



Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

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VERSION CONTROL			
Version	Date	Author/Reviewer	Substantive changes since the previous version
v1	Sept 23	DD/JH/GB	Model ONE Academy Trust Policy personalised for each school
V2	Nov 23	DD/JH/GB	Trust-wide policy. Para 9.4 amended to generically refer to schools' own processes of reporting Para 11.4 added
v3	July 24	GB/JH/MT	Updated in line with KCSiE 24
V4	July 25	GB/JH/MT	Updated in line with KCSiE 25 Para 1.4 updated and new reference/resource links added Para 2.1 Further information added in relation to how child-on-child abuse can manifest itself Para 2.2 Addition of 'a child identified as suffering from mental health problems' and linked footnote Para 6.5 Links included to updated Lucy Faith Foundation toolkit (including associated footnote) and Carson's AIM model. Para 7.2 Added Para 7.5 Added Para 7.6 Expanded to recognise the careful handling of associated information Para 7.8 Specific reference to risk assessment

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 ONE Academy Trust and the schools within the trust are committed to a whole-school approach to the prevention, early identification, tackling and responding to child on child abuse, sexual harm/violence and harassment, including those that have happened outside of school and/or online.
- 1.2 This policy supports the local authority guidance issued to schools, that helps understand, identify and provides tools to respond to problematic/harmful sexual behaviours in schools.
- 1.3 A child/pupil as described in the policy is a child and young person up until 18 years.
- 1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with:
 - Local Authority guidance relevant to the location of the schools (Derbyshire County Council, Derby City, Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire County Council).
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges All staff in a school should be familiar with the relevant sections that deal with Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment.
 - [Addressing child-on-child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges](#). Farrer and Co's resource providing practical guidance for schools and colleges on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to child-on-child abuse.
 - [Serious Violence Strategy](#) The Home Office's identification of risk factors that may increase likelihood in serious violence.
 - The non-statutory guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi- nudes Advice for Education Settings, Working with Young People](#)
 - The non-statutory: [Challenging victim blaming language and behaviours when dealing with the online experiences of children and young people](#)
 - The non-statutory: [Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations](#)
 - [Teaching Online Safety in Schools, DfE updated 2023](#)
 - [The Voyeurism Act, 2019 \(Section Upskirting\)](#)
 - The NSPCC's advice about HSB: [NSPCC Learning: Protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour](#) and the [NSPCC – Harmful sexual behaviour framework](#)

Associated Documents:

- It is recommended that staff access the relevant Local Authority guidance available.
- 1.5 In cases where child on child abuse is identified, we will use the local safeguarding procedures as set out by the relevant local authority.
 - 1.6 We will also refer to other relevant policies in school including:
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
 - Behaviour Policy;
 - Anti-Bullying policy;
 - E-Safety Policy;
 - Acceptable Use of the Internet and IT Policy.

- 1.7 We will ensure all our staff, governors, volunteers are trained in the awareness and response to all forms of bullying, all forms of child-on-child abuse, racism and race hate and including any local issues and concerns in the wider context (contextual safeguarding).
- 1.8 In addition, we will ensure all our staff, governors and volunteers are aware of this policy and the supporting guidance, in order that they are clear regarding their role and responsibilities.
- 1.9 The school Designated Safeguarding Lead will take on a lead responsibility to ensure all staff are trained in the use of the available assessment tools, including the use of Health, Wellbeing and Safety Support Plans, the in-school risk management plan and the victim support plan.
- 1.10 Where a governing body is established, the link safeguarding governor in the school will act to oversee and audit any training activity which takes place and activities in relation to this policy. Where there is no governing body, the trust's safeguarding lead will oversee implementation of this policy.
- 1.11 The governing body/trust safeguarding lead should undertake an audit activity to help assess the effectiveness of the school and its processes in tackling all forms of child-on-child abuse.
- 1.12 We will ensure that parents/carers are made aware of this policy and its availability on the trust and school websites.

2. Context

- 2.1 We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:
 - Child Sexual Exploitation;
 - Sexting (youth produced digital imagery such as consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos);
 - Bullying- (including name-calling, physical, cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - 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 such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
 - Prejudiced behaviour linking to protected characteristics, e.g. race, disability;
 - Cyberbullying & online abusive behaviour;
 - Radicalisation;
 - Abuse in intimate relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse');
 - Children who display sexually problematic/harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment (e.g. making sexual comments, remarks, jokes and

online sexual harassment which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse);

- Upskirting
- Gang association and serious violence (e.g. County Lines, initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals;
- Race hate and Racism.

2.2 We recognise that all children are at risk but that some groups are more vulnerable than others and include:

- A child with additional needs and disabilities;
- A child living with domestic abuse;
- A child who is at risk of/suffering significant harm;
- A child who is at risk of/or has been exploited or at risk of exploited (CCE, CSE)
- A 'looked after' child;
- A child who goes missing or is missing education;
- Children who identify as or are perceived as LGBTQ+;
- A child identified as suffering with mental health problems¹

1.1 Research tells us that girls are more frequently identified as been abused by their peers and more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching, and sexual harassment. They often are exploited into gangs and are victims of sexual violence when in gangs. However, we are aware as a school that these are behaviours not just confined to girls.

1.2 Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may display other behaviour such as anti-social/criminal behaviours. Boys are more likely to be exploited/entrapped into gangs and subject to violence due to gang culture.

3. Bullying, including online bullying and behaviour

3.1 Child-on-child abuse can happen online and through social media. This trust (and each school within the trust) have policies and procedures which relate to identifying, responding to and reporting this type of behaviour by pupils including anti-bullying, cyberbullying and the school behaviour policies. We will take a robust approach and educate all our staff to help prevent and tackle this.

4. Responding to racism

4.1 We acknowledge that Britain is a multi-racial and multi-faith country, and everyone has the right to have their culture and religion respected by others. Racist bullying is not just about colour, it can be about ethnic background or religion too.

4.2 We recognize that racism is illegal. We will notify the police if we believe an offence may have been committed.

¹ Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however are well placed to observe and identify pupils who may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If staff have a mental health concern this is also a safeguarding concern and should be followed up in accordance with procedures.

- 4.3 We will provide education in school about racism and its impact on children and their families and this will be taught as part of our curriculum. We will use a whole-school approach to tackling and eradicating this type of behaviour.

5. Hate crime

- 1.3 Hate crimes happen because of race, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and disability.
- 1.4 Hate crimes can include:
- physical attacks - physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti, neighbour disputes and arson
 - the threat of attack - offensive letters or emails, abusive or obscene telephone calls, groups hanging around to intimidate you and unfounded, malicious complaints
 - verbal abuse or insults - harassment over the phone, by text or face to face, abusive gestures and remarks, bullying and threats
- 1.5 Hate crime can happen anywhere - at home, school, work or on the street. It can be frightening for the victim and witnesses. Hate crime can happen in school. It is an offence and we will notify the police if we believe an offence may have been committed.

6. Sexual harm, violence and/or sexual harassment

- 6.1 Sexual harm, violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age or gender; this can either be a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or a group of children. We recognise that this behaviour can take place in a school or any setting where pupils are together.
- 6.2 The impact of this behaviour on children can be very distressing, having an impact on academic achievement and their emotional health & wellbeing.
- 6.3 All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a pupil's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it.
- 6.4 In this policy, we recognise the importance of distinguishing between healthy, problematic and harmful sexual behaviour (HSB).
- 6.5 Our schools may use the Lucy Faithful Foundation ²[HSB toolkit](#) (including Traffic light Tool), and Hackett's Continuum. In some cases, we may also use the [AIM model 2016 \(Carson\)](#). These are nationally recognised and acclaimed tools to assist in determining healthy, problematic and harmful sexual behaviours in children and young people.
- 6.6 We may also use an in-school Health, Wellbeing and Safety Support Plan, or an in-school Risk HSB (Harmful Sexual Behaviour) Management Plan depending on the outcomes of assessing risk in each individual case.
- 6.7 Using tools like this will help us to:
- Decide next steps and make decisions regarding safeguarding children;
 - Assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviour in pupils;
 - Understand healthy sexual development and distinguish it from

