WREKIN

LOVE THE JOURNEY

WREKIN COLLEGE
ANTI-BULLYING AND CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE POLICIES

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This document was created in July 2015 to bring together a number of existing policies.

This policy and guidelines needs to be read alongside other school documentation including:

- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy (includes the Use of Reasonable Force and Physical Restraint Policy)
- Code of Conduct for All Staff and Governors
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Controlled Drugs and Misuse of Substances Policy
- Conducting Interviews, Searches and Confiscation Policy and Procedures
- Data Protection Policy (Confidentiality of Information)
- E-Safety and Online Safety Policies
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Games and Sporting Activities Policy and Guidelines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Centre and First Aid Policy
- Missing Pupil Policy
- PSHE Policy and Programme
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines
- Welfare and Health Policies - Pupils (includes Alcohol and Smoking Policies)
- Wellbeing and Mental Health Policies and Guidelines - Pupils (includes depression, self-harm, eating disorders and suicide intervention)
- Whistleblowing Policy

Other relevant documentation:

- Boarding Mission Statement (available on the school's website, printed in the Parents' Handbook and Pupil Handbook)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education - September 2026
- Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards - September 2022
- Parents' Handbook
- The School's Aims and Code of Conduct
- Pupil Handbook (accessible via Pupil Homepage (eLearning Hub))

The senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all behavioural issues within the school is Deputy Head (Pastoral)/Supervising Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

The person responsible for this policy, in consultation with the DDSLs and other key personnel, is the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/Supervising DSL.

Part G (Standards 15, 16 & 17) of the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards - Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships:

Standard 15 – Promoting positive behaviour

15.1 The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils, including boarders. The school's approach to behaviour is easily apparent to anyone joining or visiting the school and is evident in the actions and messages from all staff and pupils, including boarders. The school behaviour policy includes detail on:

- the underlying objective to create a safe environment in which all pupils, including boarders, can learn and reach their full potential and to reflect the values and ethos of the school; the role of designated staff in maintaining consistent behaviour expectations, including the responsibilities of school leaders, any resources allocated, and the involvement of governors or trustees;
- the behaviour expected of pupils (including boarders), including treating others with dignity, kindness and respect, and the measures to promote positive behaviour, including positive reinforcement and reward and consequence systems;
- how the needs of all pupils, including boarders, and staff are met so members of the school community feel safe knowing that bullying, physical threats or abuse are not tolerated, and that they belong;
- school systems and social norms, including rules, routines and consequences systems for pupils, including boarders' behaviour when in the charge of the school and including when outside of the school premises and online;
- pupil (including boarder) support, including the roles and responsibilities of designated staff and the support provided to pupils with additional needs where those needs might affect behaviour;
- measures to prevent child-on-child abuse and the response to incidents of such abuse, including disciplinary action;
- when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and other physical contact and how this will be managed; and
- arrangements for searching and screening children and their possessions and how this relates to safeguarding policies. Any search of boarders' personal belongings should be carried out in accordance with section 550ZA of the Education Act 1996 and with regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

15.2 The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance, and is accessible, clear and easily understood by staff, pupils, parents and carers.

15.3 Senior leaders should monitor the use of restraint, take appropriate action to prevent the inappropriate use of restraint, and take effective action when inappropriate restraint has been used.

15.4 The headteacher should consider whether members of staff require any additional training and support to enable them to de-escalate potential confrontations between pupils, or potentially violent behaviour, to minimise the need for restraint.

Standard 16 - Preventing bullying

16.1 The school ensures that all forms of bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory), at the school, are prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of a proactive and effective anti-bullying strategy. The strategy should include accessible and effective systems for children to report bullying.
16.2 Any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Staff take steps to help pupils to overcome the impact of bullying. All school staff are trained to recognise bullying and know who to go to, if required, in order to ensure bullying is dealt with.
16.3 The school's anti-bullying strategy should reflect that unlike at day schools, boarders who are being bullied (off line) cannot escape their bullies for long periods of time as they are not going home as often.

