



Child on Child Abuse Policy

Date of Review: June 2026

Date of Next Review: September 2027

We believe that all students have the right to be taught in a safe environment to enable them to optimise their learning and achievement. We expect all students to have respect for themselves and others and work to ensure everyone in our community feels safe, valued and supported. The Laurus Trust promotes the values of honesty, acceptance, inclusion and fairness within a caring, restorative and nurturing environment.

Understanding Child-on-Child Abuse (Students who harm each other)

As a Trust, we understand and recognise safeguarding issues can arise via children abusing other children. It can take many forms and may occur inside and outside of the school environment and online. We do not tolerate any form of Child-on-Child abuse and this will not be passed off as “banter” or “having a laugh”

Child-on-child abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse (including assault and use of weapons)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)
- Gender-based violence
- Abuse motivated by misogyny or harmful belief systems
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Teenage relationship abuse (including coercive control)
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate images and/or videos (including AI-generated or “deepfake” content)
- Upskirting (a criminal offence)
- Grooming for criminal or sexual exploitation

We recognise that serious violence between children, including threats or possession/use of weapons, is a safeguarding concern and must be treated as such.

All staff are aware of child-on-child abuse. Staff members who are concerned that a child might have been or is being abused by another child will follow the Trust’s safeguarding and child protection procedures and report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as outlined in this policy.

We take a proactive approach to mitigate child-on-child abuse. Delivered through

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is delivered through PSHE and/or Beliefs and Values lessons, using age-appropriate content throughout the Key Stages. This is in line with the DFE's Statutory Guidance on RSE.

Teaching:

- Consent and respectful relationships
- Online safety and digital behaviour
- Recognition of harmful behaviours, including misogyny
- How to report concerns and seek help
- Assemblies and safeguarding education throughout the year

Students are supported to:

- Understand acceptable and unacceptable behaviours
- Recognise peer pressure and coercion
- Create safe environments for themselves and others

Responding to reports of child-on-child abuse

Robust systems have been established in The Trust for dealing with safeguarding concerns, including any reports of child-on-child abuse. All incidents will be treated seriously and confidentially. Allegations of abuse by a child will be treated as seriously as allegations of abuse from an adult, it should never be dismissed as normal behaviour. Incidents of child-on-child abuse may need to be dealt with in various ways.

Consideration will be given to:

- The wishes of the victim
- The nature and severity of the incident
- The ages and developmental stages of those involved
- Any power imbalance
- Ongoing risks to all children

Incidents of child-on-child abuse will be dealt with via the schools anti-bullying policy and/or behaviour policy. Incidents which take place outside of school may need to be addressed in school, however the school are clear that where professional advice needs to be sought from external partners, it will be.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult children's social care on matters relating to the safety and welfare of a child and will consult the police in respect of matters relating to a possible crime.

We recognise that:

- Students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities may find it more difficult to articulate their experiences. All such incidents will be investigated fully, recorded on CPOMS, and shared with parents and carers.
- Individual circumstances and needs will be considered, including making reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure students with SEND are supported appropriately. Social stories or other tailored interventions and forms of communication may be used where helpful.
- Both the child harmed and the child who has displayed harmful behaviour may be in need of safeguarding support. All staff understand that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue, not just a behaviour issue. Harmful behaviours may be a sign that a child is experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation themselves. We will consider the welfare and safety of all children involved and will put a proportionate and supportive package of care in place for those affected this may include measures such as separation, supervision and risk assessments.

Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB)

We respond to sexual harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour in line with statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and adopt a case-by-case approach.

Responses may include:

- Manage the incident internally
- Make a referral to 'Early help'
- Referrals to children's social care
- Reporting to the Police

Please refer to the Trust Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy for further guidance.

Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault will be reported immediately and the school will work closely with police and social care on how best to deal with situation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy – Trust Secondary
- Behaviour Policy – School Secondary

Equality Impact Statement

Names and titles of people involved with this assessment Title of Policy – Child on Child Abuse Policy	Rachel Robinson Assistant Trust Director of Inclusion
Impact assessment carried out with regard to identified characteristics	Race ☒ Disability ☒ Sex ☒ Age ☒ Religious belief ☒ Sexual orientation ☒ Gender Reassignment ☒
Summary of any issues/proposed changes	Amended to KCSIE 2026 Amended to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
Date	June 2026
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