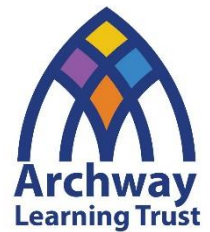


# Anti-Child-on-Child Abuse & Bullying Policy



Approved: October 2024  
Review date: July-Sept 2024  
Responsible Officer: Director of Safeguarding

# Trust Ethos, Mission, Vision and Values



The Trust believes in the transformational power of education for each individual and that this is enhanced through collaborative working between the academies.



Working together, transforming lives

## Contents

Section		Page
1	<a href="#">Statement of Intent</a>	5
2	<a href="#">Legal framework &amp; guidance</a>	6
3	<a href="#">Scope of this policy</a>	6
4	<a href="#">What is Child on Child abuse?</a>	7
5	<a href="#">What is contextual safeguarding?</a>	8
6	<a href="#">Understanding behaviour</a>	8
7	<a href="#">Identification of Child on Child abuse</a>	9
8	<a href="#">A whole academy approach</a>	10
9	<a href="#">Multi-agency working</a>	11
10	<a href="#">Responses to concerns or allegations of child-on child abuse</a>	12
11	<a href="#">Risk Assessment &amp; Safety plans</a>	14
12	<a href="#">Information sharing, data protection and record keeping</a>	15
13	<a href="#">Disciplinary action</a>	15

Where the words 'Trust' and 'we' are used in this document, it refers to Archway Learning Trust.

Where the word 'Advisory Board' is used it refers to the Academy Advisory Board (AAB) of an individual academy within the Trust.

Where appropriate the AABs of individual academies will publish details of the procedures and practices to implement Trust policies.

The term 'Trust Executive Leadership Team' (ELT) comprises of the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Corporate Services Officer, Chief People Officer, Director of Education and Director of Safeguarding.

Where the word 'users' is used it refers to staff, future staff issued with ICT access and/or hardware, AAB members, volunteers and regular visitors.

Where the phrase 'Senior Leader' is used, this refers to Principals, Headteachers and local Academy Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Where the phrase 'Principal' is used, this also refers to Headteachers.

## Related Policies and Procedures

- [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#)
- [Behaviour & Exclusions Policy](#)
- [SEND Policy](#)
- [Attendance & Punctuality Policy](#)

## **1. Statement of Intent**

- 1.1 We are committed to safeguarding children and young people from child-on-child abuse and bullying and we expect all of our people to share this commitment. This policy sets out how we will deliver these responsibilities.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (with special reference to Part 5), which is statutory guidance to be read and followed by academies and colleges, and alongside 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 This policy sets out our strategy for improving prevention and identifying and appropriately managing child-on-child abuse.
- 1.5 The policy applies to all members of the academy community, pupils, staff and volunteers.
- 1.6 It is reviewed every two years and updated in the interim (if required) to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which pupils are or may be exposed.
- 1.7 This policy recognises that child-on-child 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 as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 1.8 We take a safeguarding, child-centred approach to all individuals involved in concerns or allegations about child-on-child abuse, (in addition to any sanctioning work that may also be required) including those who are alleged to have been harmed and those who are alleged to have harmed another child.
- 1.9 Although the starting point is that our response to child-on-child abuse should be the same for all pupils, regardless of age, there may be some different considerations in relation to, for example, a child aged under 10, or aged over eighteen in terms of how local agencies and/or partners respond.
- 1.10 We ensure that each incident and child is responded to as an individual with a proportionate and appropriate response to all instances of child-on-child abuse and thus promoting the zero tolerance culture to sexism and all forms of prejudice.

### **1.11 In particular:**

We believe that in order to protect children, we must be aware of the nature and level of risk to which our pupils are or may be exposed and put in place a clear and comprehensive strategy which is tailored to our specific safeguarding context; and take a whole-academy community Contextual Safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse.

We regard the introduction of this policy as a preventative measure. We (a) do 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/intervention.
- 1.12 We recognise national and increasing concern about this issue, and wish to implement this policy in order to mitigate harmful attitudes and child-on-child abuse in the academy setting, and encourage parents to challenge us on this issue, so that if their child is feeling unsafe as a result of the behaviour of any of their peers, they should inform the academy leadership directly so that we can ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken in response to safeguard all pupils.
- 1.13 Furthermore, we will follow the procedures set out by the local safeguarding partnership
- 1.14 We ensure that pupils are taught about child-on-child abuse and bullying, including online behaviours, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 1.15 We will work with parents to build an understanding of the academy's responsibilities to ensure the welfare of all pupils, including the need for referrals to other agencies in some situations.

## **2. Legal framework and guidance**

2.1 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
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- 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)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018)
- The Data Protection Act (2018)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Teaching online safety in Schools (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)

## **3. Scope of this Policy**

3.1 This policy defines a 'child' or 'pupil' as anyone under the age of 18 years or any learner of any age on the academy roll.

- 3.2 This policy applies to all members of our staff, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, trustees, academy advisory board (AAB) members, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- 3.3 The trustees, AAB members, senior leadership team, and all staff (which term shall apply to all volunteer staff members) are committed to the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse (as defined below) both within and beyond the academy.

#### **4. What is child-on-child abuse?**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 We recognise that it is statistically more likely that girls will be victims of child-on-child abuse and that boys will statistically be more likely to be perpetrators and that child-on-child abuse can be perpetrated by the same gender, one child or a group of children and that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously and never tolerated.

#### **4.3 child-on-child abuse can take various forms, including (but not limited to):**

This is most likely to include but is not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment, (physical, verbal and online) such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of 'nudes' and 'semi-nudes' images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced/involved 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 (also a crime)
- 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).

## **5. What is contextual safeguarding?**

- 5.1 This policy encapsulates a contextual safeguarding approach, which is about the way that professionals approach child protection when risks occur outside of the family (extra familial harm) 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 in which children may have encountered child-on-child abuse.
- 5.2 We adopt a whole-academy 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 pupils
  - creating a safe culture in the academy 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 academy and conducting training on potential bias and stereotyped assumptions
  - being alert to and monitoring changes in pupils' 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.

