



BULLYING AND PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY

Chair of Governors Daniel Wood

Signed: *Daniel Wood*

Date: January 2023

Head Teacher Lisa Parker

Signed: *Lisa Parker*

Date: January 2023

Next review: January 2023

Rationale

We recognise that bullying and peer on peer abuse is a safeguarding matter and will be dealt with accordingly. Support will be offered in line with our anti-bullying policy and parents will be involved. Children and young people with learning difficulties are at risk of 'Mate Hate' abuse. Staff training includes recognition of signs and risk factors. Any form of bullying will be treated seriously and with sensitivity: racist bullying, sexist bullying, homophobic bullying, special educational needs and disability bullying. This includes verbal, physical and cyber bullying. The risks with online activity to the child or young person may involve sexting, inappropriate use of the internet, and body shaming which can cause physical and emotional damage. Children and young people at Warmley Park School and College are encouraged to be confident to inform a trusted adult if they are concerned about anything. Cyber bullying is addressed as part of the PSHE curriculum. Posters are put up in each class to identify who they can talk to. Information is available on the school website for parents if they are concerned about the risk of cyber bullying including sexting.

Paragraph 29 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020) states, All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- *bullying (including cyberbullying);*
- *physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;*
- *sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;*
- *sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;*
- *upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;*
- *sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and*
- *initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.*

All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs;
- Communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

At Warmley Park School and College we deliver a comprehensive and differentiated preventative approach through our Relationships and Sex Education Scheme of Work that includes consent, and human biology including reproduction. All of our Schemes of Work aim to promote equality and diversity.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads at Warmley Park School and College are:

Lisa Parker- Headteacher

Ellie Goodson- Deputy Headteacher

Marian Lovell- Head of College

Shaun Payne- Family Support Worker

We ensure that there is always at least one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads on site at all times, and that a second DSL can be reached by phone. ALL STAFF AND ADULTS INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS AND GOVERNORS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SAFEGUARD PUPILS.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST OTHER PUPILS

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.

We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse (i.e. that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators). However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Sometimes, incidents between pupils can be managed under the school’s behaviour and anti bullying policy. Rules, social stories, and the reinforcement of expectations can be effective in stopping further incidents. This policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Causes an injury;
- Causes emotional distress;
- Is coercive or involves an imbalance of control by one pupil on another;
- Is discriminatory/ offensive;
- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence;
- Could put pupils in the school at risk from harm outside of school;
- Is violent;
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol;
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including sexting and upskirting);
- Promotes gang involvement.

Reporting any peer on peer abuse. Dismissing inappropriate behaviours risks normalising them- action must be taken.

This should be recorded on CPOMS and a discussion will need to take place with a DSL. The victim may worry about the repercussions of making a disclosure, or have been threatened and therefore may not say anything. Or their communication may be limited and they find it difficult to express themselves, or they may not realise that what they are experiencing is wrong.

Be aware that the bullying or abuse could be taking place face to face or online. It could be directed towards an individual, or a family or group. It is better to report a concern that is unfounded, rather than hope that it is and it turns out to be taking place.

If a pupil makes an allegation or suspicion of abuse against another pupil:

- You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the pupil(s) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

- Staff must record the allegation and tell the DSL, but not investigate it themselves.
- If the victim requires First Aid or medical support this will be given.
- Staff should not make judgements.
- They cannot promise not to tell anyone else.
- They should keep the recording factual, being aware that their report could be used by the police or social care.
- They should not delay reporting concerns.
- The DSL will contact the local authority children's social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence.
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed.
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate.
- Parents of the perpetrator and victims will be informed, taking into consideration confidentiality. The DSL will inform parents at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the pupil at risk of harm.

We will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Using our Warmley Park Safeguarding Toolkit which focuses on giving pupils communication skills to be able to express something is wrong. We recognise that some pupils may not be able recognise that what they are experiencing is peer on peer abuse. Therefore we use our high ratios of staff, our positive and open relationships with parents, and explicit information on what is not acceptable to reduce risk.
- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images.
- Using resources that are sensitive to cultural and gender depictions and have trained staff on unconscious bias.
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys.
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent- this refers to the Relationship and Sex Education curriculum but also other areas including online safety in Computing and PSHE.
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially. This is indicated to pupils through signs and posters. For pupils who are pre-verbal and would have difficulty in communicating this, we implement Have Your Say days to look at Warmley Park from the perspective of the pupil, and use the core vocabulary as described in the Warmley Park Safeguarding Toolkit.
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy.

Following an incident support will be given for victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by peer on peer abuse. This will include:

- An individual debrief with all of those involved which will be noted and kept on CPOMS;
- Referral to external agencies for support if appropriate;
- Monitoring by class staff and DSL for indications of any issues that emerge in the period following the initial debrief;

DEFINITIONS OF MATE CRIME AND HATE CRIME

This is potentially very challenging for our pupils to understand due to their learning difficulties which adds to their vulnerability.

- Disability hate crime is the general term used to describe any criminal offence that is motivated by hostility or prejudice based upon a person's disability. If you think people are picking on someone else because of their disability then it is a **hate crime**.
- **Mate crime** happens when someone pretends to be a friend and then uses the student instead of being a good friend. A 'mate' may be a friend, family member, supporter, paid staff or another person with a disability.
- Mate crime is when someone says they are a friend, but they do things that take advantage of the student, like ask you for money a lot. A real friend does not need to be bought, and someone who takes money, asks someone to pay for lots of things, or makes someone feel uncomfortable is not a true friend.
- If someone who says they are your friend hurts another person, steals from them or makes them do something they don't want to do, they should, if they are able to, tell to someone they trust right away. This could be their parent or someone in school. It is not their fault and they will not get in trouble for speaking out.
- **Hate crime** is when a person or group of people are victimised by strangers or someone they know just because they have a disability, or because of another feature of their identity such as the colour of their skin or their religion. **Mate Crime** is typically done by someone they know.

Is this person my friend?

- A friend is a companion you trust and have fun with. But if your friend makes you feel anxious or scared, takes your money or possessions or makes you do things you don't want to, that's not right. We call that a **mate crime**.
- Remember that most of your friends are good friends but that if you are worried about a friendship you have a right to be believed and to be taken seriously when you report incidents.

Hate Crime and **Mate Crime** may include:

- Verbal or physical abuse
- Intimidation or threats
- Manipulation
- Bullying
- Online harassment
- Theft

Mate crime is often hidden but these signs may indicate something is wrong:

- These new people seem to have an undue influence over the person.
- The person may comment that their friends will be disappointed if a certain activity doesn't take place. They may express worry that they'll lose their friends. They may appear uneasy about the friendship.
- The vulnerable person may be spending their own money and may be buying gifts for other people or giving away precious possessions.
- The person may unexpectedly change their routine, behaviour or appearance. They may have unexplained injuries, or show signs of anxiety.

Staff responsibilities when responding to an incident:

We always take allegations or incidents in relation to peer on peer abuse seriously. It should never be dismissed or ignored,

SEXTING

If you are made aware of an incident involving sexting (also known as 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

You must **not**:

- View, download or share the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it. If you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL.
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it.
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility).
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.

We have produced a symbol version of this policy to support pupils.