

St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School



Peer on Peer Abuse

Approved: April 2025

Next Review Date: April 2026

1. Introduction

At St John Henry Newman Catholic Primary School, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where every child is valued and protected from harm. As a Catholic school, we uphold Gospel values of love, respect, and dignity, ensuring that all pupils feel safe and supported. This policy is in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024* and outlines our approach to preventing, identifying, and responding to peer-on-peer abuse.

2. Definition of Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse refers to any form of abuse or harmful behaviour between children. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Physical abuse (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, etc.)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Sharing of inappropriate images (e.g., sexting)
- Initiation/hazing-type violence and rituals
- Upskirting (as defined in the Voyeurism Offences Act 2019)

3. Preventative Measures

Our school takes a proactive approach to preventing peer-on-peer abuse by:

- Promoting a strong ethos of respect, kindness, and Gospel values.
- Embedding safeguarding and behaviour expectations within the curriculum, particularly through RSE and PSHE lessons.
- Providing regular staff training to recognise signs of abuse and respond appropriately.
- Implementing clear behaviour policies and anti-bullying strategies.
- Ensuring that pupils feel safe and know how to report concerns.
- Providing pastoral support and designated safe spaces for pupils.

4. Recognising the Signs of Peer-on-Peer Abuse

All staff must be vigilant for signs that a child may be experiencing abuse from a peer, including:

- Sudden changes in behaviour, mood, or school performance.
- Unexplained injuries or reluctance to discuss incidents.
- Avoidance of certain people or situations.
- Signs of distress after using technology (cyberbullying/sexting concerns).

5. Reporting and Responding to Peer-on-Peer Abuse

- Pupils are encouraged to report concerns to a trusted adult, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or through our anonymous reporting system.
- Staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report concerns immediately to the DSL.
- The DSL will investigate all reports sensitively and take appropriate action, including:
 - Supporting the victim and ensuring their safety.
 - Managing and supporting the alleged perpetrator.
 - Engaging parents/carers and external agencies (where necessary).
 - Recording and monitoring incidents to identify patterns of behaviour.
- Serious incidents will be referred to children's social care and/or the police, in line with KCSIE 2024 guidance.

6. Supporting Victims and Perpetrators

- Victims will receive tailored support, including pastoral care, counselling, or referral to external services if needed.
- Perpetrators will be supported through behaviour interventions, restorative justice approaches, and external referrals where necessary.
- The school will work closely with parents/carers to ensure the well-being of all involved.

7. Recording and Monitoring

- All incidents of peer-on-peer abuse must be recorded and securely stored by the DSL.
- Patterns of behaviour will be monitored, and interventions will be reviewed to ensure effectiveness.
- Governors will be informed of trends and safeguarding developments through regular reports.

8. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
- Online Safety Policy

9. Review and Policy Approval

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if necessary, to reflect updates in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and best safeguarding practices.