



PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY

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Introduction

Orion School is committed to a whole school approach to identifying, tackling and responding to peer on peer abuse, sexual harm, violence and harassment. We are committed to ensure that any form of peer on peer abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently. This will reduce the extent of harm to the young person and minimise the potential impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being

Peer on Peer Abuse

All members of staff at Orion recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting (youth produced digital imagery)
- Bullying- name calling, physical
- Prejudiced behaviour- homophobic, disabilities
- Cyber bullying and on line abusive behaviour
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate relationships, including teenage relationship abuse
- Children who display sexually problematic/harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment
- Gang association and serious violence- County Lines, initiation, hazing

We are mindful that some potential issues may be affected by the gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.

Orion believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated, dismissed or minimised. Any incidents of peer on peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern in accordance with Local Authority procedures.

We want to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of peer on peer abuse in our school and beyond.

Prevention

As a school we will minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse by:

- Providing a developmentally appropriate wellbeing curriculum which develops pupils understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.
- Develops pupil's knowledge, understanding and skills, to ensure personal safety and self-protection when using the internet and social networking.
- Having robust monitoring and filtering systems in place to ensure pupils are safe and act appropriately when using information technology in school.

- Having systems in place for any pupil to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work through our pastoral framework and curriculum on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk
- Developing robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils

The Context

All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a child's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it. In this policy, we recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour (Harmful Sexual Behaviour HSB).

We are adopting the NSPCC definition of HSB as: - "Sexual behaviours expressed by children...that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child...or adult."

We will also use Simon Hackett's continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours (Appendix 1) and the Brook Traffic Lights (Appendix 2).

Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that all children can be at risk however, we acknowledge that some groups are more vulnerable. This can include: experience of abuse within their family; living with domestic violence; young people in care; children who go missing; children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities); children who identify or are perceived as LGBT and/or have other protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.

Whilst research tells us girls are more frequently identified as being abused by their peers and, girls are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching in schools this is not confined to girls. Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may display other behaviours such as antisocial behaviour.

Boys report high levels of victimisation in areas where they are affected by gangs. All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs

Examples of Peer on Peer Abuse

Physical Abuse

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 action or sanctions to be undertaken.

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children 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 include:

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

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

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is the use of phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the 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 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 instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

Sexting

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics', 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, regardless of their age, gender or sexual preference. However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 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.

Emotional Abuse

Can include blackmail or extortion and may also include threats and intimidation. This harmful behaviour can have a significant impact on the mental health and emotional well-being of the victim and can lead to self-harm.

Sexual Abuse

Sexually harmful 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 sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse. It can also include indecent exposure, indecent touching /serious sexual assaults or forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting.

Teenage Relationship

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

Sexual Exploitation

This can include encouraging other young people to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour or grooming and recruiting members of the peer group into being sexually exploited by other young people or adults. It can also include photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts.

Understanding Peer on Peer Abuse

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex or a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. The impact of this behaviour on children can be very distressing and have an impact on academic achievement and emotional health and wellbeing.

Physical Abuse

While a clear focus of peer on peer abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive. These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, it will be reported to the police. The principles from the Anti-Bullying Policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority.

When dealing with other alleged behaviour, which involves reports of, for example, emotional and/or physical abuse, staff can assess where the alleged behaviour is for example:

- 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
- involves a misuse of power

Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Peer on Peer Abuse

All reports of peer on peer abuse will be assessed on a case by case basis with the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) taking a leading role using their professional judgement and supported by other agencies such as social care or the police as required.

The immediate response to a report

- The school will take all reports seriously and will reassure the victim that they will be supported and kept safe.
- All staff will be trained to manage a report.

- Staff will not promise confidentiality as the concern will need to be shared further (for example, with the DSL or social care). Staff will, however, only share the report with those people who are necessary to progress it.
- A written report will be made as soon after the interview as possible recording the facts as presented by the child. These may be used as part of a statutory assessment if the case is escalated later.
- Where the report includes an online element, the school will follow advice on searching, screening and confiscation. The staff will not view or forward images unless unavoidable and only if another member of staff (preferably a DSL) is present.
- The DSLs will be informed as soon as possible.

Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs' assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The risk and needs' assessment will consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator, and
- All the other children (and, if appropriate, staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments will be recorded and be kept under review. The DSLs will ensure they are engaging with Local Children's Care Services where appropriate.

Action Following a Report of Sexual Violence and/or Sexual Harassment

Following an incident, we will consider:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- The nature of the alleged incident(s), including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- The ages of the children involved.
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a SEN/D?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, staff; and other related issues and wider context?

Follow Up Actions

Children sharing a classroom:

Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police:

- The perpetrator will be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- We will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on the school premises and on transport to and from the school.

These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

Options to Manage the Report

Manage Internally

1. In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, we may decide that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising the behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support. This decision will be made based on the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All decisions and discussions around making these decisions will be recorded and stored.

2. In line with 1 above, we may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address nonviolent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

3. Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to the CASS/MASH following locally agreed protocols. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, the DSL will be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children that require support.

Reporting to the Police

Any report to the police will generally be made through the MASH as above. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point will be to contact the police. Where a report has been made to the police, the school will consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers.

They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. Where there is a criminal investigation, the school will work closely with the relevant agencies to support all children involved (especially potential witnesses). Where required, advice from the police will be sought to help us. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator, we will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school takes do not jeopardise the police investigation.

The End of the Criminal Process

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the school will update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all children. We will consider any suitable action following our Behaviour Policy. Where cases are classified as “no further action” (NFA) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support to the victim and the alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for the victim. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. We will continue to support all parties in this instance

Support for Children Affected by Sexual-Assault

We will support the victim of sexual assault to remain in school but if they are unable to do so, we will support them in continuing their education elsewhere. If they are moved, we will ensure the new school is aware of the ongoing support they may need. The DSL will support this move. Where there is a criminal investigation, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any shared classes with the victim and we will also consider how best to keep them a reasonable distance apart on the school premises or on school transport. This is in the best interest of the children concerned and should not be perceived to be a judgement of guilt before any legal proceedings. We will work closely with the police.

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, we may take suitable action, if we have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils).

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, we may, if we have not already done so, consider any suitable sanctions using our Behaviour Policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion.

Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature

of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to a report to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. None of this means the offence did not happen or that the victim lied. The process will have affected both victim and alleged perpetrator. Appropriate support will be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis.

Any arrangements should be kept under review.

APPENDIX 1

Simon Hackett (2010) has proposed a continuum model to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people, from those that are normal, to those that are highly deviant. Staff can use this in their assessments.

<p>Normal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developmentally expected• Socially acceptable• Consensual, mutual, reciprocal• Shared decision making
<p>Inappropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour• Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group• Context for behaviour may be inappropriate• Generally consensual and reciprocal
<p>Problematic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problematic and concerning behaviours• Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected• No overt elements of victimisation• Consent issues may be unclear• May lack reciprocity or equal power• May include levels of compulsivity
<p>Abusive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Victimising intent or outcome• Includes misuse of power• Coercion and force to ensure victim compliance• Intrusive• Informed consent lacking or not able to be freely given by victim• May include elements of expressive violence
<p>Violent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physically violent sexual abuse• Highly intrusive• Instrumental violence which is physiologically and/or sexually arousing to the perpetrator• Sadism

APPENDIX 2

Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool

Behaviours: Aged 9 to 13

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

What is a green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices.

What Can You Do?

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

Green Behaviours Aged 9 – 13

- Solitary masturbation
- Use of sexual language including swear and slang words
- Having girl/boyfriends who are of the same, opposite or any gender
- Interest in popular culture, e.g. fashion, music, media, online games, chatting online
- Need for privacy
- Consensual kissing, hugging, holding hands with peers

What is Amber Behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.

What Can You Do?

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

Amber Behaviours Aged 9 – 13

- Uncharacteristic and risk-related behaviour, e.g. sudden and/or provocative changes in dress, withdrawal from friends, mixing with new or older people, having more or less money than usual, going missing
- Verbal, physical or cyber/virtual sexual bullying involving sexual aggression
- LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) targeted bullying
- Exhibitionism, e.g. flashing or mooning

- Giving out contact details online
- Viewing pornographic material
- Worrying about being pregnant or having STIs

What is Red Behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur.

What Can You Do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red Behaviours Aged 9 – 13

- Exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- Distributing naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- Sexually explicit talk with younger children
- Sexual harassment
- Arranging to meet with an online acquaintance in secret
- Genital injury to self or others
- Forcing other children of same age, younger or less able to take part in sexual activities
- Sexual activity, e.g. oral sex or intercourse
- Presence of sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- Evidence of pregnancy

Behaviours: Aged 13 to 17

What is a Green Behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability and reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices.

What Can You Do?

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

Green Behaviours Aged 13 – 17

- Solitary masturbation
- Sexually explicit conversations with peers
- Obscenities and jokes within the current cultural norm

- Interest in erotica/pornography
- Use of internet/e-media to chat online
- Having sexual or non-sexual relationships
- Sexual activity including kissing, hugging, holding hands
- Consenting oral and/or penetrative sex with others of the same or opposite gender who are of similar age and developmental ability
- Choosing not to be sexually active

What is Amber Behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences. A potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur.

What Can You Do?

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

Amber Behaviours Aged 13 – 17

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

What is Red Behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening and involving significant age, developmental or power differences. They may pose a concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What Can You Do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Red Behaviours Aged 13 – 17

- Exposing genitals or masturbating in public
- Preoccupation with sex, which interferes with daily function
- Sexual degradation/humiliation of self or others
- Attempting/forcing others to expose genitals
- Sexually aggressive/exploitative behaviour
- Sexually explicit talk with younger children
- Sexual harassment
- Non-consensual sexual activity
- Use of/acceptance of power and control in sexual relationships
- Genital injury to self or others
- Sexual contact with others where there is a big difference in age or ability
- Sexual activity with someone in authority and in a position of trust
- Sexual activity with family members
- Involvement in sexual exploitation and/or trafficking
- Sexual contact with animals
- Receipt of gifts or money in exchange for sex