

St John's Church of England School

'I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength'
Philippians 4:13



Child-on-child Abuse Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2024
Due for Review: Summer 2025

School Vision

‘.....I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength’. Phil 4:13.

Our ethos is deeply rooted in the Bible, underpinned by **faith** and committed to educational excellence. In our community we respect that everyone is uniquely made in the image of God. We grow together in **wisdom, compassion, strength** and instil a sense of **hope** for all to flourish.

‘We make a difference’

Core Values

Faith – Is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see

Strength – Faith is God presents us with the strength to build and progress in our life and the lives of others.

Compassion – We are fair, we care and show understanding towards others.

Wisdom – Building confidence, discipline and knowledge to fully develop our talents in all areas of our lives.

Hope – Coping wisely with situations that will help guide us into fulfilling our aspirations

Rationale

At St. John's our ethos is deeply rooted in the Bible and underpinned by **faith** and educational excellence. We thrive on creating a positive school culture and climate that fosters connection, inclusion, **respect** and value for all members of our school community.

The safeguarding and wellbeing of those in our community is paramount. We strive to protect our pupils from all forms of harm, whether these come from within their family, are the product of outside influences, or by harm inflicted upon them by other children.

Our vision and values are central to the design and implementation of our child-on-child abuse policy. This helps us to provide a safe environment for which we **hope** our pupils and staff gain the **wisdom** in understanding that peer abuse can take many forms and in a range of settings.

Through our curriculum and discussions, we educate our pupils about what child-on-child abuse is, how to respond appropriately to concerns or instances of child-on-child abuse and to know how to prevent it from occurring. One example, is in the delivery of the MindUp curriculum, these lessons focus specifically on educating our pupils about parts of the brain, how they work, and the stages of development associated with our behaviours. This knowledge's equips our pupils with the ability to show **compassion** in understanding the influence and impact our actions can have on the character development of others.

We hope that in all we do, our pupils grow into responsible, resilient and respectable young adults who will endeavour to **‘make a difference’** in and for our community and for the future generations.

Introduction

‘Research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of child-on-child abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by peers, parents or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers’ (Farrer and Co, 2019)

At St John’s C of E, The governors, senior leadership team, and all staff are committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse. (as defined below) both within and beyond the School.

In particular ensuring that our school staff, protect our pupils by, wherever possible being aware of the nature and level of risk that they are exposed to, having a clear and comprehensive strategy specific to the individuals safeguarding context and having a whole school contextual safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse.

We regard the introduction of this policy as a preventative measure and it has been written to reflect the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Statutory Guidance Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

We 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 believe that in order to tackle child-on- child abuse proactively, it is necessary to focus on all four of the following areas:

- systems and structures
- prevention
- identification
- response/intervention

At St. John’s we recognise national and increasing concern about this issue, and wish to implement this policy in order to mitigate harmful attitudes and child-on-child abuse in the school setting, and encourage parents to hold us to account on this issue, so that if their child is feeling unsafe as a result of the behaviour of any of their peers, they should inform the school so that it can ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken in response.

Policy purposes and aims

This is the school’s overarching policy for any issue that could constitute child-on-child abuse. It relates to, and should be read alongside, but not limited to:

- The most up-to-date Keeping Children Safe In Education recommendations on child-on-child abuse;
- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy - including acceptable user
- Mobile and smart technology policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Policy Children Missing from Education Policy

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- DfE's advice on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (DfE's Advice)
- Any other advice and guidance referred to within it.

The policy sets out our strategy for improving prevention, and identifying and appropriately managing child-on-child abuse. It applies to all governors, the senior leadership team, and staff and is regularly reviewed and updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which pupils are or may be exposed to. It also recognises that abuse is abuse, and should never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', or 'part of growing up'.

It is compliant with the statutory guidance on peer- on-peer abuse as set out in the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, which is updated annually. Within the policy, the terms

- 'Child' and 'children', which is defined for the purposes of this policy as a person aged under 18.
- 'Victim' and/or 'perpetrator' are not used. This is because our school takes a safeguarding approach to all individuals involved in concerns or allegations about child-on-child abuse, including those who are alleged to have been abused, and those who are alleged to have abused their peers, in addition to any sanctioning work that may also be required for the latter.

