



Sharps Copse Primary School
Prospect Lane
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Peer-on-Peer (Child-on-Child) Abuse Policy 2022-2024

Date:	17 th May 2022
Review Date:	March 2024
Responsibility:	Headteacher
Statutory, recommended or additional:	additional
Checked against Equalities Policy:	Yes
Linked Documents: Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour, Safer Recruitment & Procedures Policy, Complaints Procedures Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy, ICT Policy & Procedures, Behaviour Policy and E-Safety Policy.	
Chair of Governors:	Date: 17 th May 2022
Headteacher:	Date: 17 th May 2022



Peer on Peer (Child on Child) Abuse Policy

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Who is this policy for?

This policy is for:

- Sharps Copse Primary School Staff, volunteers and governor team.

This policy explains how we focus on developing the whole person, aiming to ensure that each pupil leave our school ready for the challenges of life at secondary school and beyond and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities towards others.

We want our pupils to be well equipped to engage positively with a rapidly changing world, as accomplished problem solvers and innovators, confident in their ability to lead and with a clear appreciation of and respect for the views and potential of others.

Protective marking

Not protectively marked.

Review date

This policy will next be reviewed March 2024

Revision History

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR
1	March 2022	Draft 1 Policy issued.	Alan Valera-Sheppard
2			

1. INTRODUCTION

All cases of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse are serious, whether physical, emotional or psychological. Peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse can take various forms and include serious bullying, relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender-based violence.

This form of abuse occurs when there is any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse, up skirting, sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. (KCSIE, 2020)

All staff should be clear as to the School policy and procedures with regards to peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse

It should be recognised that the behaviour in question is harmful to both the perpetrator (who is a child) and the victim.

The aim of the policy is to prevent peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse of any sort and to have an educational community which promotes and provides excellence in teaching, learning, relationships and opportunities, through high expectations. Therefore, all members of our school community have a right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Pupils should expect to learn in a supportive and caring environment without fear.

It is also to help members of the school community to deal with peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse if and when it may occur and, even more importantly, to prevent it.

Peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously.

A safe and secure environment is essential for effective learning and every pupil has a right to a positive school experience

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The responsibility for the implementation of this policy and provision rests with the Headteacher. On an operational basis, the management, responsibility and evaluation of this policy is undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Personal Development, Behaviour and Wellbeing Leaders.

2.2 It is important to note that every member of staff is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fully implemented and that in situations not covered by this policy, staff must act in the best interests of the pupil, as any responsible adult would act.

2.3 Any concerns should be reported using the appropriate school mechanisms and logged onto CPOMS.

3. RELATED POLICIES

This policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 and is part of a suite of school policies which should also be referred to:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Procedures Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Policy and Procedures
- E-Safety Policy

4. AIMS

4.1 The school has clear aims for its peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse policy:

- To create an environment where peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse is not tolerated, where every pupil is recognised, welcomed and valued
- To ensure that all pupils are aware of their rights and responsibilities and know how to seek help if those rights are infringed
- To encourage our pupils to work collaboratively together, develop positive relationships and offer each other mutual support and respect
- To encourage our pupils to act respectfully and considerately at all times
- To raise awareness and provide our pupils with the skills, knowledge and confidence to deal effectively with all instances of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse, through a co-ordinated programme involving SMSC, assemblies, in-class universal PDBW Sessions, targeted interventions and peer mentoring approaches.
- To use the processes around Restorative Justice (Sharps Copse Problem Solving Approach)

- To review and monitor the effectiveness of our peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse policy on a yearly basis

4.2 Peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse, in whatever form, detrimentally affects the ability of our pupils to achieve and progress to the best of their ability, their well-being and will not be tolerated in any form, or to any degree.

4.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the DfE guidance Preventing and tackling bullying Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, (July 2017) This can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying> and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (May 2018) This can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719902/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf

4.4 We will work hard to ensure that peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse plays no part in our community by proactively working with all pupils, their families and our staff to eradicate it and promptly dealing with all reported incidents.

4.5 This policy will provide clear guidance for staff on dealing with bullying incidents and the process by which the school will seek to eradicate this issue.

5. THE NATURE OF BULLYING

“Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually **repeated over time**, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”

It can be physical, psychological, social, verbal and is repetitive in its nature and causes distress to its victims.

Specific examples of bullying include but the list is not exhaustive:

- Physical violence
- Repeated name calling and teasing
- Malicious rumours, text messages, phone calls, cyber bullying or posting information on social websites e.g. Facebook, text messages, You Tube, snap chat etc. (please refer to the E safety Policy)
- Physical or verbal threats and intimidation often over a period of time
- Racist, homophobic/biphobic, sexist (including trans/non-gender conforming) language or reference to disability
- Extortion or damaging a person's property

- Exclusion from social groups Any acts of violence, bullying, racial or sexual harassment are seen as extremely serious offences and will be dealt with accordingly.

6. RAISING AWARENESS

Children and parents should know that all forms of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

It is important that there is a consensus within the school of what constitutes peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse and what can be done about it. Raising the awareness of pupils, parents and staff enables individuals to understand the problem, to discuss their perceptions of it and to make informed decisions on how to deal with it. Our school's ethos/ SHARP Values and environment encourages pupils to speak honestly and in confidence of their experiences and fears. They need to understand that they should never "suffer in silence".

Involving pupils in awareness raising, consultation and problem solving increases their understanding of what peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse is, its causes, effects, and methods of prevention. Procedures are established which enable the school to evaluate pupils' perceptions about peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse. This includes dealing with pupils who are not directly involved but who are watching, laughing or encouraging the behaviour.

Pupils who witness peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse need to understand the importance of reporting what they have seen and must be made to feel safe in doing so. Opportunities will be provided in the school curriculum, e.g. PDBW Sessions (Well-being), assemblies, role-play, stories or personal writing for positive reinforcement of anti-peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse behaviour. Appropriate communications are in place to support parent understanding of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse what it is and how to prevent it.

All pupils deserve the opportunity to be helped to understand what acceptable behaviour is. There are criminal laws that apply to harassment, assault and threatening behaviour. If the school feels that a criminal offence may have been committed, they may seek assistance from the police.

Pupils who over a period of time are not able to change, the school may consult outside agencies to help both in school and in the home e.g. Primary Behaviour Services, Early Help Hub and Educational Psychologists in line with the School Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy

7. WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Pupils who are subject to peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults.

Members of staff and all members of the community must be alert to the signs of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse; legal responsibilities are known and community members should act promptly and firmly against it, in accordance with school policy.

7.1 How and when does peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse happen?

- Anytime – it may be a **single isolated incident or over a period of time**
- Anywhere might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

7.2 Recognising the signs of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse?

Staff will suspect peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse is occurring if a pupil:

- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Shows deterioration in his/her work
- Starts to attend erratically
- Has a 'fake' illness
- Persistently arrives late
- Prefers to stay with adults

Other Signs may be that the pupil:

- Does not want to walk to and from the school
- Changes their normal routine
- Becomes withdrawn or displays a sudden lack of confidence
- Is reluctant to speak to other peers or teachers
- Attempts or threatens to commit suicide/self-harm.
- Is upset at night and has displayed a disruptive sleep pattern linked with increasing nightmares
- Is continuously complaining of feeling unwell in the morning and at school
- Displays a downturn in their academic standards
- Has a sudden increase in bruises or cuts which the pupil finds difficult or are unwilling to explain
- Stops eating/Over eating
- Suddenly displays unusual aggressive and disruptive behaviour
- Starts to bully other peers or family siblings
- Is reluctant or unwilling to talk about what is going wrong

Any pupil who has knowledge of an incident of bullying must tell someone about it. This could be:

- A member of staff
- The people who the pupil lives with

STAFF GUIDELINES

Research shows quite clearly that many children do not report peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse. It is therefore essential that we do our best to recognise possible victims. The result of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse can be that the victim feels isolated, frightened, humiliated and/or physically hurt.

- All school staff must be vigilant and proactively responsive to any peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse behaviour.
- They must take seriously all complaints and respond appropriately, effectively and consistently to all incidents of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse.
- Report incidents on CPOMS

The school will ensure high levels of supervision at all times, but particularly during high-risk periods and in key areas around the school.

It is important that we are all aware so that we can ensure the wellbeing of every child.

- All staff should be consistent in their expectations of behaviour
- Pupils will be made aware of what constitutes peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse through this policy
- When an incident of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse occurs, an appropriate and time limited response should be made
- The benefits of taking a stand against peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse needs to be recognised by the pupil as well as the staff
- Parents, governors and members of the school community will be made aware of the school's stance on peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse

8. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH PEER-ON-PEER (CHILD-ON-CHILD) ABUSE

Incident

- All incidents should be reported (victim and perpetrator), using appropriate school procedures and logged on CPOMS
- However, minor the incident appears to be, staff should intervene and report the incident using appropriate school procedures and logged on CPOMS
- Follow up actions should be taken in line with the Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy and parents/carers informed

- Staff should ensure a common approach and reinforce that aggressive, violent or cruel behaviour is unacceptable
- If this is an obvious one-off incident deal with it as such, there and then. Fall outs or occurrences of pupils being unkind or unpleasant to one another may happen in your classroom – it is your responsibility to draw attention to the fact that it is not appropriate behaviour and it will not be tolerated. Appropriate steps should be taken to address this in line with the school procedures.
- The victim should be given protection and support, which may involve mediation between the perpetrator and the victim. Staff should always take what they say seriously.
- The perpetrator should be made aware that his/her behaviour is totally unacceptable
- It is essential to follow-up after an incident to check that the peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse has not started again. Immediately after intervention the issue is likely to stop but peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse is often persistent and may re-occur. If pupils expect follow-up, they are unlikely to start repeating the behaviour again.
- The behaviour characteristics of certain pupils can contribute to peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse, for example certain SEND needs, but this in no way justifies it. If the victim is behaving in such a way as to irritate or annoy other pupils, then the issue should be addressed with them.

Pupils should be made aware of:

- Places they can go to where they will feel safe
- Who they can contact for support
- How they can make staff aware of their problem even if they are too shy or frightened e.g. sympathetic teacher or friend who will help

Pupils must accept they have an important role to play in dealing with bullying. They are encouraged to:

- Have the self-confidence to challenge peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse
- Support victims of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse
- Report any incidents of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse without guilt or fear

Parents are encouraged to:

- Identify early signs of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse noticed at home
- Contact your child's Teacher/ Children and Family Link Worker.
- Reassure their child that the school will deal with the issue.
- Encourage their Child to report all peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse issues using appropriate school procedures.

Teachers and School staff:

1. Never ignore suspected peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse
2. Don't make premature assumptions about pupils
3. Listen carefully to all accounts
4. Adopt a problem-solving approach
5. Model School SHARP Values and zero tolerance of all peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse

9.2 Consequences

- When an incident is reported the SLT will determine the appropriate sanction in line with the school procedures and the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Any incident of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse could result in the pupil being excluded in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy. Behaviours and next steps will then be discussed with the parent/carer.

Continued incidents of peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse could result in the pupil being permanently excluded in line with the Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy. Where appropriate outside agencies such as Educational Psychologist, Social Services and Police will be involved

9. APPENDIX 1 – LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

10.1 This policy also links to policies on:

- Behaviour
- Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Health & Safety
- Allegations against staff
- Parental concerns/complaints
- Attendance
- Curriculum
- PSHE
- Teaching and Learning
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Positive Handling Policy
- E-Safety
- Safer Recruitment

Further advice is available from:

- NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx>
- CEOPSThinkuknow: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
- www.chatdanger.com – a childnet site
- www.ceop.gov.uk – child exploitation and on-line danger
- www.kidscape.org.uk
- www.kooth.com
- www.Children'slegalcentre.co.uk - Publications and free advice line on legal issues
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: <http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

- Sexual violence and harassment between children in schools and colleges
[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.pdf](#)
- UKCCIS sexting
- [Preventing and tackling bullying \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Whistleblowing

Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

DFE Working together to safeguard Children

[Working Together to Safeguard Children-2018.pdf](#)

DFE – Keeping Children/pupils Safe in Education

[Keeping children safe in education.pdf](#)

DFE – Prevent Duty June 2015

[prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf](#)

DFE – What to Do if You're worried a Child is being abused March 2015

[What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](#)

10. APPENDIX 2 – TYPES OF PEER-ON-PEER (CHILD-ON-CHILD) ABUSE

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Any incidents of cyber bullying will be dealt with in line with the School Anti-Bullying Policy

Homophobic-Bullying

Homophobic bullying is behaviour or language that makes a young person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of a perceived or actual sexual orientation or that of their family/carers. Homophobic bullying occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbian, gay or bisexual people. Sharps Copse is fully inclusive and takes an active approach to tackling all forms of bullying linked to both sexual orientation and gender identity

Homophobic bullying can be hard to identify because it may be going on in secret. Sometimes, pupils may not want to tell anyone about it because of perceived judgements from others.

Generally, homophobic bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse – including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.
- 'Being outed' (the threat of being exposed to your friends and family by them being told that you are gay, lesbian or bisexual even if you are not)
- Indirect bullying / social exclusion (being ignored or left out)
- Sexual harassment (inappropriate sexual gestures)

Any incidents of homophobic bullying will be dealt with in line with the school Anti-Bullying Policy, this will be 'swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective'.

Incidents of casual homophobic language will be appropriately challenged by staff, recorded on CPOMS System and it is made clear to all members of the school community that this language will not be tolerated.

Transphobic-Bullying

Transphobic bullying is bullying based on prejudice or negative attitudes, views or beliefs about people who are trans/ non-gender conforming. Transphobic bullying affects young people who are trans but can also affect those questioning their gender identity as well as pupils who are not trans but do not conform to gender stereotypes.

Transphobic bullying is not the same as homophobic bullying. Homophobic bullying targets someone's sexuality (whether they are, or are perceived to be gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, heterosexual or other), whereas transphobic bullying targets someone because of their gender identity (whether they identify as male, female or something different, regardless of the gender they were assigned at birth) or because they do not 'conform' to traditional gender stereotypes.

Any incidents of transphobic bullying will be dealt with in line with the school Anti-Bullying Policy, this will be 'swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective'.

Incidents of casual derogatory or discriminatory language linked to gender will be appropriately challenged by staff, recorded on CPOMS and it is made clear to all members of the school community that this language will not be tolerated.

Xenophobic or racially motivated -Bullying

'A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.'

We will ensure that our academies nurture an ethos and environment where all are valued and where views are taken into consideration. All associated with the school are committed to dealing with incidents involving racism (including prejudice and stereotyping), racial harassment, and racist name calling whenever they occur.

The school is an anti-racist establishment and is committed to:

- addressing racism;
- ensuring action to support victims of racism;
- ensuring existing school policies address inappropriate behaviour around racism and other discriminatory practices;
- recording and reporting racist incidents

Any incidents of Xenophobic or racially motivated peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse will be dealt with in line with the school Anti-Bullying Policy, this will be 'swift, proportionate, discreet, influential and effective'.

Incidents of casual xenophobic or racially derogatory language will be appropriately challenged by staff, recorded on CPOMS and it is made clear to all members of the school community that this language will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

HATE CRIME

The term 'hate crime' can be used to describe a range of criminal behaviour where the perpetrator is motivated by hostility or demonstrates hostility towards the victim's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

There is no legal definition of hostility so we use the everyday understanding of the word which includes ill-will, spite, contempt, prejudice, unfriendliness, antagonism, resentment and dislike. These aspects of a person's identity are known as 'protected characteristics'.

A hate crime can include verbal abuse, intimidation, threats, harassment, assault and bullying, as well as damage to property, but the list is not exhaustive. The perpetrator can also be a friend, carer or acquaintance who exploits their relationship with the victim for financial gain or some other criminal purpose.

Targeting someone because of their protected characteristics is totally unacceptable. All behaviours will be robustly challenged and dealt with in relation to the school Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

The police will be important partners where a crime might have been committed. **Where a hate crime may have been committed, the starting principle is that this must be referred on to the police.**

PEER-ON-PEER (CHILD-ON-CHILD) ABUSE OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

Headteachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted on in line with our Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy. The school will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police. If the misbehaviour

could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between 2 children of any age and any sex or through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children

Sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated or dismissed as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”;

All unacceptable behaviours that fall within this category will be robustly challenged and dealt with in relation to the school Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

Where an incident of sexual violence or sexual harassment may have been committed, the starting principle is that this must be referred on to the police.

For the purpose of this policy, when referring to sexual harassment we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- sexual “jokes” or taunting;
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.
- It may include:
 - non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos. (UKCCIS sexting advice provides detailed advice for schools and colleges);
 - sexualised online bullying;

- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. Harmful sexual behaviour can occur online and/or offline and can also occur simultaneously between the two. Harmful sexual behaviour should be considered in a child protection context. See Child protection Policy and KCSIE.