

Child on Child Abuse (Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment between children) Policy and Procedural Guidance



**Southend YMCA
Community School**
building a future

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS:

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED:

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Context and Definition

Child on child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others.

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from child on child abuse including:

- Bullying (including online bullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing
- Physical harm;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent;
- Upskirting;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g:

- significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. School staff, alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy, have to make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

2. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2022 states that

‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and sets out how allegations of child on child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with’.

It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard

‘Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.’

Child on child abuse is referenced in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with peer on peer necessitate separate policy guidance. We have a zero-tolerance approach to child on child issues, and harmful behaviour. At Southend YMCA Community School we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child’s emotional and mental health and well-being.

3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of child on child abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues. Across our schools, we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-Bullying including Online Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

4. Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together, 2022, highlighting that every assessment of a child, 'must be informed by the views of the child'. (Working Together, 2022) This is echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

5. Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider

- What abuse is and what it looks like
- How it can be managed
- What appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual
- What preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

- Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
- Children can abuse other children. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. (KCSIE 2022)
- Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
- Staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.
- Staff should recognise that whilst a child being LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable

disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore, be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, significant harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

6. Types of abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

6.1 Physical abuse

This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

6.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will follow the DfE Guidance: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2021 Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) with consideration of:

- Managing internally
- Early Help
- Hub/MASH referral
- Reporting to the police

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

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as to the young person it is intended towards. Sexual harassment may include

- Sexual comments such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual “jokes” or taunting
- Physical behaviour such deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (where someone takes a picture under a persons’ clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim)
- Online sexual harassment

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and

- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

6.3 Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

6.4 Online Bullying

Online Bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, email, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

Online bullying can take many forms

- Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites
- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- Stealing someone's online identity
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chatrooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations

6.5 Sexting / Sharing nude or indecent imagery

Sexting is defined as the production and/or sharing of sexual photos and videos of and by young people who are under the age of 18. It includes nude or nearly nude images and/or sexual acts. It is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'. 'Sexting' does not include the sharing of sexual photos and videos of under-18 year olds with or by adults. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police (UKCCIS "Sexting – How to Respond to an Incident").

Upskirting: 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. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim. This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the UK Council for Internet Safety advice on sharing nudes and semi-nudes:

6.6 Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. Hazing may also include an online element. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

6.7 Prejudiced Behaviour

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – for example disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

6.8 Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner. This abuse may be child sexual exploitation.

7. Expected staff action

Staff should consider the seriousness of the case and make a quick decision whether to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately before taking any further in-school actions.

8. Recognising child on child abuse

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and consider:

- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery
- The effect on the victim
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

It is important to deal with a situation of child on child abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

Staff are trained in how to respond with care and diligence when incidents are reported, and how to reassure the victim that they have done the right thing in reporting any harmful behaviour. Staff will talk to the children in a calm and consistent manner. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school or college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to child on child issues, and harmful behaviour. Staff will not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood, including in conversations with parents when incidents occur. Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.

Our coordinated approach to safeguarding records means that when incidents occur, these are logged and staff will consider previous incidents in order to spot patterns, and consider an appropriate response. This ensures that consideration is given to problematic or harmful behaviour and the risk of incidents re-occurring. Logs will include a column for "follow up".

Children will be aware through preventative educational opportunities, as well as after an incident has been reported, that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

8.1 Taking Action

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting, considering the need for a risk assessment (appendix 1)
- Record all incidents and all action taken

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per the school behaviour policy.

8.2 Recording sexualised behaviour

- Be clear, explicit and non-avoidant, and avoid vague statements or euphemisms
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the child. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.

- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around.

Designated Safeguarding Leads will also keep a stand-alone log of all child on child incidents to allow effective monitoring and tracking of incidents.

8.3 Gather the Facts

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. Ask the young people to tell you what happened. Use open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not interrogate or ask leading questions.

8.4 Consider the Intent

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

8.5 Decide on your next course of action

If you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately; they will follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

It is important that schools and colleges consider every report on a case-by-case basis.