² The Lucy Faithfull Foundation in collaboration with the Home Office, has developed [Shore Space](#), an online resource which works to prevent harmful sexual behaviour.

problematic/harmful behaviour;

- Assist with communicating with parents/cares about the concerns we have about their child/children;
- Assist with communicating with our partners and agencies about the concerns we have regarding a pupil in the school.

7. Action following a report of sexual harm, violence and/or sexual harassment

- 7.1 We will inform all staff that should they see or hear of any sexual behaviour they will stop the behaviour immediately; report the behaviour to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a written record of the incident.
- 7.2 We will consider the age and developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s), the nature of the allegations and frequency of allegations.
- 7.3 We will speak to the pupil to establish their view about what happened and why, what understanding they have, what responsibility they take for their actions, and their willingness/ability to work on their behaviours.
- 7.4 We will speak to the pupil who has been targeted to establish the impact on them of the behaviour, how the other pupil/pupils managed to get in a position to carry out the behaviour, how they are feeling about the other pupil/pupils now, and what support they require. This will only be to ascertain clarification; any further investigation may have to be undertaken by the statutory agencies.
- 7.5 We will consider proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.6 The school recognises that it is good practice to meet with those parents involved. Therefore, we will contact the parents/carers of those involved and share the information as appropriate. Information sharing will be handled carefully. If an immediate risk to safety is assessed external agencies may be contacted prior to informing parents. In cases involving sexual violence/abuse informing parents may be considered inappropriate or unsafe.
- 7.7 Following an incident, we will consider:
 - The wishes of the victim and their parents in terms of how they want to proceed e.g. ask about whether they want to make a police complaint. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment;
 - The nature of the alleged incident(s) e.g. the intention, mitigating circumstances, whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
 - The ages of the pupils involved;
 - The developmental stages of the pupils involved;
 - Any power imbalance between the pupils concerned. For example, is the alleged abuser significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
 - If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern;
 - Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other pupils, siblings, adult students or school

staff; or other related issues in the wider context?

7.8 Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case:

- The alleged abuser is likely to be removed from any classes or areas they share with the victim;
- We will undertake a risk assessment, considering any reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of the alleged abuser, victim and all other pupils we have a duty to safeguard;
- We will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged abuser/s at a reasonable distance apart on school premises, including transport to and from the school;
- We will use the recommended in-school HSB Risk Management Plan if assessed as appropriate. Any risk assessments in place will be reviewed in a timely manner;
- We will use a victim support plan.
- These actions are in the best interests of the pupils involved and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged abuser/s.

8. Responding to an incident/disclosure

- 8.1 Where abuse or violence, including sexual harm and/or sexual harassment, has taken place outside of school e.g. on school transport, off-site during lunchtimes, or in the local community involving one or more of our pupils; we will investigate and take action around the conduct of the pupil/s. We will also consider if we should notify the police if we believe an offence may have been committed.
- 8.2 Where behaviour between peers is abusive or violent, including sexual harm or sexual harassment within the school; we will use our procedures as set out by the school's child protection and safeguarding policy, and the procedures as set out by the local Children's Safeguarding Partnership. This will mean a referral to the police and a referral to Children's Social Care Services.
- 8.3 All staff understand that all concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead; however, we acknowledge that anyone can make a referral.
- 8.4 We will record all instances of bullying, prejudice, violence and sexual violence and related incidents involving peers. This will include racism and racist bullying. We will inform parents/carers of this.
- 8.5 Our records will show what actions have been taken and any outcomes. We will produce these for an OFSTED inspection if requested and demonstrate how we have tackled any of these incidents to prevent a recurrence.

9. Reporting

- 9.1 We have our own internal reporting approach. Safeguarding concerns are always recorded and reported in accordance with our safeguarding policy. Incidents of bullying, racism or violence are reported in accordance with the school's behavior and anti-bullying policies.
- 9.2 Any incident of racism, race hate or incitement to hate will be reported to the police if it is believed an offence may have been committed.

- 9.3 Any incident of alleged or an actual incident of sexual harm, violence and/or sexual harassment will be reported to the police if it is believed an offence may have been committed. In all cases, consideration is given to reporting the matter to Children Social Care Services.
- 9.4 There are circumstances in some cases of sexual harassment/touching which dependent upon age and understanding/age of criminal responsibility, (e.g. one-off incidents), which we may decide that the child/ren concerned are not in need of Early Help or statutory intervention.
- 9.5 In these situations, it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, for example by utilising the behaviour and bullying policies, providing pastoral intervention and support.
- 9.6 We may also decide that some children involved do not require statutory interventions; however, they may benefit from Early Help.
- 9.7 Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, this can be at any point in a child's life. We will decide if an early help approach will benefit a pupil following any outcome of assessment that we may use. This may mean the development of a safety and support plan as part of the early help process.
- 9.8 Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of a child than reacting later. This school acknowledges that an Early Help Assessment can be useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

10. Sanctions

- 10.1 We will consider the sanctions available to use in school by reference to our Behaviour Policy.
- 10.2 We recognise disciplinary actions rarely resolve issues of child-on-child abuse and this school will consider all courses of action and intervention.
- 10.3 We recognise that emotions and feelings can run high, and we will endeavour to respond to concerns from any pupil, other pupils, parents and the local community.
- 10.4 We will ensure all necessary parties, including the parents/carers are informed and kept up to date. We will listen to any concerns and will work to attempt to resolve these.

11. The role of school governors (where applicable)

- 11.1 The chair of governors/ link safeguarding governor will need to be aware of the complexities when an incident or incidents come to light, and when staff in the school are trying to manage these behaviours. This includes the use of sanctions, exclusions, pressures from parents to exclude and dealing with the parents of the alleged abuser or any alleged victim/s.
- 11.2 We know that as a school, the chair of governors/ link safeguarding governor will also need to consider that they may be approached by members of staff who are angry or anxious about pupils with sexual behaviours. In addition, we will also consider occasions where schools also feel pressure from external sources, e.g. the local community and the media.
- 11.3 It is important that those governors are informed and can help with a consistent approach and policy on such matters, and we recognise governors should use any examples to help

inform the schools future practice and ethos, reviewing any policy or procedure in light of this.

- 11.4 Where there is no local governing body in place, the trust safeguarding lead should be kept informed.

12. Multi-agency working

- 12.1 This school will work with our partners and agencies; Children's Social Care, the Police, Youth Offending Service, Health and CAHMS.
- 12.2 We recognise that we will be invited to share information, being a part of local partnerships and local partnership groups to help identify risk and issues both within the school and in our local community.
- 12.3 Our local point of contact will be the chair of our local group and the Head of Service for our locality.

13. Prevention and training

- 13.1 ONE Academy Trust and our schools work hard to create a culture where child-on-child abuse does not happen.
- 13.2 We are aiming to create an ethos of good and respectful behaviour, and this should extend to all areas of our schools and on a school day, including travelling to and from school.
- 13.3 Through curriculum teaching, learning and events and activities we will provide an age-appropriate programme of personal, social, health and emotional (PSHE) development, including our health and relationships education curriculum.
- 13.4 We will ensure that all our pupils know who to talk to, how to receive advice and help within the school. We will be able to signpost children to relevant local and national helplines and websites.

14. Monitoring and review

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed annually or as required to reflect updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).
- 14.2 This policy will be approved by the CEO.