



St. Luke's CE Primary School Peer on Peer Abuse Policy



Policy Name	Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
Governors responsible for review	TBC
Date Approved By Committee	TBC
Amended to include updates	September 2023
Review Cycle	Annually
Statutory/Recommended/Optional	Statutory

Please read in conjunction with schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Definition

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse: bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused.

Upskirting is also a form of peer-on-peer abuse. This is typically when a photograph is taken under a person's clothing without them knowing, for sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

Risks

Children are vulnerable to be abused by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

Professionals should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.

Professionals should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Professionals should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime, including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.



Learning for Life

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Learning for Life

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or Sexual Abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or at risk of Suffering, Significant Harm and in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

Protection and Action to be taken

School procedures on Safeguarding and Child Protection should be followed.