



# Orchard Partnership Academies Child on Child Abuse Policy



Reviewed: Autumn 2023

Mr Alex Davies

## Academies' Details

	Stretton Sugwas	Burghill	Canon Pyon
DSL	Ben Ford	Jacqui Symonds	Kelly Carpenter
Deputy DSL	Cath O'Reilly	Nick Locke	Emily Pritchard-Smith
Safeguarding Governor	Richard Griffiths	Penny Littlewood	Chris Kent
Prevent Officer	Cath O'Reilly	Alex Davies	Kelly Carpenter
Looked After Child Lead	Cath O'Reilly	Jacqui Symonds	Kelly Carpenter

At Orchard Partnership Academies, we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other pupils. We recognise that some pupils will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

We continue to ensure that any form of abuse, or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently, to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

### **Introduction**

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 states that 'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school or college, and ensuring that safeguarding, and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.' (page 26).

### **Purpose and Aim**

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as child-on-child abuse. The purpose of this policy is to explore the many forms of child-on-child abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues. At Orchard Partnership Academies, we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy: Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy & E-Safety.

### **Framework and Legislation**

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989, that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is Working Together, 2018, highlighting that every assessment of a child, 'must be informed by the views of the child' and within that 'It is important to understand the resilience of the individual child when planning appropriate services. (Working Together) This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

### **Introduction to abuse and harmful behaviour**

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings. It is necessary to consider what abuse is, and looks like, how it can be managed, and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual. It is also paramount to identify what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm. Abuse is abuse, and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. It includes recognition of the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators), but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously; and the different forms child-on-child abuse can take place.

## **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse, or prejudiced behaviour, is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

### **Physical abuse e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling.)**

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally, before considering the most appropriate response.

### **Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault, upskirting)**

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse

**Upskirting** typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

### **Bullying (physical: name calling: homophobia.)**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied, and who bully others, may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### **Cyber bullying**

Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, under section 1. This states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information, or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim, would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the

Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another, could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18, then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

### **Sexting**

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pictures', 'rude pictures' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture, can happen in any relationship, and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

### **Initiation/Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony, which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials that promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

### **Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society. In particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

### **Procedure following an allegation**

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another student, which is of a safeguarding nature, it should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible. If the DSL is not available, the Executive Head teacher or deputy DSL should be informed. They must then report this to the DSL as soon as possible.

A factual record must be kept (as normal safeguarding child protection procedures) and updated with all actions and outcomes. The incident should not be investigated at this time.

The DSL will contact MASH to discuss the case, and make a formal referral where appropriate.

If the allegation indicate a crime has taken place, the school will refer the case to the police following advice from MASH. Parents of both the alleged victim and the student being

complained about should be informed, this should be discussed during the consultation with the MASH team.

A risk assessment will be considered at this time to protect all parties involved. It may be appropriate to exclude the alleged child against whom the report has been made for a fixed time, in line with our schools behaviour policy and procedures.

Police and social care will lead any investigation, however where neither police nor social care thresholds are met, our school will then undertake a thorough investigation following our school's policies and procedures.

A risk assessment will be considered along with the appropriate supervision plan. Support should be given to all children involved, and they should be involved in the relevant meetings and sign and agree to the plans that are set. The plan will be monitored and review dates set.

### **For the young person who has been harmed**

The support required depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends. In which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

### **For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour**

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an EHA/strengthening Families; early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multiagency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour. The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

### **After care**

It is important that following the incident, the young people involved continues to feel supported and receive help, even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour, either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

### **Preventative Strategies**

At Orchard Partnership Academies, we recognise the importance of implementing appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of child on child abuse, rather than managing the issues in a reactive way.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

Firstly, and most importantly, we understand that child-on-child abuse can, and will occur on any site, even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

At our school, we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by:

Providing PHSE as part of the curriculum, which will help students develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours, healthy relationships and keeping them-selves safe.

Having effective systems within our school for pupils to be able to raise concerns with staff, knowing they will be listened to, supported and valued, and that the issues they raise will be looked into and addressed.

Liaising and working with other professionals to develop robust risk assessments for pupils that are identified as posing a potential risk to other children.

Liaising with specialists to deliver appropriate targeted work to pupils identified as being at potential risk e.g. protective behaviours work.

At all times, we will endeavour to create an open and honest environment, where our staff team feel confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people, including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order

to create such an environment, we provide whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice.

As a staff team, we do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. We will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.

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

Many expressions of sexual behaviour are part of healthy development and no cause for concern. However, when children or young people display sexual behaviour that increases their vulnerability or causes harm to someone else, adults have a responsibility to provide support and protection.

This is where Brook's Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool can prove invaluable. Knowing how to distinguish healthy and harmful sexual behaviour in children and young people helps in both supporting the development of healthy sexuality and in the protection of children and young people from harm or abuse.

It may be misleading to label behaviours displayed by young children in the birth to 5 category, or even the 5 to 9 category, as 'sexual'. A child who plays with his or her genitals may or may not be seeking sexual pleasure.

It is not clear how aware younger children are of sexual feeling, and behaviours are more likely to be seen as sexual because of the perception of the adult making the observation.

### **Influences**

Many factors influence sexual behaviour, such as:

- Lack of sex and relationships information
- Lack of privacy
- Boredom, loneliness, anxiety, confusion or depression
- Family/carer conflict or information and support needs
- Lack of rules, appropriate consequences or boundaries
- Emotional, physical or sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation and/or trafficking
- Communication difficulties
- Sexual excitement or curiosity
- Attention or relationship needs
- Gender issues
- Copying the behaviour of other children and young people
- Copying behaviours seen on the internet or TV

Identifying any of these factors may help you to decide on the most appropriate intervention. However, this is not an exhaustive list and you may need specialist support to clearly identify the reason for the behaviour and the correct intervention.



Dealing with unhealthy sexual behaviour at an early stage can help to prevent subsequent sexually harmful behaviours from developing. Professionals can begin to help young people change their traffic lights from red to amber and/or from amber to green.

### **Vulnerability**

All children and young people are potentially at risk of harm, though some groups may be at increased risk of exposure to, or of developing, unhealthy sexual behaviours. These include children and young people who have a disability, have been abused, or have experienced other disruptions to their development or socialisation. It is important to recognise that in these cases extra support and guidance may be needed.

- By identifying sexual behaviours as **GREEN, AMBER** or **RED**, professionals across different agencies can work to the same criteria when making decisions and protect children and young people with a unified approach.

All staff have had or will have training on how to use this tool.

## Behaviours: age 0 to 5 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

### Green behaviours

- holding or playing with own genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about other children's genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about breasts, bottoms or genitals of adults
- games e.g. mummies and daddies, doctors and nurses
- enjoying nakedness
- interest in body parts and what they do
- curiosity about the differences between boys and girls

### Amber behaviours

- preoccupation with adult sexual behaviour
- pulling other children's pants down/skirts up/trousers down against their will
- talking about sex using adult slang
- preoccupation with touching the genitals of other people
- following others into toilets or changing rooms to look at them or touch them
- talking about sexual activities seen on TV/online

### Red behaviours

- persistently touching the genitals of other children
- persistent attempts to touch the genitals of adults
- simulation of sexual activity in play
- sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects
- forcing other children to engage in sexual play

#### What is green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

#### What is amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- unusual for that particular child or young person
- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

#### What is red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

#### What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

#### What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

#### What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

## Behaviours: age 5 to 9 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

### Green behaviours

- feeling and touching own genitals
- curiosity about other children's genitals
- curiosity about sex and relationships, e.g. differences between boys and girls, how sex happens, where babies come from, same-sex relationships
- sense of privacy about bodies
- telling stories or asking questions using swear and slang words for parts of the body

### Amber behaviours

- questions about sexual activity which persist or are repeated frequently, despite an answer having been given
- sexual bullying face to face or through texts or online messaging
- engaging in mutual masturbation
- persistent sexual images and ideas in talk, play and art
- use of adult slang language to discuss sex

### Red behaviours

- frequent masturbation in front of others
- sexual behaviour engaging significantly younger or less able children
- forcing other children to take part in sexual activities
- simulation of oral or penetrative sex
- sourcing pornographic material online

#### What is green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

#### What is amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- unusual for that particular child or young person
- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

#### What is red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

#### What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

#### What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

#### What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

## Behaviours: age 9 to 13 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

### Green behaviours

- solitary masturbation
- use of sexual language including swear and slang words
- having girl/boyfriends who are of the same, opposite or any gender
- interest in popular culture, e.g. fashion, music, media, online games, chatting online
- need for privacy
- consensual kissing, hugging, holding hands with peer

### Amber behaviours

- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- verbal, physical or cyber/virtual sexual bullying involving sexual aggression
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) targeted bullying
- exhibitionism, e.g. flashing or mooning
- giving out contact details online
- viewing pornographic material
- worrying about being pregnant or having STIs

### Red behaviours

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- distributing naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- sexually explicit talk with younger children
- sexual harassment
- arranging to meet with an online acquaintance in secret
- genital injury to self or others
- forcing other children of same age, younger or less able to take part in sexual activities
- sexual activity e.g. oral sex or intercourse
- presence of sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- evidence of pregnancy

#### What is green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

#### What is amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- unusual for that particular child or young person
- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

#### What is red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

#### What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

#### What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

#### What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

	Common Behavior	Uncommon Behavior
<b>Preschool Age 0-5 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will have questions and express knowledge relating to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Differences in gender and genitalia</li> <li>- Hygiene and toileting</li> <li>- Pregnancy and birth</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Will explore genitals</li> <li>• Showing and looking at genitals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having knowledge of specific sexual acts or explicit sexual language</li> <li>• Engaging in adult-like sexual contact with another child</li> </ul>
<b>School Age 6-8 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will have questions and express knowledge relating to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical development, relationships, and sexual behavior</li> <li>- Menstruation and pregnancy</li> <li>- Personal values</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Experiment with same-age and gender children including games and role-playing</li> <li>• Self-stimulation in private</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult-like sexual interactions</li> <li>• Having knowledge of specific sexual acts</li> <li>• Behaving sexually in public place or through the use of a phone or technology</li> </ul>
<b>School Age 9-12 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will have questions and express knowledge relating to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sexual materials and information</li> <li>- Relationships and sexual behavior</li> <li>- Using sexual words and discussing sexual acts and personal values</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increased experimentation with sexual behaviors and romantic relationships</li> <li>• Self-stimulation in private</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly occurring adult-like sexual behavior</li> <li>• Behaving sexually in a public place</li> </ul>
<b>Adolescence 13-16 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will have questions and express knowledge relating to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decision making</li> <li>- Social relationships and sexual customs</li> <li>- Personal values and consequences of sexual behavior</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Self-stimulation in private</li> <li>• Sexual experimentation between adolescents of the same age</li> <li>• Voyeuristic behaviors are common</li> <li>• First sexual intercourse will occur for approximately one third of teens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Masturbation in public</li> <li>• Sexual interest directed toward much younger children</li> </ul>

source: www.StopItNow.org