# Southwick Church of England Primary School
# Child on Child Abuse

## Background

Keeping children safe from harm is our main responsibility. Over the past few years across the country, we have seen many high-profile examples of retrospective disclosures of abuse within educational settings. A significant element of this focus has been on incidences of Child on Child (or Peer on Peer) abuse.

At Southwick School we keep our children safe by responding to (and preventing) Child on Child abuse in a similar manner to which we would respond to any other form of abuse.

At all times we should be on the lookout for Child on Child abuse. At a primary school age, we will particularly be alert to the initial behaviours that if left unaddressed, could lead to more serious behaviours later on. Examples of this may include children slapping each other on the bottom or making comments about someone's gender or sexuality.

## Abuse - General

### Defining Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child.

Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Abuse can take place in person or online.

It can take place within a family, institution or a community. Occasionally it can be facilitated by others - outside of these settings.

Children are at risk of face to face abuse AND online abuse.

Children with SEND are 3 more times likely to be abused. Girls are more likely to be sexually abused than boys and it is more likely that the perpetrators will be boys.

### Forms of Abuse

***Physical abuse*** causing physical harm to a child. This includes fabricated illness.
***Emotional*** persistent emotional maltreatment that would have an adverse effect on a child's emotional or mental development. This may involve bullying, which could include racial bullying.
***Sexual*** forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. These can include contact or non-contact activities.
***Neglect*** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs.

# Child on Child Abuse

All staff should understand the importance of reporting and challenging inappropriate behaviours by children.

Certain behaviours should not be downplayed as ‘part of growing up’, ‘messing around’ or ‘boys being boys’.

These behaviours should not be normalised and part of the culture - the children should know what to speak up about and it should be challenged.

As a primary school, behaviours may not initially seem as ‘extreme’ as described below. However, we are actively looking out for behaviours that could, long term, lead on to these serious behaviours.

**Forms of Child on Child Abuse**

***Bullying*** (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)

***Relationship abuse*** 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 standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.

Sexual activity 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

***Sharing of nude/semi-nude images*** Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos11 (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)

***Upskirting*** which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm

***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).

## Responding to an incident/disclosure of Child on Child abuse

1. Reporting staff member has a professional conversation with the DSL/DDSL.
2. DSL/DDSL to investigate the disclosure/incident.
3. DSL/DDSL to decide whether this incident meets the criteria for Child on Child abuse as described above.
4. If Yes, the 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused or neglected' flow chart is followed.
5. It is our responsibility to protect and support the victim(s) but also support the perpetrator, so a risk assessment will be put in place.

## How does our school keep children safe from Child on Child abuse?

1. We have a robust, comprehensive RSE/PSHE curriculum that regularly covers topics such as consent and positive relationships. These themes run through the curriculum from Reception to Year 6.
2. During each teacher/support staff meeting, an agenda point is set aside to have a professional discussion around incidents that may or may not be classed as Child on Child abuse. By doing this, we keep it as part of everyday conversation.
3. Each teacher/support staff meeting begins with a 'safeguarding question of the week' or a mini presentation on particular safeguarding topics.
4. Each class has a worry box - the children complete a worry form every week during the PSHE lesson, whether they have a worry or not. Sometimes these worries can be addressed as a whole class, on other occasions we speak to the child or parents directly. Either way, it allows us to support the children with their worries on a regular basis.
5. We regularly enrich our PSHE/RSE curriculum with visits from (amongst others) the Stay Safe Initiative and the NSPCC. An important message of these visits is to 'speak out and stay safe'.
6. We have a clear behaviour policy that is partly designed to stop negative behaviours becoming habitual. For example, bullying is not allowed to happen because we deal with any initial concerns in a robust way.
7. We respond to incidents/disclosures of Child on Child Abuse in the manner described above.