Standard 17 – Promoting good relationships

17.1 Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Through regulations made under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, boarding schools are required to teach relationships education to primary school pupils and relationships and sex education to secondary school pupils.
17.2 In schools with both day pupils and boarders, boarders are encouraged and enabled to make and sustain respectful friendships within and outside the boarding community.
17.3 Staff understand and help boarders to understand what makes a healthy, nurturing relationship. Staff are trained to think curiously about and recognise the signs of children at risk of or involved in damaging relationships with others, including teenage relationship abuse, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and child-on-child abuse, and take appropriate action when they have a concern.

Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards - the full document may be viewed at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1102344/National_minimum_standards_for_boarding_schools.pdf

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date document updated	Document updated by	Comments	Location of saved file	Date of next review
July 2013	SEC	Sanctions now recorded on G Drive	Google Drive and Website	July 2014
July 2014	SEC	No changes made	Google Drive and Website	July 2015
July 2015	SEC	Anti-Bullying Policy and Anti-Bullying Procedure combined. Checked against NMS April 2015	Google Drive and Website	July 2016
July 2016	SEC	Updated school rules added Ref to KCSIE 2016 added	Google Drive and Website	July 2017
July 2017	SEC	No changes made	Google Drive and Website	July 2018
July 2018	SEC	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2018 - peer-on-peer abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment	Google Drive and Website	July 2019
July 2019	SEC	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2019	Google Drive and Website	July 2020

August 2020	SEC	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2020	Google Drive and Website	July 2021
Dec 2021	AWr/DTu	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2021	Google Drive and Website	Sept 2022
Jan 2023	AWr/DTu	Changes made with ref to new NMS and KCSIE 2022	Google Drive and website	Jan 2024
February 2024	AWr/DTu	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2023	Google Drive and website	Feb 2025
Nov 2024	SEC	Ref made to KCSIE 2024	Google Drive and website	Feb 2025
April 2026	DBM	Updates with regards KCSIE 2025 and anti-bullying guidance	Google Drive and website	September 2026
April 2026	DBM	Day-to-Day DSL replaced with DDSLs	Google Drive and website	September 2026
September 2026	DBM	Routine Updates	Google Drive and website	September 2027

PART 1: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Introduction

We (pupils, staff, and governors) do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. This includes behaviour that is face-to-face, written, verbal, physical, or online, whether occurring in school or outside of school where it impacts pupils' wellbeing or safety.

The school recognises that bullying is a safeguarding issue and may, in certain circumstances, constitute child-on-child abuse under Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

All staff play a vital role in safeguarding and protecting children from harm, including bullying, harassment, and peer-on-peer abuse.

We are committed to creating a culture in which pupils feel safe to disclose concerns, and where concerns are acted upon promptly, proportionately, and consistently.

Both pupils who experience bullying and those who display bullying behaviours will be supported in line with our safeguarding responsibilities and pastoral approach.

Safeguarding procedures follow guidance from the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership (or relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership).

The School Will Ensure That:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSLs, and safeguarding team receive appropriate and regular training, including child-on-child abuse, bullying, and online harm.
- All staff understand bullying as a potential safeguarding concern and know how to respond to disclosures.
- Clear reporting, recording, and escalation systems are in place and consistently used (including CPOMS).
- All concerns are acted upon without delay and are appropriately recorded and monitored.
- Safeguarding records relating to bullying are stored securely and separately from general pupil files where appropriate.
- Staff understand that "absence of reports" does not mean absence of bullying.

Responsibilities

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) / Supervising DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance including KCSIE.
- Overseeing safeguarding responses to bullying concerns.
- Ensuring accurate, timely recording and monitoring of bullying incidents.
- Ensuring appropriate referrals are made to external agencies where thresholds are met.
- Maintaining secure safeguarding records.

The DDSLs are responsible for:

- Managing day-to-day safeguarding concerns related to bullying.
- Supporting staff with recording and escalation.
- Liaising with external safeguarding partners where necessary.
- Ensuring CPOMS records are monitored and actioned appropriately.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide a safe, respectful and inclusive environment in which all pupils can learn.
- Promote a culture of respect, tolerance and kindness.
- Prevent bullying through education, early identification, and proactive pastoral systems.
- Ensure all staff are confident in identifying, reporting and responding to bullying.
- Ensure pupils know how to report concerns safely and confidently.
- Ensure bullying is responded to consistently, fairly and proportionately.
- Work effectively with external safeguarding partners where necessary.
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable and understand safeguarding expectations.

