



Great Marsden St. John's Primary – a Church of England Academy.

Our Vision

Empowered by God's love, we uphold a culture where everyone is encouraged and supported to reach their full potential.

Our Mission

Rooted in God's love, inspiring all to aim high.

Child on Child Abuse Policy

1. Statement of Intent

Great Marsden St John's is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where all children feel valued, respected, and protected from harm. We recognise that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and that child-on-child abuse is a serious issue that requires a robust and proactive response.

This policy outlines our commitment to preventing, identifying, and responding to child-on-child abuse, ensuring that all incidents are dealt with promptly, sensitively, and effectively, in line with statutory guidance and best practice. Our primary concern is always the safety and well-being of the child who has been abused, while also addressing the behaviour of the child who has caused harm.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all children attending GMSJ, and to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors who work with or come into contact with children within our setting, both on and off-site during organised activities. It covers all forms of child-on-child abuse, regardless of where or when it occurs, if it affects the safety and well-being of our children. Throughout this policy please read DSL as DDSL also.

3. Definition of Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse refers to a range of abusive behaviours perpetrated by one child or a group of children against another child or children. It can take many forms and is often about the misuse of power and control. It is important to recognise that children can be both victims and perpetrators of abuse, and sometimes both simultaneously.



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Examples of child-on-child abuse include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying): Repeated behaviour intended to cause harm or distress, often involving an imbalance of power. This can be physical, verbal, social, or online.
- Physical Abuse: Hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, or any other physical act causing injury or pain.
- Sexual Harassment/Abuse: Unwanted sexualised behaviour, comments, touching, or exploitation, including sharing of inappropriate images, "sexting," and sexual assault.
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse: Persistent belittling, intimidation, manipulation, exclusion, or threats that cause significant emotional harm.
- Online Abuse: Abuse perpetrated through digital platforms, including social media, gaming, and messaging apps, such as sharing private information, grooming, or coercive control.
- Discriminatory Abuse: Abuse based on a child's protected characteristics (e.g., race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity).
- Exploitation: Including criminal exploitation (e.g., county lines, forced criminality) and modern slavery.

It is crucial to understand that consent cannot be given by a child to any abusive behaviour.

4. Guiding Principles

Our approach to child-on-child abuse is underpinned by the following principles:

- Child-Centred: The safety and well-being of the child who has been abused is paramount.
- Zero Tolerance: We have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse.
- Proactive Prevention: We aim to prevent abuse through education, fostering a positive culture, and clear expectations.
- Early Intervention: We will act promptly at the earliest signs of concern.
- Transparency and Openness: We will be open about our procedures and encourage reporting.
- Fairness and Impartiality: All incidents will be investigated fairly and impartially.
- Support for All: We will provide appropriate support for both the child who has been abused and the child who has caused harm.
- Collaboration: We will work collaboratively with parents/carers, statutory agencies, and other professionals.



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- Confidentiality (where appropriate): Information will be shared on a "need-to-know" basis, always prioritising the child's safety.

5. Prevention

GMSJ implements a range of preventative measures, including:

- Curriculum: Delivering a comprehensive curriculum that teaches children about healthy relationships, consent, personal safety, online safety, and the importance of speaking out.
- Culture: Fostering a school culture that promotes respect, empathy, inclusivity, and challenges all forms of prejudice and discrimination.
- Staff Training: Ensuring all staff receive regular and up-to-date safeguarding training, including specific training on child-on-child abuse, peer-on-peer abuse, and online safety.
- Clear Expectations: Establishing and consistently reinforcing clear behavioural expectations and codes of conduct for all students.
- Supervision: Providing appropriate levels of supervision in all areas of the school/setting, including online environments where possible.
- Reporting Mechanisms: Ensuring children know how to report concerns and feel safe and confident to do so (e.g., trusted adults, worry boxes, anonymous reporting).
- Online Safety: Implementing robust online safety measures, educating children and parents about online risks, and monitoring online activity where appropriate and lawful.
- Promoting Voice: Creating opportunities for children to express their views and concerns, and ensuring these are listened to and acted upon.

6. Reporting Procedures

All staff, volunteers, and visitors have a responsibility to report any concerns about child-on-child abuse.

Immediate Concerns: If a child is in immediate danger, staff must take immediate action to ensure their safety and contact emergency services if necessary.

Reporting to DSL: All concerns, disclosures, or allegations of child-on-child abuse, no matter how minor they may seem, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DS via My Concern or in the case of an emergency in person and written up afterwards.



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Recording: The DSL will have oversight of all concerns recorded by staff members. Staff receive training on how to make a good recording of an event, including dates, times, individuals involved, and a factual account of the concern.

Confidentiality: Staff should not promise confidentiality to a child who discloses abuse, as information may need to be shared to ensure their safety. Staff should explain this clearly and sensitively.

Parents/Carers: Parents/carers are encouraged to report any concerns about child-on-child abuse involving their child or other children to the DSL.

7. Responding to Allegations

Upon receiving an allegation or concern, the DSL will:

- **Assess and Triage:** Immediately assess the nature and seriousness of the allegation, considering the child's immediate safety and well-being.
- **Listen and Reassure:** Listen carefully to the child who has made the disclosure, reassure them, and explain what will happen next, without making promises of confidentiality that cannot be kept.
- **Not Investigate:** Staff should not conduct their own investigations. The role of the DSL is to gather information and determine the appropriate course of action.
- **Refer to External Agencies:** If there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the DSL will make an immediate referral to Children's Social Care (CSC) and/or the Police, in line with local safeguarding procedures. If the allegation involves a potential criminal offence, the Police will be informed.
- **Inform Parents/Carers:** Parents/carers of the child who has been abused will be informed as soon as it is appropriate to do so, considering the advice of CSC and/or the Police.
- **Support for the Child Abused:** Ensure the child who has been abused receives immediate and ongoing support, which may include pastoral care, counselling, or referral to specialist services.

Managing the Child Causing Harm:

The child who has caused harm will be spoken to, and their behaviour addressed. This will be done sensitively, focusing on the behaviour and its impact, rather than labelling the child.

Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the school's behaviour policy, considering the age, understanding, and intent of the child, and the severity of the incident.



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Consideration will be given to the needs of the child who has caused harm, including whether they require support (e.g., behavioural support, counselling) or if they are also a victim of abuse.

Parents/carers of the child who has caused harm will be informed, usually after consultation with CSC/Police, and involved in addressing the behaviour.

Develop a safety plan to ensure the ongoing protection of the child who has been abused, which may include adjustments to timetables, seating arrangements, or supervision.

Maintain accurate, detailed, and secure records of all actions taken.

8. Support for Children Involved

For the Child Who Has Been Abused:

- Emotional Support: Provide immediate and ongoing pastoral care, a trusted adult, and access to counselling or therapeutic services if needed.
- Safety Planning: Implement strategies to ensure their physical and emotional safety within the school environment.
- Voice and Choice: Ensure their voice is heard throughout the process and they are involved in decisions about their safety and support.

For the Child Who Has Caused Harm:

- Behavioural Intervention: Address the harmful behaviour through clear boundaries, consequences, and educational interventions.
- Understanding Impact: Help them understand the impact of their actions on others.
- Support Needs: Assess if they have underlying needs or vulnerabilities that contributed to their behaviour and provide appropriate support (e.g., social skills training, anger management, counselling).
- Restorative Approaches: Where appropriate and safe, consider restorative justice approaches to repair harm and promote understanding, always with the consent and safety of the child who has been abused as the priority.

9. Training and Awareness

Staff Training: All staff receive regular safeguarding training, including specific modules on



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child-on-child abuse, online safety, and how to respond to disclosures.

Student Education: Age-appropriate education is provided to all students on healthy relationships, consent, personal boundaries, online safety, and how to report concerns.

Parent/Carer Information: Information is provided to parents/carers about child-on-child abuse, online safety, and the school's safeguarding procedures.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL, Senior Leadership Team and LGC, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or school circumstances. The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored through:

- Analysis of reported incidents and outcomes.
- Feedback from students, staff, and parents/carers.
- Regular safeguarding audits.

11. Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

[Name of DSL] Michaela Underwood

[Contact Number] 01282 615055

[Email Address] michaela.underwood@cidari.co.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL):

[Name of DDSL 1] Rachel Hollas

[Contact Number] 01282 615055

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[Name of DDSL 3] Joseph Longley

[Contact Number] 01282 615055

[Email Address] joseph.longley@cidari.co.uk

Local Authority Children's Social Care:

[Local Authority Name] Shane Penn – LADO

Phone: 01772 536694

Email: shane.penn@lancashire.gov.uk / lado.admin@lancashire.gov.uk

Victoria Wallace – Schools Safeguarding Officer

Phone: 01772 531196

Email: victoria.wallace@lancashire.gov.uk

Police (Non-Emergency):

101

NSPCC:

0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk



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Childline:

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other safeguarding policies, including the Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Date of Policy: July 2025

Date of Last Review: July 2025

Date of Next Review: July 2026