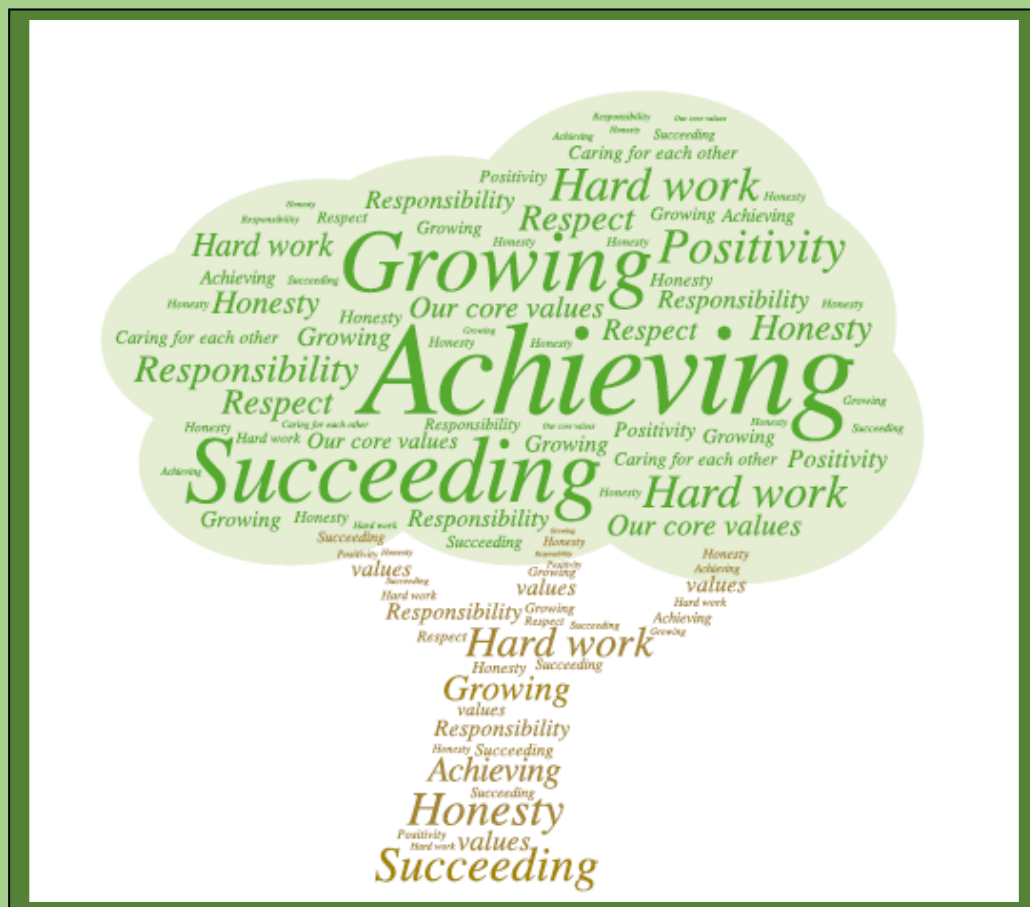


Park End Primary School



Approved By: *D Jackson*

Date: 15/11/22

Park End Primary School

Child on Child Abuse Policy and Procedure

Introduction

1. Park End Primary School encourages an open environment where children feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This is strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another.
2. At Park End Primary School we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour that does occur 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 well-being.
3. Children are vulnerable to abuse by other children. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
4. At Park End Primary we believe that abuse should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. All staff are aware that child on child abuse could happen here, at Park End Primary School. Any report of abuse will be taken seriously. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any form of violence or harassment. It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

Purpose of the Policy

5. This policy reflects the requirements of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (DfE 2022)' and the detailed advice within Part five of the document: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment .
6. In line with the recommendations of KCSiE (2022), this policy will include procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and detail how allegations of child on child abuse will be investigated and dealt with at Park End Primary School.
7. 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.

8. At Park End Primary School we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:
- Child Protection Policy
 - Anti-Bullying Policy (including Cyber Bullying)
 - Behaviour Policy
 - PSHE and RSE Policy
 - Equality Policy

Child-on-Child Abuse.

9. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:
- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
 - 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)
 - Abuse in intimate relationships between children
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
 - Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals, which 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.

Types of child on child abuse

Bullying (including Cyber bullying)

10. In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and be repeated over time. 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.
11. Cyber bullying 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.
12. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, section 1; which 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.

13. 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.

Prejudiced Behaviour

14. The term 'prejudice-related bullying' refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical, 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).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

15. At Park End Primary School we are aware that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage.
16. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Abuse can also take place within intimate relationships between children.
17. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from using inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role-play, to sexually touching another or sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault. Children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have often experienced their own abuse and trauma.
18. Park End Primary School has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never accepted and it will not be tolerated. All staff are aware it is especially important not to pass this off as 'banter' or as 'having a laugh'. Staff are aware that 'it could happen here.'

Prevention of child on child abuse

19. At Park End Primary school we provide Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) as part of the curriculum which helps pupils to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviours and healthy relationships
20. We have a behaviour policy that is followed by all members of staff in school. There are rewards and sanctions which are used consistently. These are designed to encourage positive relationships and prevent inappropriate behaviour.
21. Robust risk assessments (care plans) are devised for pupils identified as posing a potential risk to other pupils. These are devised in consultation with other professionals where required.
22. Specific and targeted work is delivered to pupils who are identified as being at risk as a victim or perpetrator of child on child abuse.
23. We are aware that children may not perceive themselves to be a victim of child on child abuse.

Responding to incidents of child on child abuse

24. Children are encouraged to report abuse to members of staff in school and are reassured that their concerns will be treated seriously. Staff are also trained to recognise changes in behaviour that may indicate that there is a concern.
25. If any member of staff believes any young person to be at risk of significant harm from a child or group of children, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (Mrs. L. Richardson) or a member of the safeguarding team (B.Kumar - Safeguarding Officer, N.Walker - Deputy Safeguarding Lead, K. Rennison – Deputy Safeguarding Lead) **immediately** and a safeguarding referral to social care will be made. Where a crime has been committed the police will also be involved.
26. The designated safeguarding lead will make an immediate risk and needs assessment to consider the protection and support of
 - the 'victim' of the abuse/harassment
 - the alleged perpetrator
 - all other children at school
27. In line with advice from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE 2022) the DSL will engage with children's social care and relevant professionals for advice and support once the following have been taken into account:
 - the nature of the alleged incident, including whether a crime has been committed
 - the ages of the children involved
 - the developmental stages of the children involved
 - any power imbalance between the children e.g. age/ability
 - if the alleged incident is a one-off incident or a sustained pattern of abuse
 - any ongoing risks to the victim, other children

- other related issues and wider context
 - the wishes of the victim in terms of how they proceed (balanced against the school's responsibility to protect other children)
28. Instances of sending nudes or semi nudes or cyber bullying will be immediately reported to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy designated safeguarding lead. An immediate referral to social services and, if applicable, the police, will be made if any of the following apply:
- there is any adult involvement
 - there is any coercion or blackmail
 - the images are extreme or violent
 - the child involved has already been identified as vulnerable or is under 13
 - there is an immediate risk of harm.

Gathering the facts

29. Any situation of child on child abuse will be dealt with immediately and sensitively. Information will be gathered as soon as possible after the incident to get the true facts before the child(ren) forget. The member of staff will be sensitive to the language they use and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Staff will not act in a prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible manner when dealing with such sensitive matters.
30. It is our policy to speak to all the young people involved in an allegation of child on child abuse separately to gain a statement of facts from them. The member of staff will ask the children to tell them what happened, only asking questions to gain clarity e.g. where did the incident happen, when etc. We will try to decipher whether this was a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another. At no time will the member of staff promise confidentiality, as with all disclosures.

Facts that we need to know:

The age of the children involved.

31. NB In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following)

Where the incident or incidents took place.

32. If the incident was in an open, visible place it may have been observed and more information can be gathered. If the incident did not take place in an open visible place then the school must consider if more supervision is required within this particular area.

The explanation that was given by all of the children involved about what occurred.

33. If all of the children give the same explanation of the incident we can have more faith in the account. If the versions differ we need to discover why. The effect of the incident may be different upon the different children involved.

The children's own understanding of what occurred.

34. It is important to be aware of what the children know about what they are doing, for example whether they know the names of body parts, about privacy and what it is inappropriate to touch. Also, whether the child knows the impact of their behaviour upon another.

Any instances of repetition

35. We need to find out if the behaviour has been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion and whether the behaviour has continued after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved.

Deciding on our next course of action

Informing social services

36. In consultation with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or member of the safeguarding team, contact will be made with social services to gain advice about future actions if this is felt to be necessary. They will advise whether or not to inform parents.

Informing parents

37. If services are not going to be involved then school will share information with parent and child together (depending on the child's age).

Next Steps

38. It is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

For the child who has been harmed

39. Support for the child who has been harmed depends on the individual young person. School can refer a child to counselling or one to one support via a mentor. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the child may need support in improving child groups/relationships with other children.
40. Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group, for example, a speaker on cyberbullying etc. Issues can be discussed in PHSE and RSE lessons.
41. If the child 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 child who has displayed harmful behaviour

42. In this circumstance it is important to find out why the child has behaved in such a way. It may be that the child is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases counselling may also be necessary or involvement of social services. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.
43. Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been provided, it is important that the child receives a consequence for their behaviour in line with our behaviour policy. Park End Primary School may also choose to exclude the child – externally or internally to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour (see behaviour policy)
44. Following a social services investigation, if one takes place, there may be a need for an individual risk assessment completed via a multi- agency 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 child and their parents.

After care

45. It is important that following the incident the children involved continue to feel supported and receive help. It is important to ensure that the child does 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 child following the incident(s) are important.

Relevant documentation

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (DfE)

<http://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/Managing-Sexting-Incidents/Sexting-Advice.aspx>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf