



BEECHEN CLIFF

Hot Topic 5: Peer on Peer Abuse

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and that it can happen both inside and outside of Beechen Cliff and online. It is important that we recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports.

All staff should understand that, even if there are no reports made at Beechen Cliff it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such it is important that if you have any concerns regarding peer on peer abuse you should speak to James Oldham, Designated Safeguarding Lead (or any of the four DDSL's).

It is essential that you understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- 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;
- 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;
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (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; and
 - 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).

How we respond to peer-on-peer abuse:

- Reassure and support victim
- Zero tolerance approach with perpetrator
- Take action via DSL/Deputy DSL/HoH/HoSf
- Liaise with parents of both perpetrator and victim
- Safeguarding team log as peer on peer on safeguarding records with orange form for victim and perpetrator
- Support for victims, involving external agencies if required
- Disciplinary steps for perpetrator, involving Police if required
- Educational input for perpetrator, involving external agencies if required
- Quality assure incidents through safeguarding meetings
- Promote respect and compassion for all

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