

# Stanton Community Primary School

*Nurture, Enjoy, Aspire, Achieve*



## ADDENDUM to the Child Protection Policy

### Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

#### Introduction

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 states that *'Governing Bodies and Proprietors should ensure they facilitate a whole school approach to safeguarding. This means involving everyone in the school, and ensuring safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development. Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the **best interests** of the child at their heart.'*

Furthermore, *'Where there is a safeguarding concern, Governing Bodies, Proprietors and school leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. The school safeguarding policies and procedures should be transparent, clear and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents and carers. Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report, any form of abuse, exploitation or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.'*

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. All staff receive training to recognise indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff understand that even if there are no reports of this type of harm, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they will speak to their Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).

This means that ALL staff will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to any unacceptable behaviour including 'banter' and will seek to prevent, challenge and take action so that all children understand that any concerns regarding their welfare and safety will be taken seriously. This will encourage and promote a culture of acceptable behaviour and

a safe educational environment for all children.

All staff must ensure that they reassure any victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. No victim should ever be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should they ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
  - abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as teenage relationship abuse);
  - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing
  - physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
  - sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
  - 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;
  - causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
  - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
  - 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 and
  - initiation / hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- (KCSIE 2022)

At Stanton Community Primary School we are committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse.

In particular ensuring that school staff protect children by, wherever possible being aware of the nature and level of risk that children are exposed to, having a clear and comprehensive strategy specific to that child's safeguarding context and having a whole school safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse.

This policy is preventative in its approach to managing possibilities of child-on-child abuse by raising awareness of issues, supporting staff in identifying them with children, and providing appropriate response and intervention that is followed consistently across the whole school workforce.

This policy will also encourage parents to share information about any risk of harm to their child and be clear on the school expectations of how this will be managed. (Farrer and Co. 2019)

All staff and Governors have signed to say that they have read, understood and agreed to work within this policy framework and parents have access to this policy on the school website.

This policy will be updated annually.

### **Purpose and Aim**

*'Research from Farrer and Co has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of child-on-child abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by other children, parents or adults in the community.'*

Children may harm one another in a number of ways which would be classified as child on-child abuse. The purpose of this policy is to explore the many forms of child-on-child abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At Stanton Community Primary School we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy - including Acceptable Use
- Data Protection Policy
- Children Missing from Education Policy
- Behaviour Policy - inclusive of positive handling and searching and confiscating
- Mental Health Policy

### **Framework and Legislation**

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document that focuses adult thinking towards the views of the child is Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018, highlighting that every assessment of a child, should *'reflect the unique characteristics of the child within their family and community context'* (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018). This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 through ensuring procedures are in place in school to hear the voice of the child and to be

mindful of the contexts children live in.

At Stanton Community Primary School we are committed to the following described preventative strategies and have a whole school approach to protect and support children from child-on-child abuse.

### **Preventative Strategies for Schools**

#### **Recognition**

At Stanton Community Primary School we have appropriate strategies in place in order to prevent the issue of child-on-child abuse rather than responding reactively.

We recognise that child-on-child abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms and that even if incidents are not being reported it does not mean that they are not happening. Therefore, it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting children to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff. This involves staff analysing any incidents for trends, patterns and identifying any areas around the site that may appear to be 'less safe'.

Staff will also have access to regular CPD and training to ensure a consistent approach to managing child-on-child issues. All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. (KCSIE, 2022).

#### **School Culture and Ethos and 'Zero-Tolerance' Approach**

In Stanton Community Primary School we take a 'zero-tolerance' approach to abuse, harm or bullying between children and this is clearly expressed in our school's ethos and values and will be shared with all school partners including children, parents and carers. It will be made clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated and never passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'a part of growing up' or 'boys being boys', as failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

In school, we recognise, acknowledge and understand the scale of harassment and abuse. This means that all staff will challenge any form of behaviour both on or off line, from language and comments to physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours can lead to normalising them. All staff will also ensure that any information is shared directly with the Designated

Safeguarding Lead (or Deputies) and recorded factually and accurately on CPOMs as soon as possible so that any action required to prevent further incidents occurs immediately.

### **A Safe Environment to Share Concerns Alongside a Positive Curriculum**

In school we foster an open environment where children feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This will be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/RSHE /SMSC curriculum that tackles issues such as prejudiced-based and discriminatory behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. The curriculum is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse and children with special educational needs or disabilities.

All staff are made aware that children may not feel ready, or know how, to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected and they may not recognise their experiences as harmful e.g., children may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This will not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL (or Deputy) if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

Therefore, to enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure that the Governing Body feels confident that the whole workforce are supported and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of children including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. In order to create such an environment, it is necessary for whole staff training and CPD around abusive behaviours and talking to children in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. This is in line with school's legal obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff dismiss or minimise the concerns raised it may result in a child seeking no further help or advice. Systems are in place and they are well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report, any form of abuse, exploitation or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can express their views and give feedback. Staff are able to discuss issues about online access and support and reinforce appropriate behaviours online including understanding why age limits are in place on social media platforms, encouraging children to share online concerns, talking about issues that have happened

in an open forum and working closely with parents. (Farrer and Co, 2019)

All staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues and that children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently both online and offline. Online abuse can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content. (KCSIE, 2022)

At Stanton Community Primary School we have a clear Online Safety/Acceptable Use Policy that gives clarity and expectations to children about their role in keeping themselves and other children safe in regards to the use of technology both inside and outside of school.

### **Involve Parents**

We know that parents need to be informed about what child-on-child abuse is and how the school will be tackling it. This can help to alleviate any concerns and worries and create a joined-up approach supporting parents in how to approach conversations with children with the same consistency as school.

In school we ensure open two-way communication is available through a variety of platforms so that both parents and staff are working together to deal with any issues. This includes supporting parents through the school's Online and Acceptable Use Policy around the use of technology and the school website and via Class Dojo.

### **Signposting**

Although every effort is made for children to have a variety of opportunities to seek support and advice, signposting is available to our older children in the event that they don't feel confident raising an issue directly to staff or a peer. External services such as the NSPCC and Childline talk to children about how to gain help and advice.

### **Forums for Children to Make Changes/Have Their Voice Heard**

It is useful to ensure children are part of changing their circumstances and the procedures within school. We have ECHO groups and Anti-bullying Ambassador meetings where we encourage pupil voice and encourage children to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. This helps to create a positive ethos in school and one where all children understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

### **Partnership Working**

Multi agency working can consolidate in house procedures in school. By accessing advice, support and guidance, effective decisions can be made in collaboration to improve

outcomes for children who may be at risk of harm. Seeking advice and guidance can act as a preventative measure so that the right course of action is taken at the earliest opportunity.

It is also necessary that we actively refer concerns/allegations of child-on-child abuse to Local Authority Children's Social Care and the police where appropriate. 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 incident cannot be managed internally) to try to address the issue alone - it requires effective partnership working (Farrer and Co. 2019).

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate our whole school environment and are reinforced by all staff and the Antibullying Ambassadors who set a good example to the rest.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs**

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children;
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

To address these additional challenges we provide extra pastoral support for children with SEND or certain medical conditions particularly when investigating any form of child-on-child abuse.

### **Children Who Are Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Trans (LGBT)**

Children who are LGBT can be targeted by other children and risks can be compounded where children who identify as LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced, and provide a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff (KCSIE 2022).

## **Language**

For the purposes of this policy the language used will refer to 'victims'. It is a widely recognised term; however all children may not recognise themselves as a victim or want to be described in this way. The term *alleged* perpetrators will also be used, this is to ensure that children are not given 'labels' about their behaviour unfairly and without any full and thorough conclusive investigation. Any language used should support victims so that they understand that they will always be believed, supported, listened to and taken seriously. The language used to children and parents in the reporting of any incidents that may have occurred could impact on any future rehabilitation of children following any investigations that may occur. The use of certain words can be both inflammatory and distressing for children and their parents, so care will be taken in the discussion of incidents with parents to ensure they are factual and accurate.

## **Measuring the Behaviour**

Simon Hackett's continuum of behaviour (taken from Farrer and Co. 2019) can be a useful guide to measure the behaviour that has occurred and consider the circumstances around the incident (s).

The continuum looks at whether it:

- 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 and the child/children allegedly the subject of that power
- involves a misuse of power

Behaviour which is not abusive at first may potentially become abusive quickly or over time. Intervening early and addressing any inappropriate behaviour which may be displayed by a child is vital and could potentially prevent their behaviour from progressing on a continuum to become problematic, abusive and/or violent - and ultimately requiring (greater/more formal) engagement with specialist external and/or statutory agencies.

