



## Wallace Fields Junior School

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Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021

### Safeguarding and Wellbeing – the Rise in Peer on Peer Abuse.

Following the pandemic and lockdowns there has been a rise nationally of peer on peer abuse. Peer-on-peer abuse includes, but is not limited to, physical and sexual abuse, sexual harassment and violence, emotional harm, on and offline bullying and in older children teenage relationship abuse.

At Wallace Fields Junior School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and wellbeing of all the children here, and we expect all staff, volunteers, governors and visitors to share this commitment. We recognise that all adults, including temporary staff, volunteers and governors, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm, and that the children's welfare and wellbeing are our paramount concerns.

The school pays full regard to Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2021](#)'. We ensure that all appropriate measures apply in relation to everyone who works in the school, to ensure the children perceive all adults as safe and trustworthy including volunteers, staff and visiting contractors.

Unfortunately, peer-on-peer abuse can and does happen in a whole range of settings that children attend. However, it often goes unseen. It might take place online, for example, or away from the school or home setting. Therefore, we train our staff to help recognise the signs, and know what to do; all staff are familiar with the safeguarding guidance and how to apply it. Staff understand our child safeguarding approaches and use them. Peer-on-peer abuse is never accepted or dismissed as 'children being children' and every incident taken very seriously and followed up.

All staff in the school know what to do if they come across, or are concerned about, peer-on-peer abuse. They know who to speak to and what action to take to make sure the children are safe.

There are many different ways a child can seek help if they feel they are suffering in school or at home from peer on peer abuse. There are several posters around the school showing the NSPCC helpline and the Childline number. We have assemblies on coping with bullying and this week it has been anti-bullying week so the message is reinforced that all children so they can feel safe and happy in school (and know what to do out of school as well).

We have 'Mood Boxes' that are used every day in every class. These give every single child the opportunity to request an adult to talk to for support should they need it (before the end of the day). We have Peer Mentors – specially trained year 6 pupils who will help provide guidance on issues within school. The school has several Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and deputy leads (DDSLs) who are pictured all around the school for children to approach regarding any concerns.

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We will provide support to the victim and alleged perpetrator for as long as necessary to make sure children are safe. Please encourage your child to tell the adults on duty or the adults in class if they ever feel unsafe or unhappy.

This week has been a focus on anti-bullying and Friday was our Wellbeing Day – the children are encouraged to feel happy and safe and to consider their own wellbeing. The happier they are, the more they engage, make friends, learn and progress and this is the positive ethos that works so well across the school.

The positive message is that the children have been learning about consent, respect and caring for each other and the children are keen to be up-standers to any bullying or unkind behaviour they see. Together we can work to ensure that they grow into respectful and supportive adults and move on to secondary school equipped with the strategies and ideals that ensure they are able to cope and seek help for any peer on peer abuse they or their friends might encounter.

Kindest regards

Mr Steve Lee  
Headteacher

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