Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School

Child on Child Abuse

Policy & Guidance

2023

Policy last reviewed:

Reviewed by: Chair of Governors and Governing body

Agreed by governors: Summer 2023

Shared with staff: Summer 2023

Frequency of review: Yearly

Date of next review: **Summer 2024**

Introduction

Constructive behaviour, happy self-discipline, positive consideration and respect for others are central themes within Christian living. The teachings of Jesus Christ are as valid in our modern times as they were two thousand years ago. The demands of living in a modern society with its high technology and online media often create problems for young people and their relationships with others. For others, these pressures can reinforce a desire for an inner, more personal, peace. The aim of this policy is to encourage respectful and 'online safe' young people who live out their lives to a high standard in school, at home, in the local community and in the wider world.

Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School promotes a safe learning environment where everyone feels able to enjoy and achieve and where success is recognised and rewarded. We work to prevent all forms of bullying so that all students are able to achieve and enjoy.

Philosophy

We believe that for everyone to benefit from our learning community, Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School should be a place where pupils, staff, helpers, families and other visitors are made to feel welcome and comfortable and where everyone is treated with respect in an atmosphere free from intimidation.

We believe that all children and young people have the right to protection from harm, neglect and abuse and that their well-being is of paramount importance. Our school aims to ensure good relationships between, and good behaviour towards, all members of its community, and that learning and personal development takes place in a climate of trust, safety and confidence.

Our school has a system of rewards which aim to motivate and encourage pupils as well as helping to build individual self-confidence and self-esteem. Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School values everyone's unique contribution to our community. Our 'Ullathorne Way' Values promote a culture of support and compassion.

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all pupils and all staff have a duty of care, to ensure our students are protected from harm.

We are a zero-tolerance school - all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell staff.

Bishop Ullathorne Mission Statement

Our Mission is to be an active Christian community of love and service, where all feel they belong and are valued. We will help each other to recognise the gifts of God within us, to search for excellence and to foster the development of our true self.

Context and definition

It is essential that all our staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a

culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as such and not coming forward to report it. (KCSIE 2023)

All staff who work at Bishop Ullathorne School are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child. In terms of sexual abuse, we maintain the attitude that 'it does happen here' (In response to the Ofsted review 2021)

Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:

- bullying (including online bullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing
- physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. School staff, alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy, have to make their own judgements for each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

Children might not report sexual abuse because they are afraid of the following:

- Being ostracised by their peers
- Their peers getting into trouble
- Losing control of what will happen after they tell someone
- Not being believed
- Being blamed
- Being shamed

Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2023 states that

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that their child protection policy includes:

- procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse
- the systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously
- how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt
- With clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by child-on-child abuse will be supported
- recognition 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
- It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard

Ultimately, all system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.' Child on Child abuse is referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with Child on Child necessitate separate policy guidance.

At Bishop Ullathorne School we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of Child-on-Child abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues. The following policies are in place and should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-Bullying including Online Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together, 2018, highlighting that every assessment of a child, 'must be informed by the views of the child'. (Working Together, 2018:21) This is echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider

- What abuse is and what it looks like

- How it can be managed

- What appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual

- What preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

- Children and young adults are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

- Children can abuse other children. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. (KCSIE 2023)

- All staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

- All staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

- All staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, significant harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs

Types of abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

Physical abuse: This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, 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 punishment to be undertaken.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will refer to the DFE guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

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. 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 to the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may include:

- inappropriate sexual language
- inappropriate role play
- sexual touching
- sexual assault/abuse.
- Staff should be aware of the importance of:
- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

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- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and

- Challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

- Up skirting: where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g., size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Online Bullying

Online Bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, email, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.
Online bullying can take many forms
- Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites
- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- Stealing someone's online identity
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chat rooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.

The term 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams by young people under the age of 18 online. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's Airdrop which works offline.

The term 'nudes' is used as it is most commonly recognised by young people and more appropriately covers all types of images sharing incidents.

Up skirting: 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. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL will follow the KCSIE: Sharing nudes and semi nudes: Advice for education settings working with children and young people December 2020

Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony 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.

Prejudiced Behaviour

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – for example disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is 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. This abuse may be child sexual exploitation.

Recognising peer abuse

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and consider:
- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery?
- The effect on the victim
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled. Staff will talk to the children in a

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- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting
- Record all incidents and all action taken onto CPOMS

Recording sexualised behaviour

- Be clear, explicit, and non-avoidant, and avoid vague statements or euphemisms
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the child. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.
- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around.

Gather the Facts

- Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account.
- Ask the young people to tell you what happened.
- Use open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?).
- Do not interrogate or ask leading questions.
- Consider the intent: has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?
- Decide on your next course of action
- If you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately; they will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- If the local authority and the police intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to.

It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

Informing parents/carers

The best way to inform parents/carers is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents/carers whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another. Is the pupil 13+ and does not want to share with parents? Use the 'Gillick' test and the'Fraser' guidelines. NSPCC Gillick Test and Fraser Guidelines

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent/carer (they may be scared to tell parents/carers that they are being harmed in any way).

Points to consider:

What is the age of the children involved?

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved?

Where did the incident or incidents take place?

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this area?

What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? (Several Time on Purpose) Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? Do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have an understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion?

In the sameway it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

Next Steps

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved

For the young person who has been harmed (the victim)

The level of support required depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends; in which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need

support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people, or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour (alleged perpetrator)

It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an Early Help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that the young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g., making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour, it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one-to-one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education elsewhere.

It may be that the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others, in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi- agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all agencies involved, including the youngperson and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour. The school may also choose a punishment, such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

After care

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g., self-harm). For this reason, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

Preventative Strategies

Child on Child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most robust policies and support processes It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent peer on peer abuse. This school has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. There is a strong and positive CPSHE/RSE curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. The school makes sure that 'support and report' signposting is available to young people.

Staff will not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.

Young people are part of changing their circumstances and, through student voice, we encourage young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. We involve pupils in the positive ethos in school; one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.