## **Expected Action Taken for All Staff**

All staff need to be alert to the well-being of children and to signs of abuse, in order to determine whether they are caused by child-on-child abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with



behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ (Farrer and Co. 2019).

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and alleged perpetrator of the harm, these simple steps can help clarify the situation and establish the facts before deciding the consequences for those involved in perpetrating harm.

## **1. Reassurance**

All staff must reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. It is important for all staff to deal with a situation of child-on-child abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get a true, accurate account of the facts around what has happened, so that nothing is forgotten.

Staff must not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters. Staff will also be mindful that wider safeguarding concerns may influence the child's account of the event(s). Alongside this, peer pressure and the impact of sharing information about the incident(s) may also influence a child's account.

## **2. Gather the Facts**

In cases specifically relating to sexual violence and sexual harassment, part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022 states that two members of staff (preferably one being the Designated Safeguarding Lead) should be present to manage the report, *where possible*.

Staff should not view or forward illegal images of a child and instead confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to police for inspection. All staff should be aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult (PACE Code C 2019) particularly when multi agency partners such as Local Authority Children's Social Care or the Police have to interview the child.

All staff are aware that children may choose to disclose to any member of staff that they feel most comfortable with and therefore all staff have basic training in managing disclosures. In any circumstance the member of staff must make clear to the child that they cannot maintain confidentiality if what is being shared has put or will put the child or another person at risk of harm and/or is criminal.

Staff must also be aware that an initial allegation made to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or

timeline of abuse.

In all circumstances, staff need to speak to all the children involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the children to tell you what happened. This involves listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed and not asking leading questions. This means only interrupting the child to gain clarity with open questions, 'where, when, why, who'.

(What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?)

Then, a full and clear record of exactly what the child has said in their own language should be made on CPOMs after the child has finished the allegation, so the child feels listened to.

### **3. Consider the Intent (Begin to Risk Assess)**

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a child to be able to harm another?

### **4. Decide on Your Next Course of Action**

If from the information that school gather's we believe any child to be at risk of significant harm, a safeguarding referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care will be made immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). This action, in most circumstances, will be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead but in the event of their absence the referral can be made by the Deputy. If this is the case, once Local Authority Children's Social Care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then school will be informed of the next steps.

If Local Authority Children's Social Care and the police intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the children in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important for school to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that Local Authority Children's Social Care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case school/DSL may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, school agrees with the decision, we may then be left to inform parents.

### **5. Confidentiality and Anonymity**

Any staff member taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very

likely that it will be in the best interest of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies. Ultimately, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy) will have to balance the victims wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

## **6. Informing Parents**

If, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/Local Authority Children's Social Care school have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved, then parents should be informed as soon as possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. Parents would not be informed if by doing so the child was put at further risk of significant harm.

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then school will encourage the child to share the information with their parent or share it with parents on their behalf (they may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in any way). The best way to inform parents is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a child may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

### **Points to Consider (Risk Assessment):**

#### **The Wishes and Feelings of the Victim**

It is important to understand how the victim wants to proceed to allow as much control as is reasonably possible over the decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed.

#### **The Nature of the Alleged Incident**

This includes consideration as to whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether Harmful Sexual Behaviour has been displayed.

#### **What is the Age and Development of the Children Involved?**

How old are the children involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? (In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage). This, however should not be overlooked if other issues arise. Any imbalance of power and control must be considered.

#### **Are There Any Additional Vulnerabilities?**

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Therefore, care must be taken to ascertain any changes in mood or behaviour without attributing that to the child's condition. Every effort must be made to overcome barriers to communication and ensure the voice of the child is heard.

**Where Did the Incident or Incidents Take Place?**

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

**What Was the Explanation by all Children Involved of What Occurred?**

Can each of the children give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the children involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one child different from another and why?

**What is Each of the Children's Own Understanding of What Occurred?**

Do the children know/understand what they are doing? E.g., do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the child's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the child have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other child?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If the school is concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, advice will be sought immediately from Local Authority Children's Social Care.

**Repetition**

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

**Ongoing Risks**

Are there any ongoing risks to the victim, other children, adult students or school, college or other setting staff?

**Contextual Safeguarding/Extra Familial Harm**

Is there any other related or wider context involving the child, including any links to child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation?

