



Hidelow Grange School

Anti-Bullying Policy

	Last Review: November 2022 Sam Goodchild
Written: July 2017	Next review due: November 2022
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Role: Head of Education	
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CareTech's children's education services provide a safe and stimulating learning environment in which young people are always offered a fresh start, and empowered to achieve and fulfil their unique potential

Description and Ethos of Hidelow Grange School

Hidelow Grange is an Independent School operating within the Branas Isaf Company, a subsidiary of CareTech Community Services Ltd., who are the proprietors.

Hidelow Grange is an independent school providing specialist education to boys aged 11 to 18 years with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, and who are Looked After Children. The school specifically caters for boys who present with a range of complex interpersonal, emotional and behavioural issues.

For a more detailed description of what the school offers see “Statement of Independence” and School Prospectus.

OUR PUPILS

All young people at Hidelow Grange School have a history of harmful behaviours, including harmful sexualised behaviours and social, emotional and mental health needs often accompanied by a range of additional learning needs.

Most of the pupils have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of attainments on admission. All have fragile self-esteem and demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. Many have experienced loss and trauma, leading to attachment difficulties. As a result, many experience difficulties in forming and maintaining appropriate, positive relationships with others and have a limited ability to work cooperatively.

Pupils are:

- aged 11 to 18;
- boys only;
- placed within the residential setting of Branas Isaf;
- residents from placing authorities throughout the United Kingdom;
- all present a range of harmful behaviours;
- most are in receipt of an EHC plan.

THE VISION

Our school aspires to become a centre of excellence renowned for making outstanding educational provision for the very special pupils we teach.

This vision drives everything we do and will be achieved through...

- A rich, deep and personalised education designed to meet the needs of each pupil;
- A pupil centred, skills focused curriculum that is relevant to the 21st century and inclusive of all;

- Encouraging all members of the school community to strive beyond expectations and develop a lifelong love of learning;
- Offering a broad range of learning experiences within a curriculum that values academic attainment as well as social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of education;
- Providing personalised careers education and guidance, with aspirational next steps planning, preparing pupils for their future;
- Recognising that time is precious: working quickly to turn around pupils' attitudes towards education so they enjoy their time at school and make the most of the opportunities on offer;
- Working collaboratively with our professional partners to support the needs of each individual pupil.

Pupils will:

1. Be challenged to engage in learning and achieve meaningful qualifications that will enable them to take their next steps in education, employment or training;
2. Develop into healthy, resilient and confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society;
3. Create, nurture and maintain healthy positive relationships with others;
4. Experience success, whatever form it takes;
5. Become enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work;
6. Celebrate diversity and develop into ethical, informed young people who are ready to be citizens of the world.

OUR MISSION

Our mission statement is:

We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that nurtures mutual respect and encourages reflection so that our pupils develop the knowledge skills and confidence to enable them to achieve their potential in all aspects of their lives.

OUR VALUES AND INTENT

Our values

- **Aspiration** : We encourage each other to be the best we can be
- **Curiosity**: We never stop learning and wondering about the world
- **Independence**: We think for ourselves and determine our own future
- **Innovation**: We look for new and creative solutions to problems
- **Reflection**: We learn from our experiences
- **Tolerance**: We value difference and respect other people's opinions
- **Trust**: We believe in the honesty and reliability of others

Our Curriculum Intent

For our staff: Everyone at Hidelow supports and challenges pupils to invest in education as a priority for a successful placement

For all learners:

- To undergo an initial 6-week assessment so we fully understand their needs for effective learning;
- To achieve at least 95% attendance in school;
- To engage in creative learning experiences appropriate to their needs, supported by an accurate individual learning plan;
- To achieve nationally recognised academic awards in core subjects;
- To achieve accreditation in a wide range of subject areas;
- To become independent learners;
- To learn how to keep themselves safe, and build positive relationships with those around them;
- To take part in decisions that shape their lives, the school and the community in which they live;
- To demonstrate the behaviours needed to stretch themselves and cope with the challenges of learning;
- To attend and participate in regular therapy sessions;
- To learn strategies to manage their feelings and know where to go for help when things are difficult;
- To have the opportunity to participate in work experience and work related learning opportunities;
- To develop the Literacy skills they need for adult life;
- To learn the skills to apply mathematical concepts;
- To learn the skills to use digital technologies creatively and safely in preparation for the world in which they will live;
- To lead healthy, active lifestyles;
- To develop as social, moral, spiritual and culturally aware individuals who are ready to make a positive contribution to society as adults.

1. Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

Hidelow Grange School does not tolerate bullying in any form. All members of our school community have the right to learn and work in a secure and caring environment. We all share a responsibility to ensuring that bullying behaviour is not tolerated and to challenge it whenever it occurs.

This policy seeks to define what bullying is, how it will be dealt with and what steps we reduce the chance of it happening.

Legislative framework

The Equality Act 2010

Preventing & Tackling Bullying, DfE 2014

The Children Act 1989

The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014

Education and Inspections Act 2006

Public Order Act 1986

Definition of Child on Child abuse

Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer/child on child abuse and can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers; physical abuse; sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; sexual harassment; non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; upskirting; downblousing; and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. (Safeguarding network, 2021)

Definition of bullying

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

We use the acronym STOP with the students to identify if something is bullying behaviour:

Several

Times

On

Purpose

Bullying is characterised by:

- **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs: they may be frequent or happen over a period of time.
- **Intent:** The perpetrator(s) means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- **Targeting:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- **Power imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Anyone can be the target of bullying behaviour particularly:

- People with SEND
- Young people who are adopted or in the care system
- People with medical needs
- Pupils with caring responsibilities

Types of bullying behaviour

Bullying might be motivated by actual differences between people, or perceived differences.

Bullying can be:

- Verbal – e.g. name calling, insults, mimicking the way someone speaks
- Physical- e.g. hitting, spitting, pushing
- Emotional- e.g. ignoring someone, making them feel inferior or stupid, making threats, undermining, criticising
- Cyber- using on-line technology to bully or intimidate

Prejudicial bullying is against the law under the Equality Act 2010. This includes:

- **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background, religion or skin colour.
- **Homophobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Homophobic bullying is the most frequent form of bullying. It is important to remember that not all young people who experience homophobic bullying are LGBT or questioning their sexuality.
- **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender 'variance' or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- **Sexual Bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension/dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes. This may be a form of Child on Child Abuse (see below)
- **Disablist bullying:** Bullying behaviour because of a person's Special Educational Needs or Disability

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governance Committee is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it is not discriminatory.
- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a record of any bullying incident through our online system *Behaviour watch* and logged as a welfare concern in the Safeguarding file of each pupil concerned (those presenting the behaviour, and those targeted by it) to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Informing the Care Team verbally and by email about any students involved in or targeted by bullying behaviour.
- Analysing the data in the bullying record at least termly to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff.

School staff are responsible for:

- Being alert to social dynamics of the groups they work with.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.

- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and that they inform the relevant staff of such observations.
- Refraining from gender stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- Reporting any instances of bullying onto the online *Behaviour Watch* system.

Care staff are responsible for:

- Informing the Headteacher if they have any concerns about bullying behaviour in school.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.

Students are responsible for:

- Their own behaviour: the reaction of bystanders can be pivotal as to whether bullying flourishes or is stamped out.
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.

Statutory implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a responsibility to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We understand that, under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, our school could have charges brought against it if it allows the rights of children and young people at the school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The Headteacher will ensure that this policy complies with the HRA; the Headteacher understands that they cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.

Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications may be considered criminal offences:

- Under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, it is an offence for a person to electronically communicate with another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, or in a way which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or contains information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by means of a public electronic communications network, a message, or other matter, that is grossly

offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information through any media, including internet sites.

- Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to the police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

Prevention

- The school clearly communicates a whole-school commitment to addressing bullying.
- The school participates in Anti-Bullying Week in November.
- All reported or investigated instances of bullying will be investigated by a member of staff.
- Through the curriculum, we encourage pupil cooperation and the development of interpersonal skills using group and pair work. Anti-Bullying work is carried out as part of PSHCE.
- Diversity, difference and respect for others is promoted and celebrated within lessons and beyond.
- Seating plans will be organised and altered to prevent instances of bullying.
- Potential victims of bullying are placed in working groups with pupils who do not abuse or take advantage of others.
- Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills are provided through participation in whole school activities, e.g. Enrichment, PE and Thursday's Reward Activities.
- All members of the school are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities in relation to it.
- All staff members receive training on identifying and dealing with the different types of bullying.
- Safe Places, supervised by staff, are available for pupils to go to during free time if they feel threatened or wish to be alone.
- Tutors offer an 'open door' policy allowing pupils to discuss bullying, whether they are victims, witnesses or perpetrators.
- Before new pupils join the school, the pupil's tutor and the DSL will consider how to prevent bullying from happening – this may include giving the pupil a buddy to help integrate them into the school.
- The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause of bullying behaviour. The school will ensure potential perpetrators are given support as required, so their educational, emotional and social development isn't negatively influenced by outside factors, e.g. mental health issues.