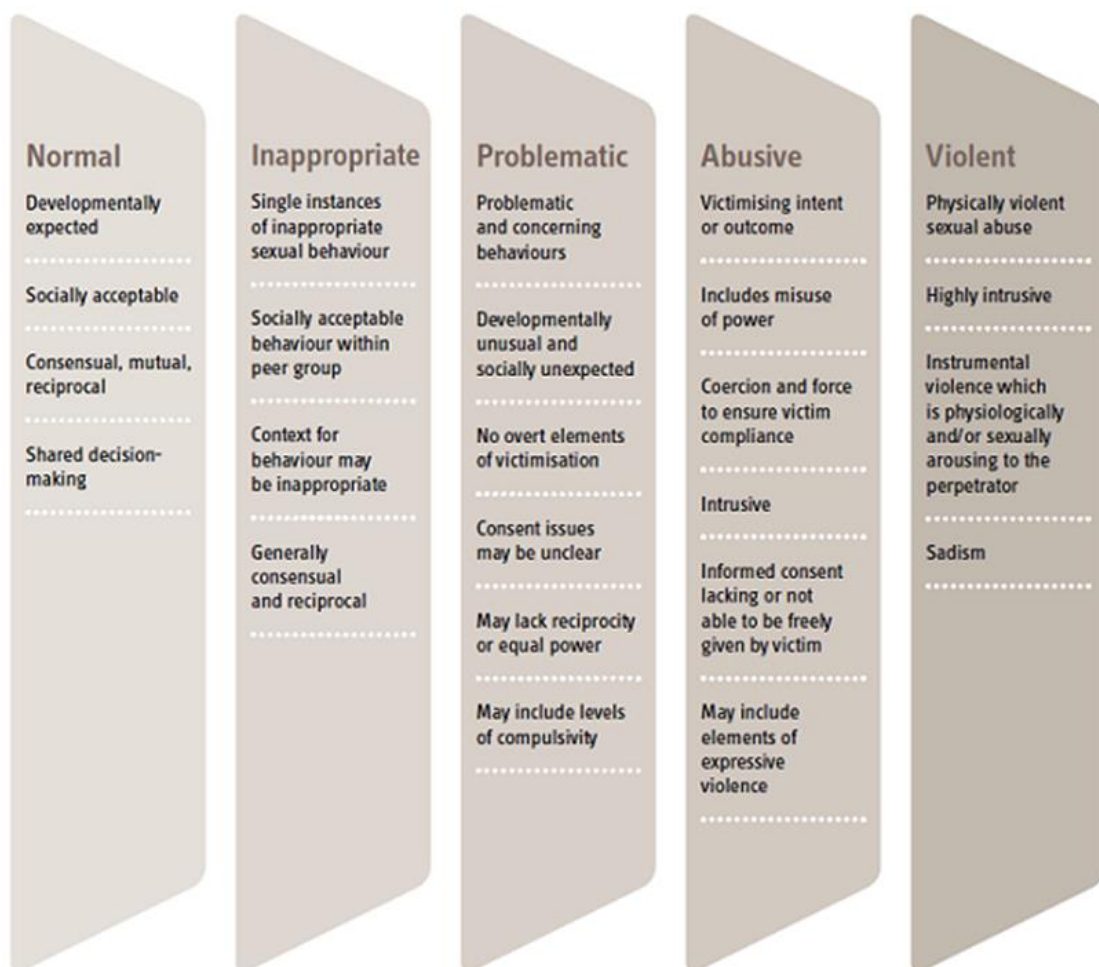
## **6. Understanding behaviour**

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.

### **6.1. 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 pupil's sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it.





*A continuum of children and young people's sexual behaviours*  
(Hackett, 2010)

Hackett's continuum relates exclusively to sexual behaviours and is not exhaustive.

6.2 In addition, we use the **Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool** to 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.

6.3 When dealing with other alleged behaviours 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.

**6.4 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.

## 7. Identification of child-on-child abuse:

All colleagues must be alert to the wellbeing of pupils and to signs of abuse, and will 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 and that there are known barriers to disclosing this abuse to adults.

- 7.1 Colleagues must be aware that pupils disclosing abuse may not reveal all of the incidents of abuse at once and that the trauma of experiencing the abuse can affect memory and recall.
- 7.2 We will regularly review behaviour and pastoral incident logs which can help to identify any changes in behaviour and/or concerning patterns or trends at an early stage.
- 7.3 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, a child disclosing abuse or an image of a child being 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.
- 7.4 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 (or perceived to be by their peers) are also particularly vulnerable to abuse by their peers.
- 7.5 Child-on-child abuse may affect boys differently from girls, and this difference may be the result of 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. As a result, we explore the gender dynamics of child on child abuse within our academy as part of the child-on-child abuse risk assessment and ensure that DSLs have sufficient training on the influence of gender and societal norms to ensure an appropriate, proportionate, safeguarding first approach to all incidents of child-on-child abuse.
- 7.6 Children who identify as LGBTQ can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBTQ can be just as vulnerable as children who do identify as such. Risks can be compounded where those children lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of academy staff.
- 7.7 Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers without SEND<sup>1</sup> and additional barriers exist when recognising abuse in children with SEND. These can include:
  - assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to a child's disability without further exploration

---

<sup>1</sup> Jones, L., Bellis MA., Wood S., Prevalence and risk of violence against children with disabilities: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies, 2012: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22795511>

- the potential for children with SEND to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers

7.8 Some children may be more likely to experience child-on-child abuse than others as a result of certain characteristics such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, race or religious beliefs.