**Risk Assessment from KCSIE, 2022 (all risk assessments should consider:)**

- The victim, especially their protection and support
- Whether there may have been other victims
- The alleged perpetrator
- All the other children at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrators or from future harms and
- The time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer.

**Outcomes**

The outcome of the investigation will follow local threshold guidance. Therefore, either a referral has been made to either the police/Local Authority Children's Social Care for a full investigation (tier 4). It may have resulted in Local Authority Children's

Social Care undertaking a further assessment (Tier 3) or as a school we may have identified additional services/intervention that are non-statutory and in which case completed an early help assessment (Tier 2). It may be that on investigation, a decision has been made to handle the incident (s) internally, in which case the school may implement a risk assessment plan (Tier 1).

In any of the above outcomes, school has a duty of care to manage the education needs of both children in which case a risk assessment plan may be needed irrespective of the outcome.

### **Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

### **For the Child Who Has Been Harmed (Victim)**

Victims may not display the whole picture immediately. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. Children who have experienced sexual violence display a wide range of responses to their experience, including, in some cases, clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. Therefore, school will remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child irrespective of how overt the child's distress is.

What support they require depends on the individual child. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. 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 child continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the child may need support in improving peer

groups/relationships with other children 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 Relationship / Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education, PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the child feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment/safety plan can be put in place for them whilst 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 Child Who Has Displayed Harmful Behaviour (Alleged Perpetrator)**

In this circumstance it is important to find out why the child has behaved in such a way. It may be that the child 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. Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the child may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the child has been met, it is important that child receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g., making amends with the child they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of harmful sexual behaviour it may be a requirement for the child to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this child cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the child will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation, the behaviour that the child has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others in which case an individual risk assessment may be required.

This should be completed via a multi-agency response to ensure that the needs of the child and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the child and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the child or protective strategies if the child feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

A punishment or consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time may also be required to allow the child to reflect on their behaviour.

### **After Care**

It is important that following the incident the children 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 children do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). In which case, regular reviews with the children

following the incident(s) are imperative.

### **Safety Planning**

Safety planning is a positive way of supporting a child who may benefit from a planned approach; this may be either the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator. Safety plans support the child by considering the behaviours that may be risky and plan ways to manage triggers and to seek support from adults and peers. They are inclusive of parents and staff and are a planned intervention to support children in feeling secure in the school, helping children identify behaviours that may leave them feeling anxious or at risk and have strategies that they can apply to keep themselves feeling safe. The language of safety planning is more positive than risk assessment and can give security to the child that a joined up approach is being followed by all in school..

### **Further Management Action**

Taking further management action and still providing support are not mutually exclusive actions. In some circumstances, the school may need to consider whether further management action may be appropriate for any child/children involved – any such action should address the abuse, the causes of it, and attitudes underlying it. Further management action may sometimes be appropriate, including

- (a) to ensure that the child/children take(s) responsibility for and realise(s) the seriousness of their behaviour;
- (b) to demonstrate to the child/children and others that child-on-child abuse can never be tolerated; and
- (c) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of other children. However, these considerations must be balanced against the child's/children's own potential unmet needs and any safeguarding concerns. Before deciding on appropriate action school will always consider its duty to safeguard all children from harm; the underlying reasons for a child's behaviour; any unmet needs, or harm or abuse suffered by the child; the risk that the child may pose to other children; and the severity of the child-on-child abuse and the causes of it.

Where appropriate, school will consider the potential benefit, as well as challenge, of using managed moves or exclusion as a response, and not as an intervention, recognising that even if this is ultimately deemed to be necessary, some of the measures referred to in this policy may still be required. Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort and only where necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the other children in the school. Engaging in Fair Access Panel Processes to assist with decision-making associated to managed moves and exclusions can also be beneficial (Farrer and Co. 2019).

**Review of Circumstances**

Following any incident of harm, it is necessary for the school to consider if anything could have been done differently. This demonstrates how proactive school is in continually reviewing its policies and systems in effectively keeping children safe.

**This policy has been heavily supported by the key document:**

Farrer and Co: Peer on Peer Abuse Toolkit 2019.

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/news-articles/downloads/peer-on-peer-abuse-toolkit-14.pdf>

**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

Stanton Community Primary School's Child Protection Policy 2022 and the local safeguarding partnership arrangements.