

Greenfields Federation

Littlehaven Infant School and Northolmes Junior School



Growing Together, Aiming High

Our vision at Greenfields Federation is that we will work together as a community to ensure all pupils achieve their best and everyone feels valued and respected. We will prioritise the well-being of our children and have high expectations for behaviour. We will create an inspiring and motivating learning environment where all children can deepen their knowledge, acquire new skills and develop as well-rounded, happy, confident individuals.

Child-on-Child Abuse and Anti-Bullying Policy

Review date: September 2023

Ratified by the Governing Body:

Next review: September 2024 (or before if guidance changes)

Introduction

At Greenfields Federation we hold a zero tolerance approach to any form of child-on-child abuse or bullying. We firmly believe that preventing, raising awareness and consistently responding with this approach to any cases of child-on-child abuse or bullying should be our utmost priority to ensure the safety and emotional well-being of all our pupils.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) states that 'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare' and that these should include schools having an effective child protection policy which clearly sets out 'policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse'. This policy, alongside our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, sets out our zero tolerance approach to these behaviours. Greenfields Federation recognises that only when all issues of child-on-child abuse and bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated July 2022). It should also be read alongside our Behaviour Policy, Mental Health and Well-being Policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and E-safety Policy.

What is Child-on-Child Abuse and Bullying? (KCSIE 2023)

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online.

All staff should be clear as to the school's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important that if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kathryn Saunderson, or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, Samantha Cox (Headteacher), Lyndsay Woodland (Assistant Headteacher) and Sue Geoghegan (Early Years Lead).

Greenfields Federation recognises that it is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” 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 accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- 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, and
- 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).

Bullying

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and can be motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves.

The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

Cyber bullying

Cyberbullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 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.

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

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

Behaviour which is not abusive at first may potentially become abusive quickly or over time. Intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour which may be displayed by a child is vital and could potentially prevent their behaviour from progressing on a continuum to become problematic, abusive and/or violent - and ultimately requiring (greater/more formal) engagement with specialist external and/or statutory agencies.

How would we know if child-on-child abuse or bullying is happening?

Signs of child-on-child abuse or bullying might include:

For young children changes in behaviour such as

- unwillingness to come to school
- becoming shy, nervous, withdrawn or isolating themselves from others
- clinging to adults
- feigning illness (such as stomach ache or headache)
- complaining about missing possessions
- refusal to talk about the problem
- being easily distressed
- damaged or incomplete work
- lacking concentration

Staff will use their knowledge of children to identify changes in behaviour that might indicate signs of bullying and will act promptly and firmly in accordance with this policy.

What are our responsibilities as a school community?

The Headteacher, Mrs Samantha Cox, has a legal duty under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among pupils and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and pupils.

To be successful in addressing child-on-child abuse and bullying, every member of our school community must commit to recognising the signs of child-on-child abuse and bullying, taking reported incidents of this seriously, and acting immediately to address it.

All staff should be alert to the well-being of children and young people and to signs of abuse, and should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by child-on-child abuse.

However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

Actions to Prevent and Address Child-on-Child Abuse and Bullying

As a Federation we will

1. Provide a developmentally appropriate education syllabus which develops pupils understanding of consent, acceptable behaviour, keeping themselves safe and healthy relationships. This will be taught through the school's Jigsaw programme as well as throughout the curriculum.
2. Deliver targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to all children and additional support provided for those children identified as being at risk. This includes delivering the NSPCC Keeping Safe assembly.
3. Develop robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.
4. Ensure clarity on how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with. Have systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued. Staff will listen, reassure and empathise but will not ask leading questions and will not promise confidentiality
 - It is important to deal with a situation of child-on-child abuse or bullying immediately and sensitively.
 - It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get a true, accurate account of the facts around what has happened, so that nothing is forgotten.
 - 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. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.
 - In all cases of child-on-child abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner.
 - Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.
 - Staff should also be mindful of contextual safeguarding and that wider safeguarding concerns may influence the child's account of the event(s). Alongside this peer pressure and the impact of sharing information about the incident(s) may also influence a child's account.
 - All conversations should be clearly recorded on CPOMS, clearly capturing the voice of the child.
5. Have clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child-on-child abuse will be monitored and supported
6. Provide a clear ethos that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up"
7. Recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse (i.e., that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators), but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously

8. Inform parents of all incidences and action taken, including ongoing support for the child who has been subject to child-on-child abuse or bullying
9. Inform the relevant external agencies such as Social Care or the Police where necessary to provide the appropriate support to children and their families
10. Ensure appropriate consequences for the perpetrator, to ensure they understand the seriousness of their behaviour and take responsibility for it. It is important that the perpetrator understands that child-on-child abuse or bullying will never be tolerated. It is important also to talk to the perpetrator to understand the root cause of the behaviour and try to address this. It may not always be clear why child-on-child abuse or bullying has taken place. The parents of the perpetrator will also be informed.

Children with Special Educational Needs

Greenfields Federation recognises that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline.

Staff understand that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so. (KCSIE, 2023)

Staff will ensure that any reports of abuse involving children with SEND involve close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kathryn Saunderson (Assistant Headteacher) or Deputy Designated Leads, Samantha Cox (Headteacher), Lyndsay Woodland (Assistant Headteacher) and Sue Geoghegan (Early Years Lead).

Greenfields Federation will ensure extra pastoral support and attention for these children is put in place where appropriate, along with ensuring appropriate support for communication is in place.

The impact of this policy will be reviewed through the Governors normal evaluation procedures, including Parents'/Carers' Annual questionnaire and interviews or questionnaires with pupils.

Useful telephone numbers:

CHILDLINE (support for children)	0800 1111
Action Against bullying Support Line	0845 075 1010
(Support for parents, carers and professionals)	

Please also visit our emotional well-being page on our school website for more information about where to access support for both parents and children.

This policy was created through discussion with parents, staff, governors and pupils.

Stopping bullying at Littlehaven Infant and Northolmes Junior Schools (Children's Anti-bullying policy)

What do we want?

We want our schools to be a happy, safe place where all the children can learn and enjoy school.

We want everyone at our schools to understand what bullying is and what we need to do to stop it from happening. This includes the children, the Mums, Dads, the teachers and other people who look after us.

We want everyone to be kind to one another: no-one should bully others.

We want everyone to be helpful and kind to children who are bullied.

We want everyone to tell an adult if they are being bullied.

We want everyone to tell an adult if they see someone else being bullied.

What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone, or some people, keep on hurting another person or group of people on purpose. It doesn't just happen once, it keeps on happening. The person who is bullying is trying to make someone upset or feel sad.

A person who is bullying might:

- push, hit, kick, hurt someone else's body or say they are going to do these things to upset you
- say unkind things to you or to other people to upset you
- call you names to upset you
- not let you join in with a game to make you feel sad
- touch you in a way you don't like to upset you

The person will keep on doing these things to you.

What should you do if you think you are being bullied or you think someone else is being bullied?

TELL SOMEONE

You could tell your teacher or another grown-up at school. You could tell your Mum, Dad or the person who looks after you at home. You can telephone a special number and talk to someone. This number is **CHILDLINE 0800 1111**.

Keep on telling other people until you know that an adult is going to sort it.