

Child Protection Policy

Portland Academy

Policy out for consultation: Policy ratified and adopted by the Standards Committee:	6/12/2021 6/9/2021
Version	3.1
Review frequency	Annually (or sooner if legislation requires it)
Date of next review	August 2022 (or sooner if legislation requires it)
Responsible Officer	Ascent Academies' Trust Safeguarding Lead

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Annex A:

Additional Advice and Support (KCSIE 2021)
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 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/cyber-bullying and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, victimisation, sexual violence and sexual harassment, criminal/sexual exploitation including county lines and serious violent crime, preventing radicalisation (extremism, radicalisation and terrorism) and issues such as honour based abuse, 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**, **Stephen Murphy** 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 or extra-familial harm) and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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 or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs
 - has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
 - has a mental health need
 - 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 sexual or criminal or exploitation
 - is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
 - has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending
-
- 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 at risk of 'honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage
- is a privately fostered child
- is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

(KCSIE 2021)

All staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect and peer on peer (child on child) abuse in its many forms. This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and a safe educational environment for all children. All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. 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 2021. **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, 2021 Annex B, include

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children in the court system
- Children missing from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Cybercrime
- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- So called 'Honour Based Abuse' inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage.
- FGM
- Forced Marriage
- Preventing Radicalisation
- The Prevent duty
- Channel
- Additional Support
- Peer on Peer / Child on Child Abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Upskirting
- The response to a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment

- Additional advice and support

(KCSIE 2021)

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 Lead or Deputies 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 (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 2021 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 2018, 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 (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE), county lines and serious violent crime, honour based abuse (HBA) inclusive of female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, preventing radicalisation, (extremism, radicalisation and terrorism), harassment, bullying including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and victimisation) preventing impairment of children's health (physical and mental health) or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and 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 clearly understand their school's systems and procedures for sharing information to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as shared in this policy.
- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at ALL times (taking the child's wishes and feeling into account) and reassure them that they will take seriously any concerns raised to them by the child and both support them and keep them safe. This will include determining what action to take and what services to provide on behalf of the child in need (for non-safeguarding concerns).
- Ensure that they report ANY concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and consistently promote a culture of vigilance in school, where concerns are shared and dealt with as soon as possible.. (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. Staff should never let fears of sharing information stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** in respect of any **safeguarding issues** 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 inclusive of 'Low-Level' Concerns 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 1st 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/terrorism (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 that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well- being cases and 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. This includes not using their mobile phones or smart technology to sexually harass, share indecent images (consensually or non-consensually) and view and share pornography and other harmful content.
- 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 status, authority and training to undertake such a role and is able to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare safeguarding 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 2021).

Portland Academy has appointed: **Martin Hope, Stephen Murphy** 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.

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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is expected to refer cases:

- Of suspected abuse to the Integrated Contact and Referral Team and support staff who make referrals to the Integrated Contact and Referral Team.
- To the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required and support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme.
- Where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required.
- Where a crime may have been committed to the police as required.

Work with others

- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners (Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership).

- 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.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding.
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT technicians and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEN in a college and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the Senior Mental Health Lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances;
- Work with the Head of Academy and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement and achievement.
- Ensure that the academy knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
- Support teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

Information Sharing and Managing the Child Protection File

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved;
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

They should ensure the file is only accessed by those who need to see it and where the file or content within it is shared, this happens in line with information sharing advice.

Where children leave the school or college (including in-year transfers) the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained. 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.

Lack of information about their circumstances can impact on the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. 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.

Training Knowledge and Skills

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide Designated Safeguarding Leads with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care (Together for Children) referral arrangements.
- 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.

- Understand the importance of the role the Designated Safeguarding Lead has in providing information and support to children social care in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and well-being, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions 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.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other Designated Safeguarding Leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

Providing support to staff

Training should support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- Ensure that staff are supported during the referrals processes;
- Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Understanding the views of children

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, Designated Safeguarding Leads should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them;
- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

Holding and sharing information

Designated Safeguarding Leads should be equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school and college, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners,
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.

Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021: Annex C.

Raise Awareness

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

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's or college's Child Protection Policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff.
- 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.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker, are experiencing with teachers and school and college leadership staff.

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, 2021: 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 Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse Policy and the Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concern) Policy, especially new or part-time staff who may work with 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.
- Ensure that a Professional Supervision Policy is in place for all Designated Safeguarding Leads and is a well embedded process in schools that allows for critical and reflective practice to promote the educational outcomes and improved mental health and wellbeing of all vulnerable children.
- Ensure that a whole academy policy for Induction is in place for all new starters including members of the workforce and volunteers, to induct them thoroughly into all key aspects of their role and responsibility in the academy across all five bubbles of the PG: SF business model.
- 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, to ensure a good and safe educational environment for all children.

This means that ALL staff will take a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to any unacceptable behaviour including ‘banter’ and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and provide a safe educational environment for all children. This policy should include bullying/cyber-bullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. This policy should additionally include the use of reasonable force. 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 to ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying/cyber-bullying, prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, is in place, as a stand-alone policy but also covered in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Ensure that an effective Record-Keeping Policy regarding information on children’s welfare is in place. This should detail the school’s procedures and applications for recording information including e.g. use of CPOMS/My Concerns, what data will be

recorded and for what purposes, who in school will have access to this information, how it will be shared and transferred and the school's retention schedule.

- 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

Governing Bodies and Proprietors should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021.

Role of the Safeguarding Trustee

Safeguarding Trustee, Lynn Watson, has also been appointed at senior board level as Chair of the board of Trustees. To support the Designated Safeguarding Lead her 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 Board of Trustees are aware of their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements and the need for the school/college to understand their role in effective multi-agency working under the new arrangements.
- 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, Head of Academy, staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) allegations are reported directly to the Designated Officer (DO), ensuring effective whistleblowing procedures are in place.
- Ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates including online safety (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, and at

least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Trustees should also ensure that this training is integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole school or college's safeguarding approach and culture of vigilance.

- Ensure that the Academy has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place to limit children's exposure to inappropriate and harmful online content and ensure that staff, pupils and visitors to their site follow their school / setting's acceptable use policy / online safety policy. Trustees should also ensure that this is regularly reviewed and risk assessed to keep up with evolving cyber-crime technologies.
- Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding, keeping themselves safe, including online safety through Relationships Education (Primary) or Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary) and that this approach to teaching is adapted to meet the needs of more vulnerable pupils, victims of abuse and some SEND children.
- Ensure that a Designated Teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, including working with the Together for Children virtual school Headteacher and discuss how pupil premium funding for looked after children will be used.
- Ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.
- Ensure their Child Protection Policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect for children with Special Educational Needs. 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.
- Ensure that where children may need to learn online at home, there are clear, safe and effective protocols and provisions in place.
- Ensure that where the academy premises are rented or hired to organisations or individuals that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe.

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.

*The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer/child on child abuse) in education and **ALL** staff should be aware of it.

** It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but all peer on peer/child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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.

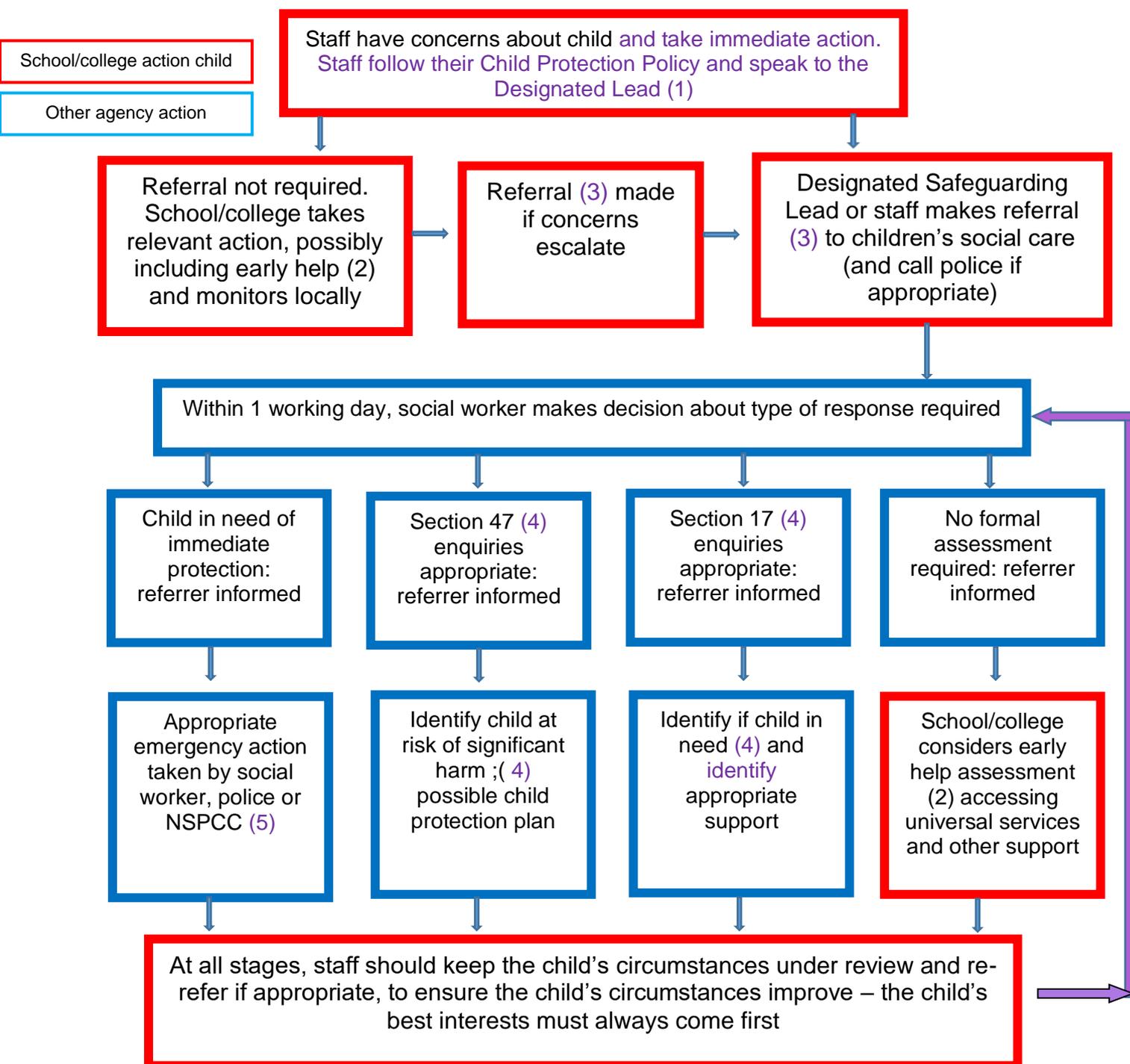
Children potentially at greater risk of harm

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities (Together for Children) and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the Designated safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence. Staff should be aware that experience and indicators of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to boys but for both boys and girls being criminally exploited they maybe at higher risk of sexual exploitation. Staff should also be aware of the indicators that signal a child is at risk from or involved in serious violent crime, for example being missing from education, changing friendships, a decline in school performance, self-harming and unexplained gifts and possessions. Staff should be able to recognise the risk factors that increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, being absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery.

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 2021)



1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of [KCSIE 2021](#)
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, volunteers and contractors 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 or an allegation is made involving a member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) must be reported to the Head of Academy immediately. If the complaint involves the Head then the CEO must be informed. If the complaint 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 2021).

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, 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.

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Where this concern does not meet the harm threshold, all staff should continue to follow their staff behaviour/code of conduct inclusive of 'low-level' concerns policy and share information with the Head of Academy or CEO. This concern may be where an adult's behaviour is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work but does not meet the allegation threshold.

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 Child Protection Policy, the policy and procedures to deal with peer on peer/child on child abuse; the Behaviour Policy (which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), the Staff Behaviour/Code of Conduct (inclusive of 'Low Level' Concern) Policy, the Safer Working Practice Document, the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education and the role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their 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 receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) which is regularly updated. Our CPD for staff is integrated, aligned and considered as part of our whole school safeguarding approach, wider staff training and curriculum planning.

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).

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Record Keeping

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. The academy has clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

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 records include, a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome (Purpose, Action, and Outcome). 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 school we follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines and information regarding children who have required statutory intervention at any point in their school career will automatically be shared with the receiving school. This is to ensure that all children are given the right support and intervention and information is shared strictly on a need to know basis.

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 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/child on child abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be investigated and dealt with appropriately as part of our school's zero tolerance approach to unacceptable behaviour.. No peer on peer/child on child 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/child on child 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 both on and off line. 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 whole academy approach to online safety that considers the four areas of risk: Content; being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake

news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-semitism, radicalisation and extremism. Contact; being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial and other purposes. Conduct; personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying. Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

- 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) mood or injury must be considered for each individual child and their own circumstances and must not be dismissed. Children with SEND and certain medical conditions are often more prone to peer group isolation than other children and there is greater potential for children with SEND and certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying (including prejudice-based bullying), without outwardly showing any signs. Therefore, time must be 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, schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND and certain medical conditions.

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 safeguarding 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 2021 and Working Together 2018. At Portland Academy we share this commitment.
- **Avec Human Resources manual.**
- **Ascent Staff Code of Conduct** - inclusive of 'Low Level' Concerns Policy and Safer Recruitment Consortium Guidance for Safer Working Practices for those working with Young People in education settings. 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)

- **Remote/Home learning Policy** inclusive of all expectations for children learning at home.
- **Record-Keeping Policy** inclusive of all procedures around the recording, storing and transferring of information regarding children
- **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).**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy/Process/Plan**
- **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.
- **Relationship and Sex education (RSE) Policy (Secondary)** inclusive Health Education content.

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 2014-2021 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

Early help Referral Form

www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/professionals/early-help

Education Act 2002 Section 175

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>

Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/en/ukpga/2021/16/enacted>

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

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

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021
<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

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

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
2019-2020	Chris Kemp	Martin Hope Karen Hart	David Barker
2020-2021	Chris Kemp	Martin Hope Karen Hart Graeme Musson	Lynn Watson
2021-2022	Chris Kemp	Martin Hope Karen Hart Graeme Musson Stephen Murphy	Lynn Watson

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 Abuse Guidance'	Approved by CEO, Executive Head for Safeguarding and Safeguarding Trustee 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)	Appointed by CEO approved by Trustees
3.09.19	Policy updated in light of changes to Statutory Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.	Approved by CEO ratified by Board of Trustees 05.12.19
2.09.20	Policy updated in light of changes to Statutory Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Chair of Trustees – updated to Lynn Watson	Approved by CEO ratified by Board of Trustees 21.10.20
6.09.21	Policy updated in light of changes to Statutory Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 New Trustee appointed to safeguarding – Lynn Watson. Additional DDSLS added – Stephen Murphy, Graeme Musson	Approved by CEO 6.9.2021

6.12.2021	G Musson left. S Murphy appointed new DDSL Additional information around LGBT+ students/inclusivity	
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Appendix 1

Abuse or Safeguarding Issue	Link to Guidance/Advice	Source
Abuse	What to do if you're worried a child is being abused	DfE advice
	Domestic abuse: Various Information/Guidance	Home Office (HO)
	Faith based abuse: National Action Plan	DfE advice
	Relationship abuse: disrespect nobody	Home Office website
	Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy	Home Office Policy Paper
	Together we can stop child sexual abuse	HM Government campaign
Bullying	Preventing bullying including cyberbullying	DfE advice
Children missing from education, home or care	Children missing education	DfE statutory guidance
	Child missing from home or care	DfE statutory guidance
	Children and adults missing strategy	Home Office strategy
Children with family members in prison	National Information Centre on Children of Offenders	Barnardo's in partnership with HM Prison and Probation Service
Child Exploitation	Trafficking: safeguarding children	DfE and HO guidance
	Care of unaccompanied and trafficked children	DfE statutory guidance
	Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims	HO statutory guidance
Drugs	Drug Strategy 2017	Home Office strategy
	Information and advice on drugs	Talk to Frank website
	Drug and Alcohol education – teacher	PSHE Association

	guidance & evidence review	website

(so called) "Honour Based Abuse" including FGM and forced marriage	Female genital mutilation: information and resources	Home Office guidance
	Female genital mutilation: multi agency statutory guidance	DfE, DH and HO statutory guidance
	fm@fcdo.gov.uk	Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) statutory guidance
	FGM resource pack	HM Government guidance
Health and Well-being	Fabricated or induced illness: safeguarding children	DfE, DH, HO
	Rise Above: Free PSHE resources on health, wellbeing and resilience	Public Health England
	Medical-conditions: supporting pupils at school	DfE statutory guidance
	Mental health and behaviour	DfE advice
Homelessness	Homelessness: How local authorities should exercise their functions	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government guidance
Private Fostering	Private fostering: local authorities	DfE statutory guidance
Radicalisation	Prevent duty guidance	Home Office guidance
	Prevent duty: additional advice for schools and childcare providers	DfE advice
	Educate Against Hate Website	DfE and Home Office advice
	Prevent for FE and Training	Education and Training Foundation (ETF)
Violence	Serious violence strategy	Home Office Strategy
	Factors linked to serious violence and how these factors can be used to identify individuals for intervention	Home Office

