

OAK TREES MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE POLICY
GEN041 ISSUE: A, FEBRUARY 2023



Prepared by:

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Chief Executive Officer

Signature:

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Date:

24th February 2023

Approved by:

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24th February 2023

JANE OWENS
Chair of Trustees

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Introduction

This document aims to outline the ways in which Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust will ensure preventative education is delivered across each of its schools and outlines how incidents of child on child abuse will be dealt with and recorded. The policy will be applied in conjunction with behaviour and safeguarding policies, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, E-Safety and documents pertinent to the RSE curriculum in each school. Oak Trees MAT will also be guided, as appropriate, by third parties such as the Police and Wirral Social Care.

What is child on child abuse?

Child on child abuse follows a recent terminology change from peer on peer abuse. This form of abuse occurs when there is any kind of physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or coercive control exercised between children both on and offline. Further specific guidance regarding child on child sexual violence and harassment can be found on page 103 of KCSIE 2022.

Oak Trees MAT has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. It is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. A failure to uphold this zero-tolerance approach could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. All members of staff across the trust have a responsibility to uphold this commitment and to respond appropriately to any such incidents. The attitude of ‘it could happen here’ is known and accepted by the trust and across its schools.

In order to ensure that staff are well-equipped and trained to identify any concerning behaviours, all schools will ensure that DSLs disseminate information at timely points and resources such as Wirral’s 7-minute briefings, Brook’s Traffic Light Tool and guidance from NSPCC are well utilised by all staff.

Oak Trees MAT values the role of preventative education and as such, through daily practices across each school, through behaviour policies and expectations and via the curriculum, we will ensure that our children are taught about respectful, healthy relationships as well as harmful behaviours. The children will be taught a zero-tolerance approach and will have clearly identified channels to report any such concerns.

This policy makes it essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Schools have a working awareness that any such victim will be adversely affected and this may impact on their emotional well-being and mental health as well as academic attainment and progress. Schools will ensure that appropriate support and intervention is implemented in a timely manner.

If and when incidents occur, the school staff, with support of senior leaders and DSLs, will identify the course of action to be taken. This is likely to include consideration of any harmful sexual behaviours, discussions with parents/carers and where appropriate, consultation with police and safeguarding professionals outside of school – i.e. Integrated Front Door. Where it is appropriate and necessary for sanctions for behaviour, each school will follow their behaviour policy. All such incidents will be recorded on CPOMS.

If it is necessary and appropriate, schools may implement a risk assessment for individual children in light of any harmful or potentially harmful behaviours being displayed. The risk assessment will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate.

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Whilst schools are limited as to their responsibility and influence outside of school hours, Oak Trees MAT remains committed to the safety and well-being of its children. Each school will deal appropriately with any concerns that are raised about events taking place outside of school – this might include signposting children and adults to wider services such as the police.

In a digital age, Oak Trees MAT also identifies that any such abuse can occur both physically and online.

Incidents of Child on Child Abuse are recorded and reported to governors on a regular basis – the reporting is strictly statistical.

It is not possible to pre-empt every possible scenario in regards to sexual harassment or violence – this policy guides the actions that schools will take but it is not exhaustive. The trust and its schools will make decisions on a case by case basis and these decisions will be professionally informed at all points.

Useful Websites

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour>

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/7-Minute-Briefing-Peer-Sexual-Abuse.pdf>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1014224/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf

<https://safeguarding.network/content/safeguarding-resources/peer-peer-abuse/>

National College – Relevant Materials

<https://thenationalcollege.co.uk/hub/view/webinar/understanding-the-new-dfe-guidance-on-sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges-2021>

<https://thenationalcollege.co.uk/hub/view/course/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-violence-for-teaching-staff>

<https://thenationalcollege.co.uk/hub/view/course/sexual-violence-for-non-teaching-staff>

<https://thenationalcollege.co.uk/hub/view/webinar/sgw-understand-the-revised-dfe-advice-on-sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-colleges>