

Title	Peer on Peer Abuse
Associated Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy • Anti-Bullying (TPO/STU/01) • Behaviour and Discipline (TPO/STU/03) • Special Educational Needs and Inclusion (TPO/STU/05) • Student Care and Welfare (TPO/STU/06) • Online Safety (TPO/STU/12) • Home School Agreement • Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (TPO/STU/10)

REVIEWED: April 2021

NEXT REVIEW: September 2021

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Brooke Weston Trust (BWT/the Trust) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. We recognise that children may face different forms of abuse and we work together to protect children from harm. As well as being abused by adults, children can be abused by other children and young people. This is known as ‘peer on peer abuse’ or ‘child on child abuse’. For the purposes of this policy the term ‘peer on peer abuse’ will be used.
- 1.2 We are committed to preventing peer on peer abuse and will protect children that may be suffering, or at risk of suffering harm perpetrated by another child.
- 1.3 We recognise that peer on peer abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh” or “part of growing up”.
- 1.4 We maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ and act in the best interests of the child at all times.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 The following terms and associated definitions will be used throughout this policy.
 - **‘Staff’ or ‘members of staff’** refers to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of any academy.
 - **Child/children** refers to any young person under the age of 18.
 - **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as; protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
 - **Peer on peer abuse (or child on child abuse)** refers to any scenario where a child under the age of 18 abuses another child under the age of 18. It can take place online or offline. The children involved do not have to be the same age and the perpetrator may be older or younger than the victim.
- 2.2 Peer on peer abuse could include (but is not limited to);
 - bullying;
 - cyberbullying;
 - physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
 - sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;

- 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;
- 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;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals including challenges and other activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation; and
- abuse within intimate personal relationships and/or teenage relationship abuse.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure that all Trust schools follow statutory guidance and advice relating to peer on peer abuse;
- provide stakeholders with information about how Trust schools work to prevent peer on peer abuse;
- provide stakeholders with information about how Trust schools respond to concerns, disclosures and/or allegations relating to peer on peer abuse; and to
- provide stakeholders with information about how Trust schools continue to support victims of peer on peer abuse following the conclusion of an investigation.

3.2 This policy adheres to and must be read alongside the school Safeguarding and Child Protection processes and procedures. All staff and stakeholders should also refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in relation to any safeguarding matters or concerns.

3.3 This policy adheres to all statutory guidance and legislation, including (but not limited to):

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2017)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- General Data Protection Regulations (2018)

3.4 The school will also refer to the government guidance documents 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools and Colleges (May 2018)' and 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation (January 2018)' advice when managing reports or disclosures of peer on peer abuse of a sexual nature.

3.5 Rather than duplicating content from Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021) in this policy, it should be understood that the school will always refer to this document as the benchmark for all safeguarding practice.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 This policy applies to all teaching, non-teaching, support, supply, peripatetic, contract staff, governors, volunteers and trustees working in or on behalf of Brooke Weston Trust. All references in this document to 'staff' or 'members of staff' should be interpreted as relating to the aforementioned unless otherwise stated.

4.2 It is the duty of all staff employed by the BWT to accept and understand their responsibilities for peer on peer abuse (as a part of safeguarding) and to follow the agreed principles and procedures outlined in this policy.

4.3 It is the duty of all staff employed by the BWT to attend all statutory training as deemed appropriate.

4.4 **The Board of Directors**

- Uphold all responsibilities under the BWT Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (as above), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021) and any other relevant statutory guidance.
- The Board of Directors will determine and keep under review the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- The Board of Directors will ensure that an effective organisation is created for the management of safeguarding and child protection concerns and will ensure that the Trust promotes the correct attitude towards safeguarding and child protection with staff, volunteers and visitors.
- The Board of Directors will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the academies' safeguarding practices and procedures.

4.5 Chief Executive Officer

- The Chief Executive Officer, as delegated by the Board of Directors, is accountable for the safeguarding of children across Brooke Weston Trust and responsible for the implementation of this policy across the Trust's academies. This will be undertaken through the support of the Safeguarding Review Group.
- Ensure that the trusts's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy includes all relevant information as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021).
- The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Board of Directors on safeguarding matters.

4.6 Safeguarding Review Group

- The core purpose of the Safeguarding Review Group (SRG) is to initiate improvements in the Trust's working practices, systems and procedures to support effective safeguarding practice in schools' statutory and regulatory roles to protect young persons from potential or actual harm.
- It is the responsibility of the SRG to ensure implementation of the Trust's safeguarding policies, monitoring the effectiveness, statutory compliance and impact of the policies and recommend and implement improvements where needed.
- The Chair of the SRG provides a (brief and by exception) written report to each Board meeting to report on risk in this area.

4.7 Local Governing Bodies

- It is the overarching responsibility of the local governing bodies to ensure that the Brooke Weston Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and each academy's procedures are in place at academy level and are operating effectively.
- The local governing body must appoint a nominated Safeguarding Governor to monitor the academies' implementation of the policy in more depth and report back to the Local Governing Body.
- All governors are expected to attend all relevant training and development provided by the Trust, including the annual safeguarding refresher training and Prevent training. It is the responsibility of all governors to ensure they have read and understood the KCSIE document (Part 1 and Annex A) and this policy and have signed a declaration confirming this has been undertaken.

4.8 Executive Principals

- The Executive Principals have strategic responsibility for the standards in Trust schools as defined by the Ofsted framework. It is the responsibility of the Executive Principals to ensure that a suitable organisation within each academy is in place to satisfy the duties and arrangement as outlines in this policy, including ensuring that appropriate staffing with the required time, funding, resources and support is in place.
- In co-ordination with the Principal, ensure that all relevant Senior Managers are capable and competent in their given roles and provided with suitable and sufficient information and instruction.

- The Executive Principal's are responsible for ensuring each academy has a nominated Safeguarding Governor.

4.9 Principal/Associate Principal

- Uphold all responsibilities under the school safeguarding and child protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021) and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Ensure that this policy and all other relevant policies are followed by all staff.
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead about ongoing enquiries, particularly those under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.
- Ensure that the school curriculum provides education opportunities to minimise incidents of peer on peer abuse.
- Ensure that the school site promotes positive behaviour and minimises the opportunity for peer on peer abuse.
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (in line with The Teachers' Standards 2012).

4.10 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Uphold all responsibilities under BWT Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021) and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Undertake any training required to uphold their post and the responsibilities outlined in this policy.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff in relation to peer on peer abuse.
- Manage disclosures of and concerns about peer on peer abuse.
- Make referrals to Children's Services and the police as appropriate.
- Ensure that this policy is known, understood and used appropriately by all staff.
- Safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties (in line with The Teachers' Standards 2012).

4.11 Role of all staff

- Uphold all responsibilities under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020, updated January 2021) and any other relevant safeguarding statutory guidance and legislation.
- Make referrals to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in cases where they suspect cases of peer on peer abuse or become aware of cases of peer on peer abuse.
- Be made aware that children can abuse other children and the forms that this abuse could take.
- Be clear as to the school policy and procedures on peer on peer abuse.
- Be made aware that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- Report any concerns relating to peer on peer abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Receive training in how to respond appropriately to incidents of 'sexting'. Where incidents involve sexting or indecent images of children, members of staff will not view, download, print or share images, unless, in very exceptional circumstances, directed to do so by the Police. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware of the incident immediately.

5. Training

- 5.1 Each academy will ensure that all staff have been trained to recognise and respond to peer on peer abuse.

- 5.2 This will include a range of different training opportunities including dissemination of this policy, a recording of the key points for all staff and Governors, regular updates through safeguarding briefings and specialist training for DSL's and safeguarding teams.
- 5.3 BWT recognises the gendered nature of peer on peer abuse. However, all staff will be trained to understand that all peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

6. Procedures to minimise peer on peer abuse

- 6.1 All schools have a responsibility to minimise opportunities for peer on peer abuse. This can be achieved by, but not limited to:
- 6.1.1 **School culture:**
- Good behaviour promotes a culture of safety and safeguarding
 - Promotion of wellbeing and mental health
 - Openness and communication – students know who to speak about their worries and know they will be listened to.
 - Protective Behaviours
 - Challenging inappropriate behaviours, including stereotyping and prejudice
 - A telling school
 - Anti-bullying
 - Community issues
- 6.1.2 **Processes and systems:**
- Behaviour policies and consistent implementation
 - Dealing with lower-level incidents quickly and consistently may prevent bigger issues arising
 - Student supervision and site safety
 - Early identification of concerning behaviours and early help
 - Risk assessments/safety plans
 - Staff awareness and training
 - Robust record keeping and analysis of data
- 6.1.3 **Curriculum:**
- Effective education around consent, sexism and Relationships Education (RE), Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Health Education (HE)
 - PSHE body confidence, self esteem
 - What respectful behaviour looks like
 - Online safety
 - Gender roles, stereotyping and equality.
- 6.2 BWT recognise that some children may be more vulnerable to peer on peer abuse than others. For example, children who have already experienced abuse, those that have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), children living in care and children who are LGBTQ+ and/or have other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 may be more likely to face peer on peer abuse than other children. We work to protect children with additional vulnerabilities in an age-appropriate and inclusive way.

Responding to concerns or disclosures of peer on peer abuse

- 6.3 All academies take peer on peer abuse seriously and will respond to all concerns or disclosures of peer on peer abuse immediately.
- 6.4 If a member of staff has a concern about peer on peer abuse, or if a child discloses peer on peer abuse to them, they will refer this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The DSL will ensure this is correctly recorded as Peer on Peer abuse on CPOMS.

- 6.5 Upon receiving a concern, report or disclosure of abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide what further action is necessary. This will vary depending on the type of peer on peer abuse and the severity of the incident/s disclosed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take contextual factors into account when managing the report.
- 6.6 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will always consider the following;
- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. The victims will be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered;
 - the nature of the alleged incident(s), including: the level of coercion or threat, whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour;
 - both the chronological and developmental ages of the children involved;
 - any power imbalance between the children, including consideration of the age of children and whether children have special educational needs or disabilities;
 - the impact on the victim;
 - if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse; and
 - if there are ongoing risks to the victim, other children or school staff.
- 6.7 Depending on the nature of the incident/s, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may:
- Seek further information from those involved and witnesses;
 - Undertake a risk assessment to ascertain steps necessary to safeguard the victim, alleged perpetrator, adults and other children;
 - Decide to manage the concern internally;
 - Organise a meeting with relevant staff and agencies to assess risk and agree a safety plan;
 - Refer the victim and/or the perpetrator to local services for Early Help;
 - Refer the case to Children's Services via a MASH referral;
 - Liaise with social workers working with children involved (if applicable);
 - Make a referral to the police;
 - Refer the matter to the Principal and or/Behaviour Lead for a sanction if appropriate.

Supporting the victim

- 6.8 All academies recognise that peer on peer abuse has a significant impact on young people and victims are likely to need ongoing support.
- 6.9 Appropriate support will be put in place for victims of peer on peer abuse whilst investigation is taking place and following the initial response. Support will continue for as long as it is needed and will be reviewed regularly to ensure the victim is receiving appropriate care.
- 6.10 All academies will do everything we can to maintain the victim's normal routine.
- 6.11 All academies will do everything we can to protect the victim from further bullying and harassment as a result of their disclosure.
- 6.12 If a victim of peer on peer abuse moves to a new setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share the necessary information to ensure that support for the child continues.

Supporting the alleged perpetrator

- 6.13 All academies have a responsibility to ensure that an alleged perpetrator continues to receive a suitable education and will consider a range of options in continuing educational provision.
- 6.14 We recognise that children who perpetrate peer on peer abuse may be being abused themselves. All schools will continue to safeguard the alleged perpetrator and provide them with support.
- 6.15 A plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator will be put in place as part of the risk assessment made following the alleged abuse.
- 6.16 If the alleged perpetrator moves to another setting, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will share information as necessary to safeguard the individual and other child at the new setting.

- 6.17 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take advice from children's social care, specialist services and the police as necessary.
- 6.18 Each academy may choose to impose a sanction on the alleged perpetrator following an incident of peer on peer abuse. In this case, we will follow the school Behaviour Policy in determining the level and severity of sanction.
- 6.19 Where a child is cautioned or receives a conviction related to an incident of peer on peer abuse, the Academy will refer to KCSIE Part 5 and the Safeguarding Advisor for guidance.

Local Arrangements and Making Referrals

- 6.20 All Academies adhere to local safeguarding arrangements, as outlined by the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (for Northamptonshire schools) and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (for Cambridgeshire schools).
- 6.21 For further details of how academies work with partner agencies in responding to safeguarding incidents please see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

7. Record-keeping

- 7.1 Members of staff will follow the procedures for recording a disclosure outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 7.2 Relevant information will be shared with the Trust and Governors as required.

8. Parent(s) and Carer(s)

- 8.1 Parent(s) and carer(s) will be informed of incidents unless sharing information puts a child at greater risk of harm.
- 8.2 If the child wishes to withhold information from their parent/s or carer/s, competency will be assessed using the Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines (where applicable).
- 8.3 Children will always be encouraged to speak to parent(s) or carer(s) about peer on peer abuse.

9. Policy Review

- 9.1 This policy will be monitored as part of the Trust and Academy's annual internal review and reviewed on a three-year cycle or as required by legislature changes

10. Sources of support

Students and their parents/carers should speak to the school in the first instance wherever possible

Further information can be found on each academy's website.

Help online can be found at:

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.bullying.co.uk
www.ceop.police.uk

Report Abuse in Education helpline – Everyone's Invited 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk