

- Set out our strategies for preventing, identifying and managing child on child abuse.
- Take a contextual approach to safeguarding all children and young people involved. Acknowledging that children who have allegedly abused their peers or displayed harmful sexual behaviour are themselves vulnerable and may have been abused by peers, parents or adults in the community.

Understanding child on child abuse

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex or a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

The impact of this behaviour on children can be very distressing and have an impact on emotional health and wellbeing as well as academic achievement.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence may also occur online.

The Context

All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a child's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it.

In this policy we recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour (Harmful Sexual Behaviour HSB).

We are adopting the NSPCC definition of HSB as: -

"Sexual behaviours expressed by children...that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child...or adult."

We will also use Simon Hackett's continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours (appendix 1) and the Brook Traffic Lights (appendix 2) to identify what is expected behaviour and what behaviour is inappropriate at each developmental stage.

Vulnerable groups

We recognise that all children can be at risk however we acknowledge that some groups are more vulnerable. This can include: those with experience of abuse within their family; living with domestic violence; young people in care; children who go missing; children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities); children who identify or are perceived as LGBT and/or have other protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.

Whist research tells is us girls are more frequently identified as being abused by their peers and girls are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching in schools, we understand that abuse is not confined to girls.

Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may display other behaviour such as antisocial behaviour. We recognise that both boys and girls experience child on child abuse, however, this may present differently.

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Responding to Alleged Incidents Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

All reports of child on child abuse will be addressed on a case-by-case basis with the designated safeguarding team taking a leading role and using their professional judgement. These judgements will be supported by other agencies (such as social care or the police) as required.

The immediate response to a report:

 The school will take all reports seriously and will reassure the victim that they will be supported and kept safe.

- All staff will be trained to manage a report (Safeguarding training in September 2021 and child on child specific training in February 2022).
- Staff will not promise confidentiality as the concern will need to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or social care) staff will however only share the report with those people who are necessary to progress it.
 - The disclosure will be reported on CPOMS as soon as possible, recording facts presented by the child. CPOMS will alert the safeguarding team in addition to anyone else who needs to be informed.
 - We will follow the Protection Promise (detailed in appendix 3). This document will facilitate the conversation between the child and staff when addressing reports of child on child abuse.

Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence or harassment, the risks should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. It may be necessary for a risk assessment to be put into place for the child(ren). The risk assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support;
- The alleged perpetrator; and
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them;

Risk assessments will be recorded in a written format and will be filed on CPOMS, shared with relevant staff and kept under review.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will ensure they are engaging with MASH if applicable.

Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

Following an incident, we will consider

- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- The ages of the children involved;
- The developmental stages of the children involved;
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse;
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff;
 and other related issues and wider context?

Options to manage the report

This decision will be made based on the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All decisions will be recorded on CPOMS and children involved will be monitored daily and this monitoring will be reviewed at monthly safeguarding meetings.

1) Manage internally

In some cases of sexual harassment, we may decide that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally. Such incidents can be addressed through utilising the safeguarding, behaviour and anti-bullying policies as well as by providing pastoral support.

The case will be investigated by a member of the senior leadership team, giving all parties an opportunity to voice their account. When sexual behaviours are identified as inappropriate, staff must think about why the child or young person is exhibiting the behaviour.

Every effort should be made to discuss the matter with the child and obtain their account of the situation and reason for their behaviour. When children or young people do not have the language, experience or ability to seek help, staff must look carefully at their behaviour to find out what they need

In each case of inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour, our priority is to educate the child(ren) about why such behaviour in unacceptable. There will be instances of behaviour where staff believe it is necessary to go beyond the teaching delivered through the curriculum in immediate response to the behaviour. This may include targeted work with individuals or groups to address behaviours which put the child or others at risk. In some instances, targeted work may include strategies such as creating social stories. The targeted work should be complemented by the PSHE education curriculum, but not replace it.

In addition to educating the child(ren) about the inappropriate behaviour, sanctions may be put in place. **Sanctions** may include: missing playtime/lunchtime, a phone call/meeting with parent, behaviour chart which must be presented daily to SLT. In each case, it will be made clear to the child why the sanction is being applied and what behaviour is required in the future.

In line with above, we may decide that the children involved may benefit from Early Help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

2. Reporting to MASH or Early Help

Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to MASH following locally agreed protocols. We will then take advice from MASH on how to progress.

In line with above, we may decide that the children involved may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

If appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy will be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alged perpetrator and any other children that require support.

3. Reporting to the Police

Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is this will be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach.

Where a report has been made to the police, the school or college will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

Where there is a criminal investigation, we will work closely with the relevant agencies to support all children involved (including potential witnesses). Where required, advice from the police will be sought.

Support for Children Affected by Peer-on- peer abuse

At Bellenden and Pilgrims' Way Primary School, we are committed to keeping the victim at the heart of the process.

- We will monitor child(ren) closely after the incident or disclosure. This could take the form of a
 dedicated time of the day/week where a selected member of staff can meet with the child to
 check on wellbeing.
- In cases involving children who are subject to risk, harm and abuse and who have LAC status, the children's social worker must be informed and a coordinated approach to address any incidents or concerns will be require.
- If required, the victim/perpetrator could have weekly sessions with our play therapist.

Physical Abuse

While a clear focus of child on child abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive.

These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, will be reported to the police.

The principles from the anti-bullying and behaviour policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority.

When dealing with other alleged behaviour which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff can draw on aspects of Hackett's continuum (Appendix 1) to assess where the alleged behaviour falls on a spectrum and to decide how to respond. This could include, for example, whether it:

- is socially acceptable
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- is socially acceptable within the peer group

- is problematic and concerning
- involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- involves an element of coercion or pre-planning
- involves a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour
- involves a misuse of power

Online Behaviour

Many forms of child on child abuse have an element of online behaviour including behaviours such as cyberbullying and sexting.

Policies and procedures concerning this type of behaviour can be found on the website, via antibullying, e-safety and child protection policy.

Prevention

At the River Peck federation, we believe that education is the most important tool for preventing child on child abuse. We actively seek to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child on child abuse by:

- Staff training on the nature, prevalence and effect of child on child abuse, and how to prevent, identify and respond to it. This includes:
- (a) Contextual Safeguarding;
- (b) The identification and classification of specific behaviours; and
- (c) The importance of taking seriously all forms of child on child abuse (no matter how low level they may appear) and ensuring that no form of child on child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing.
- Educating children about the nature and prevalence of child on child abuse via PSHE and the wider curriculum.

We have weekly PSHE sessions which are discussion based. This gives the children the opportunity to ask and answer questions and voice concerns/misconceptions.

It is important to use that children have a trusted and positive relationship with staff and we build this by ensuring staff show that they respect students, listen and respond effectively.

Through our PSHE curriculum, we teach children the following:

- -different types of relationships (including friendships, family relationships and dealing with strangers) -how to recognise, understanding and build healthy relationships (including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, how to manage conflict and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships)
- -how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health
- -healthy relationships and online safety.

We ensure the subjects are carefully designed to safeguard and support pupils and are deliverable for schools. Nevertheless, we are clear on the themes and issues they should cover, in an age-appropriate way, to achieve this. Relationships and RSE will be age-appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face.

- Each term, pupils in year 5 and 6 are separated into boys and girls and met with by a member of senior leadership team. These meetings are used as an opportunity for children to raise any concerns and voice if there are any areas of school where they do not feel safe. We also make sure each child has a named person in school that they can raise concerns with if they ever feel unsafe. Any findings are actioned and shared with relevant staff.
- Pupils are frequently told what to do if they witness or experience such abuse, the effect that it can have on those who experience it and the possible reasons for it.
- Children are regularly informed about the school's approach to such issues, including its zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of child on child abuse.
- Engaging parents on this issue by talking about it with parents as issues arise in addition to workshops educating parents of risks, such as e-safety workshops.
- Ensuring that all child on child abuse issues are fed back to the safeguarding team so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify pupils who maybe in need of additional support. In the monthly safeguarding meeting, any child on child abuse issues are discussed and actions put in place.
- Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse (both inside and outside the classroom).
- Working with all staff and volunteers, pupils and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the School community.
- Creating conditions in which our pupils can aspire to and realise safe and healthy relationships.
- Creating a culture in which our pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to.
- Responding to cases of child on child abuse promptly and appropriately.

Appendix 1:

Simon Hackett (2010) has proposed a continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people:

Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent
Inappropriate • Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour • Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group • Context for behaviour may be inappropriate • Generally consensual and reciprocal	Problematic Problematic Problematic and concerning behaviours Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected No overt elements of victimisation Consent issues may be unclear May lack reciprocity or equal power May include levels of compulsivity	Abusive Victimising intent or outcome Includes misuse of power Coercion and force to ensure victim compliance Intrusive Informed consent lacking, or not able to be freely given by victim May include elements of expressive violence	Violent Physically violent sexual abuse Highly intrusive Instrumental violence which is physiologically and/ or sexually arousing to the perpetrator Sadism
	Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group Context for behaviour may be inappropriate Generally consensual	 Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group Context for behaviour may be inappropriate Generally consensual and reciprocal No overt elements of victimisation Consent issues may be unclear May lack reciprocity or equal power May include levels 	 Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group Context for behaviour may be inappropriate Generally consensual and reciprocal Problematic and concerning behaviours Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected No overt elements of victimisation Consent issues may be unclear May lack reciprocity or equal power May include levels of compulsivity Victimising intent or outcome Coercion and force to ensure victim compliance Intrusive Informed consent lacking, or not able to be freely given by victim May include levels elements of

 $\frac{https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/publications/harmful-sexual-behaviour-framework.pdf}{}$

Appendix 2

Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool

Behaviours: age 0 to 5

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

What is a green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability. They are reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

Green behaviours

- holding or playing with own genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about other children's genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about breasts, bottoms or genitals of adults
- games e.g. mummies and daddies,
- doctors and nurses
- enjoying nakedness
- interest in body parts and what they do
- curiosity about the differences between boys and girls

What is an amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

Amber behaviours

- preoccupation with adult sexual
- behaviour

- pulling other children's pants down/skirts up/trousers down against their will
- talking about sex using adult slang
- preoccupation with touching the genitals of other people
- following others into toilets or changing rooms to look at them or touch them
- talking about sexual activities seen on TV/online

What is a red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental, or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red behaviours

- persistently touching the genitals of other children
- persistent attempts to touch the genitals of adults
- simulation of sexual activity in play
- sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects
- forcing other children to engage in sexual play

Behaviours: age 5 to 9 and 9 to 13

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

What is a green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

Green behaviours 5-9

- feeling and touching own genitals
- curiosity about other children's genitals
- curiosity about sex and relationships, e.g. differences between boys and girls, how sex happens, where babies come from, same-sex relationships
- sense of privacy about bodies
- telling stories or asking questions using swear and slang words for parts of the body

Green behaviours 9-13

- solitary masturbation
- use of sexual language including swear and slang words
- having girl/boyfriends who are of the same, opposite or any gender
- interest in popular culture, e.g. fashion, music, media, online games, chatting online
- · need for privacy
- consensual kissing, hugging, holding hands with peers

What is an amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

Amber behaviours 5-9

- questions about sexual activity which persist or are repeated frequently, despite an answer having been given
- sexual bullying face to face or through texts or online messaging
- engaging in mutual masturbation
- persistent sexual images and ideas in talk, play and art
- use of adult slang language to discuss sex

Amber behaviours 9-13

- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- verbal, physical or cyber/virtual sexual bullying involving sexual aggression
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) targeted bullying
- exhibitionism, e.g. flashing or mooning
- giving out contact details online
- $\bullet \ \ \text{viewing pornographic material} \\$
- worrying about being pregnant or having STIs

What is a red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur.

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red behaviours 5-9

- frequent masturbation in front of others
- sexual behaviour engaging significantly younger or less able children
- forcing other children to take part in

- sexual activities
- simulation of oral or penetrative sex
- sourcing pornographic material online

Red behaviours 9-13

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- distributing naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- · sexually explicit talk with younger
- children
- sexual harassment
- arranging to meet with an online acquaintance in secret
- genital injury to self or others
- forcing other children of same age, younger or less able to take part in sexual activities
- sexual activity e.g. oral sex or intercourse
- presence of sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- evidence of pregnancy

Protection Promise

What will happen next?

There will be people that we need to tell.

For example- parents, other teachers, people from outside school who could help us.

We will respect your privacy at all times where we can do.

There will be conversations that we need to have.

For example- with other people involved with what you have told me or who may know something about it.

You have done the right thing to tell; we will make this clear to everyone involved

There will be decisions that we need to make.

For example- what will the consequences be for the behaviour, how we can keep you (and others) safe from now on.

Where possible we will make these decisions with you not for you.

There will be times where we will check in with you.

For example- we will need to make sure that you and others remain safe.

But we will always listen to you when you need to talk.

There will be changes to the things that we do in school.

For example- where we put adults on the playground, topics in assemblies or lessons.

Your privacy is crucial here but we will ask for your ideas about changes that we make.

Useful Publications and Websites

Government Publications

Sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools

<u>www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges</u>

Keeping Children safe in Education - www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education

Preventing youth violence and gang involvement

www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence

Preventing and tackling bullying in schools

www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

Other useful documents

Sexting

Sexting in schools and colleges-Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609874/6 2939 SP NCA Sexting In Schools FINAL Update Jan17.pdf

Child on child abuse

Farrer &Co - Child on child abuse toolkit, guidance on peer-on peer abuse policy and template child on child abuse policy

www.farrer.co.uk/Global/Peer-on-peer%20abuse%20toolkit%2014.pdf

Anti-bullying alliance

There are some useful links on the section on sexual bullying:-

Sexual bullying: developing effective anti-bullying practice- A guide for school staff and other professional

www.anti-

<u>bullyingalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Sexual%20bullying%20-%20antibullying%20guidance%20for%20teachers%20and%20other%20professionals%20-</u>%20Feb17 1.pdf

Preventing abuse among children and young people-guidance from Stop it Now www.stopitnow.org.uk/files/stop booklets childs play preventing abuse among children and young people01 14.pdf

What is Age appropriate?

http://www.stopitnow.org/ohc-content/what-is-age-appropriate

Brook Traffic lights

https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/using-the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool

NSPCC-Harmful sexual behaviour

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour/

NCB Harmful sexual behaviour

https://www.ncb.org.uk/resources-publications/resources/workforce-perspectives-harmful-sexual-behaviour

NSPCC —Is this sexual abuse?

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/nspcc-helplines-report-peer-sexual-abuse.pdf

Online sexual harassment

Project deSHAME- Digital Exploitation and Sexual Harassment Amongst Minors in Europe Understanding, Preventing, Responding

https://www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame

Sexism

It's Just Everywhere- a study on sexism in schools —and how we tackle it https://ukfeminista.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Report-Its-just-everywhere.pdf

•Relationship Education , Relationship and Sex Education HMSO www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex