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Peer on Peer Abuse Policy	Issued: April 21
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APPROVAL BY	FULL GOVERNING BODY

# **Peer on Peer Abuse Policy**

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This document has been produced based on CFN Example Peer on peer abuse policy for Educational Settings

### 1. Aims

Alfred Street Junior School (ASJS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognise that children may face different forms of abuse and we work

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

#### 2. Definitions

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

- **'Staff' or 'members of staff'** refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of the school.
- Child/children refers to any young person under the age of 18.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as; protecting
  children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and
  physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances
  consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable
  all children to have the best outcomes (Keeping Children Safe in Education [1]).
- Peer on peer abuse (or child on child abuse) refers to any scenario where a child under the age of 18 abuses another child under the age of 18. It can take place online or offline. The children involved do not have to be the same age and the perpetrator may be older or younger than the victim. Peer on peer abuse (or child on child abuse) could include (but is not limited to);
  - bullying (including cyberbullying);
  - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
  - o sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
  - sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which maybe stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
  - upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
  - o sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
  - initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (Keeping Children Safe in Education [1]).
  - abuse within intimate personal relationships and/or teenage relationship abuse;
- Parents for the purposes of this policy, reference to 'parents' includes all adults who have a caring responsibility for a child or children in the school. This may include parents, step-parents, grandparents and other relatives, foster carers and adoptive parents as well as other adults who have a legal responsibility for a child.

### 3. Purpose

This policy has been written to:

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

## 4. Legislation and relevant documentation

This policy supports and must be read alongside the school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, which should be referred to in relation to any safeguarding matters or concerns.

This policy is part of a suite of school policies relating to child protection and safeguarding and. For further details, please see:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [2]
- Behaviour Policy [3]
- PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) Policy [4]
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy [5]
- Mobile Phone Policy [6]
- Anti Bullying Policy [7]
- Searching, screening and confiscation policies (see Behaviour Policy [3])

This policy adheres to all statutory guidance and legislation, including (but not limited to):

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) [1]
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) [8]
- Children Act 1989 [9] and 2004 [10]
- Data Protection Act (2018) [11]
- General Data Protection Regulations (2018) [12]

The school will also refer to the government guidance documents 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools and Colleges (May 2018)' [13] and 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation (January 2018)' [14] for advice when managing reports or disclosures of peer on peer abuse of a sexual nature.

Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) [1] in this policy, it should be understood that ASJS will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

# 5. Scope

This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of ASJS. All references in this

document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 6.1. Role of the Governors

The governors will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy [2], Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) [1] and any other relevant statutory guidance.
- Ensure that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy includes all relevant information as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) [1].
- Ensure that policies (including this policy), procedures and training in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.

#### 6.2. Role of the Head teacher

The Head teacher will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy [2], Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) [1] and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Ensure that this policy and all other relevant policies are followed by all staff.
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and their deputy DSLs where appropriate, about ongoing enquiries, particularly those under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 [9] and police investigations.
- Ensure that the school curriculum includes education opportunities to minimise incidents of peer on peer abuse.
- Ensure that the school site promotes positive behaviour and minimizes the opportunity for peer on peer abuse.
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (in line with The Teachers' Standards 2012 [15]).

### 6.3. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) [1] and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Liaise with the Deputy DSL about ongoing enquiries, particularly those under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 [9] and police investigations.
- Undertake any training required to uphold their post and the responsibilities outlined in this policy.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff in relation to peer on peer abuse.
- Work with Deputy DSLs to ensure a consistent and rigorous approach to safeguarding throughout the school.
- Manage disclosures of and concerns about peer on peer abuse.
- Make referrals to Children's Services and the police as appropriate.
- Ensure that this policy is known, understood and used appropriately by all staff.

• Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (in line with The Teachers' Standards 2012 [15]).

#### 6.4. Role of all staff

All staff will:

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school safeguarding and child protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) [1] and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Make referrals to the DSL, or one of the Deputy DSL if the DSL is not available, in cases where they suspect cases of peer on peer abuse or become aware of cases of peer on peer abuse.
- Be made aware that children can abuse other children and about the forms that this abuse could take.
- Be clear as to the school policy and procedures on peer on peer abuse.
- Be made aware that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- Report any concerns relating to peer on peer abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or one of the Deputy DSL if the DSL is not available, immediately.
- Receive training in how to respond appropriately to incidents of 'sexting'. Where
  incidents involve sexting or indecent images of children, members of staff will not
  view, download, print or share images. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be
  made aware of the incident immediately (Sexting: how to respond to an incident
  [16]).
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (in line with The Teachers' Standards 2012 [15] and the Staff Code of Conduct [17]).

# 7. Training

The school will ensure that all staff receive training so that they can recognise and respond to peer on peer abuse. As a minimum all members of staff receive annual safeguarding training which raises awareness of peer on peer abuse. In addition all staff are required to read KCSIE Part One [1] as a minimum.

We recognise the gendered nature of peer on peer abuse. All staff will be trained to understand that all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

# 8. Procedures to minimise peer on peer abuse

ASJS recognises that peer on peer abuse can and will occur even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. Therefore it is important that staff continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting children/young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff. The school have a responsibility to minimise opportunities for peer on peer abuse. We do this by:

• Ensuring that school has an open environment where children feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.

- Developing an honest and open environment so that all staff feel confident and enabled to talk about issues and to challenge perceptions of children, including the use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another.
- Providing whole staff training and development around the subject of abusive behaviours and prejudice.
- Supporting the development of staff so that they are all able to recognise and deal appropriately with inappropriate behaviour rather than dismissing it as 'banter' or growing up'.
- Ensuring that all staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking actions, so that concerns are not minimised and ignored rather than appropriate remedial action being taken.
- Having in place a strong 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.
- Ensuring that the children are adequately supervised (in line with ratio guidance) during lunch, in the outdoor area, moving through the setting and off-site, i.e. school outings, swimming, etc.
- Promoting British Values throughout the curriculum.

ASJS recognises that some children may be more vulnerable to peer on peer abuse than others. For example, children who have already experienced abuse, those that have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), children living in care and children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) and/or have other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 [18] may be more likely to face peer on peer abuse than other children. We work to protect children with additional vulnerabilities by:

- Recognising children that may be vulnerable and raising awareness with all staff of children whom may be vulnerable.
- Putting individual or small group additional pastoral interventions into place.
- Providing opportunities for children to talk to a member of staff on a one-to-one basis.

ASJS addresses peer on peer abuse through the school curriculum, in line with Relationships Education, Sex and Relationships Education and Health Education [19]. The DfE statutory guidance on Relationships Education expects primary schools will cover 'Families and people who care for me', 'Caring friendships', 'Respectful relationships', 'Online relationships', and 'Being safe'.

The DFE statutory guidance on Health Education in primary schools will cover 'Mental wellbeing', 'Internet safety and harms', Physical health and fitness', Healthy eating', 'Drugs, alcohol and tobacco', 'Health and prevention', 'Basic First Aid', 'Changing adolescent body'.

At ASJS, to teach PSHE and RSE the Jigsaw scheme of work is used. Jigsaw covers all areas of PSHE for the primary phase including statutory Relationships and Health Education which teaches six Puzzles (units) and these are taught across the school; the learning deepens and broadens every year.

# 9. Responding to concerns or disclosures of peer on peer abuse

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

If a member of staff has a concern about peer on peer abuse, or if a child discloses peer on peer abuse to them, they will refer this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy [2].

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

The DSL will always consider the following;

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

Depending on the nature of the incident/s, the DSL may:

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

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care, the school has agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved, a senior member of staff (usually the Head teacher, deputy Head teacher or DSL), will notify the parents in person or by telephone as soon as possible. If social care/police are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with the parents.

The same procedures should be followed when dealing with sibling on sibling abuse.

### 9.1. Supporting the victim

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

Appropriate support will be put in place for victims of peer on peer abuse whilst investigation is taking place and following the initial response. Support will continue for as long as it is needed and will be reviewed regularly to ensure the victim is receiving appropriate care.

The school will do everything possible to maintain the victim's normal routine.

The school will do everything we can to protect the victim from further bullying and harassment as a result of their disclosure.

