Anti-Bullying and Child on Child Abuse Policy

St Aidan's CE Academy

Updated: November 2025
Review Date: November 2026

Anti-Bullying and Child on Child Abuse Policy

Introduction

Our school will provide a secure and caring community where everyone can learn their own self-worth in an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect and co-operation.

School will be a happy and enjoyable place to work, which will provide the opportunity for every child and adult to fulfil their potential.

We encourage children to become confident, independent learners who are able to contribute positively to the school and community in which they live so they can thrive as individuals, whilst respecting the needs and values of others.

Rationale for this policy

We recognise the need to ensure that all children in our school do not become bullies or victims of any form of child-on-child abuse. It is the school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils in our care. (Education Act 2002). We endeavour to prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence) and to always deal with incidents if they occur. (Education and Inspections Act 2006). We accept our duty to protect pupils, parents and staff in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

Aims and Objectives

- To provide a learning environment free from threat or fear, which is conducive to the achievement of individual aspirations
- To reduce and eradicate instances in which pupils are made to feel frightened, excluded or unhappy
- To reduce and eradicate instances in which pupils are subject to any form of child-on-child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence)
- To respond promptly and effectively to all instances of child-on-child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence)
- To establish a means of dealing with bullying, or child on child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence)
- To provide support to pupils, as well as parents of pupils, who have been victims of child-on-child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence)
- To provide support for pupils as well as parents of pupils who are accused of child-on-child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence) who may be experiencing problems of their own
- To ensure that all pupils and staff are aware of the policy and procedures are followed consistently across school
- To meet any legal obligations which rest with school

At St Aidan's Academy we are committed to providing a friendly, positive and secure learning environment. Child on child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence) of any kind is unacceptable, whether it involves pupils, parents or staff. We recognise the effects that such actions can have on an individual's feelings of worth and on their schoolwork. The school community will actively promote an environment in which incidents of child-on-child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence) are dealt with in a proportionate, considered, supportive manner.

Definition of Child-on-Child Abuse

Child on child abuse (including bullying, sexual harassment or sexual violence) involves dominance of one person by another, or group of others. It is pre-meditated and usually forms a pattern of behaviour.

DCSF, 2007 defines bullying as '*Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.*'

KCSIE document 2021 defines child on child abuse

'*to most likely to include, but may not be limited to:*

- *bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)*
- *abuse in intimate personal relationships between childs*
- *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, 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 nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)*
- *upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm*
- *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). '*

At St Aidan's CE Academy, we believe bullying, or child-on-child abuse is:

- Deliberately hurtful, mentally and physically
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- The bully gaining some sort of power over the victim
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves
- Using sexually inappropriate language or actions towards others, in a manner which can make the victim feel intimidated, exploited or threatened. This includes on-line, physical and verbal behaviours.

Bullying, or child-on-child abuse can take many forms, but the main types are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking another's belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, sarcasm, excessive teasing, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – being unfriendly, spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, on-line, physical and verbal behaviours.
- Homophobic - focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Cyber – sending malicious emails, texts or comments on phones, emails and social networking sites to harass, threaten, torment or spread rumours

Some forms of child-on-child abuse are attacks not only on the individual, but also on the group which they may belong to. They can be linked to:

- Appearance
- Health
- Family and home circumstances
- Social class
- Race, religion, culture
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Homophobia, sexual orientation
- Gender

Signs and Symptoms of Child-on-child abuse

A student may indicate by signs of behaviour that they are being bullied. All adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child in school is displaying them.

Signs can include

- Frightened of walking to/from school
- Avoidance of specific areas around school such as: toilets, dinner hall, specific places in the playground/corridor and cloakroom areas.
- Unwillingness to come to school
- Withdrawn, anxious or lacking behaviours
- Other noticeable changes to character.
- Behaviour becomes more sexualised or anxious when changing for PE etc.

Preventing Child-on-Child Abuse

St Aidan's CE Academy's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school and create an environment where pupils behave well and take responsibility for each other's social and emotional well-being. We are committed to providing a caring atmosphere of trust and respect.

Our school's curriculum promotes appropriate social and learning behaviours. An understanding of bullying is taught through direct teaching in PSHCE lessons/JIGSAW and assemblies. We aim to create a climate where bullying is not acceptable by anyone within the school community.

The curriculum raises an awareness of child-on-child abuse, in a sensitive and considered manner in line with the age and understanding of the pupils in school. Using the JIGSAW program, PSHCE and RSE is taught using age-appropriate materials, resources and language meaning that children can develop their understanding as the move through school.

We teach the pupils how to constructively manage their relationships with others; increase understanding for victims and build an ethos in which any forms of child-on-child abuse are not accepted. Pupils take part in role plays, stories and circle time activities to learn how to prevent this.

Pupils are encouraged to talk to any member of staff in school if someone has been unkind or hurtful towards them.

We will regularly ask pupils if they feel safe in school and respond to their feedback.

In line with Ofsted research, we assume that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse can happen in our setting, even when there are no specific reports. For this reason, we have implemented a whole-school approach to address this, including:
- a carefully sequenced RSHE curriculum, based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance, that specifically includes sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online.

- high-quality training for teachers delivering RSHE
- routine record-keeping and analysis of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online, to identify patterns and intervene early to prevent abuse
- a behavioural approach, including sanctions when appropriate, to reinforce a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated
- support for designated safeguarding leads (DSLs)
- training to ensure that all staff (and governors, where relevant) are able to:
- better understand the definitions of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online sexual abuse
- identify early signs of child-on-child sexual abuse
- consistently uphold standards in their responses to sexual harassment and online sexual abuse

All staff are aware of policy and procedures for dealing with any forms of child-on-child abuse in school. They will receive reminders on spotting the signs of any child-on-child abuse, including update to changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KSIE). Staff access half termly on-line training units on specific aspects of Safeguarding linked with Child-on-Child abuse.

Dealing with Child-on-Child Abuse

All incidents of child-on-child abuse will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. In order to ensure that pupils feel that they can report these incidents, school's response will be proportionate, considered and supportive. We will use a range of co-operative and supportive strategies, selecting the most appropriate for the circumstances and nature of the incident.

In all cases of child-on-child abuse, the view of the victim will be considered and their wishes taken into consideration when reviewing the incident and deciding on sanctions. Ultimately the decision will lie with the headteacher and/or other appropriate bodies.

Early intervention with incidents is vital. All reports of child-on-child abuse will be addressed promptly, and the priority will be to support the victims and to stop the bullying. School will assess the seriousness of the incident and determine the action to be taken.

When parents and carers are concerned about an incident, they should speak to their child's class teacher in the first instance. They may also speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Responding to Incidents

When issues of child-on-child abuse are brought to the attention of staff, we will:

- Provide support to pupils who are bullied
- Give immediate reassurance that bullying is taken seriously and something will be done
- Report of bullying to be logged
- Incidents discussed with relevant staff so they can monitor
- Consequences may be applied in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy. These may include: removal from group work, withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Sessions for victims, bullies and bystanders will take place as appropriate. These may include: co-operative group work, circle time, circle of friends, befriending, mediation by adults
- A nominated member of staff will talk to the pupils regularly to check for any further problems
- In serious cases, parents will be informed and a meeting will be arranged. Parents will be informed in writing, about actions taken and risk reduction put in place.
- In some cases, outside agencies may be involved such as the school nurse, MAT CEO, LA safeguarding team.

- If the incident was sexual in nature, violent or an injury occurred, this will be logged in the Serious Incident Record. In some cases, it may be deemed appropriate to inform the police.
- In extreme cases, exclusion may be considered by the Headteacher.

In dealing with incidents of sexual harassment or violence sanctions put in place will be carefully considered, as the context of the incident will impact on how the incident is handled.

Consideration will be given to:

- The age and developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s)
- The nature and frequency of the alleged incident(s)
- The balance of the sanction alongside education and safeguarding concerns

'*Use exclusion from school only in the most severe cases, for example if the police recommend you exclude a pupil after an incident of sexual assault. If this happens and you still wish to keep the pupil in school, you'll need mitigations in place to protect other pupils, such as keeping that child in isolation.*' **paragraph 464 of KCSIE (2021).**

Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that school has not dealt with an incident of bullying satisfactorily and we ask that this be brought to the Headteacher's notice. If the Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents have the right to make a formal complaint through the school's Complaints Policy and contact the Chair of Governors.

We would also be pleased to receive feedback from parents when things have gone well.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and the recording of all bullying incidents.

It is the responsibility of the head teacher and school governors to monitor and review the implementation of this policy.

It is the responsibility of all staff and governors to ensure that this policy is implemented in line with expectations in school.

This policy is to be read alongside:

KCSIE (DFE guidance 2021)

Learning Accord Safeguarding policy

St Aidan's CE Academy Behaviour Policy

St Aidan's CE Academy Child Protection policy

Learning Accord Staff Conduct Policy

Learning Accord Online Safety Policy

St Aidan's CE Academy PSHE Policy