



# Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

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## Contents

1 Aims.....	3
2 Definitions.....	3
3 Purpose.....	3
4 Legislation and relevant documentation.....	4
5 Scope.....	4
6 Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
7 Training.....	6
8 Procedures to minimise child-on-child abuse.....	6
9 Responding to concerns or disclosures of child-on-child abuse.....	7
10 Local Arrangements and Making Referrals.....	8
11 Record-keeping.....	9
12 Parent/s and Carer/s.....	9
Appendix A: Further Resources.....	10

## 1. Aims

- 1.1 Allerton Grange School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognise that children may face different forms of abuse and we work together to protect children from harm. As well as being abused by adults, children can be abused by other young people. This is known as 'child-on-child abuse'. The school is committed to preventing child-on-child abuse and will protect children that may be suffering, or at risk of suffering harm perpetrated by another child. We recognise that child-on-child abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and act in the best interests of the child at all times.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 The following terms and associated definitions will be used throughout this policy.

- **'Staff' or 'members of staff'** refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of the school.
- **Child/children** refers to any young person under the age of 18.
- **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as; protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.<sup>1</sup>
- **Child-on-child abuse** refers to any scenario where a child under the age of 18 abuses another child under the age of 18. It can take place online or offline. The children involved do not have to be the same age and the perpetrator may be older or younger than the victim. Child-on-child abuse could include (but is not limited to):
  - bullying (including cyberbullying);
  - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
  - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
  - 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;
  - upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
  - exchanging nude images (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
  - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.<sup>2</sup>
  - abuse within intimate personal relationships and/or teenage relationship abuse.

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1 This policy has been written to:

- ensure that the school follows all statutory guidance and advice relating to child-on-child abuse;
  - provide stakeholders with information about Allerton Grange School works to prevent child-on-child abuse;
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- provide stakeholders with information about how Allerton Grange School responds to concerns, disclosures and/or allegations relating to child-on-child abuse; and to
- provide stakeholders with information about how Allerton Grange School continues to support victims of child-on-child abuse following the conclusion of an investigation.

## 4. Legislation and relevant documentation

4.1 This policy adheres to and must be read alongside the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

- All staff and stakeholders should also refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in relation to any safeguarding matters or concerns.
- This policy is part of a suite of school policies relating to safeguarding and child protection. For further details, please see
  - Policy for Positive Discipline (Behaviour Policy, which includes our Stop and Search protocol and Acceptable Use of a Mobile Device))
  - Anti-bullying Policy
  - PSHCE Overview
  - SRE Policy
  - Child Protection Guidance and Policy
  - SMSC Policy
- This policy adheres to all statutory guidance and legislation, including (but not limited to):
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children
  - Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework
  - Children Act 1989 and 2004
  - Data Protection Act
  - General Data Protection Regulations
- The school will also refer to the government guidance documents 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools and Colleges (September 2021)' and 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation (July 2022)' advice when managing reports or disclosures of child-on-child abuse of a sexual nature.
- Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education in this policy, it should be understood that Allerton Grange will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

## 5. Scope

5.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Allerton Grange. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

- 5.2 This policy has been developed by Sarah Whittingham in consultation with Andy Norrington HT, Lucy Saunders DHT, Barbara Trayer COG and Ruth Rowbotham DSL.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### 6.1 Role of the Governors

#### 6.1.1 The governors will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and any other relevant statutory guidance.
- Ensure that the school's safeguarding and child protection policy includes all relevant information as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ensure that policies (including this policy), procedures and training in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.

### 6.2 Role of the Headteacher

#### 6.2.1 The Headteacher will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school safeguarding and child protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Ensure that this policy and all other relevant policies are followed by all staff.
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead about ongoing enquiries, particularly those under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Ensure that the school curriculum includes educational opportunities to minimise incidents of child-on-child abuse.
- Ensure that the school site promotes positive behaviour and minimises the opportunity for child-on-child abuse.
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (in line with The Teachers' Standards 2021).

### 6.3 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

#### 6.3.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Undertake any training required to uphold their post and the responsibilities outlined in this policy.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff in relation to child-on-child abuse.
- Manage disclosures of and concerns about child-on-child abuse.
- Make referrals to Children's Services and the police as appropriate.
- Ensure that this policy is known, understood and used appropriately by all staff.

### 6.4 Role of all staff

#### 6.4.1 All staff will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school safeguarding and child protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Make referrals to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in cases where they suspect cases of child-on-child abuse or become aware of cases of child-on-child abuse.
- Be made aware that children can abuse other children and the forms that this abuse could take.
- Be clear as to the school policy and procedures on child-on-child abuse.
- Be made aware that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

- Report any concerns relating to child-on-child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Receive training in how to respond appropriately to incidents of 'sexting'. Where incidents involve sexting or indecent images of children, members of staff will not view, download, print or share images. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware of the incident immediately.<sup>3</sup>

## 7. Training

- 7.1 Allerton Grange school will ensure that all staff have been trained to recognise and respond to child-on-child abuse.
- 7.2 Training will take place by way of:
- Regular reminders in whole staff briefing and bulletin
  - 3 yearly full safeguarding training, statutory for all staff and delivered by the local authority
  - A requirement to read and sign to say you have read KCSIE, updated every summer
  - Any additional subject specific training undertaken by designated child protection officers
- 7.3 We recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all staff will be trained to understand that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

## 8. Procedures to minimise child-on-child abuse

- 8.1 The school has a responsibility to minimise opportunities for child-on-child abuse. We do this by:
- Providing staff with training on how to spot the indicators
  - Encourage staff to record all incidents or even concerns on CPOMs
  - Produce risk assessments which will minimize risk once we are aware of any student specific concerns
  - Keep abreast of the latest legislation and training related to harmful sexual behavior
  - Create a safe environment to empower our students to speak out if they witness or experience a concern
  - Ensure maximum staff supervision in and around school at all times of the day
- 8.2 We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to child-on-child abuse than others. For example, children who have already experienced abuse, those that have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), children living in care and children who are LGBTQ+ and/or have other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 may be more likely to face child-on-child abuse than other children. We work to protect children with additional vulnerabilities by using our trained SEND colleagues to support the individual concerned and remove any potential barriers. We will take advice from our SENDco and SENSAP as and when necessary.
- 8.3 We address child-on-child abuse through our curriculum, in line with [Relationships Education, Sex and Relationships Education and Health Education](#). The curriculum covers the following issues:
- Accessing help and support
  - Minimising risk in sexual encounters
  - Consent
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- Empowerment to make positive and informed choices
- Challenging stereotyping and prejudice
- Improving relationships
- Helping pupils through the process of adolescence

## **9. Responding to concerns or disclosures of child-on-child abuse**

9.1 The school takes child-on-child abuse seriously and will respond to all concerns or disclosures of abuse immediately.

9.2 If a member of staff has a concern about child-on-child abuse, or if a child discloses child-on-child abuse to them, they will refer this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

9.3 Upon receiving a concern, report or disclosure of abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide what further action is necessary. This will vary depending on the type of child-on-child abuse and the severity of the incident/s disclosed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take contextual factors into account when managing the report.

9.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always consider the following;

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. The victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: the level of coercion or threat, whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
- both the chronological and developmental ages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children, including consideration of the age of children and whether children have special educational needs or disabilities;
- the impact on the victim;
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse; and
- if there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school or college staff.

9.5 Depending on the nature of the incident/s, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may:

- seek further information from those involved and witnesses;
- undertake a risk assessment to ascertain steps necessary to safeguard the victim, alleged perpetrator, adults and other children;
- decide to manage the concern internally;
- organise a meeting with relevant staff and agencies to assess risk and agree a safety plan;
- refer the victim and/or the perpetrator to local services for Early Help;
- refer the case to Children's Services via a MASH referral;
- liaise with social workers working with children involved (if applicable);
- make a referral to the police.

### **9.6 Supporting the victim**

9.6.1 The school recognises that child-on-child abuse has a significant impact on young people and victims are likely to need ongoing support.

- 9.6.2 Appropriate support will be put in place for victims of child-on-child abuse whilst investigation is taking place and following the initial response. Support will continue for as long as it is needed and will be reviewed regularly to ensure the victim is receiving appropriate care.
- 9.6.3 The school will do everything we can to maintain the victim's normal routine.
- 9.6.4 The school will do everything we can to protect the victim from further bullying and harassment as a result of their disclosure.
- 9.6.5 The school will maintain an open dialogue with the victim's parent/carer.
- 9.6.6 If a victim of child-on-child abuse moves to a new setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share the necessary information to ensure that support for the child continues.

## **9.7 Supporting the alleged perpetrator**

- 9.7.1 Allerton Grange has a responsibility to ensure that an alleged perpetrator continues to receive a suitable education and will consider a range of options in continuing educational provision. Options may include:
- consider a move to an alternative provision;
  - consider a managed move to another local school if safe and/or appropriate to do so.
- 9.7.2 We recognise that children who perpetrate child-on-child abuse may be being abused themselves. The school will continue to safeguard the alleged perpetrator and provide them with support.
- 9.7.3 A plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator will be put in place as part of the risk assessment made following the alleged abuse.
- 9.7.4 If the alleged perpetrator moves to another setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share information as necessary to safeguard the individual and other child at the new setting.
- 9.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take advice from Children's Social Care, Specialist Services and the Police as necessary.
- 9.9 Allerton Grange may choose to impose a sanction or punishment on the alleged perpetrator following an incident of child-on-child abuse. In this case, we will follow the school's Policy for Positive Discipline (PPD – school behaviour policy) in determining the level and severity of sanction.
- 9.10 Where a child is cautioned or receives a conviction related to an incident of child-on-child abuse, the school will refer to the Police and Social Care for advice and guidance. An appropriate risk assessment will be produced and adhered to.

## **10. Local Arrangements and Making Referrals**

- 10.1 The school adheres to local safeguarding arrangements, as outlined by the Leeds Childrens Social Work Services.
- 10.2 For further details of how the school works with partner agencies in responding to safeguarding incidents (including incidents of child-on-child abuse), please see the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

## **11. Record-keeping**

- 11.1 All incidents of child-on-child abuse will be logged using our internal CPOMs system. This means they will be picked up, actioned and monitored by designated colleagues. An audit trail and timeline will then be regularly updated. Any relevant completed paperwork will be scanned and uploaded for security. Risk assessments if completed will also be uploaded, stored and reviewed half termly.
- 11.2 Members of staff will follow the procedures for recording a disclosure outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

## **12. Parent/s and Carer/s**

- 12.1 Parent/s and carer/s will be informed of incidents unless sharing information puts a child at greater risk of harm.
- 12.2 If the child wishes to withhold information from their parent/s or carer/s, competency will be assessed using the Gillick Competency and Fraser Guidelines (where applicable).
- 12.3 Children will always be encouraged to speak to parent/s or carer/s about child-on-child abuse.

## Appendix A: Further Resources

The school use a range of resources (in addition to those referenced in the main body of the policy) to support in minimising child-on-child abuse, training staff and responding to concerns or disclosures. This appendix details this additional documentation.

### **Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool**

<https://www.brook.org.uk/training/wider-professional-training/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool/>

### **Harmful sexual behaviour between children and young people, NICE**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng55>

### **NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework**

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1657/harmful-sexual-behaviour-framework.pdf>

### **Preventing and Tackling Bullying Advice (2017), HM Government**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/623895/Preventing\\_and\\_tackling\\_bullying\\_advice.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf)

### **What to do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015), HM Government**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

### **Sexting: How to respond to an incident. An overview for all teaching and non-teaching staff in schools and colleges, UKCCIS**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/647389/Overview\\_of\\_Sexting\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647389/Overview_of_Sexting_Guidance.pdf)

### **Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people UKCISS**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/759007/6\\_2939\\_SP\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_In\\_Schools\\_FINAL\\_Update\\_Jan17.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759007/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf)

### **Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1181584/Suspension\\_and\\_permanent\\_exclusion\\_guidance\\_september\\_23.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181584/Suspension_and_permanent_exclusion_guidance_september_23.pdf)

### **Behaviour and discipline in schools (2022), Department for Education**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/651d42d86a6955001278b2af/Behaviour\\_in\\_schools\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/651d42d86a6955001278b2af/Behaviour_in_schools_guidance.pdf)