

THE TELFORD PRIORY SCHOOL



Member of Leadership Team with Responsibility for Update of Policy	Mrs Heather Murphy
Headteacher	Ms Stacey Jordan
Date adopted by the School Standards Committee	March 2023
Policy Review Cycle	Annually
Date for Policy Review	January 2024

CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE POLICY

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

The aim of The Telford Priory School child-on-child abuse policy (formally peer on peer abuse) is to prevent abuse of any sort and to complement the Child Protection and Safeguarding policies to ensure that everyone can operate in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. All members of the community, including teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what child on child abuse is and be familiar with the school policy on child-on-child abuse; therefore the aim of the policy is to help members of the school community to deal with bullying when it occurs and, even more importantly, to prevent it. Child-on-child abuse is an anti-social behaviour which affects everyone; it is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated. Everyone in the community has a responsibility to report any incident of abuse that comes to their attention and these reports will always be taken seriously. Regular staff training and updates will be provided via CPD sessions and staff briefings to ensure all staff are clear of the procedures in place to effectively investigate and resolve any concerns surround child-on-child abuse whilst ensuring both the victim and perpetrator are effectively supported.

Definition of child-on-child abuse

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), friendships and wider peer associations. Child-on-child abuse may be defined as any deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time which intentionally hurts another student or group physically or emotionally, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves, and is often motivated by prejudice. All staff are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

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

Child-on-child abuse may be overt and intimidatory but is often hidden and subtle. It includes actions or comments that are racist, religious or cultural, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual or that which has a focus on disabilities or other physical attributes (such as hair, colour or body shape) or any reference to Special Educational Needs and/or disability.

Sexual behaviours

The following continuum model demonstrates the range of sexual behaviours presented by children, which may be helpful when seeking to understand a student’s sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it.

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmentally expected • Socially acceptable • Consensual, mutual, reciprocal • Shared decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour • Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group • Context for behaviour may be inappropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problematic and concerning behaviour • Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected • No overt elements of victimisation • Consent issues may be unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victimising intent or outcome • Includes misuse of power • Coercion and force to ensure compliance • Intrusive • Informed consent lacking or not able to be freely given

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally consensual and reciprocal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May lack reciprocity or equal power • May include levels of compulsivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May include elements of expressive violence
--	---	---	---

This continuum relates exclusively to sexual behaviours and is not exhaustive. The Telford Priory School also uses The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool which enables professionals working with children to distinguish between three levels of sexual behaviour- green, amber and red, and to respond according to the level of concern.

All children are vulnerable to and potential victims and perpetrators of child-on-child abuse however, as the research suggests, specific groups of students are more vulnerable to child on child abuse. It may affect boys differently from girls, and that this difference may result from societal norms (particularly around power, control and the way in which femininity and masculinity are constructed) rather than biological make up. Barriers to disclosure will also be different. As a result, schools need to explore the gender dynamics of child-on-child abuse within their settings and recognise that these will play out differently in single sex, mixed or gender imbalanced environments. SEND students are three times more likely to be victims of child-on-child abuse than none-SEND students. The views and opinions of SEND students are monitored through SEND specific student voice to ensure any child-on-child abuse is fully investigated. Some students may be more likely to experience child-on-child abuse as a result of certain individual characteristics such as Ethnicity, Race, Religious Beliefs or Sexual Orientation. As the research suggests, boys find it more difficult to communicate concerns surrounding child-on-child abuse. Confidential student voice boxes are placed strategically around school to allow students to discreetly report any concerns they have, including any child-on-child abuse concerns. Students can also report child on child abuse via the “Red Button” on the website, anonymously if they so wish.

Fortnightly review meetings take place to analyse CPOMS data to highlight and intervene with repeat offenders or victims to ensure effective intervention and support is put in place as soon as possible. To ensure all staff and students have a strong understanding of what constitutes child-on-child abuse and the impact of it, TPS proactively works with both the staff and students to ensure child-on-child abuse incidents are minimal. Regular assemblies, tutor time activities and Global Citizenship activities are delivered to ensure students fully understand and appreciate the implications and impact of child-on-child abuse and what they should do should they have concerns surrounding another child/peer being abused.

During the fortnightly review of CPOMS data identified members of the Senior Leadership will review all incidents logged on CPOMS and categorise all incidents as either B1 – Bullying or B2 an incident of conflict.

Child on child abuse outside school premises

The Headteacher has a specific statutory power to discipline students for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power to regulate students’ conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any child-on-child abuse incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in the town centre. Where child abuse outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or community support officers.

What should you do if child-on-child abuse is taking place?

If you are receiving child-on-child abuse or you know of someone else being abused – **TELL SOMEONE**. Don’t blame yourself for what has happened.

