Anti-Child-on-Child Abuse (& Bullying) Policy

Sponsorship & Review

Sponsor

Assistant Vice Principal – Safeguarding and Safeguarding Strategy
Vice Principal – Personal Development, Culture and Ethos

Released

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Reviewed

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Next Review

January 2025 (or when required by statutory updates)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents and linked policies:

- Charlton School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Charlton School Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Charlton School Student Equality Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (2020)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)

1. <u>Our Vision</u>

1.1 **Building Knowledge. Developing Character. Inspiring Futures.**

Intent: Our vision is to nurture happy, healthy young people who have the knowledge, academic achievement, and strength of character to lead safe and successful lives in modern Britain; preparing them for their next steps in education or employment with a thirst for lifelong learning.

- ✓ **Pastoral care.** We ensure that every member of our school community knows that we are committed to supporting their physical health, safety and emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ **Behaviour.** Relationships between staff and students are based on our core values: respect, responsibility and resilience. Clearly stated standards of behaviour are to be upheld by all.
- ✓ **Belonging.** We celebrate our differences and show respect for our community. Students understand and develop their role as active and responsible citizens and are equipped with the skills to challenge discrimination.
- ✓ **Inclusion.** Charlton is an outward facing and globally conscious school. We promote compassion, and advocacy for all members of our school community. We are unwaveringly inclusive and determined to eradicate all barriers to educational success.
- ✓ **Partnership.** We have well established links with our local community and view partnerships with the Learning Community Trust, wider community partners and our families as central to our success.

2. <u>Statement of Intent</u>

2.1 We are committed to safeguarding children and young people from Child-on-Child abuse and bullying and we expect all our people to share this commitment. This policy sets out how Charlton School will deliver these responsibilities. This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which is statutory guidance to be read and followed by academies and colleges, and alongside 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (March 2018), a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- This policy is our overarching policy for any issue that could constitute Child-on-Child abuse. It relates to, and should be read alongside, the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and any other relevant policies.
- This policy sets out our strategy for improving prevention and identifying and appropriately managing Child-on-Child abuse.
- The policy applies to all members of the school community, students, staff and volunteers.
- This policy recognises that abuse is abuse and should never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', or 'part of growing up'. It is compliant with the statutory guidance on Child-on-Child abuse as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. We take a safeguarding approach to all individuals involved (in addition to any sanctioning work that may also be required) in concerns or allegations about Child-on-Child abuse, including those who are alleged to have been abused and those who are alleged to have abused their peers.
- Although the starting point is that our response to Child-on-Child abuse should be the same for all students, regardless of age, there may be some different considerations in relation to, for example, a child aged under 10, or aged over 18 in terms of how local agencies and/or partners respond.

2.2 We believe that in order to protect children, all schools should be aware of the nature and level of risk to which their students are or may be exposed and put in place a clear and comprehensive strategy which is tailored to their specific safeguarding context; and take a whole-school community Contextual Safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse.

2.3 We regard the introduction of this policy as a preventative measure. We do (a) not feel it is acceptable merely to take a reactive approach to Child-on-Child abuse in response to alleged incidents of it; and (b) believe that in order to tackle Child-on-Child abuse proactively, it is necessary to focus on all four of the following areas:

- Systems and structures
- Prevention
- Identification
- Response and intervention.

2.4 We ensure that students are taught about Child-on-Child abuse and bullying, including online behaviours, through the explicitly taught Personal Development curriculum including PSHEE and RSE, through the whole school delivery of SMSC, active promotion of the fundamental British Values and our values based school Ethos.

2.5 We will work with parents to build an understanding of the schools' responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all children, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

3. Legal framework and guidance

3.1 This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and relevant guidance including, but not limited to:

- The Education Act (2002)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- What to do if you are worried about a child (2015)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners (2018)
- Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in
- education settings (2019)
- The Data Protection Act (2018)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Teaching online safety in school (2018)
- UKCIS Education for a connected world (2018)
- Prevent Duty (2015)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Preventing youth violence and gang involvement (2013)
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance (2018)

4. Scope of this Policy

4.1 This policy defines a 'child' as anyone under the age of 18 years or any learner of any age on roll at Charlton School.

4.2 This policy applies to all members of our staff, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, local governing body, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers. This policy must be read in conjunction with the safeguarding and child protection policy.

4.3 The local governing body, senior leadership team, and all staff (which term shall apply to all volunteer staff members) at Charlton School are committed to the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of Child-on-Child abuse (as defined below) both within and beyond the academy.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (SLT member) is: Angela Bithell – Assistant Vice Principal
- The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Paul Wakelin - Assistant Vice Principal and Anna Vickers – Vice Principal
- Nominated Safeguarding Governor: Mrs Ricki Thiara

5. What is Child-on-Child abuse?

5.1 For these purposes, Child-on-Child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships and wider peer associations. We recognise that it is statistically more likely that girls will be victims of Child-on-Child abuse and that boys will be perpetrators and that Child-on-Child abuse can be perpetrated by the same gender, but that all Child-on-Child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

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

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

5.2 Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- 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)
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm, and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Child sexual exploitation
- Youth and serious youth violence
- Prejudice-based violence including, but not limited to, gender-based violence.
- Racist incidents, defined as 'Any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'. Race can mean colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins, ethnic or national group.

Consensual image sharing, especially between older children of the same age, may require a different response. It might not be abusive – but children still need to know it is illegal- whilst non-consensual is illegal and abusive. UKCIS provides detailed advice about sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and videos.

5.3 Examples of online Child-on-Child abuse would include:

- Sexting
- Online abuse
- Child-on-Child grooming
- The distribution of youth involved sexualised content, and harassment.

5.4 Definition of bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. Early intervention can help to set clear expectations of the behaviour that is and isn't acceptable and help stop negative behaviours escalating.

5.6 Definition of Cyber-bullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.

6. <u>What is contextual safeguarding</u>?

6.1 This policy encapsulates a contextual safeguarding approach, which is about the way that professionals approach child protection when risks occur outside of the family, thereby requiring all those within a Local Safeguarding Partnership to consider how they work alongside, rather than just refer into, children's social care, to create safe spaces for children who may have encountered Child-on-Child abuse

6.2 We adopt a whole-school community Contextual Safeguarding approach, which means

- being aware of and seeking to understand the impact that these wider social contexts may be having on our students.
- creating a safe culture in the school by, for example, implementing policies and procedures that address Child-on-Child abuse and harmful attitudes, promoting healthy relationships and attitudes to gender/ sexuality, identifying any risky areas in the school and conducting training on potential bias and stereotyped assumptions.
- being alert to and monitoring changes in students' behaviour and/or attendance, and contributing to local child protection agendas by, for example, challenging poor threshold decisions and referring concerns about contexts to relevant local agencies.

7. <u>Understanding behaviour</u>

7.1 We understand that all behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a child's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it.

7.2 Sexual Behaviour: Simon Hackett has proposed the following continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children, which may be helpful when seeking to understand a student's sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it. Hackett's continuum relates exclusively to sexual behaviours and is not exhaustive. The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool can help professionals working with children to distinguish between three levels of sexual behaviour – green, amber and red, and to respond according to the level of concern. A designated member of staff has received appropriate training enabling us to use the tool to effectively to identify, understand and respond to sexual behaviours in young people.

7.3 When dealing with other alleged behaviour which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff can draw on aspects of Hackett's continuum to assess where the alleged behaviour falls on a spectrum and to decide how to respond.

This could include, for example, whether it

- is socially acceptable
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- is socially acceptable within the peer group
- is problematic and concerning
- involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- Involves an element of coercion or pre-planning
- involves a power imbalance between the child/ children allegedly responsible for the behaviour and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power
- involves a misuse of power

8. <u>Identification of Child-on-Child abuse</u>

8.1 All colleagues should be alert to the well-being of students and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by Child-on-Child abuse. However, colleagues should be mindful of the fact that the ways in which children will disclose or present with behaviours as a result of their experiences will differ.

8.2 We will regularly review behaviour incident logs which can help to identify any changes in behaviour and/or concerning patterns or trends at an early stage. Behaviour data and analysis is discussed in weekly strategy meetings where actions, interventions and monitoring take place.

8.3 Any child can be vulnerable to Child-on-Child abuse and colleagues should be alert to signs of such abuse amongst all children. Individual and situational factors can increase a child's vulnerability to abuse by their peers. For example, an image of a child could be shared, following which they could become more vulnerable to Child-on-Child abuse due to how others now perceive them, regardless of any characteristics which may be inherent in them and/or their family.

8.4 Peer group dynamics can also play an important role in determining a child's vulnerability to such abuse. For example, children who are more likely to follow others and/or who are socially isolated from their peers may be more vulnerable to Child-on-Child abuse. Children who are questioning or exploring their sexuality may also be particularly vulnerable to abuse by their peers.

8.5 Child-on-Child abuse may affect boys differently from girls, and this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make-up. Barriers to disclosure will also be different.

9. Prevention

9.1 A whole-school approach is focused around prevention of bullying, promoting an ethos of respect based on shared values and character virtues. We develop an attitude of intolerance towards any form of abuse. These include:

- Effective school leadership that promotes belonging for all. We celebrate our differences and show respect for all members of our school community.
- Students understand and develop their role as active and responsible citizens and are equipped with the skills to challenge discrimination.
- Use of curriculum opportunities, in particular tutor periods and PSHE classes where issues of diversity and bullying are discussed. Children and young people learn to understand the impact of bullying, why people bully and where to report incidents involving them or their peers
- Assemblies, PSHE lessons, Character Education and Form time activities ensure children and young people clearly understand and can define bullying, know that all staff are trained to support them and that they have a platform to discuss anything affecting their health and well-being
- Mental health and well- being team provide one to one and group sessions to promote resilience, confidence and self-esteem
- Students, staff and parents have access to the anonymous reporting app Tootoot and helpline information via our website https://www.charlton.uk.com/ to access wellbeing support or report any allegations of peer-on-peer abuse
- Use of opportunities throughout the school calendar and at certain times of the school day to raise awareness of the negative consequences of bullying, e.g. Anti-Bullying Week in November of each year
- Whole school assemblies
- Student surveys
- Poster campaigns
- Improved supervision in potential problem areas
- Peer mentoring and Buddy Schemes
- Review of general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure staff training reflects the anti Child-on-Child Abuse (and bullying) policy and practice of the school
- Child-on-Child abuse is a scheduled item on the staff safeguarding training programme which clearly identifies risk factors, signs of abuse, advice, guidance and actions.

9.2 We actively seek to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of Child-on-Child abuse by educating governors, our senior leadership team, staff, students, and parents about this issue. This includes training governors, the senior leadership team, and staff on the nature, prevalence and effect of Child-on-Child abuse, and how to prevent, identify, and respond to it.

9.3 This includes:

- contextual safeguarding
- the identification and classification of specific behaviours, including digital behaviours
- the importance of taking seriously all forms of Child-on-Child abuse (no matter how 'low level' they may appear) and ensuring that no form of Child-on-Child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing
- social media and online safety, including how to encourage children to use social media in a positive, responsible and safe way, and how to enable them to identify and manage abusive behaviour online
- educating students about the nature and prevalence of Child-on-Child abuse, positive, responsible, and safe use of social media, and the unequivocal facts about consent, via Personal Development, PSHE and the wider curriculum
- Students are frequently told what to do if they witness or experience such abuse, the effect that it can have on those who experience it and the possible reasons for it, including vulnerability of those who inflict such abuse. They are regularly informed about our approach to such issues
- Educating students about consent includes teaching them basic facts such as a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity, the age of consent is 16 and that sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

9.4 Engaging parents on these issues includes:

- PSHE representation at all parents' evenings where parents share and explore aspects of the Personal Development curriculum
- An item of agenda on the friends of Charlton committee meetings, led by Anna Vickers – Deputy DSL
- The personal development intent and implementation documents are shared on the school website which: (https://www.charlton.uk.com/parent-student-information/curriculum/personal-development-handbook-and-curriculum-intent) which defines our PSHE, RSE, Character Education and SMSC and gives parents the opportunity to discuss further if they wish
- Parental concerns will be addressed by the welfare team in the first instance
- Parents will be given the opportunity to discuss incidents and be kept fully informed of actions taken to resolve and eliminate issues affecting their children
- A programme of sessions designed to educate parents around local and national safeguarding priorities
- Supporting the on-going welfare of students by drawing on multiple resources that prioritise student mental health, to address underlying mental health needs

9.5 Wider context

- Working with local governors, senior leadership team, and all staff, students and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the academy community
- Creating conditions in which our students can aspire to, and realise, safe and healthy relationships fostering a whole-school culture which is founded on the idea that every member of our academy community is responsible for building and maintaining safe and positive relationships, and helping to create a safe school environment in which bullying, violence and abuse are never acceptable
- Responding to cases of Child-on-Child abuse promptly and appropriately

10. <u>Multi agency working</u>

10.1 We actively engage with our Local Safeguarding Partnership in relation to Child-on-Child abuse, and work closely with, for example, children's social care, the police, Telford and Wrekin Family Connect and other relevant agencies in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures, and other schools. The relationships that we have built with these partners are essential to ensuring that the school is able to prevent, identify early, and appropriately handle cases of Child-on-Child abuse.

10.2 They help Charlton School to:

- develop a good awareness and understanding of the different referral pathways that operate in our local area, as well as the preventative and support services which exist
- ensure that our students are able to access the range of services and support they need quickly
- support and help inform the academy's local community's response to Child-on-Child abuse
- increase our awareness and understanding of any concerning trends and emerging risks in our local area to enable us to take preventative action to minimise the risk of these being experienced by our students

10.3 We actively refer concerns and allegations of Child-on-Child abuse where necessary to children's social care, the police and other relevant agencies in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures. This is particularly important because Child-on-Child abuse can be a complex issue, and even more so where wider safeguarding concerns exist. It is often not appropriate for one single agency (where the alleged incident cannot appropriately be managed internally by the academy itself) to try to address the issue alone – it requires effective partnership working.

11. <u>Responses to concerns or allegations of Child-on-Child abuse</u>:

11.1 All concerns and allegations of Child-on-Child abuse are handled sensitively, appropriately and promptly. The way in which they are responded to can have a significant impact on our academy environment.

11.2 Any response will:

1. Include a thorough investigation of the concern or allegation, and the wider context in which it may have occurred (as appropriate) – depending on the nature and seriousness of the alleged incident. (It may be appropriate for the police and/or children's social care to carry out this investigation). A clear account of the incident will be recorded by the Pastoral Manager who will investigate the incident by interviewing all concerned and record outcomes on the files of those involved.
2. Students who have allegedly experienced the abuse will be offered the opportunity to discuss their experience with their form tutor or another member of staff, be offered support in terms of access to the counselling or peer mentoring scheme to restore self-esteem and build confidence and have the use of a supervised room for as long as needed.
3. Treat all students involved as being at potential risk – while the student allegedly responsible for the abuse may pose a significant risk of harm to other students, they may also have considerable unmet needs and be at risk of harm themselves.
4. Take into account that the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the student involved and consider and address the effect of wider sociocultural contexts – such as the child's/children's peer group (both within and outside the school); family; the academy environment; their experience(s) of crime and victimisation in the local community; and the student/students' online presence.
5. Students who have bullied will be helped by discussing what happened, discovering why the student became involved and establishing a sense of wrong-doing. Parents/carers will be informed (where appropriate to do so) to help change the attitude and behaviour of the student.
6. We will consider what changes may need to be made to these contexts to address the student/students' needs and to mitigate risk, and the potential complexity of Child-on-Child abuse and of student's experiences, and consider the interplay between power, choice and consent.
7. While students may appear to be making choices, if those choices are limited, they are not consenting, − the views of the student/students are affected.
8. Unless it is considered unsafe to do so (for example, where a referral needs to be made immediately), the DSL/appropriate member of the safeguarding team will discuss the proposed action with the student/students and their parents/carers and obtain consent to any referral before it is made where possible. Parents will be kept informed and are discouraged from taking matters into their own hands.

9. We will manage the student's expectations about information sharing, and keep them and their parents informed of developments, where appropriate and safe to do so. It is particularly important to take into account the wishes of any student who has allegedly been abused, and to give that student as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and how they will be supported.
10. We will ensure that a safeguarding response is in place for both the student who has allegedly experienced the abuse, and the student who has allegedly been responsible for it (and the additional sanctioning work may be required for the latter).

12. What should you do if you suspect either that a child may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by their peer(s), or that a child may be at risk of abusing or may be abusing their peer(s)?

12.1 If a colleague thinks for whatever reason that a student may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by their peer(s), or that a student may be at risk of abusing or may be abusing their peer(s), they should discuss the matter with their DSL as soon as possible to explain their concern and register a note of concern on the internal referral system CPOMS.

12.2 Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and, if appropriate, the police) is made immediately.

12.3 Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made in line with the Safeguarding and Child protection policy.

12.4 If a student speaks to a member of staff about Child-on-Child abuse that they have witnessed or are a part of the member of staff should listen to the student and use open language that demonstrates understanding rather than judgement without promising confidentiality. For further details please see the procedures set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

13. How we will respond to concerns or allegations of Child-on-Child abuse?

13.1 The DSL and or DSL (Deputy) will discuss the concern or allegation with the member of staff who has reported it and will, where necessary, take any immediate steps to ensure the safety of the child/all children affected.

13.2 Where any concern or allegation indicates that indecent images of a child or children may have been shared online, the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) will consider what urgent action can be taken in addition to the actions and referral duties set out in this policy. See the youth involved sexual imagery section below to seek specialist help in preventing the images spreading further and removing the images from the internet.

13.3 The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has a trained team that can evaluate and remove illegal images from the internet when the images are reported to them quickly. They will also share the image with the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command to facilitate an investigation. Any report to IWF will be made in consultation with the police.

13.4 The DSL and or DSL (Deputy) will always use their professional judgement to assess the nature and seriousness of the alleged behaviour and determine whether it is appropriate for the alleged behaviour to be to be dealt with internally and, if so, whether any external specialist support is required.

13.5 In borderline cases the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) may wish to consult with children's social care or other relevant agencies in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures on a no-names basis (where possible) to determine the most appropriate response.

13.6 Where the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) considers or suspects that the alleged behaviour in question might be abusive or violent on a spectrum or where the needs and circumstances of the individual child/children in question might otherwise require it, the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) should contact children's social care and/or the police immediately and, in any event, within 24 hours of the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) becoming aware of the alleged behaviour.

13.7 The DSL and or DSL (Deputy) will discuss the concern(s) or allegation(s) with the agency and agree on a course of action.

13.8 The DSL and or DSL (Deputy) will always refer to the police if there are aggravating factors:

- If the incident involves an adult (over 18).
- If there are concerns about the capacity to consent (SEND).
- Images show atypical sexual behaviour for their development stage or violent acts.
- Images show sex acts with a child under age 13.
- The disclosure places the pupil (or any child) at risk of imminent harm (self-harm, exploitation, harmful response from home etc).

14. Safety plans

14.1 We will carry out a safety plan in respect of

- any student who is alleged to have behaved in a way that is considered to be abusive or violent
- any student who has reportedly been abused or affected by the alleged abusive or violent behaviour by another student
- any student who may be at risk due to the alleged abusive or violent behaviour by another student as deemed appropriate by the DSL and or DSL (Deputy)

14.2 Where it is alleged that a student has behaved in a way that is considered to be inappropriate or problematic (as opposed to abusive or violent), the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) will use their professional judgment – based on the particular concern or allegation raised, and the needs and circumstances of the individual children in question – to determine whether it would be appropriate to contact children's social care, and to carry out a safety plan.

14.3 Careful judgment and consideration are required as to whether alleged behaviour which might be judged to be inappropriate by an adult might actually be harmful to another student. Consultation is recommended with Children's Social Care if there is any doubt about this.

14.4 Careful consideration will also be given to a range of factors including the context, severity of the alleged behaviour, impact of the alleged behaviour on others, risk to others, and whether there are any patterns of behaviour occurring.

14.5 Where other students have been identified as witnesses to alleged abuse or violence, consideration should also be given by the DSL and or DSL (Deputy) to whether there might be any risks to those children, and whether a safety plan would be appropriate in relation to any risks presenting to them.

15. Information sharing, data protection and record keeping

15.1 When responding to a concerns or allegation of Child-on-Child abuse, we will

- always consider carefully, in consultation with Children's Social Care, the police and other relevant agencies (where they are involved), how to share information about the concern or allegation with the student(s) affected, their parents, relevant staff, and other appropriate individuals
- record the information that is necessary for the school and other relevant agencies (where they are involved) to respond to the concern or allegation and safeguard everyone involved
- keep a record of the legal purpose for sharing the information with any third party, including relevant authorities, and ensure that the third party has agreed to handle the information securely and to only use it for the agreed legal purpose
- be mindful of and act in accordance with its safeguarding and data protection duties, including those set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children and the HM Government advice on Information Sharing

16. Disciplinary action

16.1 We will consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any student involved in Child-on-Child abuse. However, if there are police proceedings underway, or there could be, it is critical that we work in partnership with the police and Children's Social Care.

Where a matter is not of interest to the police or Children's Social Care, school leaders will still consider what is the most appropriate action to take to ensure positive behaviour management.

16.2 Disciplinary action could include but is not limited to:

- Official warning to cease offending
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises or certain activities
- Detentions
- Isolation
- Referral to senior staff and/or external agencies, e.g. Education Welfare Officer, Police Liaison Officer
- Internal fixed term suspension
- External fixed term or permanent suspension

16.3 Disciplinary action is appropriate to

- ensure that the student(s) involved take responsibility for and realise the seriousness of their behaviour
- demonstrate to students and others that Child-on-Child abuse can never be tolerated
- ensure the safety and wellbeing of other students

16.4 These considerations must be balanced against any police investigations, children's own potential unmet needs, and any action or intervention planned regarding safeguarding concerns.

16.5 Before deciding on appropriate action we will always consider our duty to safeguard all students in its care from harm; the underlying reasons for a student's behaviour; any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the student; the risk that the student may pose to other students; and the severity of the Child-on-Child abuse and the causes of it.

16.6 The school will, where appropriate, consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of using managed moves or exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognizing that even if this is ultimately deemed to be necessary, some of the measures referred to in this policy may still be required. For example, action may still need to be taken by the academy in relation to other students who have been involved with and/or affected by Child-on-Child abuse.

16.7 Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the other students in the academy. Engaging in Fair Access Panel Processes to assist with decision-making associated to managed moves and exclusions can also be beneficial. In the event of any managed move, consideration must be given to sharing information with the receiving school regarding the Child-on-Child abuse, in order to allow best protection of children in the new school.

16.8 Disciplinary interventions alone are rarely able to solve issues of Child-on-Child abuse, and the school will always consider the wider actions that may need to be taken, and any lessons that may need to be learnt going forwards, as set out above and below.

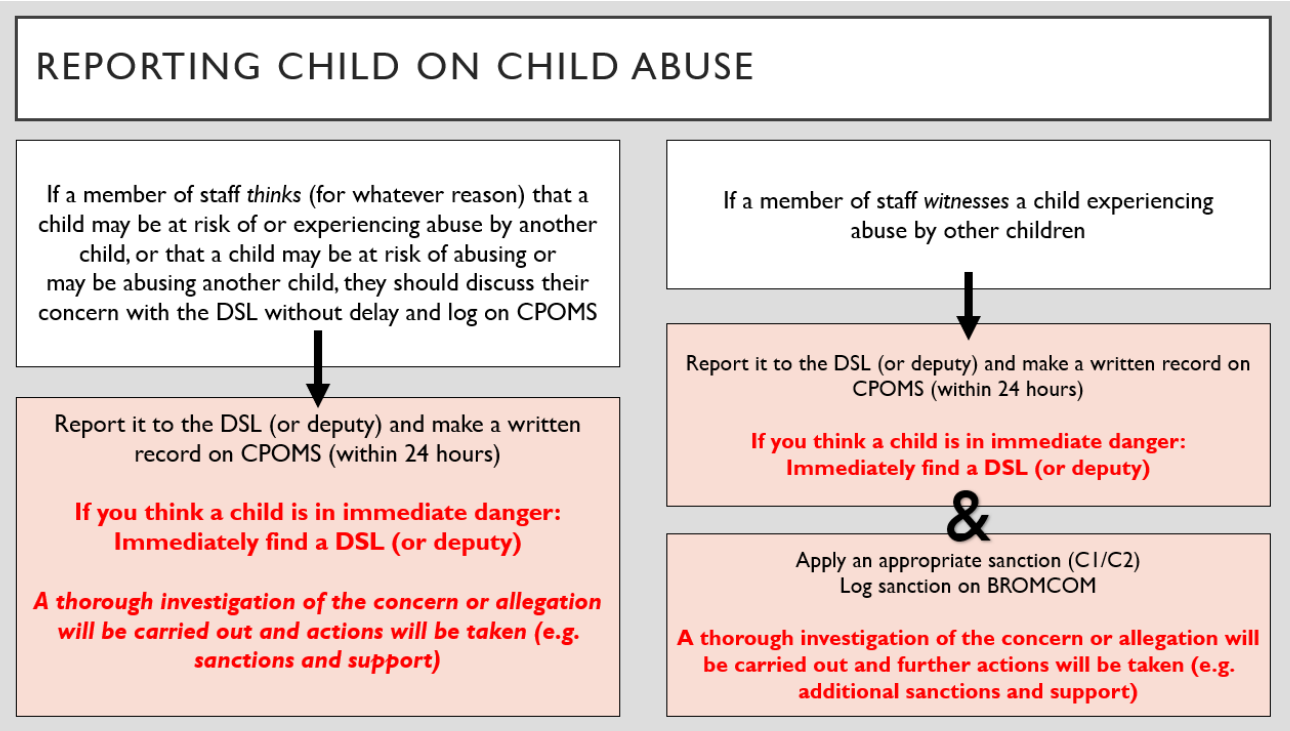
17. Development, Monitoring and Review

17.1 We plan to:

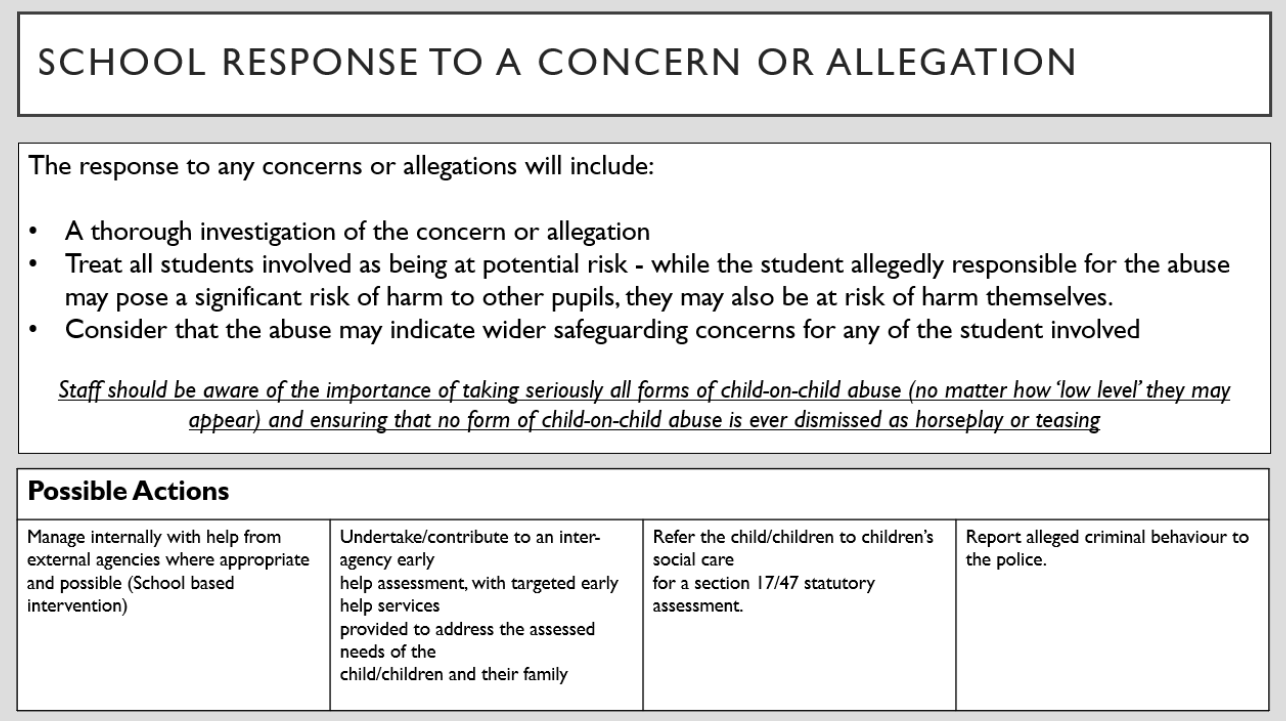
- Monitor, evaluate and review our Child-on-Child abuse on a regular basis.
- Support staff to identify and tackle bullying appropriately through a comprehensive CPD programme
- Ensure that students are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively and seek feedback from students via the Student Leadership Team and termly student questionnaires.
- To learn from Anti-Bullying good practice elsewhere and utilise the support of the LCT Network and relevant statutory and or voluntary organisations when appropriate.

Appendix Dealing with Child-on-Child Abuse

18.1 Actions taken by all staff in response to an allegation of a Child-on-Child abuse will follow these steps:

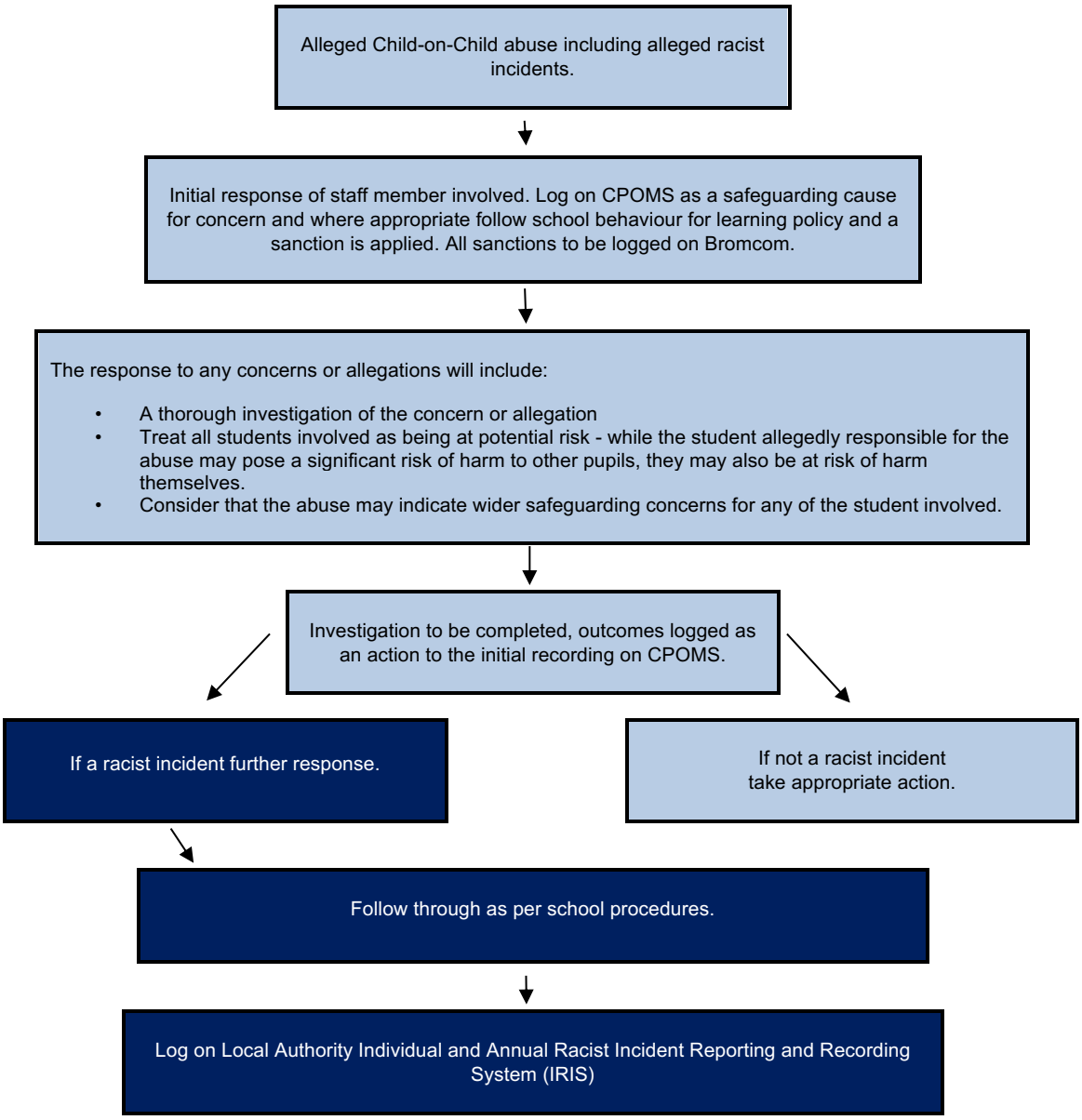


18.2 Actions taken by any member of staff investigating an allegation of a Child-on-Child abuse will follow these steps:



Appendix Dealing with Racist incidents

18.1 Actions taken in response to an allegation of a racist incident will follow these steps.



Support for Victim

- An appropriate mentor will speak to the child who has been harmed sensitively and determine the level of support required, stressing that they are not to blame for the bullying and detail strategies to supporting reporting in the future.
- Allocate a Buddy, counselling or support through a peer-to-peer mentor or support group if appropriate.
- Promote pride in their cultural heritage and culture.

Support for Perpetrator

- Student to be allocated an appropriate mentor who will support with the following:
    - Adults at home should be notified of allegation on the day received
    - Question whether they know what Racism is and the impact of their words and actions on the victim.
    - Explain the legal ramifications including that they could be arrested and prosecuted under the equality act 2010.
    - If appropriate restorative work between the students involved should be conducted the young person causing harm should show an understanding of the impact they have had on another person.
    - Sanction includes Restorative Booklet for Student to complete on Diversity and Equality (Internal)
    - Student to complete letter of apology/verbal apology to victim, where appropriate (Internal)

In addition to the actions detailed above, the following actions may also be taken:

- Meeting with adults at home to be arranged (Internal - Head of Year to arrange)
- TAARC (targeted small group work) referral to be considered (External)
- Appropriate sanction
- Channel Panel Referral to be considered
- Targeted Interventions
- Show Racism Red Card
- TAARC Intervention
- Stand against violence workshops
- Behaviour Support