

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

In our school we believe that each person is unique and created to flourish in God's image.

We aspire to excellence through a nurturing environment in which every child takes Jesus Christ as their model and develops their individual gifts so that they live fully and serve others.



Child Protection Policy

Agreed:

Date: 5.12.17

Review Date: Autumn 2018

Purpose and Aim

Our Lady Queen of Peace School's Child Protection Policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with Child welfare concerns. The policy also aims to make explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe in our school.

The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that our children's welfare is of paramount importance, early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and where Child Protection concerns are identified referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's well-being.

This policy is informed by *Keeping Children Safe in Education* which can be found at :
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Introduction

Our Lady Queen of Peace School fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the pupils in its care. There are four main elements to Our Lady Queen of Peace School's child protection policy:

1. **Prevention** (positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models, the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and reducing risks to children including bullying, victimisation, exploitation, radicalisation and issues such as Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage).
2. **Protection** (following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training and is supported to refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Children's Services Duty Social Worker directly IF NECESSARY. (In certain specific cases such as Female Genital Mutilation, Radicalisation or Forced Marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted). Concerns can also be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer by the DSL or other members of staff directly.
3. **Reconsideration** (following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child's circumstances)
4. **Support** (to pupils and school staff and to children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances)

This policy applies to Our Lady Queen of Peace School's whole workforce.

All Staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse or peer abuse in its many forms including:

Child Exploitation
Bullying
Domestic Violence
Drugs
Fabricated Illness
Faith Abuse
Forced Marriage
Gangs
Gender Based Violence
Radicalisation and Extremism
Peer to Peer Abuse
Sexting

In the event of any of these issues being recognised, information should be shared directly with the Designated Safeguarding Leads which may result in the situation being monitored or the pupil being referred to specific services.

Framework and Legislation

Schools do not operate in isolation. Keeping Children Safe from Significant Harm is the responsibility of all adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the

responsibilities of Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with Children and families across the City.

Our Lady Queen of Peace School is committed to respond in accordance with Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board and partner agencies in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm.

Significant Harm is defined in The Children's Act 1989 as the ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and physical abuse) or the Impairment of health (physical or mental) or development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural) as compared to a similar child.

Note: harm includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person

(Adoption and Children Act 2002)

Local Authorities have a duty to investigate (under S47 of the Children Act 1989). Where a Local Authority is informed that there is a child who is living, or is found, in their area and they have reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm they must make such enquiries as necessary to promote or safeguard the child's welfare. Children's Services undertake this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority once a referral has been made.

Keeping Children Safe in Education July 2015 (and subsequent updates) contains information on what schools and colleges should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges must comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (and subsequent updates.) The Children Act 1989 sets out the Legal Framework.

Roles and Responsibilities for all staff

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting ALL children from all forms of maltreatment and abuse (including in addition to the four categories of harm, issues such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and victimisation inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage); preventing impairment of children's 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. This includes everyone under the age of 18.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Due to the regular contact with children all staff have a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children and to prevent concerns from escalating. Children can make disclosures or show signs of abuse at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools. Therefore it is important that ALL staff:

- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child.
- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. (However, ALL staff can refer their concerns directly to the duty social worker if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above).
- Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies.
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher.
- Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime through whistleblowing procedures and the staff behaviour/code of conduct policy.
- Ensure that they attend regular training/updates to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of risk to the child.
- Ensure that the school has 'due regard to prevent' and to assess risk of children and young people being drawn into extremism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols in place for all visitors so that views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others).
- Ensure that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Our Lady Queen of Peace School will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The governing body will appoint a member of staff of the school's or college's leadership team to the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead. This person should have the appropriate authority and be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings – and/or to support other staff to do so – and to contribute to the assessment of children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the headteacher, Mrs B Reilly-O'Donnell. The Designated Deputies are Mrs K Lamond and Mrs E Maher.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding leads are identified here.

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to
 - Children's Services
 - The Designated Officer (DO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member).
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child);and/or
 - Police (cases where a crime may have been committed including Sexual Exploitation (MSET lead), Radicalisation (through the Single Point of Contact for the Channel Panel) Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage).
- Liaise with the Headteacher to inform her of issues especially ongoing enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Inform LA of any pupil to be deleted from school admission register (IAT9) and follow missing from Education protocols
- Inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's or college's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.

The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the school policies are known and used appropriately:

- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the governing body regarding this.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Link with the local LSCB to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Where children leave the school or college ensure their child protection file is transferred appropriately for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Governing Bodies Role and Responsibilities

- Best practice would suggest that Governing Bodies receive training to clarify their statutory role in keeping children safe to support their quality assurance of those statutory arrangements.
- Ensure a member of the Governing Body, usually the Chair, is nominated to liaise with the local authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Headteacher or member of Governing Body of the school. The Nominated member of the governing body of Our Lady Queen of Peace School is Mr J Hindmarch.
- Best practice would advise that a Safeguarding Governor is appointed to support the DSL in their role from the perspective of ensuring the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding and child protection activity, challenge the safeguarding activity and ensure both the self-assessment tool and the DSL report demonstrates fully and accurately the safeguarding arrangements and any action to progress areas of weakness or development. The Nominated member of the governing body of Our Lady Queen of Peace School is Mr J Hindmarch.
- Ensure that the appointed member of the Governing Body holds the Headteacher to account on all matters involving safeguarding through an effective Child Protection Policy that is embedded and followed by all the workforce in all of the above raised areas.

Information for Parents

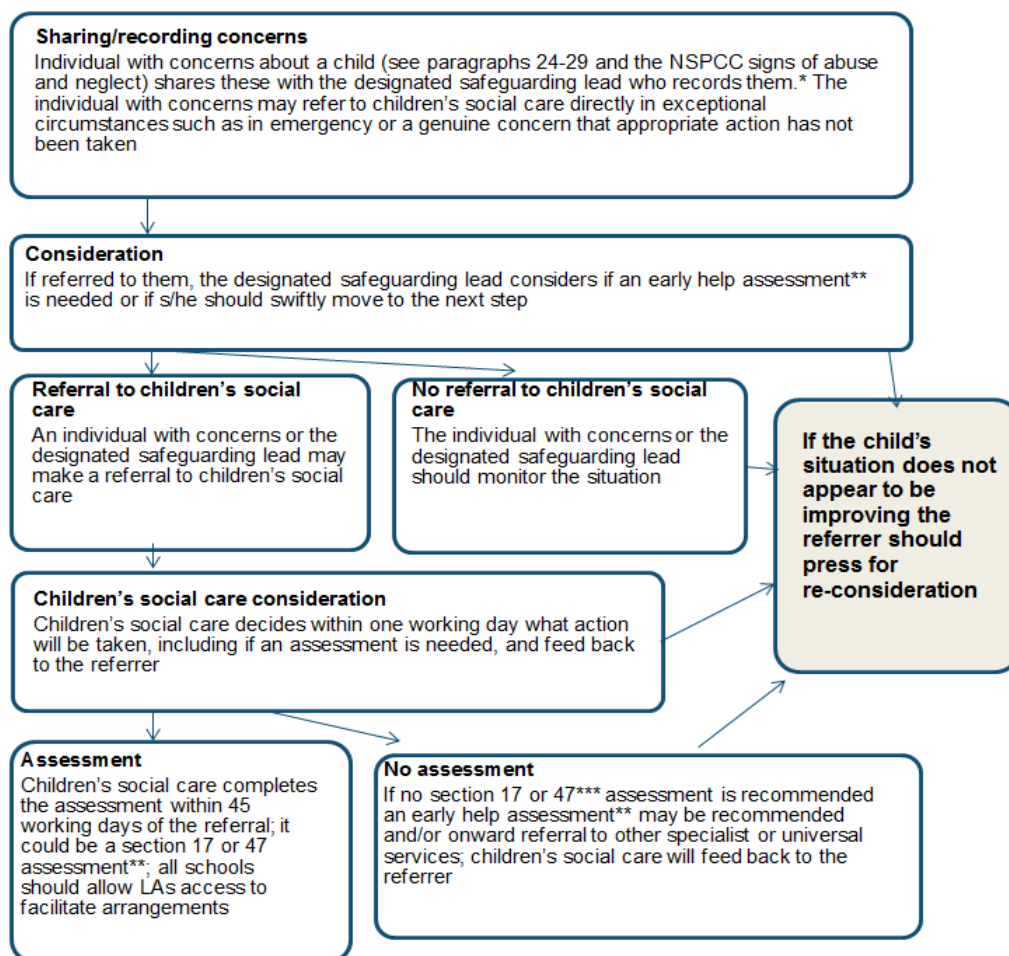
Parents/carers should be aware that the school will take any reasonable action to safeguard the welfare of its pupils. In cases where the school has reason to be concerned that a child may be subject to significant harm, ill-treatment, neglect or other forms of abuse, staff have no alternative but to follow the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board Procedures and inform Children's Services or Police of their concern.

Procedures

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed immediately by an employee of the school, pupil of the school, parent of the school, other persons, in the following circumstances:

- Suspicion that a child is being harmed
- There is evidence that a child is being harmed

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to Children's Services if necessary. The Headteacher will be kept informed at all times.



** If unhappy about the outcome of the referral to Children's Services Social Care/Police, consider the Professional Differences Procedure in Chapter 3 of the SSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures which can be found at www.sunderlandscb.com

**** Keeping Children Safe in Education flow diagram

Our Lady Queen of Peace School's Whistle Blowing Policy provides guidance to staff and volunteers on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken, when staff have concerns about any adults behaviour.

Complaints/Allegation Management Towards or with a Child or Adult

A safeguarding complaint involving a member of staff must be reported to the Headteacher immediately. If the complaint involves the Headteacher then the Chair of Governors must be informed. Consultation without delay with the LADO, (Jane Groom,) will determine what action follows. A multi-agency strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context, the Headteacher/ senior member of school staff must attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the Designated Officer. All issues must be recorded on the allegation management form and the outcome reached must be noted to ensure closure.

Training and Support

All staff members should be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes: the school's child protection policy; the school's staff behaviour policy, safer working practices and the designated safeguarding lead and their cover or nominated deputy. All staff members should also receive appropriate child protection training which is updated annually. The Governing Body in consultation with SSLB will decide the content of this CPD.

Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of Safeguarding. Our Lady Queen of Peace School recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. (See the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Safeguarding Children Procedures, http://www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion/Sunderland_SCB/index.html)

Records and Monitoring

Well-kept records are essential to good Safeguarding practice. Our Lady Queen of Peace School is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within its care and uses CPOMS to record all incidents.

Attendance at Safeguarding Conferences

In the event of Our Lady Queen of Peace School being invited to attend Child Protection Conferences, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will represent the school and/or identified the most appropriate trained member of staff to provide information relevant to Child Protection Conference (Initial/Review) using the proforma in Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board Procedures -which can be found at www.sunderlandscb.com.

Supporting Children

Our Lady Queen of Peace School recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Our Lady Queen of Peace School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The school, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

Our Lady Queen of Peace School also recognises that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

Our Lady Queen of Peace School will endeavour to support all its pupils through:

- The curriculum, to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, self- protection.
- The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- Approaches which allow children and young people to develop critical thinking, literacy skills and digital literacy skills.
- A curriculum which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain.
- A coherent management of behaviour and discipline policy and procedures inclusive of the use of reasonable force.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's interest to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in all safeguarding situations.

Our Lady Queen of Peace School recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. School staff must give consideration to children who are subject to a statement of special needs, an Education Health Care Plan or have a medical condition as these can mask safeguarding issues and must not be dismissed.

Our Lady Queen of Peace School also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health issues children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

This policy **MUST** be read in conjunction with other related policies in school. These include:

- Recruitment and Selection policy-inclusive of safer recruitment guidance

- Staff Behaviour Policy. The school will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with young people and agree to work within all policies and procedures to safeguard both children and adults. The school will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings being taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).
- Good Behaviour and Discipline Policy – inclusive of the Use of Reasonable Force.
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy.
- The Schools Educational Visits/Off Site Policy which reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips, visits or pupils being creatively educated.
- Photograph Policy with parental consent forms
- Administration of Medicines Policy and Procedures with trained staff who manage this.
- Pupils with Medical Needs Policy and implications for your workforce pupils and partnership with parents.
- Attendance Management policy
- Missing Children Policy – inclusive of runaways, missing, and children missing from education
- Complaints Policy
- Allegation Management Policy
- Whistle blowing Policy.
- Looked after Children Policy.
- Intimate Care and Care Plan Policy
- Unaccompanied travel to and from school procedure to ensure pupils safety.
- Equality.
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Curriculum inclusive of, when appropriate, Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Mental Health and Well-being and Fundamental British Values.

This policy has been informed by the following legislation and national & local guidance:

Education Act 2002 Section 175

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175

Keeping Children Safe in Education March, July 2015 and September 2016

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

Framework for the Assessment of Children and Families <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/appendix-4.html>

Children Act 1989/2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Working Together to Safeguard Children DOH (2015) with updates in February 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board Procedures www.sunderlandscb.com

Early Help Referral Form <https://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/professionals/early-help>

CP Referral Form http://www.sunderlandscb.com/reporting_concerns.html

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf

Data Protection Act 1998 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>

Sexual Offences Act 2003 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Freedom of Information Act 2000 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga_20000036_en.pdf

This Policy is reviewed annually or in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance.

Appendix 1: Peer to Peer Abuse

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016 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'* (page 19). The document also states it is most important to ensure opportunities of seeking the voice of the child are 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, any system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.'*

At Our Lady Queen of Peace RCVA Primary 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 impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

Purpose and Aim

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. The purpose of this Appendix to the Child Protection Policy is to explore the many forms of peer on peer abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At Our Lady Queen of Peace RCVA Primary School we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Protection Policy

Internet 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 that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is Working Together, 2015, highlighting that every assessment of a child, *'must be informed by the views of the child'* and within that *'It is important to understand the resilience of the individual child when planning appropriate services.* (Working Together, 2015:23) This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

Introduction to abuse and harmful behaviour

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and 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, 2016).

Types of abuse

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive.

- Physical abuse

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, 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.

- Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)

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 well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse.

- Bullying (physical, name calling, homophobia etc.)

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour 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.

- Cyber bullying

Cyberbullying is the use of telephones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will involve the police to investigate these situations.

- Sexting

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'.

- Initiation/Hazing

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

The idea behind this practice is that it 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 – in particular, prejudices to do with 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 (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

Expected action taken from all staff

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

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 around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. 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. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

- 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. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

- Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)

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 from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps.

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

It may also be that social care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

- Informing parents

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents you need to inform the parents as soon as possible.

The best way to inform parents 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 whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

- 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? (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 if other issues arise (see following)

- 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?

- 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?

- 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?

- In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care.

- 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?

- 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

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 cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC 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.

For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

In this circumstance 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 a CAF/strengthening families/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. In the case 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 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 whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others and 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. 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.

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). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

Preventative Strategies

It is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, and most importantly is recognition that peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. It is important to continue to recognise, manage and review such risks. This is supported by an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This is be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC 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.

It is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident to talk about issues and challenge the perceptions pupils. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

Useful Resources

Whatis.com <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/cyberbullying>

New Choices Inc <http://newchoicesinc.org/educated/abuse/TDV/def>

This is abuse campaign https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/410010/2015-03-08_This_is_Abuse_campaign_summary_report_2_.pdf

Stop bullying.gov

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/index.html#types>

Holding Together: equalities, difference and cohesion, a resource for school improvement planning, published for Derbyshire Education Authority by Trentham Books, summer 2009.

EACH resources for LGBT

CEOP <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Media-Centre/Press-releases/2009/What-does-sexting-mean/>

Appendix 2:

Designated Safeguarding Lead should

- have a sound knowledge of, and to respond in accordance with, SSCB Safeguarding Children Procedures.
- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- Act as a source of support advice, expertise, co-ordination within the educational establishments when receiving welfare concerns/suspicion of child abuse and deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Ensure that all staff report any welfare concerns/suspicion of child abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or cover nominated deputy in their absence (liaison with Headteacher is essential if this person does not hold this key responsibility).
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in order to protect them.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Make referrals of all cases of suspected child abuse to the Children's Services duty social worker
- Make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child)
- Make referrals to the police (cases where a crime may have been committed)
- Liaise with other agencies and co-ordinate the most appropriate school representative to attend/contribute at child protection meetings.
- Monitor the transfer of pupils, alerting the Local Authority Attendance Team of any concerns immediately. Maintain contact with other relevant schools where there is more than one child in the family.
- When children leave the establishment ensure child protection files are transferred to the new establishment as soon as possible separately from main school files. A receipt must be returned to the forwarding school and kept until the child's 25th birthday.
- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns.
- Receive appropriate training every 2 years to:
 - Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention.
 - Have working knowledge of CP conferences and reviews be able to attend and effectively contribute.
 - Ensure whole workforce understands the child protection policy in practice and their new role within this.
 - Attendance at safeguarding lead termly briefings/or alternative CPD.
- Ensure all staff have induction training covering safeguarding/child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately as they arise.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the School's suite of safeguarding policies particularly the Child Protection Policy and the Staff Behaviour Policy, especially new or part-time staff who may work with different establishments.
- Be aware of all school excursions and residentials and clarify with educational visit co-ordinator/group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding/child protection.
- Ensure a whole school policy about managing behaviour and discipline including the use of reasonable force, is in place.

- Ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber-bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, is in place.
- Ensure the Child Protection Policy is updated and revised annually and work with Governing Bodies/proprietors regarding this.
- Ensure whole workforce read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and are clear of their role in your school.
- Ensure the child protection policy is publicised on your school website. The policy alerts them to the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the schools/colleges role in this.

Equality statement

- The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.
- This policy has been impact assessed by governors in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.

Autumn 2017