Signs of Bullying

We recognise that our students are especially vulnerable to being bullied and to exhibiting bullying behaviour themselves. Many have witnessed or experienced bullying or abuse previously; many have mental health issues at times as a result of their experiences; they may feel powerless in relation to their current situation; they may have low self-esteem; they may have poor social skills and be anxious about fitting in with their peers; they may be looking to impress other students or to divert negative attention of their peers. Our pupils are all in care and living away from their families and home towns.

These are all risk factors that can determine whether a child may present bullying behaviours towards others.

Pupils with SEND are three times more likely to experience bullying than their peers.

Therefore we acknowledge that we are likely to have bullying behaviour in our school at times.

Our students are supervised closely at all times and will never be left alone with another young person without an adult present. However staff need to be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:

- Unwillingness to attend school
- Truancy
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill in the morning
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Returning home with torn clothes or damaged possessions
- Missing possessions
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although these signs may not be due to bullying, they may also indicate social, emotional or mental health issues. Pupils who display any these signs will be supported by a key member of their staff to determine the underlying issues, whether they are due to bullying or something else.

Responding to bullying

- Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns and how these will be handled – this includes reporting concerns about friends or peers.
- Staff will treat reports of bullying seriously and never ignore signs of suspected bullying.
- Unpleasantness from one pupil towards another is always challenged and never ignored.
- All staff act immediately when they become aware of a bullying incident.
- Staff will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”.
- If a member of staff believes a pupil is in danger of being hurt or harmed, they will inform the DSL immediately. The DSL will follow the Safeguarding Policy to keep all children safe from harm.
- Incidents of bullying reported to the School are always recorded, reported and followed through.
- The Headteacher will decide who is best placed to investigate a report of bullying. This will usually be the tutor. Following the investigation, this member of staff will discuss their findings with the Headteacher and other relevant staff to consider what consequences and follow up action to take. The member of staff will record the incident and outcome on our online

Behaviour Watch system, referring the incident to the Headteacher who will ensure a record is kept in the Safeguarding files of all of the students concerned.

Investigating a bullying incident

- If a pupil is injured, member of staff take immediate action with regards to first aid and assessment of their injuries.
- The victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses will be interviewed separately in a suitably private room.
- Members of staff ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils being interviewed during this process.
- If appropriate, the alleged perpetrator, the victim and witnesses, will be asked to write down details of the incident; this may need prompting with questions from the member of staff to obtain the full picture. Staff may scribe for them.
- It is important not to be judgemental at this stage. Members of staff listen carefully to all accounts, are non-confrontational and do not attach blame until the investigation is complete.
- All pupils involved are informed that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils.
- Due to the potential for sexist, transphobic, sexual bullying to be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviour, staff members involved in dealing with the incident are required to consider whether there is a need for safeguarding processes to be implemented.

Consequences

- If the Headteacher is satisfied that bullying did take place, a plan will be drawn up to help the perpetrator understand the consequences of their actions. They will be warned that there must be no further incidents.
- The Headteacher informs the pupil of the sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying behaviour continues.
- A Restorative Meeting may be held to attempt reconciliation and to obtain a genuine apology from the perpetrator. This will either be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with the victim's full consent. Discretion is used: victims will never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the perpetrator.
- Both the perpetrator and victim will have regular 1-1 meetings with their tutors to discuss the ongoing situation. The aim is to help the perpetrator recognise the consequences of their behaviour on others, and to consider the choices they have regarding the way they treat people.
- Care staff and Social Workers for both young people will be informed of bullying incidents and the action taken. A meeting of the multi-agency team may be required involving Therapy and Care, and possibly the Social Worker.
- The therapists for all young people involved will be informed and may carry out relevant work as part of their sessions.
- Sometimes, bullying behaviour may continue in spite of intervention from staff and it is felt that it is causing serious harm, or put others at significant risk of harm. In this case an exclusion may be necessary. The School will follow the procedures outlined in the School's Exclusion Policy.

- In serious circumstances if the bullying takes the form of criminal activity it will also be appropriate to involve the Police: this decision will be made on a case by case basis.

Support

- For at least a month after the initial incident of bullying, the tutors will hold regular informal 1-1 discussions with the pupils involved to check whether the bullying has stopped.
- All staff will monitor the situation and will challenge bullying behaviour - reporting and recording any incidents as before.

Pupils who have been bullied are supported in the following ways:

- Being listened to
- Having an immediate opportunity to meet with their tutor or a member of staff of their choice
- Being reassured
- Being offered continued support
- Being offered counselling, where appropriate

Pupils who have bullied others are supported in the following ways:

- Receiving a consequence for their actions
- Being able to discuss what happened
- Being helped to reflect on why they became involved
- Being helped to understand what they did wrong and why they need to change their behaviour
- Appropriate assistance from the Care Team

Incidents of bullying reported to the School by an employee suffering bullying by another employee will be treated as a grievance, and is recorded, reported and followed through using the **Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures**.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is *'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'*. Where this is the case, the School will report their concerns to their local authority safeguarding officer, and the placing authority for the child in question, and will follow the School's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**.

For incidents of child-on-child abuse (including sexting, CSE and sexual harassment) the school will follow the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures**, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people (2016) to assess the risk and to determine the most appropriate course of action. This may include the MASH, police and Social Care involvement (see below)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that occurs online or offline. Sexual harassment violates a child's dignity and makes them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and can create a hostile, sexualised or offensive environment. If left unchallenged, sexual harassment can

create an atmosphere that normalises inappropriate behaviour and may lead to sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to the three following offences:

- **Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- **Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines our stance on addressing child-on-child sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence are uncovered. More information regarding the school's stance on preventing child-on-child sexual abuse is available in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Cyber bullying

The students at our school do not have unsupervised access to the internet or social media at home or at school. However the school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying and will follow the procedures set out above if any incidents come to light.

In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If an electronic device is seized by a member of staff, and there is reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, the device must be given to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, the Headteacher will decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of the relevant policies. The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyber bullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in line with the procedures to respond to bullying incidents outlined above.

The school covers all aspects of internet safety including healthy behaviour on line as part of the PSHCE curriculum.

Bullying outside school

The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Where bullying outside school occurs, the Care Team will work with Teaching Staff to ensure steps are taken to keep all young people safe in school as well as at home.

How students can raise concerns

We provide a range of opportunities for pupils to raise concerns and be listened to. These include:

- School Council;
- Tutors, Staff Team and Senior Leadership;
- 1-1 tutor meetings twice a half term;
- Residential care staff and management, particularly Key Workers;
- Independent Advocacy;
- National Helplines;
- Local Authority representatives, including social worker, IRO and virtual school;
- Parents;
- School group meetings and tutor times;
- The company complaints system.

Continuous professional development of staff

As part of the induction process, all staff joining the school team will complete a session on bullying and the school's approach to tackling bullying.

The School's annual programme of professional development days may include additional training on tackling bullying.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

The date of next review will be November 2023

As part of the review of this policy, we will gather the views all stakeholders including pupils, care staff and social workers. We use feedback questionnaires from all stakeholders, and bullying is discussed by the School Council.

Bullying incidents are recorded as a Welfare Concern in the Safeguarding files of the pupils involved. They are also recorded on our on-line recording system *Behaviour Watch*, and will be passed on to the relevant Care Teams by email. Patterns of bullying behaviour will be analysed to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy, and identify areas for development.

Roles & Responsibilities

Teaching Staff	Qualifications
Sam Goodchild Headteacher; DSL; LAC; Teacher: PE	BSc (Hons) in Sports Studies; PGCE: Secondary Education
Charlotte James DDSL; SENCO; Exams Officer; Teacher: Maths, ICT, Art	BA (Hons) in Primary Education specialising in SEND
Mark Maddock 0.6 FTE Teacher: Science, DT	B.SC. (Hons): Applied Zoology (with Agriculture); PGCE in Biology and Science (Distinction in Teaching Practice) Post-Graduate Certificate of SEN
Victoria Cooper Teacher: English; Enrichment	BA (Hons) English Literature and minor Religious Studies; Dip (HE) Diploma in Community, Youth and Play Work; PGCE Secondary English
Juliet Smith Teacher: PSHE; Humanities; Art; Enrichment	BA (Hons) in Humanities with History; PGCE Secondary Geography

Links with other school policies

For further detailed guidance on those policies referred to in this policy, and other relevant policies, please read the School's policies as listed below:

- Complaints Policy and Procedures;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework
- Exclusion Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures;
- Behaviour Policy and Procedures;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures;
- Acceptable Use of Technologies Policy

Further resources

For further sources of information and resources please refer to the DfE guidance documents:

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Preventing and tackling bullying; Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies, DfE 2014

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444862/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harrassment between Children in Schools and Colleges: DfE 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1014224/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harrassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf

Appendix A: Peer on peer abuse

Excerpt from School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

11.5 Child-on-child abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. We understand that the child who is perpetrating the abuse may also be at risk of harm. We will make every effort to ensure that the perpetrator is also treated as a victim and supported appropriately.

Child on child abuse can take the form of:-

11.5.1. Bullying

- ‘Cyberbullying’: sending inappropriate or hurtful text messages, emails or instant messages, posting malicious material online (e.g. on social networking websites) or sending/ posting offensive or degrading images and videos
- Racist and Religious Bullying: A range of hurtful behaviour, both physical and psychological, that makes a person feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded or worthless because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, faith community, national origin or national status;
- Sexual, Sexist and Transphobic Bullying: includes any behaviour, whether physical or non- physical, where sexuality is used as a weapon;
- Homophobic Bullying: targets someone because of their sexual orientation (or perceived sexual orientation);
- Disablist Bullying: targets a young person solely based on their disability, this can include manipulative bullying where a perpetrator forces the victim to act in a certain way, or exploiting a certain aspect of the victims disability.

Response: Pupils who attend our school have the right to learn in safety. We do not tolerate bullying of any kind and will challenge derogatory language and behaviour towards others. There are clear behaviour and anti-bullying policies used across the school. Behavioural incidents including bullying are recorded and monitored to identify patterns.

11.5.2 Child Sexual Exploitation

“Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.” DfE, 2017

There are different models of CSE including child on child sexual exploitation. Many children are not aware of the exploitation as they have a genuine belief that they are loved by their boyfriend / girlfriend or are acting in accordance with their peers. They are often recruited into exploitation by those who they trust, those of a similar age and with similar hobbies. Often the nature of child on child exploitation encompasses a sense of peer pressure and wanting to fit in.

Response: Follow the school safeguarding procedures. Make a referral to social care and LADO as appropriate. Provide support for the child who has perpetrated the abuse.

11.5.3 Sending or posting sexually suggesting images (sexting)

Pupils should be aware that making, possessing and distributing any imagery of someone under 18 which is ‘indecent’ is illegal. This includes imagery of yourself if you are under 18.

All members of staff (including non-teaching) will be made aware of how to recognise and refer any disclosures of incidents involving 'youth produced sexual imagery' or child-on-child abuse.

Response: The school will follow UKCCIS Guidance: Sexting in schools and colleges, responding to incidents, and safeguarding young people (2016) to assess the risk and to determine the most appropriate course of action. This may include police and/or CSC involvement.

11.5.4 Sexual harassment and sexual violence

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Definitions of sexual violence and sexual harassment can be found in *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges* (May 18). Due to the nature of need of our young people, all staff have completed AIM 2 training to enable them to be aware of the risks of sexually harmful behaviour that our young people present to themselves and others

Response:

- Record the incident and report to the DSL / deputy in line with safeguarding and child protection procedures as a matter of urgency. Is information about the incident first hand or do other individuals need to be spoken to, to confirm?
- The DSL will consider the ages/ developmental stage of children involved; whether there a power imbalance; whether this is a one off or sustained pattern; whether a criminal offence been committed.
- If a criminal offence has been committed, contact the police
- If there is no criminal offence has taken place the DSL will consider next steps, in discussion with parents/carers. Next steps may be to deal with the incident following the behaviour policy; multi-agency approach working with Care and Therapy; and liaising with the social workers for all children involved

See also Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy: Appendix 10: Flow Chart for responding to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools