

# Newton-le-Willows Primary School & Nursery



## Child on Child Abuse Policy and Procedure (Including Harmful Sexual Behaviours, Sexual Assault, Harassment and Rape in Education Settings)

<b>Status:</b>	<b>NON - STATUTORY</b>	
<b>Responsible Person/People:</b>	Mrs Chisnall Mrs McCormack, Mrs Branch, Mr. Ibbotson, School Staff	
<b>Responsible Governor:</b>	E. Charleston	
<b>Approved by:</b> Mr. Bradley	<b>Signature:</b> <i>M. Bradley</i>	<b>Date:</b> Spring 2025
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	Summer 2024	
<b>Next review due:</b>	Spring 2026	

## **1. Introduction**

### **Child-on-Child**

*"All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as Child on Child abuse)"*  
**Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, p.13.**

Child on Child abuse features physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse of a child/young person by their peers. Child on Child abuse is often located within the neighbourhoods, schools, peer groups and families associated with the young people who are affected.

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers; these are described below and are followed by sections giving advice and support on action to be taken in relation to both the victim and the child displaying the harmful behaviour.

It should be noted that there can be considerable overlap between these different types of Child-on-Child abuse.

This section directly links to the Government Guidance **'Sexting in Schools and Colleges, responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People'**.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may include biting, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be reasons why a child physically harms another, and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour (including whether it happened accidentally) before considering the action or sanction to be taken. Any physical incidents will be taken extremely seriously and will be dealt with in accordance with Newton-le-Willows Primary School's Anti-Bullying and Anti- Abuse Policy and in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

### **Prejudice Behaviour**

The term 'prejudice related bullying' refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, (physical, emotional or both) which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society. In particular, prejudices are to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, gender identity and sexual identity. Any form of prejudice behaviour will be taken extremely seriously and dealt with in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying and Anti- Abuse Policy and in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

### **Harmful Sexualised Behaviour (HSB) and Sexual Abuse**

Harmful Sexualised Behaviour (HSB) from children or young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. HSB may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse including rape.

Although all children and young people have the potential to be at risk of any form of sexual harassment or assault, we recognise that some groups may be more at risk than others. For example, girls are often more at risk of being sexually harassed than boys.

Not all sexual behaviour displayed by children or young people is harmful. Showing some sexualised behaviours can be healthy and a normal part of child and adolescent development. The NSPCC guidance on healthy and harmful sexual behaviour can be found in Appendix 1.

Decisions on whether sexualised behaviour is potentially harmful should be made with reference to the NSPCC framework, knowledge and understanding from specialist training and advice from the St. Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership or via training from other providers, using the ERASE tool.

Professionals should also consult and utilise the **St Helens Policy, Procedures and Practice Guidance for Children and Young People (aged under 18) who display Harmful Sexual Behaviour'** including the ERASE tool developed by the Local Authority to identify harmful sexual behaviour and outline next steps.

Due to the concerning and sensitive nature around suspected Harmful Sexual Behaviour from a child or young person, as well as the need to keep the victim safe, advice will be sought from external agencies including Children's Social Care. School will also work with families where appropriate, and directly with both the child displaying the harmful behaviour and the victim (separately) to ensure that all children are kept safe and the harmful behaviour ceases.

If the harmful behaviour continues, it may be necessary to take further action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the victim. This is in line with Newton-le-Willows Primary School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

At Newton Primary School, we understand that any incidents of sexual assault, harassment or rape may be hard for a child or young person to disclose to an adult. There are many barriers that may stop a child or young person from wanting to share what has happened to them. We also understand that some disclosures we receive may be relating to historic incident.

Regardless of when or where the incident took place, we will ensure that:

- All disclosures or concerns are taken seriously.
- All incidents are thoroughly investigated.
- We listen to the voice of the child or young person and let that inform and shape how we support them..
- We understand that some children may not tell us what has happened to them, and it is our job to understand behaviour and other forms of communication or indicators.
- We teach about healthy relationships, rights and abuse within our safeguarding/PSHE/RSE curriculum to help protect and empower pupils
- We challenge inappropriate language, gender stereotypes or attitudes.

### **Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying includes the use of phones and computers/electronic devices to harass, threaten or intimidate someone and it can include; instant messaging; email; chat rooms; voice notes or social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. It may constitute a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Outside of the immediate support children or young people may require in these instances, they school may have no choice but to involve the police to investigate certain situations. Many incidents may occur outside of school hours, however we understand that any situations around cyber-bullying will have an impact on the child's wellbeing at school, especially if the perpetrator(s) also attends. Newton Primary works hard to provide a PSHE, SMSC and safeguarding curriculum that encompasses online safety and helps our pupils deal with any concerns they may have.

In cases of sexting, Government guidelines will be consulted and implemented. The website is as follows:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/759007/6\\_2939\\_SP\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_In\\_Schools\\_FINAL\\_Update\\_Jan17.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759007/6_2939_SP_NCA_Sexting_In_Schools_FINAL_Update_Jan17.pdf)

### **Initiation / Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony that is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team 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 a part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse and harassment. Although it is not subjective to males, it should be noted that boys may be more at risk of such forms of abuse.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and must include:

- Imbalance of power – young people who bully use their power, such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity, to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition – bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

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

### **Responses**

All disclosures, claims or allegations of Child-on Child abuse will be investigated immediately and as thoroughly as possible. It will be important to gain accounts from all those involved, including the victim, the child displaying the behaviour and any witnesses.

Previous records of incidents will be looked at to determine whether there are any patterns of behaviour and the persistency of the issue. Once the evidence has been collated, a judgement and outcome will be decided based on the information and evidence gathered. The response will be dependent upon the nature and severity of the incident. However, as a school we have set responses to manage and support both the victim and the perpetrator. The flowchart in Appendix 2 clearly demonstrates the steps to take once an incident has been investigated/accounts have been taken.

### **For the young person who has been harmed:**

The appropriate support required depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one-to-one support via a mentor/via the school's therapeutic teacher or via the school pastoral team. 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 PSHE that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently, subsequently developing children's understanding of these topics.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst they are in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

**For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour:**

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in a harmful manner. 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.

Support from identified services may be necessary through Early Help and the young person may require additional support from family members. Dependent upon the outcome of the investigation, a decision will be made as to whether the child requires therapeutic support, a behaviour sanction, or a combination of both.

If there is any form of ongoing criminal investigation it may be that the young person cannot be educated onsite until the investigation has concluded. In such circumstances, 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 in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. See Appendix 3 and Appendix 4. 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 proportionately by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents/carers. 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.

**After care:**

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.

**Minimising the risk**

As with all forms of abuse, preventative measure should be taken to avoid any Child on Child abuse occurring. This includes the following:

- Ensuring that safeguarding is taught as part of the curriculum across all key stages and year groups.
- That any lower level incidents of bullying etc. are dealt with immediately and effectively in order to ensure they do not escalate.
- That children who have vulnerability indicators of either being a victim or a perpetrator are identified early and subsequently supported.
- That vulnerability indicators are clearly identified and recognised, such as mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, learning difficulties and disabilities, and previous abuse suffered.
- By recognising and that evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk of sexual violence and harassment' (Barnardo's and Fox, 2016; McGeeney et al, 2017; Xu and Zheng, 2014).
- That all staff have relevant up to date training on Child on Child abuse a part of their annual safeguarding training.
- That school is a safe and caring environment where children and young people feel confident to express their concerns at the earliest stages.

### **Record Keeping**

It is important that school staff keep accurate and comprehensive records of any bullying or Child on Child abuse incidents that take place. This is important for the following reasons:

- To hold evidence of incidents so their frequency, nature and severity can be assessed to determine the appropriate action.
- To spot trends and to see whether there are particular issues that seem to be more prevalent within the school and therefore need specific intervention.
- To provide supporting documentation for any investigation including criminal investigations.
- To ensure compliance with child protection procedures.
- To provide evidence of outcome of any incidents to ensure they have been dealt with effectively.
- To ensure effective monitoring procedures.
- Incidents are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

**Child on Child abuse can be and is as damaging as any form of abuse.**

**All incidents will be taken extremely seriously and dealt with in the same approach as other allegations of abuse.**

**Child on Child abuse should never be tolerated under any circumstance and should not be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'boys being boys' or 'part of growing up'.**

**All children have the right to feel safe with their peers and should be protected accordingly.**

**Any incidents of bullying will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Anti-Bullying and Anti-Abuse Policy.**

### **EQUALITY**

Newton Primary School is committed to the principle of equality for all pupils irrespective of race, religion, gender, language, disability or family background, and to the active support of initiatives designed to further this principle. We believe that equality is at the heart of good educational practice. All pupils are of equal value and deserve equal access to every aspect of school life. They have equality to learn and work towards their highest possible levels of achievement. The vision and values which we uphold as a school help to emphasise equality for all staff, pupils, parent/carers and visitors at all times. All personnel are responsible for ensuring that we implement this policy.

Equality means that discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexuality, language, disability or family background is not acceptable.

### **REVIEW**

The Governing Body reviews this policy **annually**. The Governors may decide to review the policy earlier than this if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing Body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. This policy has been reviewed in light of DFE guidance, latest initiatives and any Local Authority policy and procedures.

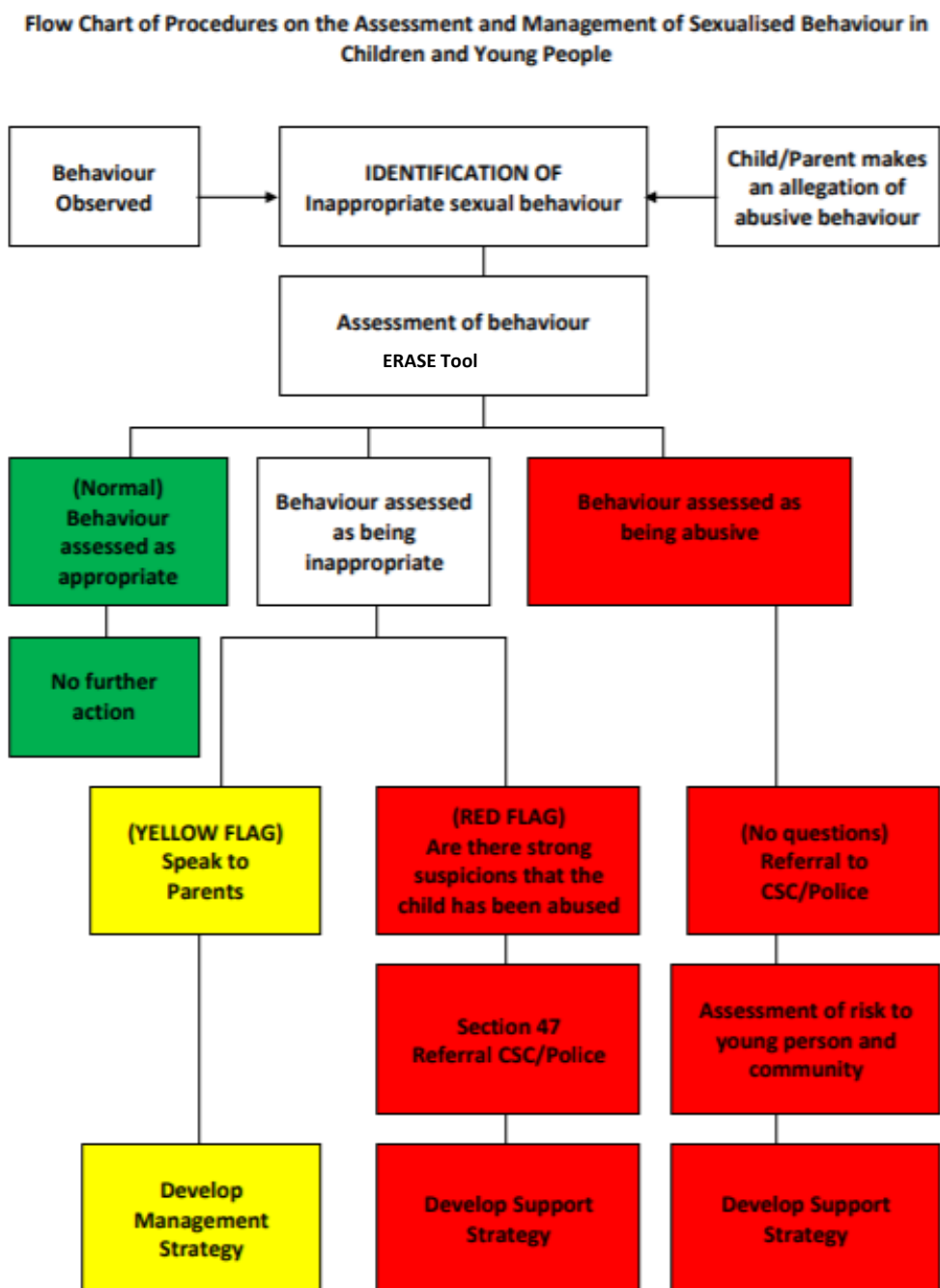
Our Child on Child Abuse Policy and Procedure stands alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, our Behaviour and Discipline Policy, our Anti-Bullying and Anti – Abuse Policy and our E-Safety Policy. Where necessary, when dealing with an incident these policies may need to also be referred to.

## **Appendix 1 – NSPCC LINK**

Please find a link to this document below to access further guidance on healthy sexual development in children and young people.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2019/harmful-sexual-behaviour-framework>

**Appendix 2 - SEXUALISED BEHAVIOUR RISK AND SUPPORT MANAGEMENT PLAN FLOWCHART, SUGGESTED QUESTIONS TO USE WHEN DEALING WITH A REPORTED INCIDENT**



School may wish to discuss the behaviours with other professionals as part of their initial assessment process. Schools should also refer to the NSPCC framework, knowledge and understanding from specialist training and advice from the St. Helens Safeguarding Children Partnership

### **Appendix 3: COMPILING A RISK ASSESSMENT**

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS PART OF INVESTIGATION/BEFORE COMPLETING RISK ASSESSMENT:**

##### **Staffing and School site issues:**

##### **Staffing:**

- What staff are involved in teaching / supporting the child / young person?
- Who is aware of concerns about their problem sexual behaviours?
- Do other staff need to be aware and if so, how will this be managed?
- What is the current level of supervision and is this appropriate?
- Is the level of supervision required achievable in the current circumstances?
- Are all staff aware of the level of supervision required?
- Who is responsible for discussing the child / young person's risk and needs to other staff?

##### **School Site:**

- Are there areas within the school and grounds that are unsupervised?
- Are there any other building issues that may increase risk? E.g. building works, nursery or primary school located in the same building, communal playground, etc.

##### **In the classroom:**

- Has the child / young person engaged in any inappropriate behaviour within the classroom setting now or previously?
- If so, what were the circumstances?
- Who in the class may be vulnerable and why?
- Is the level of supervision in the class adequate?
- How much information does the class teacher and any others responsible for the child / young person in the class have about the young person's behaviours, risks and needs?
- Are there particular times when the young person seems more relaxed and content?
- Are there particular times where the child / young person seems more unhappy / upset / distracted / irritable / distressed?
- Can extra support / supervision be put in place during difficult times?
- Are the seating arrangements satisfactory?
- Are there times when the child / young person is allowed to leave the class during class times?
- Are there times when other adults are in the class besides the class teacher?
- Is the classroom environment free of any confusing sexual images and behaviours?
- How is SRE managed and does the child / young person need further information?
- Does the class teacher need to be able to talk to the child / young person about their problem sexual behaviours?
- Is so, what level of support will the teacher require?
- Are there particular areas of risk in the class e.g. when the teacher is occupied with other pupils, and how can this be managed?
- Is this case open to the Police? If so, seek advice on what can be discussed / disclosed to staff.
- Is a separate plan needed to protect and support the victim?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE COMPLETING CONTINUED . . . :

### Unsupervised times or transitions:

- Have there been concerns about the child / young person's sexual behaviours outside the classroom?
- Is so, who were the behaviours directed to and in what circumstances?
- What children may be particularly vulnerable and how can this be managed?
- What level of supervision is there when the child / young person is going between classes, at lunch times, at break times and at the start and end of the day?
- Is this adequate?
- If more supervision is required, how will this be achieved?
- Are particular rules required for going to the toilet?
- Are there rules about showering, dressing and undressing for PE that needs to be considered?
- Are there rules about physical contact during play that needs to be considered?
- Is the environment free of any confusing sexual images, messages and behaviours e.g. access to computers, magazines, etc.?
- Are the right staff aware of the child / young person's level of supervision required?
- Has the child / young person got a history of absconding / truanting?
- How are they transported to school?
- Does someone meet them or take them to their transport?

**Appendix 4: RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE/RECORD OF MEETING**

**NAME OF PUPIL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHOOL NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **YEAR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF PLAN:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE OF REVIEW:** \_\_\_\_\_

ATTENDEES:					
NAME	ROLE	AGENCY	PERSON PRESENT	PERSON CONSULTED BUT NOT PRESENT	REPORTS SUBMITTED

*N/B Parents and the young person concerned should be part of the plan, along with key agencies / professionals.*

**APOLOGIES:**

**1. Staffing and School Site**

**Level of risk identified:**

High

Medium

Low

**Reasons:**

**Actions required staffing:**

**Actions required school site:**

**2. In the Classroom**

**Level of risk identified:**

High

Medium

Low

**Reasons:**

**Actions required in the classroom:**

**Actions required school site:**

### 3. Unsupervised times or transitions

Overall level of risk identified:

High

Medium

Low

Reasons:

Actions required toilet arrangements:

Actions required morning and lunch break arrangements:

Actions required for PE:

Actions required to and from school arrangements:

### 4. Risk Assessment Review

Strengths of current risk assessment:

Needs identified:

Identified actions and timescales:

**ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY INCLUDING SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ANY COMPLAINANT**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Dangers</b>	<b>Hazards</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Needs</b>	<b>Assessed Level of Risk High / Med / Low</b>	<b>Actions Required</b>