



Thorpe Acre Junior School



Thorpe Acre Infant School

Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Approved by : Governing Body
Date : May 2026
Review : May 2027

Learning, Working and Succeeding Together
Reaching High, Learning and Growing Together

Safeguarding Statement

At Thorpe Acre Junior School and Thorpe Acre Infant School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to, deliver services at Thorpe Acre Junior School and Thorpe Acre Infant School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

GDPR Statement

Data will be processed to be in line with our requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Equality Impact Statement

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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1. Purpose of policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clarity on what is meant by child-on-child abuse, in all its forms.
- Understand the culture within our setting.
- Evidence how all staff support the children in our setting.
- Give children confidence that they will be supported and informed.
- Give parents/carers the assurance that staff know how to deal with this abuse.
- Evidence how our safeguarding staff handle reports/concerns/disclosures.
- Inform of the post incident management process/ongoing support/safety planning.

In addition to this policy, we have other policies that support this and that should be ready in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Online Safety

2. Our Staff

All staff at Thorpe Acre Infant School and Thorpe Acre Junior School:

- Recognise the increasing national concern regarding this issue.
- Are aware of the level and nature of risk that our pupils are, or may be, exposed to.
- Understand the important role that they play in the culture of vigilance
- Recognise child-on-child abuse of all types.
- Are confident and competent in responding promptly and appropriately with timely challenge of the attitudes and behaviours of child-on-child abuse (both inside and outside the classroom).
- Listen to children, capture their voice, and help to create a culture in which our children feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgemental environment.
- Will not downplay behaviours and dismiss them as 'just banter', 'having a laugh', or 'part of growing up'.
- Understand that by dismissing unacceptable behaviours it can lead to an unsafe environment for children and, in worse case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not having the confidence to come forward, speak out and report what has happened to them.
- Report and record their concerns following our safeguarding referral processes.
- Understand that even if there are no reports of this type of abuse, that it 'does happen here'.
- Are committed to a whole setting, whole staff approach, to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our setting and beyond.
- Recognise and understand that children who harm others, may have additional or complex needs of their own, e.g. significant disruption in their

own lives, domestic abuse, under-achievement and possibly an involvement in criminal activity and therefore they too will need support.

- Encourage parents to communicate with us so that we can work together to ensure and enable a prompt and appropriate response to any type of child-on-child abuse.
- Know that putting a stop to child-on-child abuse of any type and ensuring the safety of our children is a priority in our schools.
- Regard the introduction of this policy as a positive, proactive, and preventative measure.

At Thorpe Acre Infant School and Thorpe Acre Junior School, we work hard to create a culture where child-on-child abuse does not happen. We strive to create an ethos of mutually respectful behaviour. However, if this type of abuse is seen, heard or reported, all staff are confident in their actions and subsequent support.

3. Our children

All children are at risk of child-on-child abuse, but some groups are more vulnerable than others to abuse, and include the following:

- A child with SEND
- A child living with domestic abuse in the home
- A child who is at risk of/suffering significant harm
- A child who is at risk of CCE (Child Criminal Exploitation)
- A child who is CME (Child Missing Education)
- A child who is at risk of CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation)
- A looked after child
- A child who goes missing from school/home
- Children who identify as, or are perceived, as LGBT+

The fact that a child may be LGBT+ is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm. However, children who are LGBT+ can be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child who is perceived by other children to be LGBT+ (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT+. These risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT+ 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 these children to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

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

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

At Thorpe Acre Infant School and Thorpe Acre Junior School, we encourage our children to talk to us and tell us when they are worried and what they are worried about, be it about themselves or another child. We are confident that our children know:

- Who to speak to and/or where to go for support.
- They will be listened to, taken seriously and not dismissed.
- They will receive the right help at the right time.
- They will receive ongoing support.
- They will be supported to feel safe in school.
- They will be supported to continue to access their education.

We will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. Victims will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. We will ensure that we explain that the law is in place to protect children rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way that avoids them causing alarm or distress.

We also inform our children that there are other ways to report abuse if they are worried about themselves or other children and for whatever reason they don't feel that they can speak to staff in school. For example:

- NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000

We aim to educate children at an age-appropriate level/developmental stage, against abuse and harmful sexual behaviours. We will do this through our curriculum and assemblies, which open up topics such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships, including consent.
- What respectful behaviour looks like.
- Gender roles, stereotyping, equality, prejudiced behaviour.
- Body confidence and self-esteem.

4. Child-on-child abuse – What is it?

Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse which uses coercion, power and/or control by an individual child, or group or children, and is exercised between children and within their relationships.

All staff in our settings recognise that children can abuse their peers and are aware of the different forms that these safeguarding issues can take:

- Bullying – repeated behaviour which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise, causing physical harm)
- Online/Cyber bullying
- Prejudiced related bullying
- Sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexually harmful behaviour
- Sexting – sharing of nude or indecent imagery
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

- Hate crime
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Gang association and serious violence – County Lines
- Radicalisation.

This abuse can be motivated by perceived differences, e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences and result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation, and/or violence to the victim.

We will record all instances of child-on-child abuse and inform parents/carers of such incidents.

Bullying is “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power which can happen face to face or online.” At Thorpe Acre Infant School and Thorpe Acre Junior School, staff and children define bullying as something that happens:

Several
Times
On
Purpose

Using this definition helps children to understand the seriousness of bullying compared to other unacceptable forms of behaviour, or falling out with friends.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are ultimately responsible for deciding whether the behaviour is persistent enough to qualify the behaviour as ‘bullying’. We therefore believe it is important to review and maintain records to be able to identify the extent of the perpetrator’s behaviour and whether the frequency can be defined as ‘several times’.

Bullying, whether verbal, physical, cyber or psychological, is not tolerated. It is everyone’s responsibility to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Whilst the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher share lead responsibility in dealing with bullying behaviours, incidents may be brought to the attention of any member of staff by the children themselves, their friends, their parents or carers.

Any behaviour that may need to be handled with sanctions, will be in line with our Behaviour policy.

Online bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, email, chat rooms etc) to harass, threaten or intimidate someone, e.g.:

- Sending abusive or threatening texts, emails, or messages.
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites.
- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else.
- Stealing someone's online identity.
- Spreading rumours online.
- Trolling – sending menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chat rooms or games.
- Developing hate sites about another person.
- Making prank calls or messages.
- Being involved in group bullying or exclusion online.
- Sending anonymous messages.
- Encouraging a person to self-harm.
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations.

N.B. THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE

Prejudiced 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, e.g. special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), 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.

Sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexually harmful behaviour (SHB) can occur between two children of any age or sex or with groups of children by sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

We recognise that this behaviour can take place in a school or any setting where pupils are together and that the impact of this behaviour on children can be extremely distressing, impacting on their emotional health and wellbeing as well as affecting their academic achievement.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment **MUST** be referred **IMMEDIATELY** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who in our schools, is the Headteacher.

Sexual violence – for this policy, we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

- Rape A: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if; he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

- Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual harassment – for this policy we mean ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. We refer to this in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child’s dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. Sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual ‘jokes’ or taunting.
- Physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone’s clothes and displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- Online sexual harassment, which might include non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos and sharing sexual images and videos (both often referred to as sexting); sexualised online bullying and inappropriate sexual comments on social media; exploitation; coercion and threats. Online sexual harassment may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

N.B. THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) In this policy, we recognise the importance of distinguishing between healthy, problematic and harmful sexual behaviour.

Harmful sexually 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 harmful sexual behaviour, and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as to the young person it is intended towards. It may include:

- Inappropriate sexual language
- Inappropriate role play
- Sexual touching
- Sexual assault/abuse

Consent is when someone agrees by choice and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. It is important to note that:

- 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.

Sexting – the sharing of nude or indecent imagery (youth produced sexual imagery) The term ‘sexting’ relates to the sending of indecent images, videos and/or written messages with sexually explicit content; these are created and sent electronically. They are often ‘shared’ via social networking sites and instant messaging services. These images may have been because of up-skirting.

Initiation/Hazing Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a sports team, etc. There are several different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which 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.

Hate crime often happens because of race, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and disability. It can happen anywhere – home, school and in the community, and can be frightening for both victim and witnesses and is an offence. Hate crimes can include:

- Physical attacks – physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti, neighbour disputes and arson.
- Threat of attack – offensive letters or emails, abusive or obscene telephone calls, groups hanging around to intimidate, and malicious complaints.
- Verbal abuse or insults – harassment over the phone, by text, or face to face, abusive gestures, remarks, bullying and threats.

5. Indicators that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse

Indicators and signs that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include:

- Failing to attend school, disengaging from class, or struggling to carry out school related tasks to the standard ordinarily expected
- Physical injuries
- Experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing
- Becoming withdrawn and/or shy; experiencing headaches, stomach aches, anxiety or panic attacks; suffering from nightmares or lack of sleep or sleeping too much
- Broader changes in behaviour including alcohol or substance misuse
- Changes in appearance and/or starting to act in a way that is not appropriate for the child’s age
- Abusive behaviour towards others.

Abuse affects our children and their presenting behaviours in different ways and the list above is not exhaustive. Children who present with one or more of these signs are not necessarily victims of abuse and their behaviour will depend on their individual circumstances.

All staff are alert to behaviour that may cause concern and think about what the behaviour might signify. We actively encourage children to share with us any

underlying reasons for their behaviour and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents/carers so that the cause of their behaviour can be investigated and understood with the appropriate support in place.

6. Responding to a concern/incident/disclosure of child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse may occur in our school, on the way to or from school, or out in the community. Consideration will be given to many aspects of the abuse, e.g.:

- Does it involve a single incident, or has it occurred over time?
- Is the behaviour problematic and concerning?
- Does it involve any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination, e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability?
- Is there any element of coercion or pre-planning?
- Does it involve a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power?
- Has there been a misuse of power?

N.B. THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE

It is also important that we:

- Ascertain if there were any witnesses to the abuse
- Make notes and record all conversations with children spoken to as well as parents/carers/other professionals, including any actions taken
- Treat all children involved as being at potential risk – while the child allegedly responsible for the abuse may pose a significant risk of harm to other children, s/he may also have considerable unmet needs and be at risk of harm themselves
- Ensure that a safeguarding response is in place for both victim and alleged perpetrator.

Consideration should also be given to supporting children who have witnessed child-on-child abuse of any kind. This is likely to be traumatic and support may be required. We will signpost to agencies and support services available, where needed.

We will do all that we can to ensure both the victim and alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed following this. Social media is likely to play a part in the fallout from any incident and friends from either side could well harass the victim or alleged perpetrator online, as well as face-to-face. Any evidence we have of pupils using social media inappropriately will be sanctioned in accordance with our existing policies.

Responding to all reports and concern of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment between children

We have covered in Point 6, what we do when responding to child-on-child abuse concerns/disclosures, and these apply to sexual violence and sexual harassment between children's disclosures; however, we recognise the complexity and challenges that we face following the report of this particular type of abuse.

Guidance is clear in that it does not attempt to provide (nor would it be possible to provide) detailed advice on what we should do in any or every particular case; it provides effective safeguarding practice and principles for us to consider in our decision-making process and on a case-by-case basis.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies (DDSLs) will take the lead role when dealing with this type of abuse using their professional judgement and working together practices. Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure and it is important to maintain a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports.

We understand that it is not easy for children to tell us about this type of abuse, and they may struggle to make a direct verbal report. Therefore, observations of changes in presenting behaviours, is key (see Point 5 above).

We understand the importance of our initial response to a report and how this can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment. The culture in our setting is key to this.

On occasions, the victim may not wish for their identity to be known and there are no easy or definitive answers when this is requested. If the victim does not give consent to share information, we may still lawfully share it, if it can be justified to be in the public interest, e.g. to protect children from harm and to promote the welfare of children.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the following:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
- The victim should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions. Regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered – we will balance this aspect and the need to balance our duty and responsibility to protect other children.
- The nature of the alleged incident(s) including whether a crime has been committed and consideration of any display of harmful sexual behaviour.
- The ages of the pupils involved.
- The developmental stages of the pupils involved.
- Any power imbalance between the pupils (e.g. Is the alleged perpetrator significantly older? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?).
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (the sustained pattern of abuse may not just be of a sexual nature).
- That sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children.
- Whether there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children, or staff.
- Other related issues and the wider context, including links to any forms of child exploitation.

When we talk about Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children, we will refer to 'victim' and 'alleged perpetrator'. This does not mean that we are taking

sides nor making any judgement, but for the purpose of this policy, we will refer to children involved, in this way.

Victim

When we speak to the 'victim', we will:

- Listen and take any disclosure seriously
- Never make them feel that they are creating a problem or should be ashamed
- Reassure them
- Handle the situation with sensitivity
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the child
- Ask open questions and not lead the victim
- Ascertain where the abuse occurred as this may highlight 'hot spots' or vulnerable locations in our schools, or within the community, which may need to be revisited by either ourselves (in school), or by alerting police/partners, if it is in the community
- Ascertain if other children witnessed this abuse
- Consider ongoing support within our schools
- Consider any referrals for external support.

Parents or carers of the victim will be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk). Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes and the DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children within the schools. If a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police is made against the victim's wishes, this will be handled carefully, the reasons will, in most cases, be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support offered.

We will provide all the necessary support for the victim to remain in school; however, if the trauma results in the victim being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another school will be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitable education. This will only be at the request of the victim and following discussion with their parents or carers.

Alleged perpetrator

When we speak to the 'alleged perpetrator', we will:

- Listen to what they say and not dismiss their account
- Handle the situation with sensitivity and a non-judgemental approach
- Offer ongoing support
- Record all conversations and all action taken
- Consider any referrals for external support

When to inform the alleged perpetrator will be a decision that will be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then we may speak to the relevant agency, discuss next steps and decide how the alleged perpetrator will be informed of the allegations.

There are four likely scenarios we will consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:

- 1) **Manage internally:** In some cases of sexual harassment (for example, one-off incidents), we may take the view that the pupils concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, using our own sanctions in line with our behaviour policy and by providing pastoral intervention and support.
- 2) **Early Help:** We may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as the problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. This will help to evidence the support that we have given, the work undertaken and if desired outcomes have been achieved.
- 3) **Referral to the police:** see Point 7 below
- 4) **Referral to social care:** see Point 8 below

7. Reporting to the police

At Thorpe Acre Infant School and Thorpe Acre Junior School, we understand our responsibilities to call the police and report forms of child-on-child abuse. This does not mean that we are looking to criminalise children, and this may not always be necessary.

The guidance that we follow is:

[When to call the police - guidance for schools and colleges](#)

In any form of child-on-child abuse where it is believed that an offence has been committed, a report may be made to the police.

Where a report has been made to the police, we will consult with the police and agree what information is appropriate to disclose to staff and others, in particular, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. We will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

This may also include the development of a clear and robust safety and support plan, as part of this early help process. Risk assessing and safety planning is a key aspect of all child-on-child abuse (see Point 11 below).

With regard to sexual violence between children, where there is a report of a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the starting point is that this should be passed to the police who will advise and log according to their own guidelines.

8. Referring to Social Care: advice and support

In all cases of child-on-child abuse, but in particular with sexual violence and sexual harassment, consideration will be given to the reporting of the matter to Children's Social Care via Leicestershire's First Response service. In making this decision, we must consider whether a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.

In some cases, children's social care will review the evidence and decide that a statutory intervention is not appropriate, and in these circumstances, we will consider other support mechanisms, such as Early Help, specialist support, referrals and pastoral support within a formalised plan.

However, if the DSL/DDSL feels that the child remains in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, they may refer again. The threshold document will help support our decision making.

[Leicestershire and Rutland Threshold document](#)

At this referral stage, we will inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision will be made with the support of children's social care.

If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved need protection or other services.

Where statutory assessments are appropriate, we will work alongside, and cooperate with, social services. This collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children requiring support.

We will not wait for the outcome, or even the start of children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school. It will be important for us to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions we take do not jeopardise a statutory investigation.

9. Working with parents and carers

At Thorpe Acre Infant School and Thorpe Acre Junior School, we will, in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of child-on-child abuse including sexual violence or sexual harassment. The exception to this rule, is if there is a reason to believe that informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

We will carefully consider what information is provided to the respective parents or carers about other children involved, and when to do so.

In some cases, children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view on this aspect, and it will be important for us to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

It should be the case that we will meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present, to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim. This will enable all parties to understand wishes, in terms of support and how the report will be progressed (see Point 11).

It is also likely that we will meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact the alleged perpetrator, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education.

We will be clear and transparent and explain the reason behind any decisions. Support for the alleged perpetrator will be discussed, including any referrals, if appropriate.

