

## Peer-on-peer abuse including sexualised abuse.

Peer-on-peer abuse is defined as abuse between children.

Eccleston Lane Ends Primary School has a **zero-tolerance approach to abuse**, including peer-on peer abuse.

Eccleston Lane Ends Primary School will refer to specific guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education Part five: Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment and St Helens Procedures. 5.31 Peer Abuse ([proceduresonline.com](https://proceduresonline.com)).

All staff will be aware that peer-on-peer abuse can occur between pupils of any age and gender, both inside and outside of school, as well as online. All staff will be aware of the indicators of peer-on-peer abuse, how to identify it, and how to respond to reports. All staff will also recognise that even if no cases have been reported, this is not an indicator that peer-on peer abuse is not occurring. All staff will speak to the DSL if they have any concerns about peer-on-peer abuse.

All staff will understand the importance of challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers, and will not tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up". Peer-on-peer abuse can be manifested in many different ways, including:

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying.
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse - this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse.
- Sexual violence - this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence.
- Sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- The consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.
- Upskirting.
- Initiation- and hazing-type violence and rituals, which can 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.

All staff will be clear as to the school's policy and procedures regarding peer-on-peer abuse and the role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of pupils with SEND, who evidence suggests are more likely to be abused than their peers. Staff will not assume that possible indicators of abuse relate to the pupil's SEND and will always explore indicators further.

All staff will be made aware of the heightened vulnerability of LGBTQ+ pupils, who evidence suggests are also more likely to be targeted by their peers. In some cases, pupils who are perceived to be LGBTQ+, regardless of whether they are LGBTQ+, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBTQ+ pupils. The school's response to sexual violence and sexual harassment between pupils of the same sex will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. Pupils will also be reassured that they will be taken seriously, be supported, and kept safe.

The school's procedures for managing allegations of peer-on-peer abuse are outlined in the School Behaviour Policy. Staff will follow these procedures, as well as the procedures outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and exclusion procedures, where relevant.

Eccleston Lane Ends Primary School and DSL will consider:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
- the nature of the alleged incident.
- the ages of the children involved.
- the development stages of the children involved.
- any power imbalance between the children.
- is the incident a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, school or college staff.
- contextual safeguarding issues.
- **Following a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment, considering:**
  - the victim.
  - the alleged perpetrator.

- all other children (and if appropriate adult students and staff).
- Risk assessments will be recorded and kept under review as a minimum termly.