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| **Date:** | January 2021 |
| **Date approved by Management Committee:** | January 31st 2021 |
| **Signature of Chair of Management Committee** | Sue Cain |
| **To be reviewed:** | Annually |

**Child Protection Policy**

This policy provides guidance on Child Protection policy and procedures and should be read alongside the Anti Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy and Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

**Purpose and aim**

Bishopton PRU’s Child Protection Policy aims to provide clear direction to all staff and other members of our school community, about expected codes of behaviour when dealing with any child welfare concerns. The policy also aims to make explicit the school’s commitment to the development of robust practice and rigorous procedures to keep children safe in our school.

Our students’ welfare is of paramount importance to the staff here at Bishopton PRU. The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that our staff recognise their responsibility to work towards ensuring that early and additional help is offered to prevent escalation of cases, and where Child Protection concerns are identified referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the child’s well- being.

Management Committee and staff are committed to providing our students with a safe and caring environment through all our policies, procedures and practices. We expect all our students’ parents and all visitors to the school to share this commitment and understanding.

**Introduction**

Bishopton PRU fully recognises the contribution it can make to keeping children safe and supporting the students in its care. There are four main elements to Bishopton PRU’s Child Protection Policy:

**Prevention**

Positive school atmosphere, careful and vigilant teaching, pastoral care, support to students, providing good adult role models and the identification of early and additional support/services to children and families and recognising and reducing risks to children including harassment, bullying, victimisation, exploitation, radicalisation and issues such as Honour Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.

**Protection**

Following agreed procedures, ensuring all staff respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns and that every member of staff has regular training and updates at least annually and are supported to refer their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads, Emily Carr and Rachel Campbell, or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Claire Thompson, or Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer, Jemma Cruces, or The Children’s Hub (Tel 01429 284284 or email childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk) directly. If necessary. In certain specific cases such as Female Genital Mutilation (Mandatory reporting of FGM since October 2015), Radicalisation or Forced Marriage there are SPOCS/named teams and individuals within the police who can be contacted.

**Reconsideration**

Following and challenging the progress of new referrals and existing cases to ensure that individual cases are reconsidered if there remains no improvement to a child’s circumstances.

**Support**

To students and school staff and to children who may be vulnerable due to their individual circumstances.

All staff have a responsibility to recognise child abuse, neglect and peer on peer abuse in its many forms. Additional guidance on how our school supports the following areas of need, additional need or harm are either hyperlinked to the areas identified below form Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) or a named school policy these must be read in conjunction with our Child Protection Policy.

**Framework and Legislation**

No Schools operate in isolation. Keeping children safe from significant harm is the responsibility of all adults especially those working with children. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board, which includes the partnership of several agencies who work with Children and families across the Borough.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020 contains information on what schools and colleges should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges must comply. It should be read alongside Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 which applies to all the schools, including maintained nursery schools. The Children Act 1989 sets out the Legal Framework.

**Bishopton PRU’s Safeguarding Team**

Bishopton PRU has appointed from our Leadership Team, Emily Carr and Rachel Campbell, to be our Designated Safeguarding Leads and Claire Thompson, to be our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The PRU also has appointed a Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer, Jemma Cruces. The team work closely to ensure staff are supported and that communication to other agencies is timely. Whilst the activities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be delegated to an appropriately trained deputy the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection will not be delegated and remains with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has the overall responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection and has the appropriate authority and training to undertake such a role and is able to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters. This person is able to take part in strategy discussions and inter agency meetings and to support other trained staff to do so as well as contribute to the assessment of children.

The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding leads are identified here.

The safeguarding team can be viewed in appendix A.

**Manage referrals**

Refer all cases of suspected abuse to The Children’s Hub (Tel 01429 284284 or email childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk)

Refer cases to the Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child); and/or

Refer to the Police (cases where a crime may have been committed including Sexual Exploitation (VEMT lead), Radicalisation (through the Single Point of Contact for the Channel Panel) Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage).

Support staff who make referrals to the Children’s Hub, Channel Panel or Police as appropriate.

**Work with others**

Liaise with the Head teacher to inform them of issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations.

