**St Stephen’s**

**(child-friendly)**

**Child-on- Child Abuse**

**Policy**

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Agreed by Governing Board September 23

Policy will be reviewed before the end of September 24

For we are the handiwork of God, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10

**Feeling safe and happy at school**

At St Stephen’s, we want to make sure that our children feel looked after, safe and happy at all times. This policy is for the benefit of all stakeholders but can also be used to support children and so is in child friendly language.

This policy looks at child-on-child abuse, and what children can do when they feel you are being abused, or when they notice someone else being abused.

We can help by:

* Teaching children what child-on-child abuse is.
* Teaching children what to do if they feel like they are being abused, or if someone else is being abused.
* Making sure children know the grown-ups they can speak to if they are worried.

**What is child-on-child abuse?**

A **child** refers to someone under 18 years old who might be a pupil at St Stephen’s, their siblings or another child pupils may know.

**Abuse** is something which usually physically or emotionally hurts another person by using behaviour that is meant to scare, hurt or upset that person. Sometimes, it can be hard to know when abuse is happening, because not all abuse will hurt, scare or upset children at the time. It’s **really important** children know when they are being abused so we can make sure it stops.

There are lots of different types of abuse. It is important that children have an understanding of what these types of abuse are so they know what to do if they see them.

**Bullying**

(see also [Safeguarding & Anti-bullying Policy](file:///\\server2012r2\staff$\FGreenhalgh\2023-24\Safeguarding\Behaviour%20and%20anti-bullying%20policy%2023.docx))

**Bullying** can be different things, and isn’t just hitting or kicking another person.

**Emotional bullying** is hurting someone’s feelings, leaving them out or bossing them about.

**Physical bulling** is punching, kicking, spiting, hitting or pushing someone.

**Verbal bullying** is teasing someone, calling them names or using rude hand signs. People can also use verbal bullying to be racist or homophobic.

**Racist** means bullying someone because of their skin colour, race or what they believe in.

**Homophobic** means bullying someone because of their gender or sexuality; calling someone gay or lesbian to hurt their feelings would be homophobic.

**Sexist** means bullying someone because of their sex (whether they are a boy or a girl).

**Cyber bullying** involves sending horrid messages over the internet or by text message.

Bullying can be done through **another person**, by one person sending another person to say nasty things.

**Sexual harassment**

Sometimes, people can act sexually towards others and it might make them feel uncomfortable. This can happen online, on social media, through messages and face-to-face. It might make someone feel scared, embarrassed, uncomfortable or upset.

It could be:

* Someone making sexual comments, like telling sexual stories, saying rude things or saying sexual things about someone’s appearance or clothes.
* Calling someone sexual names.
* Sexual jokes or teasing.
* Being physical, like touching which makes you feel uncomfortable, messing with your clothes, or showing pictures or drawings which are of a sexual nature.
* Being sexual online, like sharing sexual pictures and videos, or posting sexual comments on social media.
* It might also be sexual threats or pushing someone to do something sexually that they don’t want to or aren’t ready for.

**Sexting**

This is sending inappropriate pictures, videos or messages – they can sometimes be called ‘nude pics’, ‘rude pics’ or ‘nude selfies’, but can also be rude messages. Pressuring someone into sending these pictures, videos and messages is abuse.

It is illegal to have these kind of pictures or videos of a person if they are under 18 years old.

**Relationships**

Any relationship a child has should be good and happy. A bad relationship might make someone feel scared, confused, worried and even unsafe.

It’s really important for children to know the difference between a good relationship and a bad relationship.

**Good relationships**

* You are comfortable around that person.
* You can be honest with that person.
* You can say how you feel, what you are thinking and you listen to each other.
* You support each other and treat each other nicely.
* You feel safe.
* You trust that person.
* You are equal – you don’t boss each other around or tell each other what to do. 
* You feel looked after.

**Bad relationships**

* The person might push you, hit you or destroy your things.
* The person might tell you what to do, what to wear or who you can see.
* You might feel scared – they might say they will hurt you if you don’t do something. They might also say they will hurt you if you do something too.
* The person calls you names, makes you feel bad in front of other people and makes you feel bad about yourself.
* The person gets angry easily and you don’t know what will make them angry – it might make you feel nervous.
* The person might pressure you to do things you don’t want to or aren’t ready for, like sex, or using drugs and alcohol.
* The person might not take no for answer when you say you don’t want to do something.

**How to know if someone is being abused?**

It might be hard for children to identify if they are being abused and **t**hey might not really understand it is happening. It is important that children can recognise when behaviour isn’t appropriate.

It’s also important that children can notice when someone else might be being abused. Some signs might be:

* Not attending school.
* Having injuries, like bruises.
* Feeling sad and down.
* Feeling like they can’t cope.
* Feeling withdrawn or shy.
* Getting headaches or stomach ache.
* Feeling nervous.
* Not being able to sleep, sleeping too much or getting nightmares.
* Feeling panicked.
* Using alcohol or drugs.
* Changing looks to look much older.
* Being abusive to someone else.

**What to do if someone else is being abused?**

If an individual suspects someone else is being abused, it is important to seek help. Children or adults should never walk away and ignore the problem if abusive behaviour is observed, because the person might continue to behave in that way.

Children must tell a grown-up, such as a teacher, as soon as they see someone being abused. Grown-ups can try to stop the abuse and make that person feel happy again.

You should never feel scared to tell someone about abuse.

Sometimes, individuals might not see someone being abused, but might be worried about them. Or, they might think they are being abused by someone not known to the individual. It’s really important children tell someone even if they are worried, even if they haven’t seen any abuse.

**What to do if you are being abused?**

The first thing a child should do is tell someone they trust. This could be a family member, a friend or a teacher. They can also tell the person abusing them to leave them alone if they felt confident to do so. If telling them to leave them alone would make them feel too scared or worried that they might hurt them, tell someone so they can help.

Children should try not to:

* Do what the person says.
* Let what the person says or does upset you.
* Get angry or hit them.

Always remember that if you are being abused, it is not your fault and you are never alone. You shouldn’t be scared to talk to someone if you are being abused. If you talk to a grownup, they can get the support to make the abuse stop.

**Who is there to talk to?**

It is important to tell someone as soon as there is any sign of abuse. Speaking to someone like a trusted family member, carer or teacher will mean that they can get the support to make sure the abuse stop and prevent it from happening again. Children can speak to any one of the adults in school and they will take the time to listen to their concerns.

**How can abuse be stopped?**

We can help stop abuse at our school by:

* Making sure we understand how we should act towards each other.
* Helping others when they are in need.
* Being kind, friendly and respectful to others.
* Thinking about people’s feelings before we say or do something.
* Taking part in school activities, like worship, PSHCE lessons and circle time, which talk about child on child abuse.
* Talking to someone when we are worried.

Abuse is NEVER OK and it is serious. It is not funny or part of growing up.

Other places I can get help.