	Youth Endowment Fund	Home Office
	Gangs and youth violence: for schools and colleges	Home Office advice
	Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy	Home Office strategy
	Violence against women and girls: national statement of expectations for victims	Home Office guidance
	Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges	DfE advice



Annex A Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse Guidance Portland Academy

Guidance out for consultation: Guidance ratified and adopted by the Standards Committee:	6/12/2021
Version	3.1
Review frequency	Annually (or sooner if legislation requires it)
Date of next review	August 2022 (or sooner if legislation requires it)
Responsible Officer	Ascent Academies' Trust Safeguarding Lead

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Appendix 1: Examples of supportive strategies and interventions

Peer on Peer/Child on Child 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/child on child abuse. The purpose of this Annex to the Child Protection Policy is to explore the many forms of peer on peer/child on child 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 2021 states that *'Governing Bodies and Proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school or college approach to safeguarding. This means ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.'* Furthermore, *'Where there is a safeguarding concern, 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, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.'*

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (peer on peer/child on child abuse) 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 /child on child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in Portland Academy 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 that if staff have any concerns regarding peer on peer /child on child abuse they should speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy).

This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and a safe educational environment for all children.

All staff must ensure that they reassure any victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Peer on peer/child on child 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 physical abuse);
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- 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 them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Sexting (known as youth produced sexual imagery) 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).

(KCSIE 2021)

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/child on child 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/child on child 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 should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. (KCSIE, 2021).

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 2021, 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/Child on Child Abuse?

For these purposes, peer on peer/child on child 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/child on child abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), intimate relationship abuse between peers, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos, upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (KCSIE, 2021). It may also involve gang related behaviours, including serious violence and county lines. 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/child on child abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of peer on peer/child on child 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. This means adopting a **whole school community approach** by ensuring all staff: are aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments (KCSIE, 2021),

Research suggests that peer/child on child abuse is one of the most common forms of abuse affecting children in the UK (Farrer and Co, 2019). 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 2021). Research suggests that peer on peer/child on child 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. It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but all peer on peer/child on child abuse must be taken seriously (KCSIE, 2021). 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 or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions 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 or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions 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, schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support for children with SEND or certain medical conditions particularly when investigating any form of peer on peer/child on child abuse.
(KCSIE, 2021)

Language

For the purposes of this policy the language used will refer to ‘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/child on child 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). This is also so that victims understand and they will always be believed, supported, listened to and taken seriously. 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. The use of certain words can be both inflammatory and distressing for children and their parents, so care should be taken in the discussion of incidents with parents

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.

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.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual. B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (This could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.)

What is consent? Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is 16
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape

Sexual Harassment: means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of the academy. 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 2021).

Sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as; telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual 'jokes' or taunting;
- Physical behaviour, such as; deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

It may include:

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and videos;
- Sharing of unwanted explicit content
- Upskirting;
- Sexualised online bullying;
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media;
- Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats;

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and

may overlap. They can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Schools and colleges should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated by factors outside the school or college, including intimate personal relationships. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Staff should be aware that it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. (Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, 2021)

Causing Someone to Engage in Sexual Activity Without Consent

This includes forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party. (see above definition)

Consensual and Non-Consensual Sharing of Nudes and Semi-Nudes Images and/or Videos

This is also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery. 'Youth Involved/Produced' includes children sharing images that they, or another child, have created themselves.

'Imagery' covers both still photos and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the policy).

Sexting (more commonly known as) 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, to anyone, whatever their age, gender identity or sexual orientation.

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 on 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

Bullying (including Cyberbullying, Prejudice-Based and Discriminatory Bullying)

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 identity, 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. We are also aware that LGBT+ students are nearly twice as likely to be called names, verbally

harassed or physically assaulted at school compared to their non-LGBT+ peers, therefore we have a strong focus to support our LGBT+ students.

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. Many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e. 3G, 4G and 5G). This means that some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images; consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups) and view and share pornography and other harmful content. (KCSIE, 2021)

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.

Prejudiced Behaviour and Discriminatory Bullying

The term prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour (physical, emotional or both and online) 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 identity; home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class); and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transgender etc).

Sexting (Youth Involved/Youth Produced Sexual Imagery)

'Youth Involved/Produced' 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 identity or sexual orientation.

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. It can 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.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. The umbrella term is 'harmful sexual behaviour' (HSB). Harmful Sexual Behaviour can occur online and/or face to face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.

When considering Harmful Sexual Behaviour, ages and stages of development of children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, e.g. the child is disabled, or smaller in stature.

Harmful sexual behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in harmful sexual 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. Harmful sexual behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another, sexual assault, rape or abuse.

Abuse in Intimate Personal Relationships Between Peers

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers 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 abuser uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, 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/child on child 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.

Firstly all staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. It is important for all staff to deal with a situation of peer/child on child 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/child on child 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, 2021 states that two members of staff (one being the Designated Safeguarding Lead) should be present to manage the report, where possible. Staff should not view or forward illegal images of a child and instead confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to police for inspection.

The most appropriate member of staff with the best relationship with the child should be the person alongside the child who wishes to disclose wherever possible. However, staff should always be aware that children may choose to disclose to any member of staff that they feel most comfortable with and therefore all staff need basic training in managing disclosures. In any circumstance the member of staff must make clear to the child that they cannot maintain confidentiality if what is being shared has put or will put the child or another person at risk of harm. Staff must also be aware that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse.

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. This involves listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed and not asking leading questions. This means only interrupting 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?). Then, a full and clear record of exactly what the young person has said in their own language after the child has finished the disclosure, so the child feels listened to 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. Decide on your next course of action

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.

If a young person is deemed to be 'Gillick Competent' following the 'Fraser' guidelines and does not wish you to share the information with parents, then the school must consider this especially for example if the young person is pregnant and this is why they are being bullied (unless this has occurred through significant harm in which case a criminal/social care case is likely or the young person is under the age of 13).

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent or even with them (they may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in any way). Where school can evidence they are acting in the best interests of the young person they would not be criticised, however this would be the case if they actively breached the rights and choices of the young person.

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. The Evolve accident reporting system 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. The wishes and feelings of the victim

It is important to understand how the victim wants to proceed to allow as much control as is reasonably possible over the decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed.

b. The Nature of the Alleged Incident

This includes consideration as to whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behaviour has been displayed.

c. What is the age and development 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). Any imbalance of power and control must be considered.

d. Are There Any Additional Vulnerabilities?

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Therefore care must be taken to ascertain any changes in mood or behaviour without attributing that to the child's condition. Every effort must be made to overcome barriers to communication and ensure the voice of the child is heard.

e. 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?

f. 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?

g. 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.

h. 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.

Ongoing Risks

Are there any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school, college or other setting staff?

Contextual Safeguarding/Extra Familial Harm

Is there any other related or wider context involving the child, including any links to child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation?

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 (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 Relationship / Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education, PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be 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 harmful sexual 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.

Safety Planning

Safety planning is a positive way of supporting a child who may benefit from a planned approach; this may be either the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator. Safety plans support the child by considering the behaviours that may be risky and plan ways to manage triggers and to seek support from adults and peers. They are inclusive of parents and staff and are a planned intervention to support young people in feeling secure in the school/setting, helping young people identify behaviours that may leave them feeling anxious or at risk and have strategies that they can apply to keep themselves feeling safe. The language of safety planning is more positive than risk assessment and can give security to the child that a joined up approach is being followed by all in school. Safety Plans are available via PGSF.

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/child on child 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/child on child 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. 2019).

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/child on child abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, and most importantly for Portland Academy, is recognition that peer on peer/child on child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms and that even if incidents are not being reported it does not mean that they are not happening. 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/child on child 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. This includes parent's contribution to the school's online and acceptable use policy around the use of technology and agreement to work consistently with the school in addressing issues both inside and outside of school.

Although every effort should be made for children to have a variety of opportunities to seek support and advice, it is also 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/child on child abuse. This then encourages a variety of forms or mediums for children to have their voices heard. 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. Children should be able to effectively communicate

how to improve their school's culture and ethos around acceptable behaviour so that children can feel confident and empowered to identify unacceptable behaviours so that they can be dealt with accordingly and in the longer term eradicated.

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/child on child abuse where necessary to front door services/children's social care and the police where appropriate. This is particularly important because peer on peer/child on child 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. 2019).

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 2019.

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/news-articles/downloads/peer-on-peer-abuse-toolkit-14.pdf>

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

DFE: Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021

<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

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

Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, December 2020

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