



BRITANNICA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, SHANGHAI

Peer on Peer Abuse

Policy and Procedural Guidance

Including sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

August 2021

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Name of School	Britannica International Shanghai
Policy review date	August 2021
Date of next review	August 2022
Who reviewed this policy?	Safeguarding Committee, SLT, Principal and RHoS
Date approved	
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Anthony O'Brien

This policy has been reviewed; to the best of our knowledge, we do not feel it impacts negatively on any specific group or individual within our school community.

Introduction

Britannica International Shanghai is a community of resilient, respectful lifelong learners which offers a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment where every member of the community is encouraged to strive for excellence.

At Britannica International Shanghai we are committed to providing all learners with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of student achievement and attitude.

This policy summarises our expectations and common working practices, which reflect the aims and objectives of the School and support its Vision Mission and Values.

Vision, Mission and Values

Britannica will be:

INSPIRING: an inspiring place of learning creating globally-minded leaders of tomorrow

INCLUSIVE: an inclusive community, which values the needs of all individuals

COLLABORATIVE: a supportive and collaborative workplace

EMPOWERING: a school that empowers students to develop their confidence and independence, to achieve their academic potential [Our Mission](#)

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Our Values

Excellence - We strive for excellence in everything we do.

Respect - We learn at school by showing respect to everyone in the community

Responsibility - We are engaged, promoting actions and behaviours that support a sustainable future.

Integrity - We are transparent, honest and ethical in all our relationships.

Compassion - We are kind and caring, encouraging everyone to succeed.

1. Context and Definition

Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others.

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as Peer on Peer abuse). And that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of Peer on Peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding Peer on Peer abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

DSL: Mr Anthony O'Brien: aobrien@educator.orbital.education

DDSL: Ms Katherine Mustoe: kmustoe@educator.orbital.education

All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually 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 normal and not coming forward to report it.

Peer on peer abuse 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 such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, 11 such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, 12 such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;

For further information about sexual violence see Annex B.

For further information about sexual harassment see Annex B.

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regards to Peer on Peer abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should be aware this abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

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 about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

2. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2021 states that

‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with’.

It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard

‘Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.’

Peer on Peer abuse is referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with peer on peer necessitate separate policy guidance.

At Britannica International Shanghai, 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.

Governing bodies and proprietors have a strategic leadership responsibility for their school’s safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation.

They must have regard to this guidance, ensuring policies, procedures and training in their schools are effective and comply with the law at all times.

Principals should ensure that the policies and procedures, adopted by their governing bodies and proprietors, (particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect), are understood, and followed by all staff.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, governing bodies, proprietors and school leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

Systems should be 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, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

Safeguarding policies and procedures

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

These policies should include individual schools and colleges having:

- an effective child protection policy which: reflects the whole school approach to Peer on Peer abuse

3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of peer on peer abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues.

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers (including online).

All staff should be clear about their school's policy and procedures with regard to Peer on Peer abuse.

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

- procedures to minimise the risk of Peer on Peer abuse;
- Section 35 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Section 38 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- 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 Peer on Peer abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with;
- clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by peer on peer abuse will be supported;
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- a recognition that even if there are no reported cases of Peer on Peer abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported;
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- recognition that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all Peer on Peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and
- the different forms Peer on Peer abuse can take, such as:
- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);

- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Part five of this guidance and Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools sets out how schools should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment;

Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery):

The UKCIS Education Group has published *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young 36*. Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive.

UKCIS provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

People which outlines how to respond to an incident of nudes and seminudes being shared; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm; and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

At Britannica International Shanghai

we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

3.1 Anti-Bullying Policy

3.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

4. 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, 2021 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

5. 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'. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE, 2021). It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

- Children 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.
- Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
- 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.

6. 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.

6.1 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 accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

6.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will follow the DfE Guidance: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018 (updated 2021)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

with consideration of

- Managing internally 65.1, page 27
- Early Help 65.2, page 28
- MASH referral 65.3, page 28
- Reporting to the police 64.4, page 29

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

- **Upskirting:** 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.

6.3 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.

Updated guidance on the types of Peer on Peer abuse

The following updates have been made:

- Updated the definition of bullying to include prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying
- Added abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Updated the definition of physical abuse **to include an online element** which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse
- Updated the definition of sexual violence **to include an online element** which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence
- Added causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Updated the definition of 'sexting' to refer specifically to the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos
- Updated the definition of 'up skirting' to specify that it typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission (previously this was 'without them knowing')
- Updated the definition of initiation/hazing type violence to include an explanation of what may be involved, **including an online element**

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.

6.4 Online Bullying

Online Bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, e-mail, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated

New information regarding Online Safety:

A significant amount has been added to annex C on online safety moving into part 2, to make clear it should be considered as part of your whole school approach to safeguarding, with these additions:

- A new reference to parental engagement with online safety
- Specifying that you should have "an appropriate level of security" to protect users and their data
- Added a fourth area of risk - 'commerce' - which covers risks such as gambling
- Updated definitions for the previous risk areas of 'content' and conduct'
- Explanation that you should review your approach annually, including a risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks your pupils face

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, chatrooms 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

6.5 Sexting

The term 'sexting' relates to the sending of indecent images, videos and/or written messages with sexually explicit content; these are created and sent electronically. They are often 'shared' via social networking sites and instant messaging services.

Upskirting: which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and

- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

DSL will follow the UKCIS: Sexting in schools and colleges 2016 guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexting-in-schools-and-colleges>

6.6 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.

6.7 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.

6.8 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.

7. Expected staff action

Staff should respond to an initial disclosure as follows:

Staff;

- Do not need to wait for a child to make a disclosure, they should act on any concerns immediately
- May overhear a conversation that suggest a child may have been harmed or a child's behaviour may be an indicator
- May confiscate devices for evidence to hand to the police, if the report includes an online element
- Can ask children outright if they have been harmed and what the nature of the harm was
- Should keep in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation
- Should reflect back, using the child's language, when hearing a report
- Should recognise it may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse

The DSL or DDSL's response after the initial reporting:

The DSL's risk and needs assessment in response to a report of sexual harassment should also consider whether there have been any other victims

- Be aware of, and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of school
- Balance the victim's wishes against your responsibility to protect other children
- Remember that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers

- Think about other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, and take the potential for sexual violence and harassment in intimate personal relationships into consideration
 - Keep victim and alleged perpetrator(s) a reasonable distance apart on school premises includes at before and after-school activities
 - Regularly review the actions you take to respond to reports. In response, update relevant policies with lessons learnt and consider whether there are wider cultural issues at play
 - Record all concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, in writing
- the response should be underpinned by the principle that "there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated"
 - The DSL (and deputy) should know what the early help process is and how and where to access support

8. Recognising peer abuse

The updated summary explains that:

- Guidance in part 5 refers to child-on-child sexual violence and harassment that takes place inside or outside of school and online
- All staff need to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"
- Addressing inappropriate behaviour can help prevent abusive/violent behaviour
- Victims of this abuse will likely find the experience distressing, which can affect their progress in school, this can be made worse if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school
- Staff should be aware that girls are more likely to be victims and boys are more likely to be the perpetrators
- It could be done by a group, not just an individual, and therefore saying "perpetrator(s)" in this section, rather than "perpetrator"

You should read part 5 alongside the DfE's advice on [sexual violence and harassment](#) 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 calm and consistent manner. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

8.1 Taking Action

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

8.2 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.

8.3 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.

8.4 Consider the Intent

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

8.5 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 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.

8.6 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 (updated June 2020).

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/gillick-competency-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).

9. Points to consider

9.1 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? In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1–4-year-olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however, should not be overlooked.

9.2 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 particular area?

9.3 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 also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

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

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. 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 understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

9.5 Repetition

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

10. 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.

10.1 For the young person who has been harmed

What support they require 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.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on online bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of Relationship and Sex Education (from 2020), PSHE that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

10.2 For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that 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 of those agencies involved including the young person 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 as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

10.3 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.

11. Preventative Strategies

Peer on peer 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 PSHE 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 school council and pupil voice for example, 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.

12. Where to go for further information

- 12.1 DfE: Statutory guidance: Working together to safeguard children 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2>
- 12.2 DfE: Statutory guidance: Keeping children safe in education 2021
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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>
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Review and Evaluation

This policy is to be reviewed and evaluated annually by the SLT, Principal and with the RHoS.

Due for Review:

PREPARED BY: Principal - Paul Farrell August 2021

Revised by Michael W Clack, RHoS August 2021