As required liaise with the case manager (Head teacher or where the Head teacher is the subject of the allegations the Chair of Governors, Chair of Leadership and Management Committee) and the DO at the Local Authority, for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member).

Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

**Undertake Training**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and any deputies should receive appropriate training updated every two years. They should undertake prevent awareness raising and in addition to the formal training their knowledge and skills should be refreshed at regular intervals but at least annually.

**Raise Awareness**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure that the school policies are known understood and used appropriately:

Ensure the school’s Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors and the workforce in this regard to ensure its effectiveness. This includes ensuring that all staff receive the policy on their induction.

Ensure the Child Protection Policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.

Link with the Stockton Safeguarding Children Board to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.

**Child Protection File**

Where children leave the school ensure their child protection file is transferred appropriately for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main student file. Ensure secure transit and confirmation of receipt. This may be through an electronic system.

**Availability**

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during school hours) for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020 Annexe A.

In addition, PG: Safeguarding First Ltd recommend as best practice that the Designated Safeguarding Lead’s:

* Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school’s suite of safeguarding policies particularly the Child Protection Policy and the Staff Behaviour Policy (which incorporates the Staff Handbook and the Teacher’s Standards), especially new or part-time staff who may work with different establishments.
* Be aware of all school exclusions and residentials, and clarify with educational visit co-ordinator / group leader(s) their role and responsibility in connection with safeguarding / child protection.
* Ensure a whole school policy about managing behaviour and discipline including the use of reasonable force, is in place.
* Ensure an effective whole school policy against bullying / cyber-bullying inclusive of measures to prevent all forms of bullying among students is in place.
* Inform the LA of any student to be deleted from the school admission register and follow missing from Education protocols.
* Inform the LA of any student who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school’s permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

**Responsibilities of Bishopton PRU’s Management Committee**

Best practice would advise that a Safeguarding Governor at senior board level is appointed to support the Designated Safeguarding Lead in their role from the perspective of ensuring the allocation of funding and resource is sufficient to meet the current safeguarding and child protection activity, challenge the safeguarding activity and ensure both the self-assessment tool and the Designated Safeguarding Lead report demonstrates fully and accurately the safeguarding arrangements and any action to progress areas of weakness or development.

At Bishopton PRU, The Safeguarding Governor is Sue Cain, the Chair of the Management Committee. The role of this individual is to: Ensure that governing bodies receive training to clarify their statutory role in keeping children safe to support their quality assurance of those statutory arrangements.

The role of the Safeguarding Lead governor is to:

* Ensure that they liaise with the local authority and/or partner agencies on issues of child protection and in the event of allegations of abuse made against the Head teacher of a school or a member of the governing body of the school.
* Ensure that in the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head teacher where the Head teacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school, allegations should be reported directly to the Designated Officer (DO). Therefore, ensuring effective whistleblowing procedures are in place.
* Ensure that the appointed member of the Management Committee for Safeguarding holds the Head teacher to account on all matters involving safeguarding through an effective Child Protection Policy that is embedded and followed by the entire workforce in all of the above raised areas.
* Ensure that all staff undergo safeguarding training at induction and that they receive regular updates.
* Ensure that the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place for online content (inclusive of 3 and 4G).
* Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and/or Sex and Relationships Education.
* Ensure that a designated teacher is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, including working with the Local Authority’s virtual school Head teacher and discuss how pupil premium funding for looked after children will be used.

**Information for Parents**

At Bishopton PRU, Governors and staff are committed to keeping our children safe and will take any reasonable action to safeguard and promote their welfare. In cases where the school has reason to be concerned that a child maybe suffering significant harm, ill treatment, neglect or other forms of harm, staff have no alternative but to follow Stockton safeguarding Children Board procedures and inform The Children’s Hub or police of their concern.

**Procedures**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy DSL) will be informed immediately by an employee of the school, student of the school, parent of the school, other persons, in the following circumstances:

**Suspicion that a child is being harmed**

The threshold of significant harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 Section 31 (9) as: Ill-treatment Impairment of health (as compared to a similar child) Note: harm now includes the impairment of a child’s health or development as a result of witnessing the ill- treatment of another person (Adoption and Children Act 2002).

Working together 2015 defines the categories of harm as: Physical Abuse A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sexual Abuse Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child though it may occur alone.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep a full record of concerns raised and make referrals to The Children’s Hub (Tel 01429 284284 or email childrenshub@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk) if necessary. These records may be either handwritten or electronic but will be stored via a secure system. The Head teacher will be kept informed at all times.

**Actions where there are concerns about a child**

1. In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against a staff member, see Part Four of this guidance

2. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, and early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details guidance on the early help process

3. Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. This can include S17 assessments of children in need and S47 assessments of children at risk of significant harm. Full details are in Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguarding Children

4. This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)

At all stages, staff should keep the child’s circumstances under review and re-refer if appropriate, to ensure the child’s circumstances improve – the child’s best interests must always come first.

**Training and Support**

All staff members should be aware of the systems within Bishopton PRU which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of their induction into the school to ensure they can discharge their responsibilities effectively. This includes: the school’s Child Protection Policy; the school’s Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a Code of Conduct, at Bishopton, this incorporates the Staff Handbook and the Teachers’ Standards); Safer Working Practice Document and the names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their cover or nominated deputy.

All staff members should also receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The governing body in consultation with SSLB will decide the frequency and content of this CPD. At Bishopton PRU our whole school training is held annually. In addition, all staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates via staff meetings held termly or internal CPD as required but at least annually to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively and allow them opportunities to contribute to reviewing and shaping the safeguarding arrangements.

**Professional Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of safeguarding. Bishopton PRU recognises that the only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. (Child Protection Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. (http://www.teescpp.org.uk/).

**Record Keeping**

Well-kept records are essential to good safeguarding practice. Bishopton PRU is clear about the need to record any concerns, discussions held, decisions made and reasons for those decisions about a child or children within its care. All staff will follow the school’s information sharing and recording policies to ensure recording keeping is compliant.

Safeguarding Recording with Bishopton PRU is through CPOMS. Following a child leaving our school we follow the appropriate transfer procedures and retention guidelines.

**Attendance at Safeguarding Conferences**

In the event of Bishopton PRU being invited to attend Child Protection Conferences, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will represent the school and the identify the most appropriate trained member of staff to provide information relevant to the Child Protection Conference (Initial/Review). In the event that those staff members cannot attend, the Safeguarding Officer, Bishopton PRU’s SENCo or Headteacher will attend in their place.

**Supporting Children**

Bishopton PRU recognises that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. Bishopton PRU may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of some of the children in its care. The school, therefore, recognises that such children might exhibit challenging and defiant behaviour and will take careful note of the context of such behaviour.

As an Operation Encompass partner we work closely with the OE Lead with regards to Domestic Violence incidents and record reports appropriately.

**Peer on peer abuse**

Bishopton PRU also recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms and any concerns raised will be investigated and dealt with appropriately. No peer on peer abuse should be tolerated or minimised as part of growing up and all those involved will be provided with an appropriate level of support. It is understood that those students who have experienced abuse in their own lives may in turn abuse others.

Bishopton PRU recognises that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work in any capacity with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. School staff must give consideration to children who are subject to an Education Health and Care Plan or have a medical condition as these can mask safeguarding issues and must not be dismissed.

Bishopton PRU also recognises that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol misuse or mental health issues children may also be vulnerable and in need of support and protection.

**Peer on Peer Abuse Policy and Procedure Guidance**

Introduction Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020 states that ‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with’ (page 19). The document also states it is most important to ensure opportunities of seeking the voice of the child are heard, ‘Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, any system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.’

At Bishopton PRU we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to impact on that individual child’s emotional and mental health and well-being.

**Purpose and Aim**

Children and young people may be harmful to one another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. The purpose of this policy is to explore the many forms of peer on peer abuse and include a planned and supportive response to the issues. At Bishopton PRU we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Protection Policy

Cyber Bullying Policy

These policies are 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, 2015, highlighting that every assessment of a child, ‘must be informed by the views of the child’ and within that ‘It is important to understand the resilience of the individual child when planning appropriate services. (Working Together, 2015:23) This is clearly echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

**Introduction to abuse and harmful behaviour**

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence (KCSIE, 2016). It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

**Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

**Physical abuse** e.g. (biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling etc.)

Physical abuse may include, hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidently before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

**Sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse** e.g. (inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault etc.)

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as well as the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may range from inappropriate sexual language, inappropriate role play, to sexually touching another or sexual assault/abuse

**Bullying** (inclusive of all types) Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber- bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online. Low-level disruption and the use of offensive language can in itself have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as banter or horseplay it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour. (Preventing and tackling bullying, July 2017)

**Cyber bullying**

Cyberbullying is the use of mobile telephones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above. It is important to state that cyber bullying can very easily fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 under section 1 which states that electronic communications which are indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim would be deemed to be criminal. This is also supported by the Communications Act 2003, Section 127 which states that electronic communications which are grossly offensive or indecent, obscene or menacing, or false, used again for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another could also be deemed to be criminal behaviour.

If the behaviour involves the use of taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no choice but to involve the police to investigate these situations.

**Youth Produced Sexual Imaging also known as Sexting**

‘Youth produced’ includes young people sharing images that they, or another young person, have created of themselves.

‘Sexual’ is clearer than ‘indecent’. A judgement of whether something is ‘decent’ is both a value judgement and dependent on context.

‘Imagery’ covers both still photographs and moving videos (and this is what is meant by reference to imagery throughout the document).

The types of incidents which this advice covers are:

A person under the age of 18 years creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18 years.

A person under the age of 18 years shares sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 years with a peer under the age of 18 years or an adult.

A person under the age of 18 years is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18 years.

Sexting is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending ‘nude pics’, ‘rude pics’ or ‘nude selfies’. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

However, once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and these images could end up anywhere. By having in their possession or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 years on to someone else, young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as stated as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

The UKCCIS Education Group has produced advice for schools and colleges on responding to incidents of ‘sexting.’ The advice aims to support them in tackling the range of issues which these incidents present including responding to disclosures, handling devices and imagery, risk assessing situations and involving other agencies. The advice also contains information about preventative education, working with parents and reporting imagery to providers. This advice is non-statutory and should be read alongside the Department for Education’s Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance and non- statutory Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice for schools. These documents are consulted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead when and if an incident occurs.

**Defining ‘sexting’**

Whilst professionals refer to the issue as ‘sexting’ there is no clear definition of ‘sexting’. Many professionals consider sexting to be ‘sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile telephones or over the internet’. Yet when young people are asked ‘What does sexting mean to you?’ they are more likely to interpret sexting as ‘writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know’. Similarly, many parents think of sexting as flirty or sexual text messages rather than images.

This advice only covers the sharing of sexual imagery by young people. Creating and sharing sexual photographs and videos of uner-18s is illegal and therefore causes the greatest complexity for schools and other agencies when responding. It also presents a range of risks which need careful management.

On this basis this advice introduces the phase ‘youth produced sexual imagery’ and uses this instead of ‘sexting.’ This is to ensure clarity about the issues this advice addresses.

**Initiation/Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

**Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices to do with disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

Teenage relationship abuse Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner.

**Expected action taken from all staff**

Although the type of abuse may have a varying effect on the victim and initiator 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. It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts around what has occurred as soon after the child(ren) may have forgotten. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. For example; do not use the word perpetrator, this can quickly create a ‘blame’ culture and leave a child labelled.

In all cases of peer on peer abuse it is necessary that all staff are trained in dealing with such incidents, talking to young people and instigating immediate support in a calm and consistent manner. Staff should not be prejudiced, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

**Gather the Facts**

Speak to all the young people 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 young people to tell you what happened. Only interrupt the young person from this 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?)

**Consider the Intent (begin to Risk Assess)**

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

Decide on your next course of action If from the information that you gather you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must make a safeguarding referral to social care immediately (where a crime has been committed the police should be involved also). If this is the case, once social care has been contacted and made a decision on what will happen next then you will be informed on your next steps. If social care and the police intend to pursue this further they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to also. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

It may also be that Social Care feel that it does not meet their criteria in which case you may challenge that decision, with that individual or their line manager. If on discussion however, you agree with the decision, you may then be left to inform parents.

Informing parents if, once appropriate advice has been sought from police/social care you have agreement to inform parents or have been allocated that role from the other services involved then you need to inform the parents as soon as possible. If services are not going to be involved then equally, this information may need to be shared with parents. If a young person is deemed to be ‘Gillick Competent’ following the ‘Fraser’ guidelines and does not wish you to share the information with parents, then the school must consider this especially for example if the young person is pregnant and this is why they are being bullied (unless this has occurred through significant harm in which case a criminal/social care case is likely or the young person is under the age of 13).

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent or even with them (they may be scared to tell parents that they are being harmed in any way). Where school can evidence they are acting in the best interests of the young person they would not be criticised, however this would be the case if they actively breached the rights and choices of the young person.

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 young person 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:**

What is the age of the children involved?

How old are the young people 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 (see following)

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

What is each of the children’s own understanding of what occurred?

Do the young people 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 young person’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 young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

In dealing with an incident of this nature the answers are not always clear cut. If you are concerned or unsure as to whether or not there is any risk involved, please seek advice from Children’s Services 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?

**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 young person who has been harmed What support they require depends on the individual young person. 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 young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people 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 PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment 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 young person who has displayed harmful behaviour in this circumstance it is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person 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 young person may require additional support from family members. Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person 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 young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education whilst off site.

Even following the conclusion of any investigation the behaviour that the young person 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 young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

**After care**

It is important that following the incident the young people 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 young people 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 young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

**Information Sharing**

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect. As part of meeting a child’s needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the process and principles for sharing information within the school or college and with the three safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies and practitioners as required. School and college staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children’s social care.

**Preventative Strategies for Schools and Settings**

For all schools and settings, it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way. Firstly, and most importantly for schools and settings is recognition that peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

This can be supported by ensuring that each school/setting has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This can be strengthened through a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another.

To enable such an open and honest environment it is necessary to ensure the whole workforce feels confident and enabled to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people 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 young people in a way that continues to create an open and honest environment without prejudice. It is incredibly important that staff do not dismiss issues as ‘banter’ or ‘growing up’ or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. It is necessary that staff consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action. If staff minimise the concerns raised it may result in a young person seeking no further help or advice.

It is important that signposting is available to young people in the event that they don’t feel confident raising an issue to staff or a peer. It is useful to have a resource board with support services on a wide range of issues so young people can seek their own solutions should they wish to. In the same way external services or support programmes could be brought in to talk to young people about specific issues in support of the prevention of peer on peer abuse.

Finally, it is useful to ensure young people are part of changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within schools. Having a school council and pupil voice and encouraging young people to support changes and develop ‘rules of acceptable behaviour’ will go far in helping to create a positive ethos in school and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

Schools which excel at tackling bullying (and peer abuse) have created an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. That culture extends beyond the classroom to the corridors, the dining hall, the playground, and beyond the school gates including travel to and from school. 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 the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. (Preventing and tackling bullying, 2017).

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting ALL children from maltreatment and abuse; (including in addition to the four categories of harm, issues such as child sexual exploitation (CSE), Honour based violence (HBV) inclusive of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage, preventing radicalisation and extremism, harassment, bullying and victimisation) preventing impairment of children’s 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. This includes everyone under the age of 18.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Due to the regular contact with children all staff at Bishopton PRU have, we hold a particularly important role in safeguarding as we are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and to prevent concerns from escalating. Children can make disclosures or show signs of abuse at any time and to any individual and safeguarding incidents can occur within schools.

