

Allegations Against Other Pupils Policy

Bushmead Primary School

September 2023



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1. Aims

It is important that all school safeguarding policies reflect their local situations and areas of risk. This model policy is offered as a basis for schools to develop their own policy that meets their needs of their own pupils. The effectiveness of all policies is judged on their outcomes, not on their wording.

At Bushmead Primary we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

2. Legislation and guidance

The new 'Keeping children safe in education' statutory guidance says that 'governing bodies... should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children' (paragraph 40). Having such procedures is a new feature to this guidance.

3. Definitions

DSL – Designated Safeguarding Lead

SENDCo – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Governor/s

The link governors are the Safeguarding Link Governors

They will:

Work with the head teacher to determine the strategic development of the policy and provision in the school.

The Governing Body will review this policy in line with the Policy review schedule at the FGB.

4.2 The head teacher

The head teacher is **Mr Steve Down**

He will:

Work with staff, parents and governors to determine the strategic development of the policy and provision in the school.

Have overall responsibility for the safe, fair and effective management of allegations against other pupils.

4.3 Class teachers and teaching assistants

They will:

Work with parents and children to implement the following procedures in the event of any allegations being made by a pupil or pupils against other pupils in school.

5. Safeguarding Allegations

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found.

5.1 The allegation:

- is made against a pupil and refers to their behaviour towards another pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other pupils in the school
- indicates that other pupils may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

5.2 Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

5.2.1 Physical Abuse

- violence, particularly pre-planned
- forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

5.2.2 Emotional Abuse

- blackmail or extortion
- threats and intimidation

5.2.3 Sexual Abuse

- indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting

5.2.4 Sexual Exploitation

- encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties
- photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

In areas where gangs are prevalent, students may attempt to recruit other pupils using any or all of the above methods. Young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other young people under threat of violence.

5.3 Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards pupils from other students

On occasion, some students will present a safeguarding risk to other students. The school should be informed that the young person raises safeguarding concerns, for example, they are coming back into school following a period in custody or they have experienced serious abuse themselves. These students will need an individual risk management plan to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. There is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.

5.4 What to do

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the DSL should be informed.

A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.

The DSL should contact social services to discuss the case. It is possible that social services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate.

The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both pupils' files.

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim).

It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures.

Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher **every 3 years**. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.

It will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to our policies on:

- a. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- b. Behaviour Policy

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