Definition - Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated or with the potential to be repeated, that is intended to cause harm or distress, or where there is an imbalance of power (perceived or real), making it difficult for the victim to defend themselves.

Bullying may be a single serious incident or a pattern of behaviour.

Bullying can be:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional / psychological
- Social / relational (including exclusion)
- Online / cyber

Bullying is always unacceptable and will always be taken seriously.

Forms of Bullying may include:

- Physical harm (hitting, kicking, pushing)
- Verbal abuse (name-calling, threats, teasing)
- Social exclusion or manipulation
- Spreading rumours or false information
- Damage to property
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, or disability-based abuse
- Abuse relating to religion, culture, appearance, or identity
- Cyberbullying (including messaging, social media, gaming platforms)
- Sexualised bullying or harassment
- Coercion or intimidation

Child-on-Child Abuse Link

The school recognises that bullying may constitute child-on-child abuse. Where concerns meet safeguarding thresholds, the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

The Problem

Bullying is often hidden, and pupils may be reluctant to report concerns due to fear of escalation or social consequences.

The school therefore commits to:

- Acting on all concerns promptly
- Ensuring confidentiality is maintained appropriately
- Ensuring victims are protected from further harm
- Ensuring alleged perpetrators are supported and held accountable appropriately

Staff must never assume that silence means safety.

Direct and Indirect Bullying

Bullying may be overt or covert.

Those who witness bullying and do not report it may unintentionally enable it to continue. All pupils and staff share responsibility for safeguarding the school community.

Emotional and physical symptoms linked to bullying

Possible indicators may include (not exhaustive):

Emotional:

- Anxiety or withdrawal
- Reduced self-esteem
- Mood changes
- Academic decline
- Social isolation

Physical:

- Headaches or stomach aches
- Sleep disturbance
- Unexplained injuries
- Fatigue

These indicators must always be considered in context and not assumed to indicate bullying alone.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying includes harmful behaviour carried out via digital platforms including messaging apps, social media, gaming platforms, and online forums.

The school will:

- Respond to all incidents regardless of where they occur
- Take safeguarding action where appropriate
- Involve parents/carers where necessary
- Consider whether external agency referral is required

Sanctions will be proportionate and based on safeguarding risk.

Online safety education is delivered through PSHE, assemblies, and staff training.

Staff should be conversant with the school's Conducting Interviews, Searches and Confiscation Policy and Procedures

Extract from the school's procedure for conducting searches and confiscation:

1. Searching can play a critical role in ensuring that schools are safe environments for all pupils and staff. It is a vital measure to safeguard and promote staff and pupil welfare, and to maintain high standards of behaviour through which pupils can learn and thrive.
2. Under common law, school staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed. The ability for a pupil to give consent may be influenced by the child's age, any SEN and other factors, and these should be considered when carrying out a search, making reasonable adjustments where necessary (e.g. for a pupil with a disability).

3. If a pupil refuses, then the Head and staff authorised by the Head (see below) have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item.
4. **Prohibited items (as included in the school rules) are:**
    - Knives or weapons
    - Alcohol
    - Illegal drugs
    - Stolen items
    - Tobacco and cigarette papers
    - Fireworks
    - Pornographic images
    - Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury, or to cause damage to property.
5. The Head and authorised staff can also search for any other item banned by the school rules, which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for. A example of such an item is electronic cigarettes ('vapes').
6. Where a member of staff suspects a substance to be a controlled (illegal) drug or is unsure, they should treat the substance as a controlled (illegal) drug as outlined below.

Authorised Staff
The Head decides whom to authorise to use these powers. There is no requirement to provide authorisation in writing.

