

Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and Procedures including Sexual Violence and Harassment

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy is applicable to all of the nurseries and schools of the Stephen Perse Foundation (the **School**). It is applicable to the whole school community, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and to boarders.
- 1.2. The School recognises that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse). We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1. This Policy:

- is the School's overarching policy for any issue that could constitute child-on-child abuse. It relates to, and should be read alongside, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and any other relevant School policies including, but not limited to, the PSHEE Policy, Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils, Attendance Policy and Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.
- sets out our procedures for preventing, identifying and appropriately managing child-on-child abuse. This applies to all members of the School's Governing Body, Operational and Educational Executive, the Senior Leadership Teams of each individual school, and all staff. It is reviewed annually, and updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which students are or may be exposed.
- is compliant with the statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in the Department for Education (**DfE**) Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) (**KCSIE 2026**) statutory guidance.
- ensures that a safeguarding approach is taken to all individuals involved in allegations of or concerns 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 that may also be required for the latter. We recognise 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 other children, their family or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers.
- uses the terms 'child' and 'children', which are defined for the purposes of this policy as a person aged under 18. We have nonetheless chosen not to restrict our approach to child-on-child abuse under this policy to children but instead to adopt a wider interpretation of our safeguarding responsibilities so that they apply to all students, regardless of age. Although the starting point is that the School's response to child-on-child abuse should be the same for all students, regardless of age, there may be some additional considerations in relation to a student aged 18 or over in terms of how local agencies and/or partners respond. This, for example, is likely to be different on the part of local authorities, given that their safeguarding duties are limited, in the case of children's social care services - save for a number of specific exceptions - to children under the age of 18. Similarly, the School's response to incidents involving the exchange of nude and semi-nude images will need to differ depending on the age of the students involved. There is also likely to be a more significant criminal justice response, where applicable, in relation to any student responsible for abuse who is aged 18 or over.

3. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1. Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which may be classified as child-on-child abuse.
- 3.2. This policy considers:
 - 3.2.1. What child-on-child abuse is and what it looks like;
 - 3.2.2. The prevention of child-on-child abuse;
 - 3.2.3. How we can respond appropriately and proportionately to concerns or instances of child-on-child abuse, including child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment;
 - 3.2.4. What appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual(s) involved; and
 - 3.2.5. What preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

4. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1. The School's Governing Body, Operational and Educational Executive Committee (the OpEd Exec), the Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs) and all staff at the School are committed to the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse (as defined below) both within and beyond the School.
- 4.2. In particular, we:
 - operate a zero tolerance approach to abuse. Such behaviour should never be accepted or dismissed as being normal between young people, as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'children being children' or simply 'part of growing up';
 - believe that in order to protect children, all schools should (a) be aware of the nature and level of risk to which their students are or may be exposed; (b) put in place a clear and comprehensive strategy which is tailored to their specific safeguarding context; and (c) take a whole-school community Contextual Safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse;
 - regard the introduction of this policy as a preventative measure. 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;
 - believe that in order to tackle child-on-child abuse proactively, it is necessary to focus on all four of the following areas:
 - (i) systems and structures
 - (ii) prevention
 - (iii) identification
 - (iv) response/intervention
 - recognise national and increasing concern about this issue, and wish to implement this policy in order to mitigate harmful attitudes and prevent child-on-child abuse in the School and each individual school; 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.

5. PREVENTION

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

- Educating all Governors, members of the OpEd Exec, the SLTs, staff and volunteers, students (in an age appropriate way) and parents about this issue. This includes:
 - training all Governors, members of the OpEd Exec and SLTs (in 1-11 and 11-18 respectively), staff and volunteers on the nature, prevalence and effect of child-on-child abuse, and how to prevent, identify and respond to it. The training includes: a) Contextual Safeguarding; b) the identification and classification of specific behaviours; and the importance of taking seriously all forms of child-on-child abuse (no matter how low-level they may appear) and c) ensuring that no form of child-on-child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay, teasing or as 'children being children';
 - educating children about the nature and prevalence of child-on-child abuse via PSHEE, Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education and the wider curriculum. Students are 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 informed about the School's approach to such issues, including its zero tolerance policy towards all forms of child-on-child abuse; and
 - involving parents in our approach to child-on-child abuse, including through parent surveys and curriculum information.
- Monitoring safeguarding records relating to child-on-child abuse to spot and address any concerning trends and identify students who may be in need of additional support. This is done through regular meetings between the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) in each school either between themselves or with Heads of Years reviewing MyConcern, termly School Safeguarding Committee meetings and internal supervision (both formal and informal).
- Challenging the attitudes that underlie such abuse, both inside and outside the classroom and the School.
- Working with Governors, the OpEd Exec, the SLTs, all staff and volunteers, students and parents to address inclusion 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.
- Creating a culture in which our students 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.

