



# Child Protection Policy Portland Academy

<b>Policy out for consultation: Policy ratified and adopted by the Standards Committee:</b>	<b>14.09.18 – 27.09.18</b> <b>11.10.18</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Review frequency</b>	<b>Annually</b> (or sooner if legislation requires it)
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>October 2019</b> (or sooner if legislation requires it)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Ascent Academies' Trust Safeguarding Lead</b>

## **INDEX**

## **Section**

Purpose and Aim	1
Introduction	2
Framework and Legislation	3
Roles and Responsibilities for all Staff	4
The Designated Safeguarding Team	5
The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead	6
The Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees	7
Information for Parents	8
Actions where there are Concerns about a child	9
Safe Schools: Safe Staff	10
Supporting Children	11
Supporting Policies	12
Legislation and National & Local Guidance	13
Table of Changes	14
Appendix 1 Annex A:	Additional Advice and Support (KCSIE 2019) Peer on Peer Abuse Guidance

# **Child Protection Policy for Portland Academy**

## **1 Purpose and Aim**

Portland Academy's whole-school Child Protection Policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child welfare concerns. The policy also aims to make explicit our commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children safe in our Academy. This policy recognises that abuse can occur in all communities and contexts and that all staff have a responsibility and the opportunity to support children, in sharing concerns and worries in school to feel safe. The whole school culture of vigilance in Portland Academy creates a safe space where children are supported, listened to and valued in what they choose to share and that ALL staff act immediately with the necessary level of intervention to create the most effective outcome for every individual child.

The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that our children's welfare is of paramount importance, early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation and where child protection concerns are identified referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child's well-being.

Trustees and staff of Portland Academy are committed to keeping children safe by safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our care through all of our policies, procedures and practices. We expect all of our pupils, parents and visitors to share this commitment and understanding.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislative or Academy-based procedural changes require it. It will be updated if social care or LADO procedures or details change. Whole-School consultation or training may inform changes or updates to the policy to ensure it remains the most effective policy to keep our children safe. Amendments can only be made following the approval of the Ascent Safeguarding Lead and the Board of Trustees.

This policy applies to the whole workforce. This policy should be read by all staff working and volunteering in Portland Academy. Instances of non-compliance with this policy will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may be reported to the Head of Academy and the Ascent Safeguarding Lead.

## **2 Introduction**

Portland Academy recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. Academy staff who work, in any capacity, with children who have complex needs, attachment difficulties and/or social, emotional and behavioural problems need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. Academy staff must give consideration to our children who are subject to a statement of special needs, an education health and care plan and those who have additional medical conditions. These difficulties can mask safeguarding issues and must not be dismissed.

Portland Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the pupils in its care. There are four main elements to the Academy's child protection policy:

- a. **Prevention** - positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to pupils, providing good adult role models and the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and recognising and reducing risks to children including harassment, bullying, victimisation, sexual violence and sexual harassment, exploitation, radicalisation and issues such as Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.
- b. **Protection** - following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training which is updated at least annually and is supported to refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Trust Lead, **Sharon Common**, Designated Safeguarding Lead, **Chris Kemp** or Deputy Designated Leads, **Martin Hope** and **Karen Hart (03339991455)** or the Integrated Contact and Referral Team (0191 5617007) directly IF NECESSARY.  
In certain specific cases such as Female Genital Mutilation (Mandatory reporting of FGM from October 2015), Radicalisation or Forced Marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted).
- c. **Reconsideration** - following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child's circumstances.
- d. **Support** - to pupils and Academy staff and to children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances.

All staff have the added responsibility of recognising that there may be children with additional vulnerability who remain at higher risk of harm or abuse because of their existing vulnerability. All Academy staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child  
(KCSIE 2019)

All staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect and peer on peer abuse in its many forms. Additional guidance on how our Academy supports the following areas of additional need or harm are provided in the hyperlinked documents in Appendix 1 of this Child Protection Policy and includes the full list taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 pages 87 and 88. Where the Academy has created an additional policy because of any specific area of need this is to be read in conjunction with this Child Protection Policy.

Broadly the areas taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018 (Annex A), include:

- Children in the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation - County Lines
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- So called 'Honour Based Violence' inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and practises such as Breast Ironing.
- Preventing Radicalisation
- Peer on Peer Abuse
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Additional advice and support

(KCSIE 2019)

**If a child is particularly vulnerable in one of these areas, the relevant Hyperlink should be accessed for further information and guidance.**

In the event of any of the above issues being recognised, information should be shared directly with the Designated Safeguarding Leads which will result in the situation being monitored and supported in the Academy or the pupil/s being referred to specific services.

### **3 Framework and Legislation**

No Academy operates in isolation. Keeping children safe from significant harm is the responsibility of **all** adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (to be replaced by the Safeguarding Partner arrangements), which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with children and families across the City.

Portland Academy is committed to keeping children safe and safeguarding all children in accordance with Child Protection: Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board procedures [www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com](http://www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com) (to be replaced by the Safeguarding Partner arrangements) and partner agencies in all cases where there is a concern about significant harm.

Significant Harm is defined in The Children's Act 1989 as the ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and physical abuse) or the impairment of health (physical or mental) or development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural) as compared to a similar child.

**Note:** harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill treatment of another person (*Adoption and Children Act 2002*).

Local Authorities have a duty to investigate (under S47 of the Children Act 1989). Where a Local Authority is informed that there is a child who is living, or is found in their area and they have reasonable cause to suspect that child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, they must make such enquiries as necessary to promote or safeguard the child's welfare. Together for Children, through the Integrated Contact Referral Team, undertakes this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority once a referral has been made.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018 contains information on what our Academy **should** do and sets out the legal duties with which our Academy **must** comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, which applies to all schools including maintained nursery schools. The Children Act 1989 sets out the Legal Framework.

## 4 Roles and Responsibilities for All Staff

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting ALL children from maltreatment and abuse; including in addition to the four categories of harm, issues such as sexual violence and sexual harassment, child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation (CSE), Honour based violence (HBV) inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage, preventing radicalisation and extremism, harassment, bullying and victimization; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. This includes everyone under the age of 18.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Due to the regular contact with children all staff members at Portland Academy have, we hold a particularly important role in safeguarding as we are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating. Children can make disclosures or show signs of abuse at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools. Therefore, through a thorough induction process and the sharing of this policy to all staff, students and volunteers, it is important that ALL staff:

- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child.

- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. (However, ALL staff can refer their concerns directly to the Integrated Contact Referral Team if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above). They should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible if they have reported concerns directly.
- Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies. All discussions, decisions and reasons for them, should be recorded in writing on the CPOMS recording system in adherence with the Academy's recording and information sharing procedures.
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child/ an adult/ Academy staff member directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head of Academy.
- Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the Academy's safeguarding regime through confidential reporting procedures and the staff code of conduct policy.
- Ensure that they attend regular formal training/updates at least annually to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child.
- Ensure from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, April 2015 that the Academy has 'Due regard' To Prevent' and to assess risk of children and young people being radicalised or drawn into extremism (based upon potential risks in local area) and that clear protocols in place for all visitors so that views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others.
- Ensure from October 2015 that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.
- Ensure that they understand, through online safety training, the additional risks for pupils online and continue to promote the Academy's Online Safety Policy in the protection of all pupils. This includes the management of 3G and 4G internet access via children's personal mobile phones or electronic devices which can allow them unlimited access to the internet without any restrictions, using their own data allowance. The Academy's online safety policy sets out the expectations of pupils regarding their own devices whilst on site and the consequences of any evidence of inappropriate use of the internet.
- Ensure that they remain vigilant whilst visitors are on site and continue to promote the Academy's commitment to keeping children safe through reminding visitors and parents of the Academy's appropriate use of personal mobile phones/devices whilst they are on Academy premises. This includes staff understanding and adhering to the Staff Behaviour Policy inclusive of use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

- Ensure that they have read and understood both the Academy's Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018).

Portland Academy will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

## 5 The Designated Safeguarding Team

Portland Academy has appointed a senior member of staff, **Chris Kemp**, to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This person has the overall responsibility for safeguarding and Child Protection and has the appropriate authority and training to undertake such a role and is able to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. Chris Kemp is able to take part in strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and to support other trained staff to do so as well as contribute to the assessment of children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns (KCSIE 2019).

Portland Academy has appointed: **Martin Hope** and **Karen Hart** as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, who are part of the safeguarding team. These individuals are trained to the same standard as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chris Kemp. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies the ultimate LEAD RESPONSIBILITY for child protection will not be delegated and remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In the event that the Lead or Deputies cannot be contacted, please seek advice from Sharon Common, the Ascent Academy Safeguarding Lead, or Rachel Hargreaves, the Executive Head of Portland Academy.

If there is an IMMEDIATE safeguarding concern and the Designated Safeguarding Leads are unavailable, please seek immediate support via the Integrated Contact and Referral Team (0191 5617007).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead may contact the Police on 101 or the Police Safeguarding Department (Previously known as PVP) on 03456 043 043 in the event of any emergency or if a crime has been committed.

## 6 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a very detailed role. The broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Leads are identified here:

### Manage referrals

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the Integrated Contact and Referral Team.



- Support staff who make referrals to the Integrated Contact and Referral Team.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required.
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required (including Sexual Exploitation (MSET lead) or Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage).

### **Work with others**

- Act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners. (Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning group within the LA and Chief Police of Police within the LA)
- Liaise with the Head of Academy to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- As required, liaise with the case manager (Executive Head of Academy, or where the Executive Head of Academy is the subject of the allegations, Chief Executive Officer or the Chair of the Board of Trustees) and the Designated Officer: This is done through Together For Children, operating on behalf of the Local Authority, and applies to all child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- Liaise with staff (especially pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians and SENCOs on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding.

### **Undertake Training**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies should receive appropriate training updated every two years. They should undertake prevent awareness raising and in addition to the formal training, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or taking

time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, so they:

- Understand and keep up with any developments to their role
- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the Academy's Child Protection Policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the Academy and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure, written and electronic records of concerns and referrals.
- Understand and support the Academy with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and be able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.
- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online in the Academy.
- Can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses.

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the Academy may put in place to protect them.

## **Raise Awareness**

The designated safeguarding lead should ensure the Academy's policies are known, understood and used appropriately:

- Ensure the Academy's Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors and the workforce in this regard to ensure its effectiveness. This includes ensuring that all staff members receive the policy on their induction.
- Ensure the Child Protection Policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the Academy in this.
- Link with the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (to be replaced by the Safeguarding Partner arrangements) to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

## **Child Protection File**

- Where children leave the Academy, ensure their child protection file is transferred appropriately for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file. The DSL will ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt. This may be transferred electronically through the CPOMS system.
- Receiving schools and colleges should ensure key staff such as Designated Safeguarding Leads and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in colleges, are aware as required.
- In addition to the child protection file, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

## **Availability**

- During term time the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should always be available during Academy hours for staff in the Academy to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
- Whilst generally speaking the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, in exceptional circumstances, such as may happen in an emergency, availability via phone is acceptable.
- The designated safeguarding lead will work with the Academy to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

*(Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018: Annex B)*

**In addition we also recommend, as best practice, that the Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the Academy's suite of safeguarding policies particularly the Child Protection Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct. This especially relates to new or part-time staff who may work with or across different establishments.
- Are aware of all Academy excursions and residential visits and clarify with educational visit co-ordinator/group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding/child protection.
- Liaise with the Behaviour Support Manager to ensure a whole school policy about managing behaviour and discipline including the use of reasonable force, is in place. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for Academy staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of the classroom. When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEN or disabilities or with medical conditions, the Academy considers the risks carefully and recognises the additional vulnerability of these groups. The Academy considers their duties under the Equality Act 2010/36 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, non-discrimination and their Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Liaise with the Behaviour Support Manager and Trust IT manager to ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber-bullying, inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, is in place.

- Inform the LA /Together for Children of any pupil to be deleted from the Academy admission register and follow missing from Education protocols
- Inform the LA/Together for Children of any pupil who fails to attend the Academy regularly, or has been absent without the Academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

## **7 The Responsibilities of the Ascent Board of Trustees**

### **Role of the Safeguarding Trustee**

Safeguarding Trustee, David Barker, has been appointed at senior board level to support the Designated Safeguarding Lead. His role is to:

- Ensure that the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding and child protection activity and challenge the safeguarding activity.
- Challenge the Safeguarding activity and ensure that the Termly Action Plan and the Designated Safeguarding Lead Report demonstrates fully and accurately the safeguarding arrangements and records any action to progress areas of weakness or development.
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees receives training to clarify their statutory role in keeping children safe and to support their quality assurance of those statutory arrangements.
- Ensure that the Trustees are aware of the changes from Local Safeguarding Children Board's to Safeguarding Partner arrangements and the need for the Academy to understand their role in effective multi-agency working under the new arrangements.

### **Role of the Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Nick Hurn has been appointed at senior board level as Chair of the Board of Trustees. His role is to:

- Liaise with the Together for Children, operating on behalf of the local authority, and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the CEO or member of the Board of Trustees.
- Ensure that in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the CEO, allegations are reported directly to the Designated Officer (DO), ensuring effective whistleblowing procedures are in place.

- Ensure that the Safeguarding Trustee holds the Head of Academy to account on all matters involving safeguarding through an effective Child Protection Policy that is embedded and followed by the entire workforce.
- Ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding training at induction and that they receive regular updates.
- Ensure that the Academy has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place for online content (inclusive of 3 and 4G).
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and/or Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).
- Ensure that a Designated Teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children, including working with Together for Children's virtual school Head teacher and agreeing how pupil premium funding for Looked After Children will be used.

## 8 Information for Parents

At Portland Academy, Trustees and staff are committed to keeping our children safe and will take any reasonable action to safeguard and promote their welfare. In cases where the Academy has reason to be concerned that a child maybe suffering significant harm, ill treatment, neglect or other forms of harm, staff have no alternative but to follow Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board procedures (to be replaced by Safeguarding Partner arrangements) and inform the Integrated Contact and Referral Team or police of their concern.

### Procedures

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy DSL) will be informed immediately by an employee of the Academy, pupil of the Academy, parent of the Academy or other persons, in the following circumstances:

- where there is suspicion that a child is being harmed,
- where there is evidence that a child is being harmed.

The threshold of significant harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 Section 31 (9) as:

- Ill-treatment
- Impairment of health (as compared to a similar child)

*Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child's health or development as a result of witnessing the ill-treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002).*

Working together 2018 defines the categories of harm as:

### **Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Emotional Abuse**

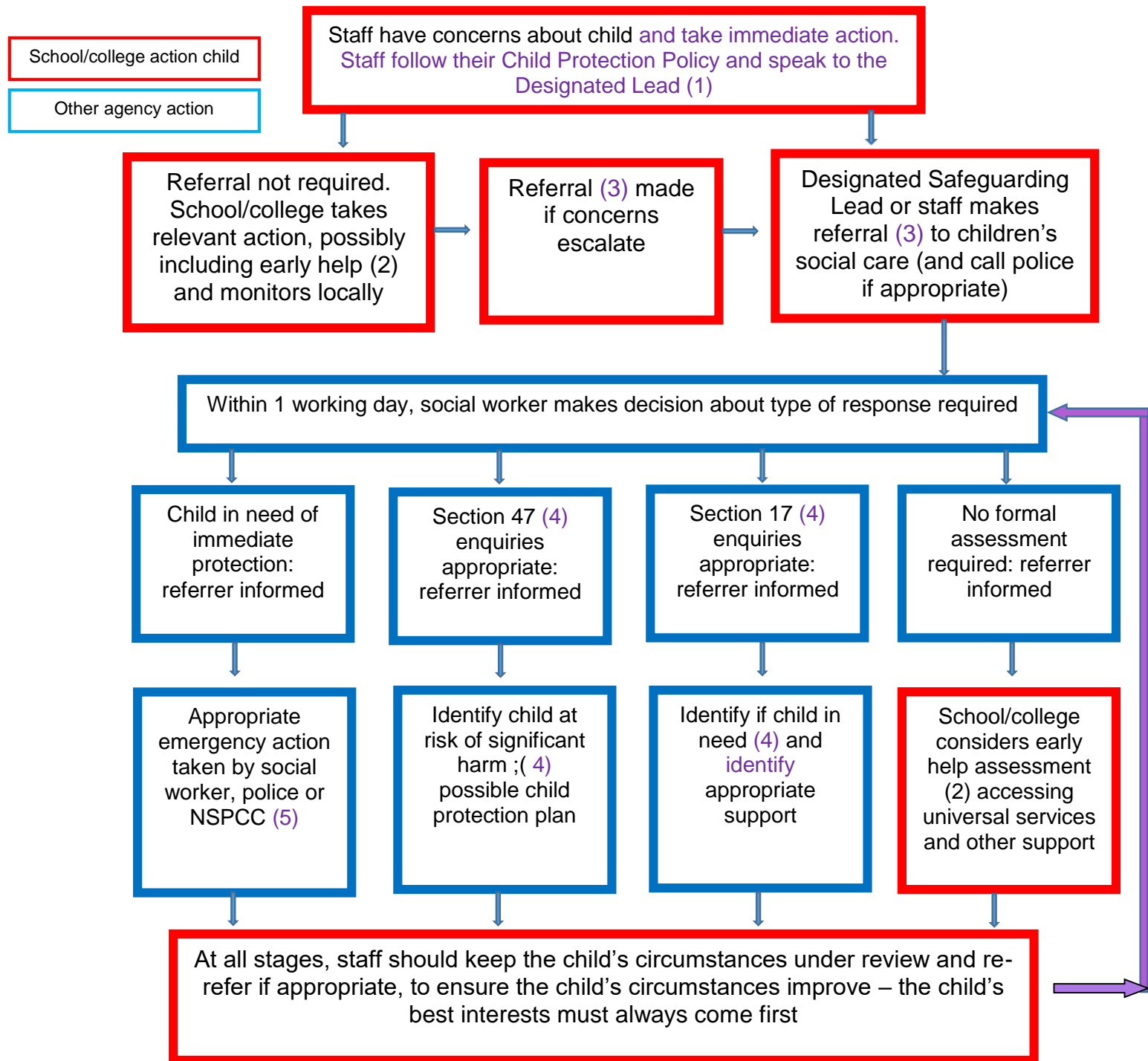
The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child though it may occur alone.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to the Integrated Contact and Referral Team or Police if necessary. These

records may be either handwritten or electronic but will be stored via the secure CPOM system. The Head of Academy will be kept informed at all times.



## 9 Actions where there are Concerns about a Child (KCSIE 2019:13)



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of [KCSIE 2019](#)
2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, and early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) provides details guidance on the early help process.
3. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include S17 assessments of children in need and S47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter One of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
4. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

## 10 Safe Schools: Safe Staff

The Board of Trustees have agreed and ratified the following policies, procedures, processes or systems which must be read and considered in conjunction with this policy:

### **Confidential Reporting**

Portland Academy's confidential reporting policy (Ascent Code of Conduct: Annex B) provides guidance to staff and volunteers on how they can raise concerns and receive appropriate feedback on action taken, when staff have concerns about any adult's behaviour.

### **Complaints / Allegation Management Towards or with a Child or Adult**

A safeguarding complaint involving a member of staff must be reported to the Head of Academy immediately. If the complaint involves the Head then the Executive Head must be informed. If the complaint involves the Executive Head, or the Chair of the Board of Trustees, then the CEO must be informed. If the complaint involves the CEO then the Chair of the Board of Trustees must be informed. Allegations should be reported directly to the Designated Officer(s) in the local authority. Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead and make any referral via them (KCSIE 2019:12).

Consultation without delay with the Designated Officer, **Danielle Rose, Tel: 0191 5613901** will determine what action follows. A multi-agency strategy meeting may be arranged to look at the complaint in its widest context; the Head/Executive Head/CEO/Chair of the Board of Trustees (as appropriate and defined above) must attend this meeting, which will be arranged by the Designated Officer. All issues must be recorded on the allegation management form and the outcome reached must be noted to ensure closure.

[www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com](http://www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com)

### **Training and Support**

All staff members should be aware of the systems within their Academy which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of their induction into the Academy to ensure they can discharge their responsibilities effectively. This includes: the Academy's Child Protection Policy; the Staff Behaviour Policy (code of conduct); Safer Working Practice Document and the names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their nominated deputies.

All staff members receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively with opportunities to contribute to reviewing and shaping the safeguarding arrangements (the Board of Trustees decide the frequency and content of this CPD). In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates in weekly-held team briefings and through internal CPD as required, but at least annually.

All staff members are provided with opportunities to contribute to reviewing and shaping of the safeguarding arrangements in the Academy, inclusive of the Child Protection Policy.

### **Professional Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. Portland Academy recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child (Child Protection Sunderland Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures to be replaced by Safeguarding Partner arrangements).

[www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com](http://www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com)

### **Record Keeping**

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. Portland Academy is clear about the need to record any concerns, discussions held, decisions made and reasons for those decisions about a child or children within its care. All staff will follow the Academy's information sharing and recording policies to ensure recording keeping is compliant and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018.

Safeguarding Recording within Portland Academy is held electronically through a secure management system of CPOMS and all staff are aware of the recording expectations and their duty to record concerns electronically on the CPOMS system. A paper-based system is in place for those staff members who do not have access to this system. Following a child leaving our Academy we follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines. Where paper-based Child Protection files have been transferred in to our Academy this will be clearly identified on the child's electronic case file to alert the Safeguarding team to any previous Safeguarding issues.

### **Attendance at Safeguarding Conferences**

In the event of Portland Academy being invited to attend child protection conferences, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Deputy, will represent the Academy and/ or identify the most appropriate trained member of staff to provide information relevant to child protection conference (initial/review). In the event that those staff members are unable to attend, the Executive Head of Academy (Rachel Hargreaves) or the Ascent Safeguarding Lead (Sharon Common) can attend in their absence.

## **11 Supporting Children**

As an Operation Encompass (OE) partner, Chris Kemp is our Academy OE Lead and will work closely with the Sunderland Lead, Dianne Stockdale, with regards to incidents of Domestic Violence (DV). Chris Kemp will offer wellbeing checks to our pupils if we are contacted following an incident which has occurred in the home of a pupil.

Portland Academy recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Portland Academy may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The Academy, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

Portland Academy also recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers (other children). Peer on peer abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be investigated and dealt with appropriately. No peer on peer abuse should be tolerated or minimised as part of growing up and **all** those involved will be provided with an appropriate level of support. It is understood that those pupils who have experienced abuse in their own lives may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered and sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support. See Peer on Peer abuse guidance (Annex A) for detailed information.

**Portland Academy will endeavour to support all its pupils through:**

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem, self-motivation, self-protection.
- The Academy ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- Approaches which allow children and young people to develop critical thinking, literacy skills and digital literacy skills.
- A curriculum which explores human rights, equality, democracy and tolerance and prepares children and young people fully for life in modern Britain.
- A curriculum where children develop personal resilience, understand and can take appropriate risks or have personal strategies/safety plans that allow them to manage their own safety. This can include topics covered as part of Relationships and Relationships and Sex Education as well as Fundamental British Values and the SMSC Curriculum which cover harm, abuse, positive and healthy relationships and crime.
- A coherent management of behaviour and discipline policy & procedures inclusive of the use of reasonable force.
- Liaison with other professionals and agencies who support children and parents.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents whenever it is in the child's interest to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group whose role it is to respond appropriately in all safeguarding situations.

Portland Academy recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. Academy staff who work, in any capacity, with children who have profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. Academy staff must give consideration to children who are subject to a statement of special needs, an education health and care plan and those who have additional medical conditions.

These difficulties can mask safeguarding issues and may often be attributed to the medical condition rather than that a child may be being harmed. Concerns such as changes in behaviour and presentation (both physical and mental) must be considered for each individual child and their own circumstances and must not be dismissed. Children with SEN are often more prone to peer group isolation than other children and there is greater potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs. Time is taken to ensure that the full circumstances of any child who has additional needs and requires support around language and communication is shared at the point of referral to ensure the best possible outcome for the child is always achieved and their voice through any form of communication is always heard. To address these additional challenges, our Academy provides extra pastoral support for children with SEN and disabilities.

Portland Academy also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health issues children may also be additionally vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

It is also recognised that children may also be at risk of Serious Violent Crime – such as Gang/Youth Violence and criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults (i.e. county lines). All staff need to ensure they know the indications that may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime.

## 12 Supporting Policies and Procedures

This policy MUST be read in conjunction with other related Academy/ Ascent Trust policies:

- **School Recruitment and Selection policy** inclusive of safer recruitment guidance and regulation, for example the **single central record** which demonstrates the pre-employment vetting checks for all staff (e.g. identity, professional qualifications, right to work in the UK, and further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK including recording checks for those EEA teacher sanctions and restrictions), for the workforce who are in regulatory activity (enhanced DBS [excluding associate members], children's/adult barred list, prohibition from teaching check, section 128 check for management positions and trustees) and supervision of those who don't meet this requirement.
- **Clear recruitment procedures** which embeds keeping children safe across every aspect from vacancy to conditional appointments, induction and an on-going culture of vigilance.
- **Trained panel members** who ensure that the policy works in practice in all recruitment and selection within the Academy.
- **School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, Regulation 9:** require Trustees of maintained schools to ensure at least one member of a recruitment panel must

undertake safer recruitment training to satisfy all requirements in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and Working Together 2015. At Portland Academy we share this commitment.

- **Avec Human Resources manual.**
- **Ascent Staff Code of Conduct** - Safer Recruitment Consortium Guidance for Safer Working Practices for those working with Young People in education settings, October 2015. The Academy will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with young people and agree to work within all policies and procedures to safeguard both children and adults.
- The Academy will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with pupils aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings being taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Position of Trust).
- **Behaviour & Discipline Policy** – inclusive of the Use of Reasonable Force/positive handling and confiscating and searching.
- **Anti-bullying Policy/Cyber/Online bullying.**
- **Online Safety Policy** inclusive of appropriate usage documentation (covering the use of mobile phones, cameras and all other technology within the Academy)
- **Inclusion & Special Education Needs Policy.**
- **The Academy's educational visits/off site policy** (reviewed annually) reflects the consideration we give to the safeguarding of our children both within the Academy environment and when away from the Academy when undertaking trips, visits or pupils being creatively educated.
- **Peer on Peer Abuse Guidance (see Annex A attached).**
- **Photographic & digital imagery policy** with parental consent forms annually signed.
- **Administration of medicines policy and procedures** with trained staff who manage this.
- **Pupils with medical needs policy** and implications for your workforce, pupils and partnership with parents.
- **Attendance Management policy**- management of attendance and the partnership with the LA/Together for Children in reporting children missing from education and

those deleted from the Academy's admission register. This includes the need for two emergency contact details for every pupil, where possible.

- **Missing children policy** – inclusive of runaways, missing and children missing from education, ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses.
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Allegation Management Policy**
- **Confidential Reporting Policy.**
- **Information Sharing Policy** (internal and external exchange of information)
- **Looked after Children policy** inclusive of named LA teacher whose role is to champion the achievement of LAC in the Academy and work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Virtual Head Teacher within Together for Children who has responsibility for LAC.
- **Intimate Care and Care Plan policy** – inclusive of procedure to support pupils who have an accident and either wet, soil or menstruate and need assistance.
- **Unaccompanied travel to and from school procedure** to ensure pupils' safety.
- **Single equality scheme.**
- **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Curriculum** inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Domestic abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Mental Health and Well-being and Fundamental British Values.

### 13 Legislation and National & Local Guidance

This template was originally developed by members of CAPE (The National Group of Education Leads for Safeguarding and Child Protection across the North West/East). Sunderland City Council Education Safeguarding Team remodelled and adapted it to suit local/regional need. Between 2014-2018 the template was again revised in partnership with Pam Gartland: Safeguarding First Ltd, to provide a guidance tool for schools in light of revised statutory DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education.

It has also been informed by the following legislation and national & local guidance:

Children Act 1989/2004

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

CP Referral Form

<https://togetherforchildren.org.uk/professionals/integrated-contact-referral-team>

Data Protection Act 2018

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

DfE Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596629/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

Early help Referral Form

[www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/professionals/early-help](http://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/professionals/early-help)

Education Act 2002 Section 175

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175)

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made>

Equality Act 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

General Data Protection Regulations, 2018

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules_en)

Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

Freedom of Information Act 2000

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga\\_20000036\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga_20000036_en.pdf)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/728/made>

Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-schools-england>

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

School attendance: Guidance for schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

Sexual Offences Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board Procedures

[www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com](http://www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com)



What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Working together to safeguard children HM GOV (2018)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

## 14 Table of Changes

Academic Year	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Named cover	Nominated Safeguarding Trustee/s
2009 – 2010	Jennifer Chart	Martin Wright	Dorothy Elliott
2010 – 2011	Fintan Clarke	Karen Brunskill	Peter Dawson
2011 – 2012	Fintan Clarke Karen Brunskill (Adults)	Martin Wright	Elizabeth Nelson
2012 – 2013	Fintan Clarke Karen Brunskill (Adults)	Karen Brunskill	Peter Dawson
2013 – 2014	Steve Murphy Karen Mitchell (Adults)	Pauline Holbrook	June Torgersen
2014 - 2015	Steve Murphy	Pauline Holbrook	
2015 - 2016	Steve Murphy	Martin Hope	Val Milnes Roy Patel
2016 (Sep to Dec)	Sharon Common	Martin Hope Steve Murphy	Roy Patel
2017 - 2018 (from January)	Chris Kemp	Sharon Common Martin Hope Karen Hart	Roy Patel
2018-2019	Chris Kemp	Martin Hope Karen Hart	David Barker

Review Date	Changes made	Ratification Date by Safeguarding Trustee
Nov 2015	Val Milnes and Roy Patel (Deputy) appointed as Safeguarding Trustees.	November 2015
Nov 2015	Policy reviewed in light of KCSIE (July 2015)	20.01.16
Jan 2016	Policy reviewed to remove all reference to Governors and replace with Trustees	20.01.16
March 2016	Annex A: 'Guidance on Children Displaying Harmful Behaviour' added to the CP Policy. Reporting Route in relation to allegations re the Head, the Executive Head, the CEO or the Chair.	May 2016
November 2016	Policy updated in light of changes to Statutory Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.  Annex A rewritten and renamed 'Peer on Peer	Approved by CEO, Executive Head for Safeguarding and Safeguarding Trustee

	Abuse Guidance'	09.11.16
January 2017	IRCT references have been replaced by IRCT	10.01.17
September 2017	Section 2 - Specific reference to SEN Section 4 - Online behaviour Section 7 - Added info on role of Trustees Section 8 - Added categories of harm Section 13 –Updated hyperlinks Annex A (4) - Bullying info added Annex A (9) – Paragraph re Ethos	Approved by CEO – 21.09.17  Ratification by Standards Committee –12.10.17
28.01.19	- Academy contacts updated (p5/p6/p9) - old references to 'organisational lead' changed to 'Trust safeguarding Lead' (p5/p6/10) - KCSIE 2016 changed to 2018 (p12) - WTSC 2015 changed to 2018 (p12) - reference to Induction and training added (p12) - Safeguarding Trustee changed to David Barker (p14)	28.01.19 (Approved by Carolyn Morgan CEO)
30.4.2019	- Sharon Common appointed Designated Safeguarding Trust Lead (p4, 8, 18, 24)	
3.09.19	Policy updated in light of changes to Statutory Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.	

## Appendix 1

<b>Abuse or Safeguarding Issue</b>	<b>Link to Guidance/Advice</b>	<b>Source</b>
Abuse	<a href="#"><u>What to do if you're worried a child is being abused</u></a>	DfE Advice
	<a href="#"><u>Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance</u></a>	Home Office
	<a href="#"><u>Faith based abuse: National Action Plan</u></a>	DfE Advice
	<a href="#"><u>Relationship Abuse: Disrespect Nobody</u></a>	Home Office Website
Bullying	<a href="#"><u>Preventing bullying, including cyberbullying</u></a>	DfE Advice
Children and the courts	<a href="#"><u>Advice for 5-11 year olds witnesses in criminal courts</u></a>	MoJ Advice
	<a href="#"><u>Advice for 12-17 year olds witnesses in criminal courts</u></a>	MoJ Advice
Children missing from education, home or care	<a href="#"><u>Children missing education</u></a>	DfE Statutory Guidance
	<a href="#"><u>Child missing from home or care</u></a>	DfE Statutory Guidance
	<a href="#"><u>Children and adults missing strategy</u></a>	Home Office Strategy
Children with family members in prison	<a href="#"><u>National information centre on Children of Offenders</u></a>	Barnardo's in partnership with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Advice
Child Exploitation	<a href="#"><u>County Lines: Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults</u></a>	Home Office Guidance
	<a href="#"><u>Child sexual exploitation: Guide for practitioners</u></a>	DfE Guidance
	<a href="#"><u>Trafficking: Safeguarding children</u></a>	DfE & HO Guidance
Drugs	<a href="#"><u>Drugs: Advice for schools</u></a>	DfE & ACPO Advice
	<a href="#"><u>Drug strategy 2017</u></a>	Home Office Strategy
	<a href="#"><u>Information and advice on drugs</u></a>	Talk to Frank Website
	<a href="#"><u>ADEPIS platform sharing information and resources for schools: Covering drug (&amp; alcohol) prevention</u></a>	Website developed by Mentor UK
'Honour Based Violence' (so called)	<a href="#"><u>Female genital mutilation: Information and resources</u></a>	Home Office
	<a href="#"><u>Female genital mutilation: Multi agency statutory guidance</u></a>	DfE, DH and HO Statutory Guidance
	<a href="#"><u>Forced marriage: Information and practice guidelines</u></a>	Foreign Commonwealth Office and Home Office
Health and Well-being	<a href="#"><u>Fabricated or induced illness: Safeguarding children</u></a>	DfE, DH and Home Office
	<a href="#"><u>Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience</u></a>	Public Health England Resource
	<a href="#"><u>Medical conditions: Supporting pupils at school</u></a>	DfE Statutory Guidance
	<a href="#"><u>Mental health and behaviour</u></a>	DfE Advice

Homelessness	<u><a href="#">Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions</a></u>	HCLG
Online	<u><a href="#">Sexting: Responding to incidents and safeguarding children</a></u>	UK Council for Child Internet Safety
Private Fostering	<u><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-private-fostering</a></u>	DfE Statutory Guidance
Radicalisation	<u><a href="#">Prevent duty guidance</a></u>	Home Office Guidance
	<u><a href="#">Prevent duty advice for schools</a></u>	DfE Advice
	<u><a href="#">Educate against hate website</a></u>	DfE & Home Office
Violence	<u><a href="#">Gangs and youth violence: For schools and colleges</a></u>	Home Office Advice
	<u><a href="#">Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy</a></u>	Home Office Strategy
	<u><a href="#">Violence against women and girls: National statement of expectations for victims</a></u>	Home Office Guidance
	<u><a href="#">Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges</a></u>	DfE Advice
	<u><a href="#">Serious violence strategy</a></u>	Home Office Strategy



## **Annex A Peer on Peer Abuse Guidance Portland Academy**

<b>Guidance out for consultation: Guidance ratified and adopted by the Standards Committee:</b>	<b>14.09.18 – 27.09.18 11.10.18 (pending)</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Review frequency</b>	<b>Annually</b> (or sooner if legislation requires it)
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>October 2019</b> (or sooner if legislation requires it)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Ascent Academies' Trust Safeguarding Lead</b>

## **INDEX**

## **Section**

Purpose and Aim	1
Introduction	2
Framework and Legislation	3
Introduction to Abuse and Harmful Behaviour	4
Acting on Concerns	5
Areas for Further Consideration	6
Supporting the Young Person who has been Harmed	7
Supporting the Young Person displaying Harmful Behaviour	8
Preventative Measures	9
References	
Appendix 1:	Examples of supportive strategies and interventions

# Peer on Peer Abuse Guidance for Portland Academy

## 1 Purpose and Aim

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. The purpose of this Annex to the Child Protection Policy is to explore the many forms of peer on peer abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.

## 2 Introduction

This Annex is included as part of Portland Academy's Child Protection Policy. It is included in response to the requirement in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019, which states that '*Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse*'. The document also states it is most important to ensure opportunities of seeking the voice of the child are 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.*

At Portland Academy 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 impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

Our policy will include a clear and comprehensive strategy taking a contextual whole-school approach to preventing and responding to peer on peer abuse, which includes a clear understanding to staff, children and young people and their parents about everyone's responsibility in managing any peer on peer abuse incidents. This will include both our prevention measures as well as our response to any incidents of harm (Farrer and Co. 2017).

All staff and trustees have signed to say that they have read, understood and agreed to work within this policy framework and parents have access to this policy.

## 3 Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is Working Together 2018, highlighting that every assessment of a child should 'reflect the unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context' (Working Together, 2018:28). This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, through ensuring procedures are in place in Academies to hear the voice of the child and to be mindful of the contexts children live in.

## 4 Introduction to Abuse and Harmful Behaviour

### What is Peer on Peer Abuse?

For these purposes, peer on peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate). Peer on peer abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender-based violence. Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to peer on peer abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of peer on peer abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences. This can be done by adopting a Contextual Safeguarding approach and by ensuring that our response to incidents of peer-on-peer abuse takes into account any potential complexity (Farrer and Co. 2017).

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in Academies and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and what it looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual. Preventative strategies also need to be carefully considered and implemented to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE 2019). Research suggests that peer on peer abuse may affect boys differently from girls, and that this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make-up. Barriers to disclosure will also be different. As a result, schools need to explore the gender dynamics of peer on peer abuse within their settings and recognise that these will play out differently in single sex, mixed or gender imbalanced environments (Farrer and Co. 2017).

### Children with Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges, the Academy provides pastoral support for its children, particularly when investigating any form of peer on peer abuse. (KCSIE, 2018)



## Language

For the purposes of this policy the language used will refer to alleged victims and alleged perpetrators as research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of peer on peer abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by peers, parents or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers (Farrer and Co. 2017). The language used to children and parents in the reporting of any incidents that may have occurred could impact on any future rehabilitation of children and young people following any investigations that may occur.

## Types of abuse

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.

### **Physical abuse (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)**

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, 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 corrective action be undertaken.

### **Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)**

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. Given the complex additional needs of our students it may be to serve a sensory need or may result from a lack of understanding. The additional needs of our pupils must be taken into consideration when these behaviours present and will inform how they are managed. 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 well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, sexually touching another or sexual assault, rape or abuse.

### **Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

**Rape:** A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Assault by Penetration:** A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual Assault:** A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

**Sexual harassment:** means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. In referencing sexual harassment, it is in the context of child on child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment (KCSIE 2019).

### **Bullying (inclusive of all types)**

The new definition of bullying is, 'a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those who they perceive as vulnerable'. (Taken from the Oxford, Cambridge and Collins dictionary, updated 2018).

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 is often 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.

Many experts say that 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.

(Preventing and tackling bullying, July 2017)

### **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 situations, the Academy will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these incidents.

### **Sexting (Youth Produced Imagery)**

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can occur in any relationship and to anyone, regardless of age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing indecent images of a person under 18 to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

### **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, 'gang' etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The idea behind this practice is that it 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.

### **Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour (physical, 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, these prejudices can involve; 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 and transgender).

### **Teenage relationship abuse**

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

## **Upskirting**

Upskirting is a term used to describe the act of taking a sexually intrusive photograph up someone's skirt without their permission or their knowledge. This act is carried out with the intention to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.

## **Measuring the behaviour**

Simon Hackett's continuum of behaviour (taken from Farrer and Co. 2017) can be a useful guide to measure the behaviour that has occurred and consider the circumstances around the incident(s).

The continuum looks at whether it:

- is socially acceptable
- involves a single incident or has occurred over a period of time
- is socially acceptable within the peer group
- is problematic and concerning
- involves any overt elements of victimisation or discrimination e.g. related to race, gender, sexual orientation, physical, emotional, or intellectual vulnerability
- involves an element of coercion or pre-planning
- involves a power imbalance between the child/children allegedly responsible for the behaviour and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power
- involves a misuse of power
- 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.

## **5 Acting on Concerns**

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 peer on peer 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 (Farrer and Co. 2017).

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

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 a true accurate account of the facts around what has happened so that nothing is forgotten.

This is imperative given the additional needs of our children. 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' as this can quickly create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer 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.

#### **a. Gather the Facts**

In cases specifically relating to Sexual violence and sexual harassment, part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018 states that two members of staff (one being the Designated Safeguarding Lead) should be present to manage the report, where possible.

In all circumstances, staff need to speak to all the young people involved separately. Gain a statement of facts from each child and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning, but to ask the young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this to gain clarity with open questions, such as 'where, when, why, who' (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). A full and clear record of exactly what the young person has said in their own language should be made and stored following the Academy recording protocols (CPOMS).

#### **b. Consider the Intent**

Begin to risk assess: Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another? Did the child who initiated the situation target a specific child with the intent to harm them, or did the behaviours escalate and result in them losing control?

#### **c. Consider Multi-Agency Referral**

If, from the information that you gather, you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should also be involved). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and have made a decision on what will happen next, then you will be informed on your next steps.

If social care 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 the Academy to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

Social Care may feel that it does not meet threshold criteria, in which case you may

challenge that decision with the individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

#### **d. Inform parents**

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care, you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved, then you need to do so as soon as possible.

If services are not going to be involved then, equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. Parents would not be informed if by doing so the child was put at further risk of significant harm.

The best way to inform parents 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, whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another. This is particularly relevant given the additional needs of the young people attending our Academy.

#### **e. Record the Concern**

Behaviour must be logged on the Behaviour Watch system detailing all known possible antecedents. IR1s must be completed where applicable. Individual pupil risk assessments and risk assessments for the room/environment (where applicable) must be revisited, updated and shared with staff and parents. Positive Handling Plans must also be revisited where applicable. The SEN Team can also discuss monitoring and intervention, including appropriate referrals to external agencies who can support the child and their behaviour (Specialist SALT, Occupational Therapy, CYPS etc.). The original concern and subsequent actions must also be recorded on the CPOMS system, on the individual case files of all children involved.

## **6 Areas for Further Consideration**

### **a. What is the age of the children involved?**

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? It must also be considered that children with additional needs may be developmentally younger than their years. This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise (see following points).

### **b. How, when and 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? Was the incident contrived? E.g. at time when less adults were around, e.g. break time or lunch time. Did the young person deliberately create an opportunity to harm, and do so knowingly?

### **c. What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?**

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying? Is it

repetitive behaviour? Is the version of one young person different from another and if so why?

**d. What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?**

Do the young people know and 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 child understand what appropriate behaviour is? What is the child's response to the incident when it is discussed? Are they able to see the impact their behaviour can have on others?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always apparent or obvious. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children's Services Social Care.