1. All members of the teaching staff and the school's Security Officer are authorised to search **with consent** for all of the above items BUT MUST NOT SEARCH, **even with pupil consent**, the content of mobile phones, laptops, computers or iPads.
2. If a member of staff suspects that an electronic storage device may contain inappropriate material, including pornography, they should confiscate the item and pass it to the Head or one of the Deputy Heads, who will then conduct the search of the item.
3. **Only the members of staff listed below are authorised to search without consent:**
    - Head
    - Deputy Head (Pastoral) and DSL
    - Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning)
    - Assistant Head (Planning)
    - Assistant Head (Co-Curricular) and Deputy Designated Person
    - Assistant Head (Head of Boarding)

In the event of all six being absent from school, the power to search without consent will be passed on to the Assistant Head (Head of Middle School) and Deputy Designated Person, Simon Platford.

Bullying and Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

Pupils with SEN or disabilities are particularly vulnerable and can face additional safeguarding challenges. Some children are at risk of having their body language and behaviour misinterpreted by other children, young people and adults. This can lead them into difficulties as others may focus on their differences, or react to the individual's different behaviour. It is important to note that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse or neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further investigation;
- Pupils with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff should read individual pupil files to familiarise themselves with SEND and medical conditions that can present with the same symptoms as abuse.

Because such judgements often require sophisticated knowledge and understanding all staff MUST err on the side of caution. It is better to discuss a number of cases where no abuse is occurring than to miss one case because a wrong assumption has been made. If there is any worry or concern about a child it must be discussed with the DDSLs/DSL.

The School's Response to Bullying

The school will ensure:

- All concerns are recorded on CPOMS
- All incidents are reviewed by the pastoral and safeguarding team
- Appropriate action is taken without delay
- Parents/carers are informed where appropriate
- Risk assessments are completed where necessary

General Guidance

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be informed of all incidents of bullying.

- Any notification of bullying will be fully investigated, documented and the relevant HsM and Tutor will be informed and the Head and parents if necessary.
- If the bullying potentially constitutes a safeguarding/child protection risk to the child, then the DSL/DDSLs (as appropriate) will also be informed.
- Where appropriate, colleagues will be informed and asked to be vigilant.
- A pupil who is being bullied should talk to somebody as outlined in the Pupil Handbook (accessible via the Pupil Homepage (eLearning Hub)).
- A member of staff who suspects a case of bullying should inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral), HsM and Tutor of both parties involved.
- Pupils who are being bullied will be given support and protection, and assistance to develop positive strategies and self-assertion.
- Pupils who are bullying will, following appropriate sanctions, be given guidance and assistance to change their behaviour.
- If the bullying behaviour continues and counselling of both parties has not worked, then further sanctions, determined by the Head, in consultation with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the relevant HsM (and the DDSLs, as appropriate), will follow. In serious cases, suspension or expulsion will be considered.

Staff need to take seriously the concerns of our young people and to liaise with each other to support pupils accordingly.

The following general advice should be noted:

1. Watch for early signs of distress in pupils, such as deterioration of work, spurious illness, isolation, the desire to remain with adults, erratic attendance and organisation. Note changes in friendship groups;
2. Listen and watch carefully at all times. Observe the socialisation of new pupils;
3. Do not accept any form of verbal or non-verbal bullying. This may be specific to a disability or personal issue for the victim, it may also relate to race or religion and is not accepted in this school;
4. Be conscious of raising the awareness of bullying through their curriculum area, if possible;
5. Use all pupils as a positive resource in countering bullying and making newcomers feel welcome and accepted. Give all pupils opportunities to discuss bullying in a safe and supportive manner;
6. Be aware of the increasing use of ICT as a means of bullying, including instant and text messages, email, social media and via gaming;
7. Make the unacceptable nature of such behaviour and the consequences of any repetition, clear to individuals and groups whenever possible;
8. Never be afraid to take action if someone is in distress. Communicate quickly with the Deputy Head (Pastoral), HsMs and Tutors, or the Head, any member of the Senior Management Team or the DDSLs, about any suspicions or concerns about bullying;
9. Parents are also encouraged to raise the issue of bullying with members of the school. The staff expect parents to report instances of bullying and will investigate and if appropriate act upon their comments.

Members of staff at Wrekin all have access to the Anti-Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse Policies, and awareness of the issue will be given a priority.

Within the classroom setting anti-bullying work will be addressed via the curriculum, and in particular within PSHE lessons.

Assemblies will be held on the subject from time to time through the year.

General Guidelines on Investigating and Reporting Incidents of Bullying:

When staff complete incident reports they are requested to state whether or not a particular incident was owing to bullying (via ticking the appropriate category(ies) on CPOMS). This will allow the management of the school to monitor the issue very closely and to respond to parental and staff concerns, as well as allowing any patterns or trends to be spotted.

When staff confront a bully or bullies it is important that they try to include the following key features into their work:

- Be as certain as possible about the known facts
- Confront the 'bully' with the allegation
- Make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable
- See each bully separately, if appropriate
- Be specific about sanctions if bullying does not stop
- Follow up to check that bullying behaviour has ceased

Supporting Children

Wrekin believes that both the bullied and the bully are viewed as in need of support.

The school recognises that both victims and those displaying bullying behaviour may require support.

Support may include:

- Pastoral mentoring
- Counselling referral
- External agency support where appropriate
- Peer support systems
- Restorative approaches where appropriate and safe

Support will always be tailored to individual need.

Confidentiality

Information relating to bullying will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Staff must understand:

- Confidentiality cannot override safeguarding concerns
- Information may be shared with DSLs and external agencies where required
- Pupils cannot be guaranteed secrecy

Whistleblowing

All staff have a duty to report concerns about:

- Unsafe practice
- Poor safeguarding responses
- Staff conduct that may place pupils at risk

Staff who raise concerns in good faith will be protected from victimisation.

Supporting Staff

The school recognises that dealing with bullying concerns can be challenging.

Staff will have access to:

- DSL support
- Senior leadership support
- Staff wellbeing services

Physical Intervention

Physical intervention will only be used in line with the school's behaviour and restraint policy and only where necessary to prevent harm.

Staff should be conversant with the school's Use of Reasonable Force and Physical Restraint Policy (part of the Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy).

Racist Incidents

Racist bullying is a serious safeguarding concern and will be addressed in line with the school's Equality, Diversity and Anti-Racism Policy.

Prevention

The school will:

- Promote an inclusive culture
- Deliver PSHE education on relationships and respect
- Use assemblies and tutor time to reinforce expectations
- Encourage pupil voice and reporting systems
- Monitor patterns of behaviour and repeat concerns

Allegations against staff, including volunteers

Any allegation of bullying involving a staff member will be managed under the school's safeguarding procedures.

The procedure to be followed when allegations of abuse are made against a member of staff (teaching or non-teaching) – See the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Useful anti-bullying websites include:

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.direct.gov.uk/bullying

PART 2: CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Introduction

The school is committed to the prevention, early identification, and appropriate response to child-on-child abuse both inside and outside of school, including online environments.

Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue and will always be taken seriously. It will never be dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up".

All staff, governors, volunteers, and contractors working with children have a responsibility to identify concerns, act on disclosures, and follow safeguarding procedures without delay.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, and Online Safety Policy.

Safeguarding Statement

The school recognises that children can be both victims and perpetrators of abuse. All concerns relating to child-on-child abuse will be managed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026) and local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Child-on-child abuse may occur in school, outside school, or online, and may continue across multiple environments.

Definition of Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse refers to harmful behaviour by one child towards another. It can be physical, emotional, sexual, or online, and may involve an imbalance of power, coercion, control, or repeated harm.

It includes (but is not limited to):

- Bullying (including cyberbullying and prejudice-based bullying)
- Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling)
- Sexual violence and sexual assault
- Sexual harassment
- Abuse in intimate peer relationships (teenage relationship abuse)
- Sharing of indecent images (consensual or non-consensual)
- Coercion or pressure to share sexual images or engage in sexual activity
- Upskirting (criminal offence under the Voyeurism Act 2019)

- Initiation/hazing rituals involving humiliation or harm
- Online abuse, exploitation, coercion, or harassment

Contextual Safeguarding

The school adopts a contextual safeguarding approach, recognising that child-on-child abuse may be influenced by environments outside the family home, including:

- Peer groups
- School culture
- Online platforms and social media
- Community environments

The school will consider these contexts when assessing risk and determining interventions.