We realise that parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been the victim of an assault or is alleged to have assaulted another child. Details of organisations that support parents are at the end of this policy.

10. Sanctions

We will decide appropriate sanctions on a case-by-case basis in line with our behaviour policy and any graduated response required. It may be that other children in our setting start to 'take sides' and become involved and may behave in ways that cause upset and distress to other children.

We will take their behaviour seriously and again use a graduated response to this, whilst also educating them to the importance of resolving any conflict in a respectful and restorative way.

If there is police involvement, we will work closely with them to ensure that any disciplinary action taken by us, as a result of the incident, does not jeopardise the police investigation.

11. Post incident management

It is vital that all children involved in child-on-child abuse are given appropriate and ongoing support for as long as it is required/needed. This may include referrals to other agencies/professionals outside our settings and this decision will be made in conjunction with the children, their parents/carers, and other professionals.

If other professionals are involved, we will liaise with those colleagues to ensure that we are working together and understand one another's role in this support. There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. However, we will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator, and other children in the school and moving forward with our post incident management.

Support planning is vital, and it is imperative that following any incident, the children involved continue to feel supported and receive help, even if they tell us that they are coping and managing. Sometimes feelings of embarrassment, remorse, regrets or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage. We will do our best to

ensure children do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves, as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). For this reason, regular reviews with the children following the incident(s), will happen as part of this plan.

Referrals may have already happened as mentioned previously in this policy, but it is important to establish which professionals continue to work with all children involved in this process and this is helped with robust planning.

Safety planning/Risk assessment is integral to post incident management. It needs to be robust and is an invaluable and necessary process. It is one of our key priorities as part of the post incident management. When looking at this process, consideration should be given to the following:

- If this is an ongoing police investigation, we will ask the police if we have any questions about the progress of the matter and if there are any updates. Where required, advice from the police will be sought to help us manage our safeguarding responsibilities. We will work with children's social care and the police to manage any implications and to safeguard our children.
- The importance in ensuring that the victim can continue in their normal routine, including continuing to receive a suitable education.
- The importance of the alleged perpetrator in continuing to access education and support.
- Whether the victim and alleged perpetrator share classes.
- What measures need to be put in place when children move between lessons/classes.
- What measures need to be put in place for unstructured times (break and lunchtimes).
- What measures need to be put in place for the arrival at the start of the school day and leaving at the end of the school day.
- Whether the victim and alleged perpetrator travel to and from school using the same form of transport.
- Appropriate information sharing with staff in our setting, in order that the plan is manageable and as successful as possible.
- If it is the case that the alleged perpetrator is moved to another educational setting, then we will ensure that the new educational setting is made aware of any ongoing support needs.

In all cases, we will record our decision making together and with the rationale behind those decisions. All the above will be considered with the needs and wishes of the victim at the heart of all we do as part of this process (supported by parents and carers as required). Our safety plan/risk assessment will be kept under review.

Appendix A – Parental Help

The following links are just a few examples of organisations that support parents, carers, and children:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/>

<https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/services-for-survivors.htm>

Appendix B – Risk Assessment, Basic Information

Referrer name and role	
Refer contact details	
Name of school(s) for victim(s)	
Name of school(s) for child/ren alleged to have caused harm	
Did the incident occur on school premises? If not, where did the incident occur?	
Date for risk assessment review	

Considerations	Risk (consider victim, child alleged to have caused harm, other pupils and staff)	Risk Level (high, medium or low)	Actions	Revised Risk Level (high, medium or low)
What is the incident? Who was involved? Where did it happen?				
Does this incident constitute a crime? Assault, sexual assault, sharing of indecent images, etc. As such, has this been referred to the police?				
Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSiE and DfE guidance on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools.				
Is there an actual or perceived threat from the child alleged to have caused harm to the victim and/or others?				

Is either the victim or the child alleged to have caused harm, at risk of physical harm because of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by others)?				
Do they share child/friendships groups? Do they share any classes/lessons? Do they share break times?				
Do they share transport to/from school?				
Are they likely to meet each other (or someone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school?				
How can this contact be limited?				
Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?				

Further action taken by the school. Please complete for each child involved:

Action	Yes/No	Date
Police informed		
Referral to social services		
Referral to external support (Early Help etc)		
Referral to internal support		
Referral to CAMHS		
Other		