**e. Is this a repeated incident?**

Has the behaviour been repeated towards an individual on more than one occasion? Consideration must be given to whether or not the behaviour has persisted towards an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and deemed to be appropriately resolved.

**f. Are there any Current or Previous Safeguarding Concerns?**

Is there any current or previous involvement with Social Care or other intervention teams? What are the child's current circumstances? Are there any previous or historic concerns or involvement with the family or any of the children involved? Is the child being monitored as vulnerable or in receipt of Early Help?

**Outcomes**

The outcome of the investigation will follow local threshold guidance. A referral to the police/social care for a full investigation (tier 4) may be deemed appropriate. This may result in Children's Services undertaking a further assessment (Tier 3) or as an Academy we may have identified additional services/intervention that are non-statutory and in which case completed an Early Help assessment (Tier 2). It may be that on investigation, a decision is made to handle the incident(s) internally, in which case the Academy may implement a risk assessment plan (Tier 1).

The Academy has a duty of care to manage the education needs of both children/young people, in which case a risk assessment plan may be needed irrespective of the outcome.

**7 Supporting the Young Person who has been Harmed (alleged victim)**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure

future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

The level and nature of support required will depend on the individual young person and their specific need. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and 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 are of a bullying nature, 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 cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be raised and discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in the Academy. They may benefit from having someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and/or identified services to offer additional support.

## **8 Supporting the Young Person Displaying Harmful Behaviour (alleged perpetrator)**

In this circumstance 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 that young person receives a corrective action 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 cases 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 ongoing 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 whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation, the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others. If this is the 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.

Portland Academy may also choose an appropriate corrective action, such as allowing a period of reflection time to allow the young person to consider their behaviour.

### **Continued Monitoring and Support**

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). Regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative in order to keep them safe.

### **Disciplinary Action**

The Academy will need to consider whether disciplinary action may be appropriate for any child/children involved – any such action should address the abuse, the causes of it, and attitudes underlying it. Disciplinary action may sometimes be appropriate, including (a) to ensure that the child/children take(s) responsibility for and realise(s) the seriousness of their behaviour; (b) to demonstrate to the child/children and others that peer on peer abuse can never be tolerated; and (c) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of other children. However, these considerations must be balanced against the child's/children's own potential unmet needs and any safeguarding concerns.

Before deciding on appropriate action the Academy will always consider its duty to safeguard all children from harm; the underlying reasons for a child's behaviour; any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the child; the risk that the child may pose to other children; and the severity of the peer on peer abuse and the causes of it. The Academy will, where appropriate, consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of using managed moves or exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognising that even if this is ultimately deemed to be necessary, some of the measures referred to in this policy may still be required. Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the other children in the Academy. Engaging in Fair Access Panel Processes to assist with decision-making associated to managed moves and exclusions can also be beneficial (Farrer and Co. 2017).

### **Review of Circumstances**

Following any incident of harm, it is necessary for the Academy to consider if anything could have been done differently. Internal lessons learnt can support in identifying what changes, if any, within the Academy need to occur. This demonstrates how proactive the Academy is in continually reviewing its policies and systems in effectively keeping children safe.

## 9 Preventative Measures

For our Academy, it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, and most importantly for Portland Academy, is recognition that peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms in place. It is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

This can be supported by ensuring that each Academy has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.

Resilience can be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek a one on one opportunity to be harmful to another.

To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people, including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare those to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

Parents need to be informed and included in policy forming, lesson plans and through open and frank conversations, training/courses about what peer on peer abuse is and how the Academy will be tackling it. This can help to alleviate any concerns and worries they may have and create a joined-up approach.

It is important that signposting is available to young people in the event that they don't feel confident raising an issue to staff or a peer. External services or support programmes could be brought in to talk to young people about specific issues in support of the prevention of peer on peer abuse. A range of strategies may be offered and implemented (see Appendix 1).

It is useful to ensure that young people are part of changing their circumstances and the related procedures within the Academy. The school council/pupil voice encourages young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. This helps to create a positive ethos in the Academy and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

Multi agency working can consolidate in house procedures in the Academy. By accessing advice, support and guidance, effective decisions can be made in collaboration to improve outcomes for children who may be at risk of harm.

Seeking advice and guidance can act as a preventative measure so that the right course of action is taken at the earliest opportunity. It is also necessary that the Academy actively refers concerns/allegations of peer on peer abuse where necessary to front door services/children's social care and the police where appropriate. This is particularly important because peer on peer abuse can be a complex issue, and even more so where wider safeguarding concerns exist. It is often not appropriate for one single agency (where the incident cannot be managed internally) to try to address the issue alone – it requires effective partnership working (Farrer and Co. 2017).

Academies which excel at tackling bullying (and peer abuse) have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the Academy staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the Academy gates including travel to and from the Academy. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.

(Preventing and tackling bullying, 2017).

## References

### **This policy has been heavily supported by the key document:**

Farrer and Co: Peer on Peer Abuse Toolkit. December 2017.

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/Global/Peer-on-peer%20abuse%20toolkit%2014.pdf>

### **This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

DFE: Keeping Children Safe in Education. September 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

DFE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies. July 2017

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/623895/Preventing\\_and\\_tackling\\_bullying\\_advice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf)

DFE: Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges. May 2018

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/719902/Sexual\\_violence\\_and\\_sexual\\_harassment\\_between\\_children\\_in\\_schools\\_and\\_colleges.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719902/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf)

## Appendix 1

### Examples of supportive strategies and interventions

- Meeting with parents and relevant professionals (SALT and OT)
- Meeting with class staff to discuss/ implement sensory/behavioural strategies
- Referral to SALT and OT
- Sensory profile to assess the need for sensory strategies/resources
- Referral to CYPS
- Pupils to access positive support plan
- Updates to risk assessment and positive handling plan
- Record on CPOMS and request monitoring by Tutors/SEN Team
- SCERTS targets
- Social stories or comic strip conversations
- Visuals or prompts
- Rebound therapy
- Bowen therapy
- Smaller groups
- Increased 1:1 time throughout the day or at key points identified
- Higher ratio of staff
- Change of face (either of staff or children)
- Identify if there are training needs and implement CPD for staff
- Targeted sessions through the SMSC curriculum