Where appropriate, safeguarding responses may include actions to address group dynamics, school culture, or environmental risk factors rather than focusing solely on individual pupils.

Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for:

- Managing all safeguarding concerns involving child-on-child abuse
- Making decisions about referrals to external agencies
- Ensuring appropriate risk assessments are completed
- Coordinating safeguarding responses and support plans
- Maintaining accurate safeguarding records

All staff are responsible for:

- Recognising signs of child-on-child abuse
- Responding appropriately to disclosures
- Reporting concerns immediately to the DSL team
- Recording concerns accurately on CPOMS

Staff must never assume that someone else will report a concern.

Purpose and Aim

Young people may be harmful to each other in ways which would be classified as child-on-child abuse. This policy explores the many forms of child-on-child abuse and includes planned and supportive responses to the issues.

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils. It is important to be clear:

- What abuse is/looks like
- How it can be managed
- What support/intervention can be put in place
- What preventative strategies may be established.

The school recognises the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Abuse issues can sometimes be gender-specific (girls being sexually touched, boys being subject to hazing type violence). It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

Types of Abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between children and this list is not exhaustive. Other forms of abuse that may not necessarily be classed as child-on-child abuse are listed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Physical Abuse: hitting, kicking, nipping, 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 accidently, before considering the action or sanction to be undertaken.

Sexual Abuse: this can include a range of behaviours, such as sexual jokes, inappropriate sexual language or comments, inappropriate role play, touching, assault, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent (such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, view sexualised images, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party), upskirting (see below), sexual violence and 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 well as the young person it is intended towards.

Online Sexual Harassment: this may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (see below)
- sharing of unwanted explicit content
- sexualised online bullying
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery): sending/receiving sexually explicit text, images or video, including sending nude or semi-nude selfies. Pressurising a child into sending nude pictures is a form of sexual abuse. Having possession of, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 is an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, school will usually have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

Staff should be conversant with the school's **E-Safety and Online Policies**, which includes the Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery Policy.

Emotional Abuse: not giving opportunity to express views, deliberately silencing someone, making fun of what they say or how they communicate; making them feel worthless or inadequate.

Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying): a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised. It may include physical bullying, name calling, spreading rumours, making threats. It may be connected to gender, religion, race, disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class), or sexual orientation or identity (homosexual, bisexual, transgender), etc. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Cyberbullying is the use of electronic media and instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. Bullying can become criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 or the Communications Act 2003, Section 127. Both young people who are bullied and those who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

Upskirting: The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force in April 2019. 'Upskirting' (which is a criminal offence) 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. Anyone, of any gender, can be a victim.

Initiation/Hazing: hazing is a form of initiation ceremony used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a sports team, etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The idea behind this practice is that it 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.

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse): 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.

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. This can be done by adopting a Contextual Safeguarding approach and by ensuring that our response to incidents of child-on-child abuse takes into account any potential complexity.

What is Contextual Safeguarding?

This policy encapsulates a Contextual Safeguarding approach, which:

- Is an approach to safeguarding children that recognises their experiences of significant harm in extrafamilial contexts, and seeks to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;
- 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

- 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 school, professionals could work with the school leadership and pupil body to challenge harmful, gendered school cultures, thus improving the pre-existing school environment.

School Response to Child-on-Child Abuse

Staff should be alert to:

- Changes in behaviour or attendance
- Withdrawal or anxiety
- Unexplained injuries
- Reluctance to attend school or specific lessons
- Sudden changes in friendship groups
- Evidence of online distress or conflict
- Sexualised behaviour inappropriate for age

Absence of reports does not mean absence of abuse.

Reporting and Recording

All concerns must be recorded on CPOMS immediately and clearly.

Records must include:

- Factual description of concern or disclosure
- Names of individuals involved
- Time, date, and location (if known)
- Immediate actions taken
- Any safeguarding concerns identified

Staff must alert the DSL team immediately via CPOMS or direct contact where risk is urgent.