Staff understand that the support an individual child may need will depend on the individual, the nature of the abuse, and the understanding of the child. The DSL will ensure that whatever support is given, the well-being of the child will be regularly monitored and reviewed, and further support offered if appropriate. Support that might be offered may include: counselling or one to one support via a pastoral mentor in school. 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 the DSL will ensure that the well-being of the 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 should be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyberbullying, relationship abuse, etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and Quality Circle Time that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable the DSL and Head teacher should consider a risk assessment being put in place for them whilst in the setting so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

If a victim of peer on peer abuse moves to a new setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share the necessary information to ensure that support for the child continues.

### 9.2. Supporting the alleged perpetrator

The school has a responsibility to ensure that an alleged perpetrator continues to receive a suitable education and will consider a range of options in continuing educational provision.

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 Assessment 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 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.

We recognise that children who perpetrate peer on peer abuse may be being abused themselves. The school will continue to safeguard the alleged perpetrator and provide them with support.

A plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator will be put in place as part of the risk assessment made following the alleged abuse.

If the alleged perpetrator moves to another setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share information as necessary to safeguard the individual and other children at the new setting.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take advice from children's social care, specialist services and the police as necessary.

The school may choose to impose a sanction or punishment on the alleged perpetrator following an incident of peer on peer abuse. In this case, staff will follow the school Behaviour Policy in determining the level and severity of sanction.

Where a child is cautioned or receives a conviction related to an incident of peer on peer abuse, 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.

## 10. Local Arrangements and Making Referrals

The school adheres to local safeguarding arrangements, as outlined by the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership [20].

For further details of how the school works with partner agencies in responding to safeguarding incidents (including incidents of peer on peer abuse), please see the school's Child Protection policy and Safeguarding [2].

# 11. Record Keeping

Detailed records of all incidents and actions taken will be kept on CPOMS and regularly reviewed by DSL and Deputies – see Appendix 2 Procedures for recording incidents of peer on peer abuse.

### 12. References

- [1] gov.uk, "Keeping children safe in education," 18 January 2021. [Online]. Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2. [Accessed 14 February 2021].
- [2] Alfred Street Junior School, "Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy".
- [3] Alfred Street Junior School, "Behaviour Policy".
- [4] Alfred Street Junior School, "PSHE and RSE Policy".
- [5] Alfred Street Junior School, "ICT Acceptable Use Policy".
- [6] Alfred Street Junior School, "Mobile Phone Policy".
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- [16] UK Council for Child Internet Safety, "Sexting: how to respond to an incident," [Online]. Available: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/647389/Overview\_of\_Sexting\_Guidance.pdf. [Accessed 13 April 2021].
- [17] Alfred Street Junior School, "Staff Code of Conduct".
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- [19] gov.uk, "Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education," 25 July 2019. [Online]. Available: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education. [Accessed 13 April 2021].
- [20] Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, "Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership," [Online]. Available: http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/. [Accessed 13 April 2021].
- [21] Alfred Street Junior School, "Online Safety Policy".

# 13. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children is our priority – see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [2].

Online safety lessons are conducted regularly within the school to help to ensure that children stay safe online – see Online Safety Policy [21] and ICT Acceptable Use Policy [5].

All concerns must be reported to our Designated Safeguarding leads: Mrs K O'Connor, Mr C Butler, Mrs S Smith, Mrs W Watts

## Appendix 1. Further Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment data/file/623895/Preventing and tackling bullying advice.pdf

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused .pdf

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment data/file/647389/Overview of Sexting Guidance.pdf

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attac hment data/file/759007/6 2939 SP NCA Sexting In Schools FINAL Update Jan1 7.pdf

School Exclusion Statutory Guidance (including changes to the exclusion process during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Procedures, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

http://northamptonshirescb.proceduresonline.com/p sexually harm behav.html

Behaviour and discipline in schools (2016), Department for Education

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools

# Appendix 2. Procedures for recording incidents of peer on peer abuse

Facts should be gathered and witnesses spoken to. Use **consistent language** and **open questions**. 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/saw the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

### 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 particular area?

### What was the explanation by all the 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?

Records should be kept on the school's electronic Safeguarding System – CPOMS. Such incidents should be reported to governors 3 times a year.

Any risk assessments in place should be reviewed every 6 weeks.

Members of staff will follow the procedures for recording a disclosure outlined in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.