Whatever the response, it should be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded in writing.

When to inform the alleged perpetrator(s) will be a decision that should be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to local authority children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, the DSL should speak to the local authority children's social care and the police and discuss next steps and how the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and should not stop the school or college taking immediate action to safeguard its children, where required.

If the Hub/MASH and the police intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

8.6 Informing parents/carers

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent/carer. Schools will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school or college is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of local authority children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies. If the pupil 13+ and does not want to share with parents, use the

The best way to inform parents/carers is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents/carers whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

9. Points to consider

What is the age of the children involved?

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked.

Where did the incident or incidents take place?

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person? Are there any additional needs to consider in terms of a child's understanding?

Repetition

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved? Are there any previous incidents recorded of this nature towards other children?

10. Next Steps

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

For the young person who has been harmed

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends; in which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people, or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a

speaker on online bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of Relationship and Sex Education (from 2020), PSHE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support. As required, support can be sought through the Hub/MASH to access specialist services.

It is important that the needs and wishes of the victim are carefully considered when creating and managing a risk assessment, as well considering what action they would like taken. Overall, the priority should be to make the victim's daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school is a safe space for them.

For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. This will ensure there is forward-looking action for the alleged perpetrator to avoid any further behaviour which could be considered problematic or harmful. However, they may still be a need to apply disciplinary actions. Any actions must comply with the law regarding reporting incidents and working in line with statutory guidance for support.

Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members. It may also be that a more specialist service is required which can be accessed through a referral to the Hub/MASH. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service).

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that the young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. If there is any form of criminal investigation, it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education elsewhere.

It may be that the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others, in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multiagency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

If creating a risk assessment, particularly when the police are involved, any risk management measures must strike a balance between management of risk and the rights of an unconvicted person (e.g. rights to privacy, family life, etc). In some instances, the victim may state concerns around ongoing contact at school with the alleged perpetrator. Where possible, victims should be

given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. This will however need to be balanced with the school's or college's duty and responsibilities to protect other children.

Consideration should therefore be given to:

- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed
- The ages of the children involved
- The developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is/are the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature, confident and well known social standing? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature)
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children
- Importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff, and other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or local authority children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly. This is a matter for the school and should be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should take a leading role. The school should consider if, by taking any action, it would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. Careful liaison with the police and/or local authority children's social care should help the school make a determination. It will also be important to consider whether there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to reach its own view about what happened while an independent investigation is considering the same facts

After care

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). For this reason, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in line with their behaviour policy. This process should include a review of the necessary actions to keep all parties safe and meet their needs.

If the perpetrator(s) remains in the same school or college as the victim, the school or college should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator(s) now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the perpetrator(s)' timetable.

Any conviction is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school. It will be important that the school or college ensure both the victim and perpetrator(s) remain protected, especially from any bullying or harassment (including online).

Where cases are classified as "no further action" by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school or college should continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated or was withdrawn does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Decisions should be discussed with the victim in this light and continue to offer support.

The alleged perpetrator(s) is/are also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience

11. Preventative Strategies

Child on child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most robust policies and support processes. It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent child on child abuse.

This school has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. There is a strong and positive PSHE curriculum, with a focus on RSE, that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. Healthy relationships and consent are explicit topics spiralled across the curriculum, ensuring education is timely and age-appropriate, with opportunities to re-visit learning. Students understand what behaviour constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence, and how to consent can be recognised.

Young people are part of changing their circumstances and, through Feed Back Friday – Pupil Voice for example, we encourage young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. We involve pupils in the positive ethos in school; one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

Just as we consider pre-emptive education, the learning pupils do after any incident is also key in reducing the risk of behaviour being repeated. This may be part of restorative and reflective work following an incident.

Additional staff training on specifically how to spot the signs of child on child abuse are addressed as part of the CPD programme for all staff.

Designated Safeguarding Leads will track trends which may help to identify students who are demonstrating problematic behaviour which could become harmful, and will offer Early Help as necessary.