Initial Response to Disclosures

When a pupil discloses abuse, staff must:

- Listen calmly and take the disclosure seriously
- Not investigate or ask leading questions
- Reassure the pupil they have done the right thing by speaking
- Explain that information may need to be shared with safeguarding staff
- Record the disclosure as soon as possible

Staff must not promise confidentiality.

Speak to all the young people involved separately to gain a statement of facts from them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions:

- What happened?
- Who observed the incident?
- What was seen?
- What was heard?
- Did anyone intervene?
- Where did this occur?

In our school, pupils have the capacity to produce a written statement. These should be collected from all parties and attached to the main report.

Safeguarding Thresholds and Escalation

Immediate referral to the DSL is required where there is:

- Allegation or disclosure of sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Physical injury or violence
- Coercion, exploitation, or control
- Indecent image sharing
- Significant emotional harm or repeated bullying
- Any risk of significant harm

DSL will determine whether:

- Internal school response is appropriate
- External referral to children's social care is required
- Police involvement is necessary (criminal behaviour or immediate risk)

School Response and Decision-Making

The DSL will consider:

- Nature and severity of the behaviour
- Age and developmental stage of pupils involved
- Power imbalance between pupils
- Whether the behaviour is repeated or escalating
- Context in which behaviour occurred (including online environments)
- Whether there is ongoing risk to any child

Responses may include:

- Safeguarding intervention and monitoring

- Behaviour sanctions (where appropriate and proportionate)
- Pastoral support plans
- Risk assessments
- External agency referral

Investigation Approach

The school will take a safeguarding-led, not disciplinary-led, approach.

Information gathering will:

- Be proportionate and necessary to assess risk
- Avoid unnecessary delay in safeguarding action
- Avoid formal interrogation-style questioning
- Be carried out separately with involved pupils
- Focus on establishing facts and safeguarding needs

This process is not a criminal investigation and must not replicate police procedures.

Serious Incidents

Where there is evidence or suspicion of:

- Sexual violence or assault
- Significant physical harm
- Coercion or exploitation
- Serious safeguarding risk

The DSL will immediately consider referral to:

- Children's Social Care
- Police
- External safeguarding partners

The school will always prioritise immediate safety and protection.

Supporting Pupils

Support will be tailored to individual need and may include:

- Designated staff support / mentoring
- School counselling services
- External specialist services (e.g. CAMHS, sexual violence support services, youth services)
- Safeguarding safety planning
- Peer support (where appropriate and safe)

Support will be provided for:

- Victims
- Alleged perpetrators
- Witnesses or affected peers

Restorative Approaches

Restorative practices may be used only where:

- The risk has been assessed as low
- There is no sexual violence or coercion involved
- Both parties are safe and willing
- DSL approval has been given

Restorative approaches will never be used where they may cause further harm or pressure.

Online Safety and Digital Abuse

The school recognises that child-on-child abuse frequently occurs online.

This includes:

- Social media harassment
- Messaging apps and group chats
- Gaming platforms
- Image sharing and coercion
- Anonymous or pseudonymous accounts

The school will:

- Respond to online incidents as if they occurred in school
- Take safeguarding action regardless of platform or location
- Work with parents/carers where appropriate
- Consider escalation to external agencies where necessary

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will be shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.

The school will:

- Share safeguarding information where necessary to protect children
- Comply with legal safeguarding duties
- Work with external agencies where required

Pupils cannot be promised confidentiality where safeguarding concerns exist.

Parental Involvement

Parents/carers will normally be informed where appropriate, unless doing so would:

- Place a child at risk of harm
- Interfere with a police or safeguarding investigation
- Conflict with legal guidance

Decisions will be made by the DSL in line with safeguarding guidance and professional judgement.

Preventative Strategies

The school aims to prevent child-on-child abuse through:

- PSHE education on relationships, respect, consent, and online safety
- Clear behaviour expectations
- Staff training on safeguarding and early identification
- Pupil reporting systems
- Promotion of positive school culture
- Monitoring of social dynamics and peer groups
- Regular review of safeguarding trends and patterns

Monitoring and Review

All incidents of child-on-child abuse will be:

- Recorded
- Reviewed by DSL team
- Analysed for patterns or repeat concerns
- Used to inform safeguarding practice and prevention strategies

Allegations Involving Staff

Any allegation involving staff will be managed under the school's Safeguarding Policy and statutory guidance for managing allegations against adults working with children.