6. WHAT IS CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE?

- 6.1. Child-on-child abuse is sexual, emotional or physical abuse that happens between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships and wider peer associations. It can happen between any number of children, and can affect any age group (DfE, 2021).
- 6.2. Child-on-child abuse can take various forms and, as stated in KCSIE 2026, is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- 6.2.1. bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - 6.2.2. discriminatory behaviour, including racism, faith-targeted abuse, and other prejudice-based incidents;
 - 6.2.3. abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse');
 - 6.2.4. physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
 - 6.2.5. serious physical assault and harm, or the threat of harm with a weapon;
 - 6.2.6. 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);
 - 6.2.7. sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
 - 6.2.8. causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
 - 6.2.9. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes;
 - 6.2.10. upskirting, which 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; and
 - 6.2.11. initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- 6.3. Many forms of child-on-child abuse have an element of online behaviour. The School's Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, the Technology Acceptable Use Policy, and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy collectively set out the policy and procedures concerning this type of behaviour. The School's Searching and Retention and Disposal of Confiscated Items Policy sets out the procedures in the situation that a staff member reasonably suspects that a student's mobile phone (or other electronic device) has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property.
- 6.4. Children can experience child-on-child abuse in a wide range of settings, including at school, at home or in someone else's home, in public spaces and online. Child-on-child abuse can often go unseen. Therefore training and awareness for professionals, to help them recognise the signs, and know what to do, is essential.
- 6.5. The impact of this behaviour on children can be very distressing. It can result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim and have an impact on academic achievement and emotional health and wellbeing.
- 6.6. Staff should be careful in the terminology they use to describe the students involved - whilst 'victim' and/or 'perpetrator' are used in guidance these may not be appropriate terms to use in front of the students.

7. HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS (HSB)

- 7.1. Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is defined in KCSIE 2026 as: Sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or abusive towards another child, young person or adult. Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. The umbrella term "harmful sexual behaviour" is widely used in child protection and applies to behaviour occurring online, face-to-face, or both. HSB should always be considered within a child protection context.

- 7.2. Staff should always use their professional judgement and discuss any concerns with the DSL/DDSL.
- 7.3. The DSL will refer to the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Board's [Child Sexual Abuse Assessment Tool](#) or the [Essex Safeguarding Children's Board](#) (for children at Dame Bradbury's School) if there is a concern that a young person may be displaying sexually harmful behaviours, may have experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment or other forms of sexual abuse
- 7.4. It can be difficult to work out if a child is displaying appropriate, inappropriate, problematic or abusive sexual behaviour. Staff should refer to Annex 2 for the sexual behaviours continuum model, proposed by Simon Hackett (2010), which demonstrates the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people, from those that are normal, to those that are abusive or violent.
- 7.5. A child's behaviour can change depending on the circumstances they are in, and sexual behaviour can move in either direction along the continuum. Therefore, it is important not to label all of a child's behaviour as belonging to one category.
- 7.6. HSB can be harmful to the children who display it as well as those who experience it. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in HSB and it may not be intended to harm others.
- 7.7. Children and young people who display HSB may have complex needs and may display other behavioural problems alongside their HSB (Hollis, 2017). For example, children who display HSB may:
 - have poor self-regulation and coping skills
 - experience social anxiety and a sense of social inadequacy
 - have poorly internalised rules for social behaviour
 - have a poorly developed sense of morality
 - lack secure and confident attachments to others
 - have limited self-control and act out emotional experiences through negative or otherwise inappropriate behaviour
 - have little insight into the feelings and needs of others or their own mental state
 - place their own needs and feelings ahead of the needs and feelings of others
 - show a poorly defined sense of personal boundaries
 - have developed strong and not easily corrected cognitive distortions about others, themselves, and the world they share
 - have deficits in social skills and in social competence overall.
- 7.8. As children develop healthily, it is normal for them to display certain types of behaviour. It is important that adults who work or volunteer with children can identify if any behaviour has become harmful or abusive, and respond proportionally to keep all the children involved safe.

8. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- 8.1. Where the misconduct may constitute sexual violence¹ (rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent) or sexual harassment, it must always be reported to the DSL/DDSL and will be managed in accordance with Annex 4 of the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 8.2. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age or sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum

¹ When referring to sexual violence, the statutory guidance refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, as described above.

and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

8.3. It can take place in spaces which are supervised or unsupervised. Within a school context, for example, child-on-child abuse might take place in spaces such as toilets, the playground, corridors and when children are walking home (Global Centre for Contextual Safeguarding).

8.4. Examples of sexually abusive behaviour may include:

- inappropriate or unwanted sexualised touching
- pressurising, forcing or coercing others to perform or take part in sexual acts
- pressuring, forcing or coercing someone to share nude images (sexting)
- sharing sexual images of a person without their consent
- taking a picture under a person's clothing, without their consent ('upskirting')
- sexual harassment
- sexual or sexist name calling

(Global Centre for Contextual Safeguarding).

8.5. Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are 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 "children being children";
- recognising that, even if there are no reports in our setting, it does not mean it is not happening;
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts; Recognising that dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

8.6. Abuse rarely takes place in isolation and often indicates wider safeguarding concerns. For example, a child may be in a sexually exploitative relationship with another child who is himself/herself being physically abused by a family member or by another child/adult. Equally, sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools and other settings can result in the sexual exploitation of children by their peers. For 16 and 17 year olds who are in abusive relationships, what may appear to be a case of domestic violence may also involve sexual exploitation. 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 set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences.

8.6.1. This can be done by adopting a contextual safeguarding approach (see below) and by ensuring that our response to incidents of child-on-child abuse takes into account any potential complexity.

8.6.2. Child-on-child sexual violence and harassment must always be referred immediately to the DSL or a DDSL. The DSL/DDSL will follow procedures set out in KCSIE 2026 - Part Five. See also Annex 5 of the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which sets out how staff should respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes² being made or shared by

² The Government guidance "[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)" uses the term "'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline." (paragraph 1.4).

students.

9. OTHER BEHAVIOUR

- 9.1.1. When dealing with other alleged behaviour which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff need 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, faith, 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 and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power
 - involves a misuse of power
- 9.1.2. It should also be recognised that the same behaviour presented by different children may be understood to be at different points on a spectrum, depending on the particular context. For example, an incident involving the sharing of nudes or semi-nudes may be inappropriate in one context, for example, when exchanged between two children in a consenting relationship, and abusive in another, for example, when it is (a) shared without the consent of the child in the image; (b) produced as a result of coercion; or (c) used to pressure the child into engaging in other sexual behaviours.
- 9.1.3. Behaviour which is not abusive at first may potentially become abusive quickly or over time. Intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour which may be 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. For example, a physical fight between two children may not constitute child-on-child abuse where the fight is a one-off incident, but may be abusive where the child's/children's behaviour subsequently deteriorates into a pattern of bullying behaviour and requires a safeguarding response from a multi-agency partnership – including a statutory assessment of whether this has led, for example, to a risk of significant harm to a child.
- 9.1.4. The importance of intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour does not just apply on an individual student basis, but could also apply across the student body.
- 9.1.5. Behaviour generally considered inappropriate may in fact indicate emerging concerning behaviour to which the School will need to take a whole-school approach in order to prevent escalation. For example, where multiple students are making inappropriate comments about other students, one-off sanctions are unlikely to be effective and wider actions should be considered, such as arranging for an external person to deliver a year group intervention exercise and/or revising the School's PSHEE or RSE curriculum plan.
- 9.1.6. It will also be important to consider the wider context in which the alleged behaviour is reported to have occurred, and which may trigger the need for a referral. For example, some behaviour that is considered inappropriate may be capable of being dealt with internally. However, if there are wider safeguarding concerns relating to the child/children in question, a referral to statutory agencies may be necessary. Where the behaviour which is the subject of the concern(s)/allegation(s) is considered or suspected by the DSL to constitute child-on-child abuse, the School will follow the procedures set out in Annex 4 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