Research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of child-on-child abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by peers, parents or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers.

Links to UNCRC Articles

This policy links to the following United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child articles:

- **Article 2 (non-discrimination):** The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.
- **Article 3 (best interests of the child):** Every decision and action taken relating to a child must be in their best interests.
- **Article 6 (life, survival and development):** Every child has a right to life and to develop their full potential.
- **Article 12 (respect for the views of the child):** Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously
- **Article 13-15 (freedom of expression, thought, belief, religion, association):** Children have these freedoms as long as they are within the law and do not stop others from enjoying their rights or cause others harm.

- **Article 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)** Every child must be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
- **Article 34 & 36 (sexual and other exploitation)** Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.
- **Article 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration)** Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life

What is child-on-child abuse?

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships and wider peer associations.

Child-on-child abuse includes, but is not limited to:

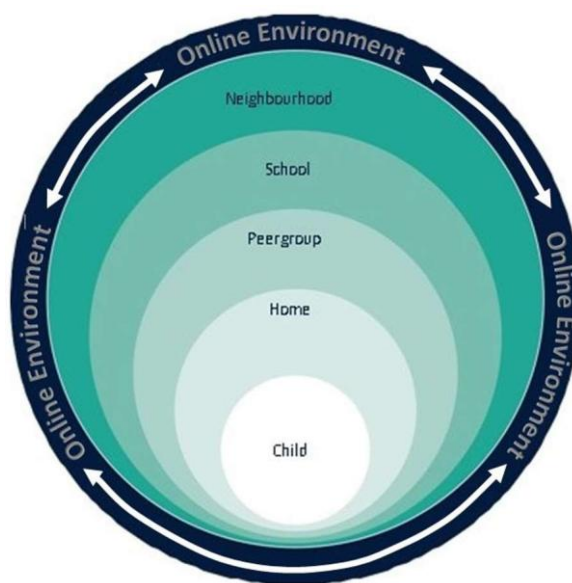
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying),
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers,
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- Sexual harassment
- Child sexual exploitation
- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- Upskirting or Downblousing
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Youth and serious youth violence
- Gender-based violence.



Appendix 1 provides further information of the types of child-on-child abuse.

Research suggests that child-on-child abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse affecting children in the UK. Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to child-on-child abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of child-on-child abuse and capture the full context of children's experiences.

This means adopting a whole school community **contextual safeguarding approach**



What is contextual safeguarding?

This policy encapsulates a Contextual Safeguarding approach, which is about changing the way that professionals approach child protection when risks occur outside of the family, thereby requiring all those within a Local Safeguarding Partnership to consider how they work alongside, rather than just refer into, children's social care, to create safe spaces in which children may have encountered child-on-child abuse.

At St. John's we adopt a whole-school community Contextual Safeguarding approach, which means:

- being aware of and seeking to understand the impact that these wider social contexts may be having on the school's students,
- creating a safe culture in the school by, for example, implementing policies and procedures that address child-on-child abuse and harmful attitudes; promoting healthy relationships and attitudes to gender/ sexuality; hotspot mapping to identify risky areas in the school; training on potential bias and stereotyped assumptions,
- being alert to and monitoring changes in students' behaviour and/or attendance,
- contributing to local child protection agendas by, for example, challenging poor threshold decisions and referring concerns about contexts to relevant

local agencies.

Sexual behaviours

The following continuum model demonstrates the range of sexual behaviours presented by children, which may be helpful when seeking to understand a student's sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it.

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive
• Developmentally expected • Socially acceptable • Consensual, mutual, reciprocal • Shared decision making	• 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 behaviour • 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 • Includes misuse of power • Coercion and force to ensure compliance • Intrusive • Informed consent lacking or not able to be freely given • May include elements of expressive violence

This continuum relates exclusively to sexual behaviours and is not exhaustive. St John's C of E School also uses [The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool](#) which enables professionals working with children to distinguish between three levels of sexual behaviour green, amber and red, and to respond according to the level of concern.

How can a child being abused by their peers be identified?

Things to look out for in victims of child-on-child abuse:

- Regularly feeling sick or unwell in the morning
- Reluctance to make the journey to and from school
- Money or possessions going missing
- Clothes or school bag torn
- Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Taking different routes to school

- Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g. moody, bad tempered, tearful
- Unhappiness
- Nightmares
- Not wanting to leave the house
- Reluctance to talk openly about school friends and playtimes

If you are concerned your son/daughter is the victim of peer on peer abuse you should contact the school as soon as possible to report the issues through the appropriate channels. Sometimes children have not reported the issues to anyone in school.

Are some children particularly vulnerable to abusing or being abused by their peers?

Any child can be vulnerable to child-on-child abuse due to the strength of peer influence during adolescence, and staff should be alert to signs of such abuse amongst all children. Individual and situational factors can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse by their peers. For example, an image of a child could be shared, following which they could become more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse due to how others now perceive them, regardless of any characteristics which may be inherent in them and/or their family.

Peer group dynamics can also play an important role in determining a child's vulnerability to such abuse. For example, children who are more likely to follow others and/or who are socially isolated from their peers may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse.

Children who are questioning or exploring their sexuality may also be particularly vulnerable to abuse by their peers.

Research suggests that:

- Child-on-child abuse may affect boys differently from girls, and that this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make-up. Barriers to disclosure will also be different. As a result, schools need to explore the gender dynamics of child-on-child abuse within their settings, and recognise that these will play out differently in single sex, mixed or gender- imbalanced environments
- Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers without SEND, and additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in children with SEND.

These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a child's disability without further exploration,
- The potential for children with SEND to be disproportionately impacted by behaviour such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs,
- Communication barriers and difficulties, and
- Overcoming these barriers.

- Some children may be more likely to experience child-on-child abuse than others as a result of certain characteristics such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, race or religious beliefs.

A whole school approach

The school actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by:

- Educating all governors, its senior leadership team, staff, students, and parents about this issue. This includes training all governors, the senior leadership team, and staff on the nature, prevalence and effect of child-on-child abuse, and how to prevent, identify, and respond to it. This includes
 - Contextual Safeguarding,
 - The identification and classification of specific behaviours, including digital behaviours,
 - 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 peer-on-peer abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing
 - Social media and online safety, including how to encourage children to use social media in a positive, responsible and safe way, and how to enable them to identify and manage abusive behaviour online.
- Educating children about the nature and prevalence of child-on-child abuse, positive, responsible and safe use of social media, and the unequivocal facts about consent, via PSHE and the wider curriculum. For example, by reviewing literature in an English class which addresses bullying and its effect on mental health. Students 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, including vulnerability of those who inflict such abuse. They are regularly informed about the School's approach to such issues, including its zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of child-on-child abuse. Educating students about consent includes teaching them basic facts such as:
 - The NSPCC PANTS rules – personal space and safe touch
 - What the word consent means in relation sexualised activity
 - That any a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
 - The legal age of sexual activity is 16, and that sexual intercourse without consent is rape. This is taught in a sensitively and carefully in line with our RSE policy and Christian values.
- Engaging parents on these issues by:
 - Asking parents what they perceive to be the risks facing their child and how they would like to see the school address those risks,
 - Involving parents in the review of school policies
 - Encouraging parents to hold the school to account on this issue, in part as a result of visibility of this policy.

- Supporting the on-going welfare of the student body by drawing on multiple resources that prioritise student mental health, and by providing in-school counselling and therapy to address underlying mental health needs. These interventions can be 'de-clinicised' and brokered through a positive relationship with the school and its staff.
- working with governors, senior leadership team, and all staff, students 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 students can aspire to, and realise, safe and healthy relationships fostering a whole-school culture:
 - Which is founded on the idea that every member of our school community is responsible for building and maintaining safe and positive relationships, and helping to create a safe school environment in which violence and abuse are never acceptable
 - Enables pupils to develop trusting relationships with staff, and in which staff understand, through regular discussion and training, the importance of these relationships in providing students with a sense of belonging, which could otherwise be sought in problematic contexts,
 - Creates a safe environment whereby pupils feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgmental environment, and have them listened to
 - Proactively identifies positive qualities in pupils, nurtures these qualities, teaches and encourages them to think about positive hopes for the future and supports pupils in developing small-scale goals that enable realistic ambitions
- Responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately
- Ensuring that all child-on-child abuse issues are fed back to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify students who may be in need of additional support. Incidents are discussed during the school's weekly safeguarding supervision meeting.

The role of all staff in recognising and dealing with child-on-child abuse

All staff should be alert to the well-being of children and young people and to signs of child-on-child abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by child-on-child abuse. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Absence from school or disengagement from school activities
- Physical injuries
- Mental or emotional health issues
- Becoming withdrawn - feeling of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations.
- Lack of sleep

- Changes in behaviour such as self-destructive behaviours
- Inappropriate behaviour for their age
- Abuse towards others may be verbally or physically
- Alcohol or substance misuse.

However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

In all suspected cases on child-on-child abuse, all staff are trained to deal with such concerns and disclosures in an empathetic, curious but serious manner. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters. They will talk to the children in a calm and consistent manner and avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

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.

Behaviour which is not abusive at first may potentially become abusive quickly or over time. Intervening early and addressing and keeping a detailed record of any inappropriate behaviour which may be disclosed or displayed by a child, is vital and could potentially prevent their behaviour from progressing on a continuum to become problematic, abusive and/or violent - and ultimately requiring (greater/more formal) engagement with specialist external and/or statutory agencies.

Staff should consider the seriousness of the case and take immediate action to report concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. As outlined in the Child Protection Safeguarding policy and Behaviour Policy, all behaviour concerns/ incidents are recorded onto CPOMS St John's chosen online software platform for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing and all pastoral issues.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Leader(s)

The Designated Safeguarding Leader will follow up with incidents, talking to our young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Convene a risk management meeting points to consider include:
 - The age of the children involved, and if there an age difference
 - Is the behaviour age appropriate e.g. 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, but should not be overlooked if other issues arise.

- Where the incident(s) took place, was it visible to others/ observed?
- The explanation of each child involved and the effect, is the behaviour regular/ repetitive?
- What is each child's understanding of what happened? Is there explanation in relation to something they may have heard or seen or experienced themselves?
- Was the behaviour deliberate and contrived?
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care to gain advice or if the child(ren) are at risk of significant harm
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Record all incidents and all action taken

Multi-Agency School Partnership (MASH)

The outcome of the investigation will follow Harrow's local threshold guidance as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. If it is believed that any young person to be at risk of significant harm, then a referral to Harrow Children Services will be made.

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the children involved. 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

This assessment will can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the next step actions and consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

Following the assessment of the incident, the following tiered steps may be taken:

- A referral will be made to either the social care/police for a full investigation (Tier 4).
- Children's Services undertaking a further assessment (Tier 3)
- The school completing and Early Help Assessment and identifying additional services/intervention that are non-statutory (Tier 2).
- On investigation, a decision has been made to handle the incident (s) internally and which case the school may implement a risk assessment plan (Tier 1).

In any of the above outcomes the school has a duty of care to manage the education needs of both children/young people in which case a risk assessment plan may be needed irrespective of the outcome

Informing parents/ carers

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care the school receive agreement to inform parents or then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible. At St. John's we appreciate that 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, and so always strongly advise parents to come into the school for a face to face meeting.

If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. Parents would not be informed if by doing so the child was put at further risk of significant harm.

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

- The 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
 - 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,
 - 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.
 - certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently through the continued curriculum of Relationship and Sex Education (from 2020), PSHE and SMSC

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.

For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

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. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

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 child(ren) they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying.

The age of criminal responsibility in England is 10 years old. 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). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the child(ren) will be provided with appropriate support and education elsewhere.

It may be that the behaviour that the child(ren) 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 multi- agency 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.

Disciplinary action

In some circumstances, as a school we will need to consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any child/children involved to address the abuse, the causes of it, and attitudes underlying it.

Disciplinary action may sometimes be appropriate, including to ensure that the child/children take(s) responsibility for and realise(s) the seriousness of their behaviour; to demonstrate to the child/children and others that child-on-child abuse can never be tolerated; and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of other children. However, these considerations must be balanced against the child's/children's own potential unmet needs and any safeguarding concerns.

Before deciding on appropriate action the St John's C of E will always consider its duty to safeguard all children from harm; the underlying reasons 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 peer on peer abuse and the causes of it. As a school we will, where appropriate, consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of using managed moves or exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognising that even if this is

ultimately deemed to be necessary, some of the measures referred to in this policy may still be required.

Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the other children in the School. Engaging in Fair Access Panel Processes to assist with decision-making associated to managed moves and exclusions can also be beneficial. Further information can be found in the Exclusions policy.

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 our children 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 child following the incident(s) are imperative.

Safety Planning

Safety planning is a positive way of supporting a child who may benefit from a planned approach; this may be either the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator. Safety plans support the child by considering the behaviours that may be risky and plan ways to manage triggers and to seek support from adults and peers. They are inclusive of parents and staff and are a planned intervention to support young people in feeling secure in the school/setting, helping young people identify behaviours that may leave them feeling anxious or at risk and have strategies that they can apply to keep themselves feeling safe

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.

At St John's we have:

- A Christian Vision underpinned by our values which help our children to understand right from wrong, help to shape their mind-sets and behaviour as they develop into young adults.
- An open environment based on equality and informed choices, allowing children to know their rights, what to do if they are upset or something is worrying them, and what it means to give true consent
- We involve our children in creating positive ethos in our school; one where all children understand the Behaviour policy and the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive
- A strong and positive PSCE, PANTS and FGM curriculum, which teaches our children about Relationships and Health Education, enables staff to holding

discussion about consent and abuse, including child-on-child abuse in an age appropriate way.

- Teaching our children about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and making reference to specific articles during lessons and assemblies.
- Teaching of the British Values, this helps staff to tackle such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to learn about democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.
- We make sure that 'support and report' signposting is available for our children, these include posters identifying DSLs, school counselling services, and other reporting platforms including the use of the worry box, child-line etc.
- Staff will not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood.
- Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.
- Our children are part of changing their circumstances and, through school council and pupil voice for example, we encourage them to support changes and develop new ideas and initiative to support peer wellbeing and behaviour

Policy Review

The Peer on Peer policy statement will be reviewed **annually** as part of the overall Child Protection and Safeguarding policy review.

Appendix 1

Types of Child-on-child 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.

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.

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 May 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassmentbetween-children-in-schools-and-colleges> with consideration of

- Managing internally (65.1, page 27)
- Early Help (65.2, page 28)
- MASH referral (65.3, page 28)
- Reporting to the police (65.4, Page 29)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex.

- Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as:
 - Rape
 - Assault by penetration
 - Sexual assault (touching).
- Sexual harassment means ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline this can include:
 - Sexual comments such as sexual stories, lewd comments or remarks about appearance of clothes
 - Sexual jokes or ‘taunting’
 - Physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against or touching clothes, displaying picture, photographs or drawings of sexual nature
 - Online sexual harassment

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. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children

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”;
- 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
- Upskirting or downblousing : This typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, 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.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). This abuse may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex)
- Non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

Like all forms of exploitation CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

CSE can:

- Be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuses
- Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse, whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources
- Happen without the child’s immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.
- Still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children: being forced or manipulated into

- transporting drugs or money through county lines,
- working in cannabis factories,
- Shoplifting or pickpocketing.
- Committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however staff should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of Child Criminal Exploitation

- Appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

The above Child Criminal Exploitation indicators can also be indicators of Child Sexual Exploitation, as can:

- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;

Bullying: This 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 for example: size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Online Bullying: This 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

Sexting / Sharing nude or indecent imagery: The term 'sexting' relates to the sending of indecent images, videos and/or written messages with sexually explicit content; these are created and sent electronically. They are often 'shared' via social networking sites and instant messaging services. Designated Safeguarding Leads will follow the UKCIS: [Sexting in schools and colleges guidance](#).

Initiation/Hazing: This is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. 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. 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.

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.

Teenage relationship abuse: This 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.