12. Where to go for further information

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2022)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2021)

DfE: Relationship Education and Relationship and Sex Education, July 2020

UKCIS: Sexting guidance for schools, 2020

DfE: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

Key messages from research on children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour

NPCC- When to call the police

Brook Traffic Light Tool

Working Together (HMG, 2018)

Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB, 2021)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG, 2015)

Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE, 2017)

Teaching online safety in schools (DfE, 2019)

Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - good practice for schools (ECC, 2021)

DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation at school, January 2018

DfE: Statutory guidance School exclusion, May 2020

DfE: Behaviour and discipline in schools, January 2016

DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018

DfE: Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff, November 2014

DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018

UKCIS: Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online. May 2017

UKCIS: Education for a connected world, June 2020

Gov.uk: Equality Act 2010: advice for schools

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2018)

Data Protection Act (2018)

Education Act (2002)

Children Act (1989)

Children Act (2004)

Children and Social Work Act (2003)

Appendix 1

RISK ASSESSMENT	CONSIDERATIONS	CHILD 'A'	CHILD 'B'	NOTES	ACTIONS
Details of the incident Record details of the incident from the point of view of both children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How serious is the incident? Was it a crime? Do we need to limit contact between the children involved? (If the allegation relates to rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault, the answer is automatically yes) How did the school find out about it? Was it reported directly or by someone else with knowledge of the incident? 			Record additional information E.g. previous, unrelated behaviour incidents	
Social risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the children share a peer group? Are people in their friend group likely to take sides? Do they both attend your school? Do other people know about the incident? Do those people understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who they can talk to if they have concerns about the people involved, or about their own safety and wellbeing The importance of confidentiality If, and how, they may need to be involved in any further investigations Are they likely to be the subject of gossip, bullying or further harassment? Have there been previous incidents of sexually inappropriate behaviour within their peer group(s)? Do they risk being alienated from their friend group(s) as a result of this incident? 				
Physical risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they feel, or continue to feel, physically threatened by the other child? Do you have reason to believe they pose a continued risk to the safety and wellbeing of the victim, or other pupils and staff? Are they at risk of physical harm as a result of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by peers). Do they share classes/break times/etc.? Are they likely to come into contact with each other (or anyone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school? How can such contact be limited? 				

Appendix 2

Safeguarding Risk Assessment (Risk Assessment to be shared with: Headteacher, Inclusion Team and any relevant staff or external agencies)

Southend YMCA Community School recognises that in order to safeguard children effectively, risk assessments may be required and involve a multi-agency approach, involving all members of the child's professional network; if applicable. A framework of risk assessment has been produced to support the identification of risk and make decisions on appropriate actions to address them. Ultimately, any decisions are for the school to make on a case-by-case basis, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) taking a leading role, using their professional judgement and support from agencies. Risk assessments should be utilised where there is risk of significant harm: "not only ill treatment (including sexual violence, harassment and abuse), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development". The main focus of any risk assessment should be the safety and protection of the child/ren and the environment they are in and should take into account any events of the victim and/or the alleged perpetrator which are pertinent to the safeguarding issue. If a High-level risk is identified, then immediate action must be taken.

Risk Assessment – Student Welfare									
Student Name:			DOB:		Year:		Completed on:		
Parent/ Carer details: Address: Contact Number: Email:			Context for Risk Assessment:			Completed by:			
						Present at the meeting:			
Lead DSL:		Key Worker:		Review dates:					
What is the risk?		Level of Risk (Low, Medium, High)	Who might be harmed?	Action taken to lower risk		Action by whom?	Action by when?	Amended at review?(Y/N)	If so how?
Overall summary of risk and agreed actions									
Views/ comments from the student:									
Views/ comments from the parent/ carer:									
Risk Assessment Agreed by:		Parent/ Carer Name:		Signature:			Date:		
Risk Assessment Agreed by:		School representative Name:		Signature:			Date:		
Review date:		Parent/ Carer Signature:		School representative Signature:			Date:		
Review date:		Parent/ Carer Signature:		School representative Signature:			Date:		
Review date:		Parent/ Carer Signature:		School representative Signature:			Date:		