10. IDENTIFYING CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. Child-on-child abuse will be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm and will warrant a response under these procedures.
- 10.3. All staff should be alert to the well-being of students and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by child-on-child abuse. 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.
- 10.4. Signs that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse (please see Annex 1 of the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for indicators of abuse) and can include:
- failing to attend school, disengaging from classes or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected of the child;
 - unexplained physical injuries;
 - signs of self harm;
 - experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing;
 - becoming withdrawn and/or shy;
 - experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and/or panic attacks;
 - suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much;
 - broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse;
 - changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child's age;
 - a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups;
 - unexplained gifts or new possessions;
 - abusive behaviour towards others.
- 10.5. Abuse affects children very differently. The above list is by no means exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily indicate abuse. The behaviour that children present with will depend on their particular circumstances. Rather than checking behaviour against a list, staff are trained to be alert to behaviour that might cause concerns, to think about what the behaviour might signify, to encourage children to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour, and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents/carers so that the cause(s) of their behaviour can be investigated.
- 10.6. Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for his/her age or out of step with their developmental stage, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being harmed or abused by their peers) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards.
- 10.7. The power dynamic that can exist between children is also very important when identifying and responding to their behaviour: in all cases of child-on-child abuse, a power imbalance will exist within the relationship. This inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the child responsible for the abuse and the child being abused. It may, for example, be the result of their relative social or economic status. Equally, while children who abuse may have power over those who they are abusing, they may be simultaneously powerless to others.

11. VULNERABLE GROUPS

- 11.1. We recognise that all children can be at risk however we acknowledge that some groups are more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse. This can include students who:
- have experience of abuse within their family;
 - live with domestic violence;
 - are in care;
 - have special educational needs and/or a disability or certain health conditions and specific additional needs;
 - lack close friends at school or (for boarders) in the boarding house;
 - are shy;
 - come from an over-protective family environment;
 - are from a different racial, religious or cultural group to the majority;
 - identify as lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT) or those perceived to be by peers (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT;
 - are different in some obvious respect from the majority;
 - are adopted;
 - are a 'provocative victim' (a child who behaves inappropriately with others, barging in on their games or being a nuisance);
 - are obviously sensitive;
 - have caring responsibilities
 - share overnight accommodation with other children (for example in boarding or during school trips).
- 11.2. The School recognises that boys and girls experience child-on-child abuse, but different gender issues can be prevalent in child-on-child abuse, for example, girls may be more likely to be victims of sexual harassment or boys may be more likely to be subjected to initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- 11.3. The School also recognises that the experience of students in the boarding houses will be different to those living at home. All boarders live in single, en-suite accommodation. Particular thought is given to boarders' age in determining the location of their accommodation. Boarders have ready access to a wide group of boarding staff to whom they can talk or raise concerns. All members of boarding staff have appropriate safeguarding training and include a Mental Health First Aider. All boarding students are given the contact details for the Independent Person, and other sources of external support, and staff explain what the role of the Independent Person is and that boarders can contact them at any time.
- 11.4. All students, including boarding students, are made aware of the School's policy, as set out in the School's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy that sexual relations between students whilst under the care of the School, irrespective of location, constitutes misconduct which is considered to be a serious breach of discipline. Boarding staff and staff on trips are particularly alert to potential inappropriate pupil or student relationships and the potential for child-on-child abuse in these environments.
- 11.5. Accommodation of students during school trips is considered carefully and the hazards inherent in child-on-child abuse are given particular consideration in the development of each trip's risk assessment, with careful thought given to risky behaviours and locations, particularly vulnerable pupils, the constituents of individual rooms, lengths of time when pupils are in their rooms unsupervised, levels of supervision when pupils are in their rooms and the proximity of staff accommodation. All students are briefed to raise any concerns during their trip.

12. CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

12.1.1. This policy encapsulates a contextual safeguarding approach which:

- 12.1.1.1. is an approach to safeguarding children that recognises their experiences of significant harm in extra-familial contexts, acknowledges that safeguarding incidents and behaviours may be associated with factors outside the School, and seeks to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;
- 12.1.1.2. recognises that as children enter adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time outside of the home in public environments (including on the internet) within which they may experience abuse, and seeks to understand the impact of these wider social contexts;
- 12.1.1.3. considers interventions to change the systems or social conditions of the environments in which abuse has occurred. For example, rather than move a child from a boarding house, pastoral and boarding staff could work with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and student body to challenge a harmful or insensitive boarding house culture, thus improving the pre-existing school environment;
- 12.1.1.4. looks at the way professionals approach child protection when risks occur outside the family, thereby requiring all those within a local safeguarding partnership to consider how to work alongside, rather than just refer into, children's social care.

13. MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

- 13.1. The School actively engages with its local partners in relation to child-on-child abuse, and works closely with, for example, the relevant Safeguarding Partnership Board (which is the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (CPSCPB) for all schools in the School apart from Dame Bradbury's where the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) applies), the police and/or other relevant agencies (in accordance with the relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures) and other schools. We will actively refer concerns/allegations of child-on-child abuse to children's social care or other relevant agencies, where necessary.

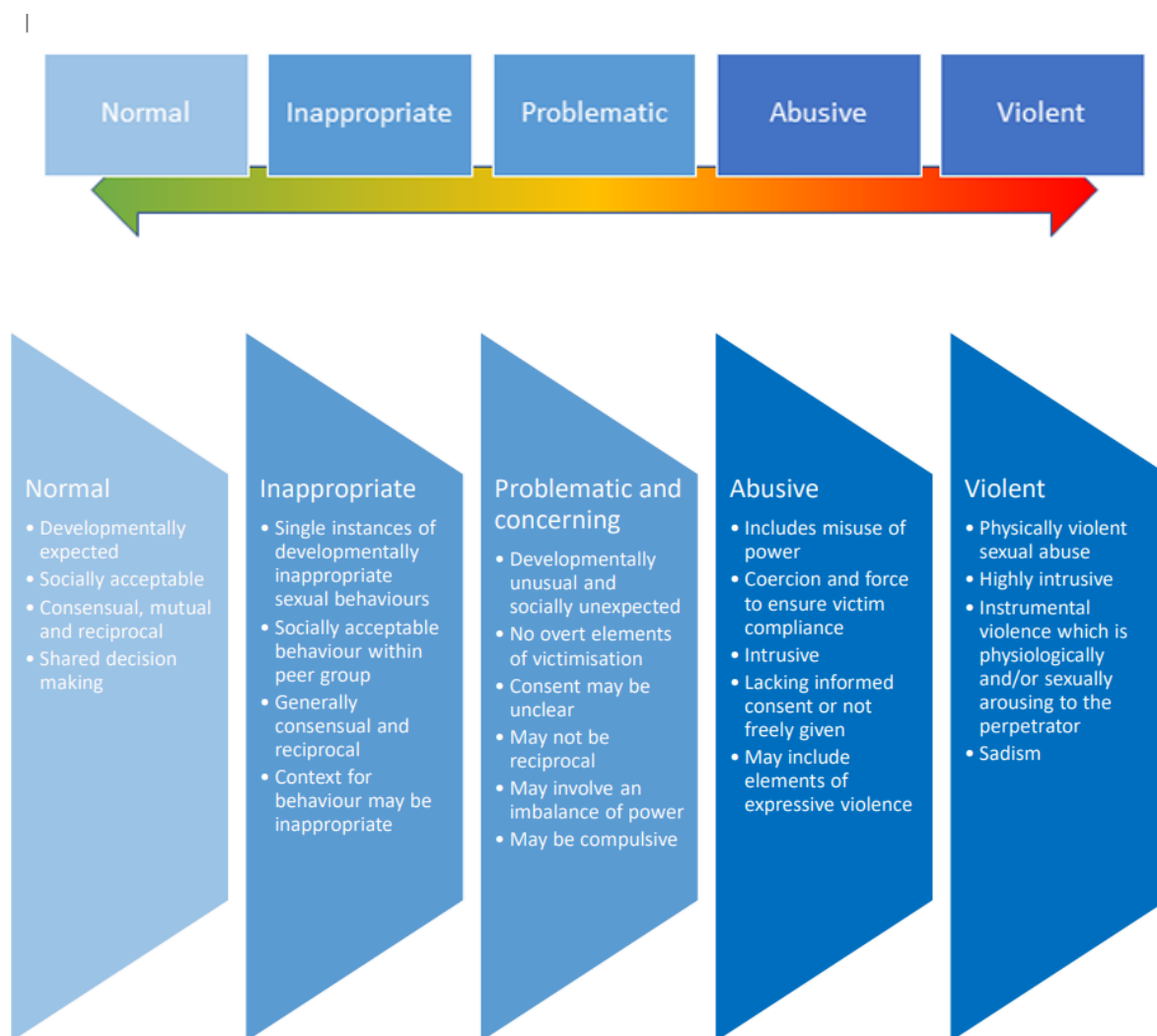
Version Control

Date of adoption of this policy	18 September 2026
Date of last review of this policy	September 2026
Date for next review of this policy	August 2027
Policy owner	DSL
Authorised by	The Safeguarding Team pending approval by the Governing Body

Annex 1 - Extract from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board Child Sexual Abuse Assessment Tool - assessing sexualised behaviour³

Sexualised behaviour should be seen as a continuum, ranging from 'normal' to 'inappropriate', to problematic, on to 'abusive' and to 'violent' behaviours (Hackett, 2010).

Please note that the examples given are guidelines. Specific incidents may have mitigating or aggravating features that move assessment of a particular behaviour, up or down the continuum.



Annex 2 - Safety Plan for child-on-child Abuse/ Harmful Sexual Behaviour

³ Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board Child Sexual Abuse Assessment Tool 2024-2026, pages 5 and 6

This Safety Plan is intended to be used by Schools whereby an incident(s) of child-on-child abuse has occurred or is likely to occur.

The Safety Plan will show considerations made for both/all students involved and will highlight the plan in place to keep all students safe. This will also take into consideration the wishes and feelings of all children involved. Each section/question will be considered from the perspective of all students involved. Considerations will also be given for the impact on, and needs of, the wider school community. All concerns and proposed actions will be recorded.

The School will work with the local multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), the Education Safeguarding Lead and other agencies as necessary when completing this risk assessment. This document should be reviewed frequently to ensure it is fit for purpose.

The terms victim and child alleged to have caused harm are used to identify the children involved. NB: there should be no assumption of guilt on the part of the child alleged to have caused harm, pending investigation.

*A risk and needs assessment should be completed for all cases relating to sexual violence or alleged sexual violence. In KCSIE 2026 (paragraph 543), sexual violence refers to specific sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003: rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. For a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

*This risk assessment should be completed with reference to KCSIE 2026 paragraph 568.

Basic information		
Referrer Name and role		
Referrer Contact details (email address and phone number)		
Name of school(s) for victim(s)		
Name of school(s) for child/ren alleged to have caused harm		
Did the incident occur on school premises? If not, where did the incident occur?		

CONSIDERATIONS	RISK (CONSIDER VICTIM, CHILD ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED HARM, OTHER STUDENTS AND STAFF)	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)	ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK	REVISED RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)
What is the incident? • Who was involved? • Where did it happen?				
Does this incident constitute a crime? Assault, sexual assault, rape, sharing of indecent images of children, etc etc. As such has this been referred to the police?				
Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSiE and DFE guidance on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools and colleges.				
Is there an actual or perceived threat from the child alleged to have caused harm to the victim and/or others?				
Is either the victim or the child alleged to have caused harm at				

risk of physical harm as a result of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by peers)?				
Do they share classes?				
Do they share break times?				
Do they share peer/friendship groups?				
Do they share transport to/ from school?				
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?				
Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?				

Further action taken by the school or college: Please make a copy and complete for each child involved. Add as an attachment to MyConcern.

Action	YES/ NO	Date
Police informed		
Referral to MASH		
Referral to external support services		
Referral to internal support services		

Referral to CAMHS		
Referral to early help		
Other		

Annex 3 - Support for young people

- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) - Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.
- [Rape Crisis](#) - Provides and signposts a range of services to support people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence.
- [The Survivors Trust](#) - UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sex abuse.
- [Victim Support](#) - Supporting children and young people who have been affected by crime. Also provides support to parents and professionals who work with children and young people – regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was.
- [Childline](#) - Provides free and confidential advice for children and young people.