CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE POLICY

BEDSTONE COLLEGE

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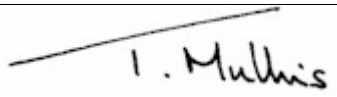
Signed Off	

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Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Executive Summary

At Bedstone College we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with as soon as possible and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the pupil, with full consideration to impact on that pupil's emotional and mental health and well-being.

Peer on peer abuse is very closely linked to the College anti-bullying policy and child protection policy, as well as other key documents which include mobile devices policy, code of behaviour and the College Rules.

Staff should be able to recognise the importance of distinguishing between developmentally expected behaviour and problematic behaviour and highly abnormal / abusive behaviour.

This policy, our child protection policy, government guidance and other references listed provide clear guidance on how schools should manage sexual violence and sexual harassment between children. It is made very clear that such behaviours are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. Similarly, such behaviours should not be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys". This section of the policy is fit for purpose, remains unchanged, and should inform all practice in relation to any Harmful Sexual Behaviours between children, specifically the following section:

As a school, where we discover incidents of sexualised behaviours between children, we will respond to this in line with the Shropshire Protocol for Managing Peer on Peer Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools, Settings and Colleges and with reference to the following documents:

Brook Traffic Light Tool see Appendix B

Background

Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020 states that

'Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with'

"Governing bodies should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children". The guidance also states the importance of minimising the risks of Child-on-Child abuse.

In order to protect children, we need to be aware of the level and nature of risk to which pupils are or may be exposed, take a whole-school approach to preventing and responding to Child-on-Child abuse and use the policy as a preventative measure, recognise national and increasing concern about this issue, and encourage pupils to speak up should they or a friend feel unsafe.

Aims of the Policy

1. To be preventative and minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse
2. To help identify and manage peer on peer abuse
3. To be a working document alongside the child protection policy and other relevant policies

Definition

What is peer on peer abuse?

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), friendships, and wider peer associations.

It can take various forms including (but not limited to): bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth produced sexual imagery, youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and / or be gender–based.

Online Child-on-Child abuse is any form of Child-on-Child abuse with a digital element, for example, sexting, online abuse, coercion and exploitation, Child-on-Child grooming, threatening language delivered via online means, the distribution of sexualised content, and harassment.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand, that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

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

Types of Abuse - details

Sexually harmful behaviour / sexual abuse (including inappropriate sexualised language, touching, assault). The Hackett continuum model demonstrates the range of sexual behaviours, which in turn is useful to understand the level of behaviour and therefore how to respond. See Appendix A and Appendix B.

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 happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

Bullying including cyber bullying. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason eg size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

In assessing if the behaviour is bullying it is worth considering the level of aggression and if it is repeated behaviour or a significant one-off incident.

> An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

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.

Relational aggression is a form of bullying set to intentionally manipulate and damage the relationships of their victims. This may include; spreading rumours, making friendships conditional, making fun of the individual's appearance, coercing or encouraging them to take a particular course of "negative" action or excluding the individual from a social group.

Relational 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). 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.

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

Responsibility of Staff

Identify the concern, take all concerns seriously never tolerate abuse as "banter"

Log on PUPIL as a pastoral concern

In particular, consideration must always be given to whether an issue should be responded to through the first stages of the bullying policy, as high-level bullying, or as Child-on-Child abuse. Staff should seek advice and support from the DSLs if they have any doubt.

Inform the DSL

Support all those involved (victim(s) and perpetrator(s)) through pastoral care system (tutor, hsm, medical centre, DSLs, friends, home)

Action and Ongoing Review

Identify locations that may be vulnerable for pupils

> Language: Try to steer aware from victim and perpetrator, more understanding of the child and the reasoning behind their behaviour before labelling

Identify any pupils who may be vulnerable (Heads of House)

Communicate with those who need to be aware (Heads of House / tutors / DSLs)

> Actively promote gender equality and healthy relationships (raise awareness with Prefects)
>
> Pupils: Raise awareness and frequent messaging about healthy relationships. Examples of what is unhealthy and what is abusive. Link to positive mental health.
>
> Whilst Hackett's model is focused on sexual abuse, it is a useful generic starting point for categorising other types of Child-on-Child abuse

References

Internal References

- Anti-bullying Policy
- ICT Acceptable use policy
- Mobile phone and mobile devices policy
- Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- College Rules

External references

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (May 2018) Part 5 KCSIE

Preventing and tackling bullying (July 2017)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9 12592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf

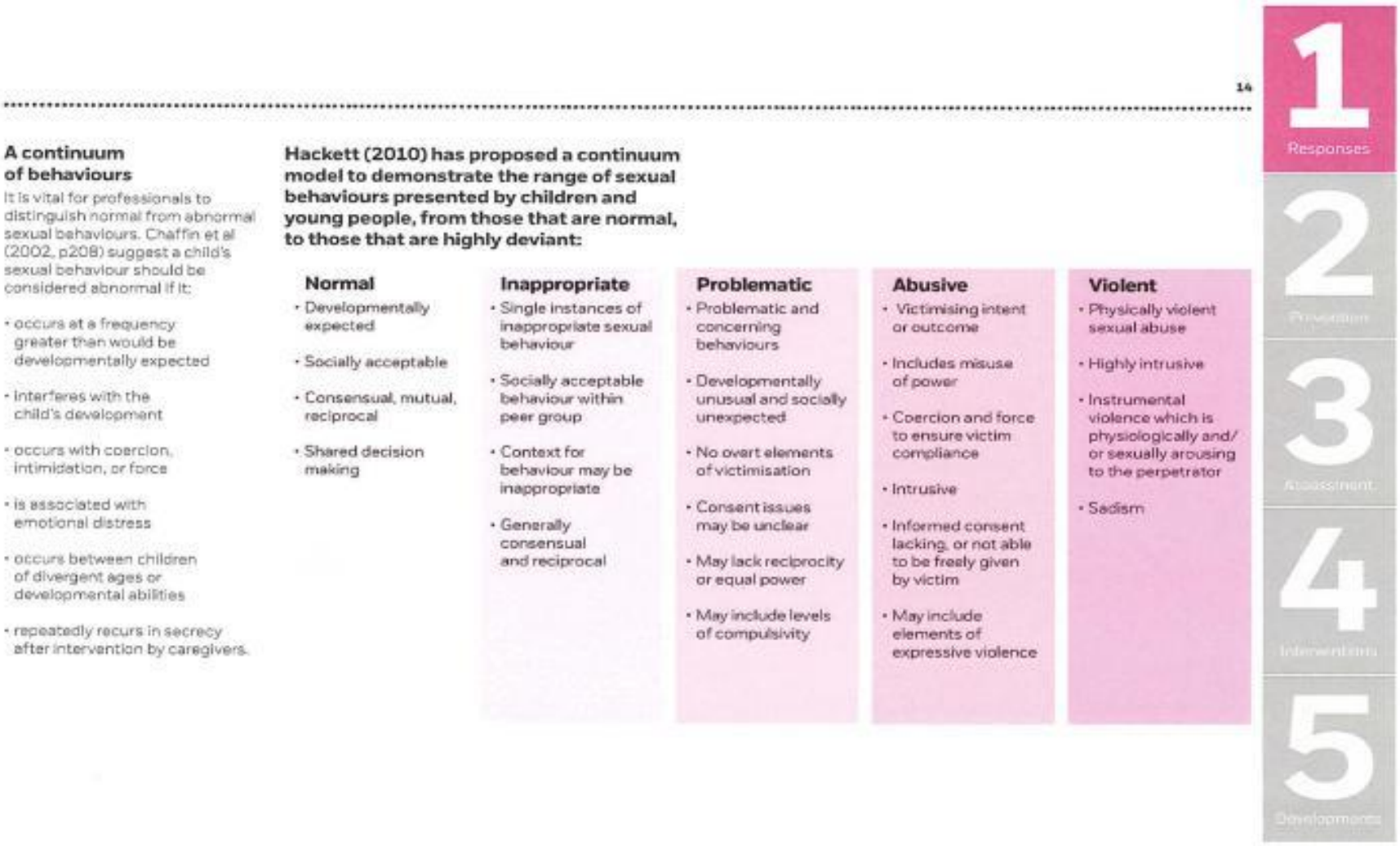
A continuum of behaviours (Hackett 2010)

Protocol for Managing Peer on Peer Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools, Settings and Colleges (December 2018)

https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/4428/protocol-for-managing-Child-on-Child-harmful-sexual-behaviour-in-schools-4-final.pdf

https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/clients-and-sectors/safeguarding/farrer--co-safeguarding-peer-on-peer-abuse-toolkit-2019.pdf

Appendix A – A Continuum of Behaviours



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A continuum of behaviours

It is vital for professionals to distinguish normal from abnormal sexual behaviours. Chaffin et al (2002, p208) suggest a child's sexual behaviour should be considered abnormal if it:

- occurs at a frequency greater than would be developmentally expected
- interferes with the child's development
- occurs with coercion, intimidation, or force
- is associated with emotional distress
- occurs between children of divergent ages or developmental abilities
- repeatedly recurs in secrecy after intervention by caregivers.

Hackett (2010) has proposed a continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people, from those that are normal, to those that are highly deviant:

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent
• Developmentally expected	• Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour	• Problematic and concerning behaviours	• Victimising intent or outcome	• Physically violent sexual abuse
• Socially acceptable	• Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group	• Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected	• Includes misuse of power	• Highly intrusive
• Consensual, mutual, reciprocal	• Context for behaviour may be inappropriate	• No overt elements of victimisation	• Coercion and force to ensure victim compliance	• Instrumental violence which is physiologically and/ or sexually arousing to the perpetrator
• Shared decision making	• Generally consensual and reciprocal	• Consent issues may be unclear	• Intrusive	• Sadism
		• May lack reciprocity or equal power	• Informed consent lacking, or not able to be freely given by victim	
		• May include levels of compulsivity	• May include elements of expressive violence	

1 Responses
2 Prevention
3 Assessment
4 Interventions
5 Developments

Appendix B – Brook Model of Sexual Behaviours

brook

SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS
TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL

Behaviours: age 0 to 5 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviours

- holding or playing with own genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about other children's genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about breasts, bottoms or genitals of adults
- games e.g. mummies and daddies, doctors and nurses
- enjoying nakedness
- interest in body parts and what they do
- curiosity about the differences between boys and girls

Amber behaviours

- preoccupation with adult sexual behaviour
- pulling other children's pants down/ skirts up/trousers down against their will
- talking about sex using adult slang
- preoccupation with touching the genitals of other people
- following others into toilets or changing rooms to look at them or touch them
- talking about sexual activities seen on TV/online

Red behaviours

- persistently touching the genitals of other children
- persistent attempts to touch the genitals of adults
- simulation of sexual activity in play
- sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects
- forcing other children to engage in sexual play

What is green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What is amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- unusual for that particular child or young person
- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

What is red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Brook has taken every care to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate and up-to-date at the time of being published. As information and knowledge is constantly changing, readers are strongly advised to use this information for up to one month from print date. Brook accepts no responsibility for difficulties that may arise as a result of an individual acting on the advice and recommendations it contains.

Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool adapted with permission from True Relationships & Reproductive Health. (2012). Traffic Lights guide to sexual behaviours in children and young people: identify, understand and respond. Brisbane: True Relationships & Reproductive Health, Australia.

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SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS
TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL

Behaviours: age 5 to 9 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviours

- feeling and touching own genitals
- curiosity about other children's genitals
- curiosity about sex and relationships, e.g. differences between boys and girls, how sex happens, where babies come from, same-sex relationships
- sense of privacy about bodies
- telling stories or asking questions using swear and slang words for parts of the body

Amber behaviours

- questions about sexual activity which persist or are repeated frequently, despite an answer having been given
- sexual bullying face to face or through texts or online messaging
- engaging in mutual masturbation
- persistent sexual images and ideas in talk, play and art
- use of adult slang language to discuss sex

Red behaviours

- frequent masturbation in front of others
- sexual behaviour engaging significantly younger or less able children
- forcing other children to take part in sexual activities
- simulation of oral or penetrative sex
- sourcing pornographic material online

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SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS
TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL

Behaviours: age 9 to 13 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviours

- solitary masturbation
- use of sexual language including swear and slang words
- having girl/boyfriends who are of the same, opposite or any gender
- interest in popular culture, e.g. fashion, music, media, online games, chatting online
- need for privacy
- consensual kissing, hugging, holding hands with peer

Amber behaviours

- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/ or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- verbal, physical or cyber/virtual sexual bullying involving sexual aggression
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) targeted bullying
- exhibitionism, e.g. flashing or mooning
- giving out contact details online
- viewing pornographic material
- worrying about being pregnant or having STIs

Red behaviours

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- distributing naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- sexually explicit talk with younger children
- sexual harassment
- arranging to meet with an online acquaintance in secret
- genital injury to self or others
- forcing other children of same age, younger or less able to take part in sexual activities
- sexual activity e.g. oral sex or intercourse
- presence of sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- evidence of pregnancy

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SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS
TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL

Behaviours: age 13 to 17 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviours

- solitary masturbation
- sexually explicit conversations with peers
- obscenities and jokes within the current cultural norm
- interest in erotica/pornography
- use of internet/e-media to chat online
- having sexual or non-sexual relationships
- sexual activity including hugging, kissing, holding hands
- consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of similar age and developmental ability
- choosing not to be sexually active

Amber behaviours

- accessing exploitative or violent pornography
- uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/ or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- concern about body image
- aking and sending naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- single occurrence of peeping, exposing, mooning or obscene gestures
- giving out contact details online
- joining adult- only social networking sites and giving false personal information
- arranging a face to face meeting with an online contact alone

Red behaviours

- exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- preoccupation with sex, which interferes with daily function
- sexual degradation/humiliation of self or others
- attempting/forcing others to expose genitals
- sexually aggressive/exploitative behaviour
- sexually explicit talk with younger children
- sexual harassment
- non-consensual sexual activity
- use of/acceptance of power and control in sexual relationships
- genital injury to self or others
- sexual contact with others where there is a big difference in age or ability
- sexual activity with someone in authority and in a position of trust
- sexual activity with family members
- involvement in sexual exploitation and/or trafficking
- sexual contact with animals
- receipt of gifts or money in exchange for sex

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