Remember:

- Tell your parents and in school tell your Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year as soon as possible
- If it is urgent **TELL** the nearest adult. If they do not listen **TELL SOMEONE ELSE. DON’T GIVE UP. IF YOU DON’T TELL, THINGS COULD GET WORSE**

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

- **If you don't feel able to tell someone in person, use the red button via the website, giving as much information as possible.**
- Walk away from any dangerous situation and **GET HELP**

As well as telling a member of staff, you can help stop child-on-child abuse by:

- Being friendly towards people you know are being treated badly, excluded from peer groups or bullied, including them in your discussions, break-times and lunchtimes
- Not laughing when someone is being abused
- Saying out loud that you don't like what is going on
- Not joining in
- Letting an adult know if you see someone else being bullied

For parents

Things to look out for in victims of child-on-child abuse:

- Regularly feeling sick or unwell in the morning
- Reluctance to make the journey to and from school
- Money or possessions going missing
- Clothes or school bag torn
- Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Taking different routes to school
- Unexplained behaviour changes, e.g. moody, bad tempered, tearful
- Unhappiness
- Nightmares
- Not wanting to leave the house
- Reluctance to talk openly about school friends and playtimes

If you are concerned your son/daughter is the victim of child-on-child abuse, you should contact the school as soon as possible to report the issues through the appropriate channels. Sometimes children have not reported the issues to anyone in school. The red button can be used by ANYONE who wants to report child-on-child abuse.

What you should do if you think your child is a victim of child-on-child abuse

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the abuse has occurred, where it happened and what has happened
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing in telling you about the abuse and that there is nothing wrong with him/her
- Encourage your child to report any incidents of peer abuse to a teacher immediately
- Make an appointment to see your child's Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year even if your child is reluctant that you do so

We can only do something if we know there is a problem

- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing
- Do not encourage your child to hit back/retaliate aggressively. It will only make matters worse. Such behaviour could be contrary to your child's nature.

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Child-on-child abuse procedures

All students are encouraged to feel it is right to tell someone if they are being abused or if someone they know is. Incidents of child-on-child abuse will be referred to Pastoral staff (Assistant Head of Year) and dealt with appropriately.

Whilst it is the responsibility of all staff within the school to reinforce the child-on-child abuse strategy and support the victims, it is recognised that not all staff have the capacity (due to the commitments of their job) to carry out a swift and thorough investigation. Therefore, incidents of child-on-child abuse should be referred to the appropriate Assistant Head of Year as quickly as possible as a non-teaching member of staff; if the Assistant Head of Year cannot be found, a Head of Year or senior member of staff should be informed. Following an investigation, any victim of child-on-child abuse will be supported and monitored through a four-to-six-week monitoring logbook with their allocated Assistant Head of Year. They may also be referred for further support via Behaviour Intervention Mentors (this would be for perpetrators as well as victims).

Staff suspecting an incident of child-on-child abuse should:

- Reassure the young person that their concerns are being taken seriously and will be investigated
- Contact the relevant Assistant Head of Year as soon as possible with details of the incident
- Record the incident details on the school's electronic recording system as an 'Incident'. The Assistant Head of Year will investigate all reported incidents of child-on-child abuse using the following procedure:
 - Appropriate students will be interviewed by the relevant Assistant Head of Year and statements taken
 - If the investigation confirms a child-on-child abuse incident has taken place the Assistant Head of Year will enter the incident on CPOMS
 - Appropriate sanctions will be used for the perpetrator/s
 - Parents of the victim and perpetrator will be notified immediately, and support will be given by the Pastoral Team. The incident will be reviewed regularly with regular contact with the victim and parents/carers (timing appropriate to individual situations)

Managing a child-on-child abuse case:

Following an investigation, the school will opt for one of four options when managing a child-on-child abuse case based on the facts recovered during the investigation:

- Manage the case internally: Parents contacted, sanctions issued and restorative work completed
- Early Help: The school will lead on an early help assessment and escalate if necessary ensuring a 6 week review is completed to determine next actions and support mechanisms
- Refer to Social Care
- Report to the police

Record Keeping child-on-child abuse Cases or Investigations:

If any student or member of staff shares concerns relating to child-on-child abuse, a pastoral member of staff or member of the senior leadership team will carry out an initial investigation using the 'Investigating Incidents' proforma. This information will then be centrally stored on the relevant student's school file.

Any follow up support for victims of child-on-child abuse will be documented in a student support logbook. Again, upon completion, this documentation will be centrally stored on the relevant student's file. Any sanctions issued as a result of an investigation into a child-on-child abuse concern will be centrally logged on CPOMS and Go4Schools (If an exclusion is issued this will also be logged using the relevant documentation with Telford and Wrekin).

Any initial concerns and regular updates during a child-on-child abuse reported concern will be logged centrally on CPOMS which will be regularly review by members of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

The Role of the Peer Mentors

These will be up and running again during 2022-23 as the recruitment process starts again following COVID-19
The trained ambassadors will often be the first point of contact for students who feel they are the victims of child-on-child abuse. Ambassadors will be easily identified around the school site by wearing a Peer Mentor badge.

The ambassadors will be able to:

- Listen to and provide support for fellow students
- Share concerns about vulnerable students with Year Teams/Peer Mentor coordinator (always with a commitment to maintaining confidentiality whenever possible)
- Signpost students to other support services available
- Show commitment to the Peer Mentor scheme and recruit new students to the scheme
- Be involved in regular monitoring of the scheme
- Work together with House Teams, staff and students in promoting good citizenship and inclusion throughout the school

The Peer Mentors will meet as a group with the designated Peer Mentor Co-ordinator every half term to reinforce their training, share experiences, feedback on the programme and make suggestions for improvements.

Recruitment and training of new Peer Mentors will take place annually in a programme co-ordinated by the Peer Mentor Co-ordinator.

Sanctions

Child-on-child abuse in any form will not be tolerated at The Telford Priory School and child abuse related incidents will be dealt with seriously. Each incident will be investigated thoroughly and parents will be kept fully informed of the outcome of such investigations. Sanctions applied will depend upon the individual incident but may include:

- Alteration to seating plans within teaching groups
- After school detentions
- Restricting access to the school site or classrooms
- A Risk Assessment completed for both perpetrator and victim to keep people safe
- Exclusion Prevent Room or Reflection Room Referral
- Exclusion from school site at lunchtime for a fixed period of time
- Transfer of form group or teaching group
- In serious cases the school will consider a fixed term exclusion/permanent exclusion

A whole school approach

The school actively seeks to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by:

- Educating all governors, its senior leadership team, staff, students, and parents about this issue. This includes training all parties on the nature, prevalence and effect of child-on-child abuse, and how to prevent, identify, and respond to it. This includes
 - ✓ Contextual safeguarding
 - ✓ The identification and classification of specific behaviours, including digital behaviours
 - ✓ The importance of taking seriously all forms of child-on-child abuse (no matter how “low level” they may appear) and ensuring that no form of child-on-child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing
 - ✓ Social media and online safety, including how to encourage children to use social media in a positive, responsible and safe way, and how to enable them to identify and manage abusive behaviour online.
- Educating children about the nature and prevalence of child-on-child abuse, positive, responsible and safe use of social media, and the unequivocal facts about consent, via Global Citizenship and the wider curriculum.

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Students are frequently told what to do if they witness or experience such abuse, the effect that it can have on those who experience it and the possible reasons for it, including vulnerability of those who inflict such abuse. They are regularly informed about the school's approach to such issues including its zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of child-on-child abuse. Educating students about consent includes teaching them basic facts such as:

- ✓ A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity
 - ✓ The age of consent is 16; and
 - ✓ Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.
- Engaging parents on these issues by:
 - ✓ Asking parents what they perceive to be the risks facing their child and how they would like to see the school address those risks,
 - ✓ Encouraging parents to hold the school to account on this issue
 - Supporting the on-going welfare of the student body by drawing on multiple resources that prioritise student mental health, and by providing in-school counselling and therapy to address underlying mental health needs. These interventions can be “de-clinicised” and brokered through a positive relationship with the school and its staff.
 - Working with governors, senior leadership team, and all staff, students, and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst all members of the school community,
 - Creating conditions in which our students can aspire to, and realise, safe and healthy relationships fostering a whole school culture:
 - ✓ Which is founded on the idea that every member of our school community is responsible for building and maintaining safe and positive relationships, and helping to create a safe school environment in which violence and abuse are never acceptable
 - ✓ In which students are able to develop trusting relationships with staff, and in which staff understand through regular discussion and training, the importance of these relationships in providing students with a sense of belonging, which could otherwise be sought in problematic contexts,
 - ✓ In which students feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgemental environment, and have them listened to
 - ✓ Which proactively identifies positive qualities in students, nurtures these qualities, teaches, and encourages students to think about positive hopes for the future and supports students in developing small-scale goals that enable realistic ambitions
 - Responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately
 - Ensuring that all child-on-child issues are fed back to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify students who may need additional support. Incidents are discussed regularly within the safeguarding supervision meetings.

Multi Agency Working

The school actively engages with its Local Safeguarding Partnership in relation to child-on-child abuse, and works closely with children's social care, the police, Family Connect and/or other relevant agencies in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures, and other schools. The relationships the school has built with these partners are essential, ensuring that the school is able to prevent, identify early, and appropriately handle cases of child-on-child abuse. They help the school to develop a good awareness and understanding of the different referral pathways that operate in its local area, as well as the preventative and support services which exist. They help the school to ensure that its students are able to access a range of services and support they need quickly. They support and help inform the school's local community's response to child-on-child abuse, and increases the school's awareness and understanding of any concerning trends and emerging risks in its local area to enable it to take preventative action to minimise the risk of these being experienced by its students.

The Telford Priory School Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

The school actively refers concerns and allegations of child-on-child abuse where necessary to children's social care, the police, Family Connect, and/or other relevant agencies in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's procedures. This is particularly important because 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 alleged incident cannot appropriately be managed internally by the School itself) to try to address the issue alone- it requires effective partnership working.

Pastoral team contact details

TPS.Pastoral@taw.org.uk

Useful Websites

www.bullying.co.uk

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

www.need2know.co.uk/beatbullying

www.diana-award.org.uk