## **8. A whole-academy approach:**

We actively seek to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by educating trustees, AAB members, our senior leadership team, staff, pupils, and parents about this issue.

This includes training trustees, AAB members, 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.

### **8.1 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 or normalised
- 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 pupils 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 PSHE and the wider curriculum

8.2 Pupils 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.

### **8.3 Educating pupils 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
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape
- consent is only consent when an individual has the freedom and capacity to choose.

Consent can be withdrawn at any point and each person may choose which sort of activity they consent to and which they do not; giving consent for one activity at one moment does not mean consent is given for another activity at the same moment.

### **8.4 Engaging parents** on these issues includes:

- Talking about them, both in groups and one to one, – asking parents what they perceive to be the risks facing their child and how they would like to see the academy address those risks.

- Supporting the on-going welfare of pupils by drawing on multiple resources that prioritise pupil mental health, and by providing in-academy coaching to address underlying mental health needs.

#### **8.4 Wider context**

- Working with local AAB members, senior leadership team, and all staff, pupils and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of, acceptance, tolerance and respect amongst all members of the academy community.
- Creating conditions in which our pupils can aspire to, and realise, safe and healthy relationships fostering a whole-academy 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 academy environment in which bullying, violence and abuse are never acceptable.
- Responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately
- Ensuring that all child-on-child abuse issues are fed back to the academy's safeguarding team/DSL so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify pupils who may be in need of additional support.

### **9. Multi-agency working**

9.1 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 and other relevant agencies in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures, and other schools/academies. The relationships that we have built with these partners are essential to ensuring that the academy is able to prevent, identify early, and appropriately handle cases of child-on-child abuse.

9.2 They help us 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 pupils 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 pupils.

9.3 We respond to each incident individually and proportionately. We actively refer concerns and allegations of child-on-child abuse where necessary to children's social care, the police and MASH 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.

## 10. Responses to concerns or allegations of child-on child abuse:

All concerns and allegations of child-on-child abuse are handled sensitively, appropriately, proportionately and promptly using professional judgement and listening to the wishes of the pupils involved and their parents.

### 10.1 Any response will:

- 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).
- Treat all pupils involved as being at potential risk. While the pupil allegedly responsible for the abuse may pose a significant risk of harm to other pupils, they may also have considerable unmet needs and be at risk of harm themselves.
- Take into account that the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the pupils involved and consider and address the effect of wider societal gender norms and sociocultural contexts – such as the child’s/ children’s peer group (both within and outside the academy); family; the academy environment; their experience(s) of crime and victimisation in the local community; and the pupil/pupils online presence.

10.2 We will consider what changes may need to be made to these contexts to address the pupil/pupils needs and to mitigate risk, and – the potential complexity of child-on-child abuse and of pupil’s experiences, and consider the interplay between power, choice and consent. While pupils may appear to be making choices, if those choices are *limited*, they are not consenting, – the views of the pupil/pupils are affected.

10.3 Unless it is considered unsafe to do so (for example, where a referral needs to be made or a risk assessment put in place immediately), the DSL/appropriate member of the safeguarding team will discuss the proposed action with the pupil/pupils and their parents/carers, and obtain consent to any referral before it is made where possible.

10.4 We will manage the pupil’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 consider the wishes of any pupil who has allegedly been harmed, and to give that pupil as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and how they will be supported.

10.5 We will ensure that a safeguarding response is in place for both the pupil who has allegedly experienced the harm, and the pupil who has allegedly been responsible for it (and the additional sanctioning work may be required for the latter).

### 10.6 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)?

10.6.1 If a colleague thinks, for whatever reason, that a pupil may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by their peer(s), or that a pupil 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. If you are unable to make contact with your DSL you must email without delay.

10.6.2 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.

10.6.3 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.

10.6.4 If a pupil 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 pupil and use open language that demonstrates understanding rather than judgement without promising confidentiality. For further details please see the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

### **10.7 How will we respond to concerns or allegations of child-on-child abuse?**

10.7.1 We will reassure the pupil that we have listened to them, believe them and are taking the incident seriously. We will ensure that they feel safe and supported.

10.7.2 The DSL 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.

10.7.3 Where any concern or allegation indicates that indecent images of a child or children may have been shared online, the DSL 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.

10.7.4 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 Child Exploitation & Online Protection (CEOP) Command to facilitate an investigation. Any report to IWF will be made in consultation with the police.

10.7.5 Colleagues should not view or forward any illegal images of children but must instead confiscate the device and take it directly to the DSL or Deputy and follow the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance on sharing nudes.

10.7.6 DSLs will always use their professional judgement to assess the nature and seriousness of the alleged behaviour (in line with statutory definitions) and determine whether it is appropriate for the alleged behaviour to be dealt with internally and, if so, whether any external specialist support is required. In borderline cases the DSL 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.

10.7.7 Where the DSL 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 should contact children's social care and/or the police immediately and, in any event, within 24 hours of the DSL becoming aware of the alleged behaviour.

10.7.8 We will ensure that information is recorded on the safeguarding system alongside any discussion outcomes, decisions and rationale.

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

**The DSL 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 (inc SEND).
- Images show atypical sexual behaviour for their development stage or abusive, violent or harmful 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).

## **11 Risk Assessment & Safety plans**

11.1 We will carry out a safety plan in respect of:

- any pupils alleged to have been involved in an incident of sexual violence and on a case by case situation for any pupil involved in an incident of sexual harassment
- any pupil who is alleged to have behaved in a way that is considered to be abusive or violent or harmful

11.2 Where it is alleged that a pupil has behaved in a way that is considered to be inappropriate or problematic (as opposed to abusive or violent), the DSL 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.

11.3 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 pupil. Consultation is recommended with children’s social care if there is any doubt about this. Where the incident is Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)- See appendix 3, DSLs will use the Brook Traffic Light Tool to establish the level of harm before making referrals to external agencies.

11.4 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.

11.5 Where other pupils have been identified as witnesses to alleged abuse or violence, consideration should also be given by the DSL 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.

## **12. Information sharing, data protection and record keeping:**

12.1 When responding to a concern 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 pupil(s) affected, their parents, relevant staff, and other appropriate individuals

- record the information that is necessary for the academy and other relevant agencies (where they are involved) to respond to the concern or allegation and safeguard everyone involved including decisions and rationale
- 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.

### **13. Disciplinary action**

- 13.1 We will consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any pupil involved in child-on-child abuse linked into the behaviour policy. In addition, 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.
- 13.2 Where a matter is not of interest to the police or children's social care, academy leaders will still consider what the most appropriate action to take is to ensure positive behaviour management and the safety of all pupils.
- 13.3 Disciplinary action is appropriate to:**
- ensure that the pupil(s) involved take responsibility for and realise the seriousness of their behaviour;
  - demonstrate to pupils and others that peer-on-peer abuse is not acceptable and will never be tolerated; and
  - ensure the safety and wellbeing of other pupils.
- 13.4 These considerations must be balanced against any police investigations, children's own potential unmet needs, and any action or intervention planned regarding safeguarding concerns.
- 13.5 Before deciding on appropriate action we will always consider our duty to safeguard all pupils in our care from harm; the underlying reasons for a pupil's behaviour; any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the pupil; the risk that the pupil may pose to other pupils; and the severity of the child-on-child abuse and the causes of it.
- 13.6 Academy leaders will, where appropriate, consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of using managed moves, alternative provision or exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognising 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 pupils who have been involved with and/or affected by child-on-child abuse.
- 13.7 Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. In the event of any managed move, consideration must be given to sharing information with the receiving academy regarding the child-on-child abuse in order to allow best protection of children in the new academy.



13.8 Disciplinary interventions alone are rarely able to solve issues of child-on-child abuse, and the academy 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.