Therefore, it is important that all staff:

* Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at all times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child.
* Ensure that they report any concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. (However, all staff can refer their concerns directly to The Children’s Hub (Tel 01429 284284 or email childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk) if necessary and the police in the stated incidents above). They should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible if they have reported concerns directly.
* Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies. All discussions decisions and reasons for them should be recorded in writing adhering to the Bishopton PRU’s recording and information sharing policy/procedure.
* Ensure that they maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of a child /an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Head teacher.
* Ensure that they feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices of staff and potential failures in the school’s safeguarding regime through whistleblowing procedures and the staff behaviour/code of conduct policy.
* Ensure that they attend regular formal training/updates at least annually to support them in recognizing the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early identification of needs of children to prevent an escalation of need or risk to the child.
* Ensure from the 1st July 2015 that under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act, April 2015 that the school has ‘Due regard’ To Prevent’ and to assess the risk of children and young people being radicalised drawn into extremism (based upon potential risks in local area and that clear protocols in place for all visitors so that views are appropriate and not an opportunity to influence others).
* Ensure from October 2015 that there is mandatory reporting to the police in all cases where teachers discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.
* Ensure that staff understand through online safety training the additional risks for students online and continue to promote the School’s Online Safety Policy in the protection of all students. This includes the management of 3G and 4G internet access via the children’s own mobile phones or electronic devices which can allow them unlimited access to the internet without any restrictions using their own data allowance. It should be clear in every school’s online safety policy, the expectations of pupils regarding their own devices whilst on school site and the consequences of any evidence of inappropriate use of the internet.
* Ensure that they remain vigilant whilst visitors are on site and continue to promote the school’s commitment to keeping children safe through reminding visitors and parents of the school’s appropriate use of personal mobile phones/devices whilst they are on school premises. This includes staff understanding and adhering to the Staff Behaviour Policy inclusive of use of mobile phones and electronic devices.

Bishopton PRU will work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy and procedures will be subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation and will be frequently cross referenced with the latest guidance and government publications.

**UNICEF - UNCRC**

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child sets out human rights of every person under 18 and applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background (Article 2).

Articles directly relating to this policy are:

Article 2 (Non-discrimination)

Article 3 (Best interest of the child)

Article 6 (Life, survival and development)

Article 16 (Right to privacy)

Article 17 (Access to information from the media)

Article 28 (Right to education)

Article 29 (Goals of education)

The template for this policy has been developed in partnership with members of CAPE (National Group of Education Leads for Safeguarding and Child Protection across the North West/East), Sunderland City Council Education Safeguarding Team remodelled and adapted it to suit local/regional need. In 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 this template was again revised in partnership with Pam Gartland: Safeguarding First Ltd to provide a guidance tool for schools in light of the new statutory DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

It has been informed by the following legislation and national & local guidance

* Education Act 2002 Section 175 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175
* Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made
* Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/728/made
* DfE Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/596629/EYFS\_STATU TORY\_FRAMEWORK\_2017.pdf
* Children’s Act 1989/2004 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents Working together to safeguard children www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children- - 2 Stockton Safeguarding Children Board Procedures http://www.teescpp.org.uk/ CP Referral Form New Multi-Agency Referral Form to Children’s Social Care = click here to download the referral form
* What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/419604/what\_to\_do\_i f\_you\_are\_worried\_a\_child\_is\_being\_abused.pdf Data Protection Act 1998 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents
* Sexual Offences Act 2003 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents
* Freedom of Information Act 2000 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/pdfs/ukpga\_20000036\_en.pdf

This Policy will be reviewed annually or in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance. This policy will be updated by our School/Setting at any time that local solutions such as front door services in social care or the LADO details change. This policy may also be amended following the annual review with staff where our School/Setting’s procedures or practices may change following whole staff discussion or training to ensure it is the most effective policy in keeping our children safe.

This policy must be ratified by the governing body signed/dated by both the Head teacher and Chair of Bishopton’s Management Committee.

**References**

DFE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies. July 2017 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/623895/Preventing\_a nd\_tackling\_bullying\_advice.pdf

Whatis.com http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/cyberbullying New Choices Inc http://newchoicesinc.org/educated/abuse/TDV/def This is abuse campaign https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/410010/2015-03- 08\_This\_is\_Abuse\_campaign\_summary\_report\_\_2\_.pdf Stop bullying.gov http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is bullying/definition/index.html#types Holding Together: equalities, difference and cohesion, a resource for school improvement planning, published for Derbyshire Education Authority by Trentham Books, summer 2009. EACH resources for LGBT CEOP https://www.ceop.police.uk/Media-Centre/Press-releases/2009/What-does-sexting-mean/

Appendix A

