

## Peer-on-Peer Abuse

At Charters School, we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by both 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. All staff are made aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:



- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. This could for example include girls being sexually touched/assaulted/harassed or boys being subject to initiation-type violence. LGBT children can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, children who are perceived to be LGBT, whether they are or not, can be just as vulnerable to abuse as LGBT children. The school's response to boy-on-boy and girl-on-girl sexual violence and sexual harassment will be equally as robust as it is for incidents between children of the opposite sex. Children with SEND are also most at risk for peer on peer abuse and again will follow the same robust response.

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 student, some of the following features will be found:

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