Appendix 1

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The School's Code of Conduct
(This code of conduct applies to all pupils)

- We are here to study and to learn
- Everyone should contribute to the happy working atmosphere of the school
- The best form of discipline is self-discipline
- When on site or off, we are all ambassadors for the school
- We take responsibility for ourselves and others

This means:

Being honest, kind, considerate, tolerant and courteous
Being organised
Being punctual
Looking after possessions, ours and those of others
Looking after our health and safety

The best relationships are open and responsible ones.

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Specific School Rules

Breaching any of the following 15 rules constitutes a very serious offence for which a pupil will be placed within our disciplinary system. Dependent on the seriousness of the breach, a pupil might be asked to leave the school, even for a first offence. The following (including any criminal act, contravening UK law, committed at any time) are unacceptable:

1. Any form of bullying (including offences against gender, race, religion, disability, sexuality and learning differences).
2. Unauthorised physical contact between pupils of any age (including that of a sexual nature).
3. Offensive, threatening or sexually rude behaviour towards others (pupils or staff) by physical, verbal or written means (including electronic communication).
4. Buying, trying to buy, selling, consuming or using drugs, alcohol or tobacco, attempting to bring such items into school or encouraging other pupils to use them. Misuse of substances including solvents etc. The use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs whether within the school boundaries or beyond are unacceptable.
5. Smoking/vaping at any time or place during term time, including any outing, visit or match organised by the school. Electronic cigarettes are not allowed.
6. Entering licensed premises (except those Upper Sixth pupils who are given permission from the relevant HsM to use specified public houses. On these occasions only eighteen year olds are permitted to consume alcohol).
7. Taking or using another pupil's possessions without his/her permission.
8. Breaking the school's use of cars policy. This includes driving a car without written consent from the parents and permission from the Headmaster/HsM and riding in a car driven by someone other than parents or a member of staff, unless specific permission has been obtained from the relevant HsM.
9. Possessing offensive or dangerous weapons, including laser pens or laser pointers, explosives or fireworks.
10. Breaking the school's use of mobile devices policy and inappropriate use of mobile devices. This includes making or receiving calls or texts during lessons or while on the paths or roads in and around the campus; walking around the campus listening to music; the use of mobile devices, email or internet to access or send inappropriate material, messages or images; or to be in possession of inappropriate material, messages or images, including pornographic material. Taking photographs or making recordings of pupils or staff, without prior consent, are also forbidden.
11. Betting or gambling, including online betting or gambling.
12. Bringing the school, its staff or pupils into disrepute or danger through poor behaviour at any time or via any media including the internet and social networking sites or by breaking the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
13. Tampering with electrical or mechanical appliances, including fire alarms, fire extinguishers etc.
14. Unauthorised absence (truancy).
15. Breaking bounds, including being out of House after lock-up time, without prior permission from the HsM or entering the private areas within another House.

Other school rules

The following are forbidden:

16. Pupils below the Sixth Form are not allowed to visit the town, unless there is a legitimate reason and only then with the permission of the HsM. Members of the Sixth Form are allowed to visit town on a Wednesday afternoon for one hour and after 4.30pm on Fridays (Lower Sixth from the beginning of the Lent term) providing that they do not have any other commitments. Uniform or full games kit must be worn when going down town.
17. Bringing bicycles and skateboards to school without prior written consent from parents and approval of the HsM.
18. Eating in the streets and shops of the town and around the school grounds. No food or drink, other than water, may be taken into teaching buildings, the Music School, Theatre, Swimming Pool or Sports Hall.
19. Chewing gum.
20. Ball games in the immediate vicinity of all school buildings and snowballing (except on the lower playing fields).

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and only some of the most common misdemeanours are given.

Please see the school's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy for further information.

Appendix 3

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CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE PROTOCOL FLOW CHART

