



Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Ratified by Governors: September 2026

Review: September 2027

1. Context, Scope and Definitions

It is essential that all our staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are abusive in nature. Minimising the impact of certain behaviours created an environment that is accepting of unsafe behaviours and invalidated the victims' experiences, which can stop them from receiving support and impact them throughout their life – for example, dismissing sexual harassment as humour, an inevitable part of growing up, or excused as child exploration can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children, and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children not coming forward to report it, or blaming themselves for what has happened (KCSIE 2026 – Part Five).

Herrick Primary School staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.

Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others.

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. KCSIE 2026 asks staff to understand harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) on a continuum, from behaviour that is developmentally expected through to behaviour that is highly abusive, so that responses are evidence-based and proportionate rather than treated as a single fixed category.

All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:

- bullying (including online bullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (including images that are AI-generated, digitally altered, or deepfakes); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences, e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences – KCSIE 2026 places particular emphasis on misogyny and misogynistic online content as a driver of sexual harassment, sexual violence and child-on-child abuse
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm
- Be indicative of concerns within the life of the child who perpetuates the behaviour, e.g. safeguarding concerns

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs, e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse, witnessing or suffering from abuse

- Educational under-achievement

2. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2026 states that:

‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with.’

It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard:

‘Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all systems and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.’

Child-on-child abuse is referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with peer-on-peer abuse necessitate separate policy guidance.

At Herrick Primary School 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 the impact on that individual child’s emotional and mental health and well-being. We also understand that as staff, we must recognise when we are unable to make decisions that are beyond our capacity, and will ensure that the appropriate or external body is informed when necessary, e.g. local Police, SEMH services etc.

All members of staff — not only those working directly with children — are expected to read and understand Part One in full, alongside the new quick-reference ‘Part One: Overview for All Staff’ document, so that everyone operates to the same safeguarding standard.

3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of child-on-child abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At Herrick Primary School, we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Anti-Bullying including Online Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Managing Allegations / Low Level Concern/Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Online Safety Policy, Statement and Procedures

4. Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principle of the Children’s Act (1989) that the child’s welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), which highlights that every assessment of a child ‘must be informed by the views of the child’ (WTTSC,

2018, 21). This is reiterated by Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) through ensuring procedures are in place in schools that emphasise the importance of the child's voice.

KCSIE 2026 also references a new statutory duty to share information, introduced by the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, which requires safeguarding organisations and practitioners to share information where it is relevant to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of a child. Staff should be confident to share information proportionately, on the basis of relevance and necessity, in order to safeguard children.

5. Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider:

- what abuse is and what it looks like
- how it can be managed
- what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual
- what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm

Abuse is abuse, even when a child is the perpetrator(s). Abuse should never be tolerated or mistaken as humour or 'a part of growing up'. It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

- Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Child-on-child abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse inflicted by adults and should be subjected to the same child protection procedures and dealt with the same severity.
- Children can abuse other children. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence, harassment and assault; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; the making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes; and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of websites, apps and technology – including generative AI – for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
- Staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime, including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator(s) is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have had considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be subjected to (or be at risk of) significant harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator(s) must address their needs along with any intervention strategy put in place.

6. Types of abuse

Herrick Primary School has a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse, sexual violence and harassment. It is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. 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.

6.1 Physical abuse

This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, 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 action or punishment to be undertaken.

6.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Refer to KCSIE 2026, Part Five, and Keeping children safe in education — GOV.UK.

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.

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 to the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may include:

- inappropriate sexual language
- inappropriate role play
- sexual touching or indecent exposure
- sexual assault/abuse

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as humour, “part of growing up”, or “just having a laugh”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as physical assault. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising these behaviours
- Upskirting: where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and/or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear), to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone, of any gender, can be a victim.

KCSIE 2026 strengthens the guidance on misogyny, recognising the growing prevalence of misogynistic content online and the impact this can have on attitudes, sexual harassment, sexual violence and child-on-child abuse. Staff should challenge misogynistic language and attitudes wherever they arise, and consider whether the curriculum, behaviour policy and reporting procedures adequately address these issues.

6.3 Bullying

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 as bullying, the behaviour must be sought to harm, intimidate or coerce and includes:

- 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 enacted by a group of people towards a specific person is considered bullying even if each individual within the group acted only 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, religion, and may exclude someone from a group on purpose. Staff must be aware that bullying and discrimination against someone who has a protected characteristic is against the law (The Equality Act, 2010), and any discrimination or harassment founded on protected characteristics must be dealt with seriously and effectively.

6.4 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, e-mail, chat rooms etc.) to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

Cyberbullying can take many forms:

- Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites
- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else — including AI-generated or digitally altered images
- Stealing someone's online identity or gaining access to someone's accounts to send messages
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling — sending someone menacing or upsetting messages in chatrooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm, or inflict harm upon others
- Pressuring children to send nude or semi-nude images, or engaging in sexual conversations
- Doxxing — when someone finds someone's personal information and can use it as blackmail

Parents and staff must be aware that there are many different forms of social media that are popular with young children; this can include online chat functions available on video games (i.e. XBOX Live), and that these online chat functions can leave children vulnerable to harassment and bullying from strangers.

6.5 Sharing nudes and semi-nudes

KCSIE 2026 and current NSPCC guidance replace the terms 'sexting' and 'indecent images' with 'nudes and semi-nudes'. This refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos and/or messages with sexually explicit content by a young person under the age of 18. This may include images taken by the young person or someone else, and now expressly includes digitally-altered images, including AI-generated or AI-modified ('nudified') images and deepfakes. These are often created and shared electronically and may be 'shared' via social networking sites and instant messaging services.

The making or sharing of nudes and semi-nudes by school aged pupils is always illegal. Even if the content was created by a child, both the child who created the images and the person who

received them can be investigated. Non-consensual creation and sharing of explicit images, especially where the person depicted is being victimised, is always illegal.

The NSPCC states: It's a criminal offence to create or share nude or semi-nude images of a child, even if the person doing it is a child themselves. If this is reported to the police, they will make a record but may decide not to take any formal action against a young person.

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will follow the UKCIS: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes guidance for education settings (formerly 'Sexting in schools and colleges').

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-how-to-respond-to-an-incident-overview>

6.6 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 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.

6.7 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. For example, 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.

Misogynistic and gender-based discrimination should also be reported on. It should not be mistaken as a 'cultural view'. Misogyny and gender-based discrimination can lead to and perpetuate gender-based violence. Behaviour should be stopped and views should be challenged at the earliest sign of an issue, in line with KCSIE 2026's strengthened focus on misogyny as a driver of harmful sexual behaviour.

See 6.3 for bullying related to people with protected characteristics, and the school's Anti-Racist Policy (Appendix 2) for racist and religiously-motivated incidents.

7. Expected staff action

Staff should consider the seriousness of the case and make a quick decision whether to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately before taking any further in-school actions. It is best practice to inform the DSL of any allegation in relation to this policy as they may have more information or background knowledge that would increase the severity of the allegation in question.

Staff should clarify the following:

- Victims should be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. They should not be given the impression that they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for making a report

- All staff should be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect for specific safeguarding issues such as child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation
- Staff should be vigilant, as multiple safeguarding issues will overlap one another

Staff must be aware of the following:

- Be aware of the risk factors that increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence
- Staff must recognise that peer-on-peer abuse may be happening without it being reported, so sensitivity must be taken when it is to promote future reporting of abuse
- Do not wait for a child to make a disclosure if you have concerns. You may overhear a conversation that is concerning between children; this is grounds to make a report to the DSL
- If you have been made aware of abuse that has taken place outside of school, it is your duty and responsibility to make the DSL aware

8. Recognising peer abuse

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed by the DSL and consider:

- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery
- The effect on the victim
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get accurate statements and uncover the truth. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. This includes verbal and non-verbal communication, which includes but is not limited to: facial expressions, tone of voice and hand gestures. Avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

It is important to consider that if this is the first report a child has made, it is not necessarily the first instance of abuse. The physiological impact abuse has on children can also affect memory; children may be unable to remember specific times, dates or what happened before or after the incident. Highly stressful situations also impact memory and recall of incidences, and staff should be aware of this when documenting a report.

In cases of child-on-child sexual violence and harassment, it is important to remember that girls are more likely to be victims and boys are more likely to be perpetrator(s). There is still a possibility for girls to be perpetrator(s) and boys to be victims, and judgement on whether or not child-on-child sexual violence and harassment has occurred should not be indicative of the gender of the victim or perpetrator(s).

Staff will talk to the children in a calm and consistent manner. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters. In instances where a child has a disability, it is beneficial for their 1:1 support to be present during any conversation.

Written records must be kept of all conversations. This can include transcripts of recordings where deemed necessary or requested by the victim or parents.

8.1 Taking action

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator(s)
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting
- Record all incidents and all action taken
- Keep in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to recording incidences because of a child's vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. Some characteristics that are not visible may not have been disclosed to the school.

8.2 Recording sexualised behaviour

- Be clear, explicit and non-avoidant, and avoid vague statements or euphemisms
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the child. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.
- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around

KCSIE 2026 confirms that staff can ask children outright if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was. Sensitivity must be taken when asking children, and the language used must be thought through to avoid unnecessary harm, perception of blame, and must not be accusatory.

8.3 Gather the facts

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use consistent language and open questions for each account. Ask the young people to tell you what happened. Use open questions: 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not interrogate or ask leading questions.

It is best to keep children involved separated so they are not influenced or coached to change their statements. It is also important to keep victims and alleged perpetrators apart during and after investigations, both during school and in after school activities, i.e. clubs.

8.4 Consider the intent

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

8.5 Decide on your next course of action

If you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately; they will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and protective strategies if the young person feels at risk.

If Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) and the police intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

8.6 Informing parents/carers

The best way to inform parents/carers is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents/carers whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident, the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent/carer (they may be scared to tell parents/carers that they are being harmed in any way).

9. Points to consider

9.1 What is the age of the children involved?

This includes developmental age and understanding when working with SEND children. How old are the children involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved?

In relation to sexual exploration, touching or inappropriate behaviour, children under the age of 5 may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. Children at these stages are taught about privacy and respect for others in a way that is age appropriate, so any instances relating to this must not be overlooked.

9.2 Where did the incident or incidents take place?

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

9.3 What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident? What is the effect on the young people involved? If the incident follows the definition of bullying, has it happened before? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

9.4 What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g., do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

9.5 Repetition

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way, it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been dealt with and appropriately resolved? Does it warrant further investigation or has it increased in severity over time?

10. Next steps

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse and inappropriate behaviour do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

10.1 For the young person who has been harmed

What support they require depends on the individual needs of the young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor, with the support of family or 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 concern bullying, 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 online bullying, relationship abuse etc.

If many instances of the same behaviours occur within a class, year group or key stage, the school must look at implementing a whole class/year/key stage approach to tackle the behaviour and to give support for individuals who have been victimised by this behaviour.

It is imperative that members of staff recognise when the support that is necessary for a child goes further than they are qualified to give, and thus must contact the appropriate organisations in order to support the child.

For victims of child-on-child abuse, and child-on-child sexual violence and harassment, victims will likely find the experience distressing and it is likely to have an impact on their education.

10.2 For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

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 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 for the child to receive 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 case 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, 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 elsewhere.

It may be that 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 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 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 suspension or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion, for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

In cases where children have perpetrated sexually inappropriate or explicit behaviour that is beyond their scope of understanding, e.g. words or phrases they do not understand the

meaning of, it is imperative for DSLs to contact appropriate agencies, as this can be a sign of sexual abuse in the child enacting these behaviours. The NHS lists the following as a sign of child sexual abuse and exploitation:

'Sexually inappropriate behaviour – children who have been abused may behave in sexually explicit ways or use sexually explicit language.'

10.3 After care

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue 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). For this reason, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

If further instances occur following this, the impact on the child must be viewed in light of previous victimisation or perpetration when looking at next steps for all children involved.

In response to sexual harassment and abuse, the DSL should also consider the likelihood incidences have happened before without being reported and should consider if there are other victims. The DSL must also balance the victim's wishes with their need to safeguard the child, e.g. you cannot promise a child that it will be a secret, but if a child is explicit that they do not want an apology from the perpetrator(s) or wish that they leave them alone in future, this can be accommodated.

The outcome of all investigations should inform how we, as a school, proceed with allegations and reports. All policies are subject to change at any time as an outcome of an investigation, allegation or report.

11. Preventative Strategies

Child-on-child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most robust policies and support processes. It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent peer on peer abuse.

PSHE and RSHE are cornerstones for preventative strategies, as making children aware of themselves and what is and is not acceptable is imperative to safeguarding. If a child does not know or understand that something is wrong, they are less likely to report it.

This school has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. There is a strong and positive PSHE/RSHE curriculum that tackles issues such 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. The school makes sure that 'support and report' signposting is available to young people.

Staff will not dismiss issues as humour or 'growing up' or compare a child's experiences to their own experiences of childhood. Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. It is important for staff to understand that new laws and regulations are written to protect children, and attitudes towards education changes as more research comes forward. It is important to follow the guidelines and to adjust attitudes accordingly for the safety and protection of all children.

Children and young people are part of changing their circumstances and, through school council and pupil voice for example, we encourage young people to support changes and

develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. We involve pupils in the positive ethos in school; one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

12. Where to go for further information

Online safety advice

- Childnet — provide guidance for schools on cyberbullying
- Educate Against Hate — provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation
- London Grid for Learning — provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements
- NSPCC E-safety for schools — provides advice, templates, and tools on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements
- Safer Recruitment Consortium — 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice', which may help ensure staff behaviour policies are robust and effective
- South West Grid for Learning — provides advice on all aspects of a school or college's online safety arrangements
- Use of social media for online radicalisation — a briefing note for schools on how social media is used to encourage travel to conflict zones
- Online Safety Audit Tool from UK Council for Internet Safety — to help mentors of trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers induct, mentor and provide ongoing support and monitoring
- DCMS advice — online safety guidance if you own or manage an online platform
- UK Safer Internet Centre — tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online
- Guidance on remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

Radicalisation

- Prevent duty guidance — Home Office guidance
- Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers — DfE advice
- Educate Against Hate website — DfE and Home Office advice
- Prevent for FE and Training — Education and Training Foundation (ETF)
- Extremism and Radicalisation Safeguarding Resources — resources by London Grid for Learning

Sexual violence and harassment

- Barnardo's — UK charity caring for and supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people through their range of services
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation — UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to preventing child sexual abuse, working with affected families, and running the confidential Stop It Now! Helpline
- Marie Collins Foundation — works directly with children, young people and families to enable recovery following (technology-assisted) sexual abuse
- NSPCC — children's charity specialising in child protection, with statutory powers enabling them to take action and safeguard children at risk of abuse
- Rape Crisis — national charity and umbrella body for their network of independent member Rape Crisis Centres
- UK Safer Internet Centre — advice and support to children, young people, parents, carers and schools about staying safe online

Harmful sexual behaviour

- Rape Crisis (England & Wales) or The Survivors Trust — information, advice, and details of local specialist sexual violence organisations
- NICE guidance — developing interventions, working with families and carers, and multi-agency working
- HSB Toolkit, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation — designed for parents and professionals to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. Includes information, resources, and practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour
- NSPCC Learning — protecting children from harmful sexual behaviour, free and independent advice about HSB
- Contextual Safeguarding Network — Beyond Referrals (Schools) provides a self-assessment toolkit and guidance for addressing HSB in schools
- Stop It Now — guide for parents, carers and professionals to help prevent harmful sexual behaviour in children, with a free confidential helpline

Nudes and semi-nudes

- UKCIS — Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (GOV.UK)
- NSPCC Learning — Safeguarding, sexting and sharing nudes (updated to reflect the current terminology, including AI-generated and ‘nudified’ images)
- London Grid for Learning — collection of advice dealing with the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Support for victims

- Anti-Bullying Alliance — detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools, signposting to helplines and websites
- Rape Crisis — support for people who have experienced rape, child abuse or any kind of sexual violence
- The Survivors Trust — UK-wide national umbrella agency with resources and support dedicated to survivors of rape, sexual violence and child sexual abuse
- Victim Support — supporting children and young people affected by crime, and their parents/professionals, regardless of whether a crime has been reported or how long ago it was
- Childline — free and confidential advice for children and young people

Toolkits

- Ask AVA — prevention platform created for practitioners across the UK, delivering a comprehensive programme to stop violence against women and girls
- NSPCC — online self-assessment tool to help organisations safeguard children
- NSPCC — resources to help adults respond to children disclosing abuse, and the independent HSB behaviour framework
- Safeguarding Unit, Farrer & Co, and Carlene Firmin, MBE, University of Bedfordshire — Peer-on-Peer Abuse toolkit: practical guidance on how to prevent, identify early and respond appropriately to peer-on-peer abuse
- Contextual Safeguarding Network — self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB
- Childnet — STAR SEND Toolkit: equips and empowers educators to support young people with SEND
- Childnet — Just a joke? provides lesson plans, activities and a quiz and teaching guide exploring problematic online sexual behaviour with 9–12 year olds
- Childnet — Step Up, Speak Up: a practical campaign toolkit addressing online sexual harassment among young people aged 13–17

- NSPCC — harmful sexual behaviour framework for children and young people displaying HSB
- Contextual Safeguarding Network — Beyond Referrals: for school leavers addressing HSB in schools
- Farrer & Co — Addressing child-on-child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges, with practical guidance on how to prevent, identify early, and respond to child-on-child abuse