



HEARTWOOD
HOUSE

Policy document control box

Policy title	Dealing with Child on Child Abuse Policy
Policy owner (including job title)	Cathy Taylor (Executive Headteacher)
Version	1.05
Date of next review	April 2027

Version	Date	Title	Status	Comment
1.03	20/9/2022	Executive Headteacher	Review	Policy review to reflect the updated terminology for Child on Child abuse in "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022"
1.04	15/9/2022	Executive Headteacher	Review	Added point 3.2 in relation to physical violence
1.05	20/3/2024	Executive Headteacher	Review	Review and rebrand

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1. Purpose
 - 1.1. This policy identifies our strategy for preventing, identifying and appropriately managing child on child abuse. It should be applied to any situation or incident that could be construed as child on child abuse. Examples of behaviours that are likely to constitute child on child abuse are included under the “definitions” part of this document.

2. Scope
 - 2.1. This policy applies to all Heartwood House colleagues, Trustees, Governors and volunteers at Heartwood House (HH).
 - 2.2. This policy is reviewed annually, and updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which students are or may be exposed. The review and development of this policy will be informed by assessing the impact and effectiveness of the policy over the previous 12 months.

3. Policy statement
 - 3.1. All forms of child on child abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. It is the responsibility of all staff to challenge abusive behaviour between students. There is a zero-tolerance approach to Child on Child abuse at HH.
 - 3.2. Please note that physical violence towards another member of the Heartwood House Community will never be tolerated. Such behaviour will always result in a student losing the right to be a part of the Heartwood House community, and being educated away from the centre.
 - 3.3. Child on Child abuse is abuse by one or more students against another pupil. Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’. Nor will harmful sexual behaviours be dismissed as the same or ‘just having a laugh’.
 - 3.4. A student is likely to disclose an allegation to someone they trust: this could be any member of staff. By making such a disclosure the pupil is likely to feel that the member of staff is in a position of trust. These types of abuse rarely take place in isolation and often indicate wider safeguarding issues.
 - 3.5. All concerns or disclosures of child on child abuse must be reported to the DSL.

- 3.6. It is vital that if child on child abuse is alleged it is investigated (in line with our Heartwood House Behaviour policy) and, if substantiated, affirmative and supportive action is implemented.
- 3.7. We will mitigate against incidents of child on child abuse by ensuring our PSHEE programme is proactive in supporting students in keeping themselves safe, providing contextual information regarding forms of abuse and exploring in a safe environment, the impact abuse can have on both the perpetrator and victim.
- 3.8. We are aware that even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and simply not being reported.
- 3.9. Further, we will:
 - 3.9.1. create a protective ethos in which child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated
 - 3.9.2. ensure all students feel confident reporting child on child abuse to any member of staff and know their concerns will be taken seriously.
 - 3.9.3. ensure all young people involved will be supported so that positive changes to unwanted behaviours are achieved and further incidents prevented. All action will be consistent with Heartwood House's Anti-Bullying' and Behaviour for Learning and Exclusion policies. In particular, staff will seek to reach mutually beneficial outcomes through conflict resolution procedures which are an integral approach within the Heartwood House ethos.
 - 3.9.4. work with partner agencies, such as Local Authority Safeguarding teams, Social Services and/or the Police to ensure any action taken within the centre is coherent with any ongoing external investigation or intervention.
- 3.10. At HH, we recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways and have a very damaging impact upon young people. We also understand that some of these abusive behaviours may be part of a wider experience of abusive behaviours towards the young person, which may result in coercion or being 'groomed' into criminal or sexual activities which may be organised by a gang. These risks may be present in the other contexts that young people experience beyond education eg communities, social activities, or within their families.

- 3.11. The emotional harm from the threat of humiliation or intimidation can result in long term trauma and challenges to the young person's wellbeing. A young person that may be experiencing.
4. Responsibilities (compliance, monitoring and review)
 - 4.1. Responsibility for the implementation and oversight of this policy rests with Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
 - 4.2. Like wider Safeguarding issues, all members of the Heartwood House community have a responsibility in implementing this policy and taking pro-active action to challenge and eliminate child on child abuse.
 - 4.3. Our response to concerns/allegations of child on child abuse should be part of on-going proactive work to embed best practice and take a contextual whole-school approach to tackling such abuse.
 - 4.4. In monitoring and reviewing incidents of child on child abuse we will consider:
 - 4.4.1. the context in which an incident of child on child abuse occurred i.e. in a Heartwood House Centre, the local community, or the wider physical and online environment
 - 4.4.2. The influence of student protective factors i.e. is there evidence of student "witnesses" intervening, is there evidence that such intervention was an impact of our PSHEE programme and/or the Heartwood House ethos?
 - 4.4.3. How and when child on child abuse was detected by staff, how was it challenged and what was the impact of such a challenge?
 - 4.4.4. how (if at all) did Heartwood House's physical environment contribute to the abuse, and are there recommendations for student safety, security and supervision?
 - 4.4.5. did wider gender norms, equality issues and/or societal attitudes contribute to the abuse?
 - 4.4.6. was there a relationship between the abuse and the cultural norms between staff and students?
 - 4.4.7. does the abuse indicate a need for staff training on, for example, underlying attitudes, a particular issue or the handling of particular types of abuse?;
 - 4.4.8. how have similar cases been managed in the past and what effect has this had?;
 - 4.4.9. does the case or any identified trends highlight areas for development in the way in which Heartwood House works with students to raise their awareness of and/or prevent child on child abuse, including considering the further development of the PSHEE curriculum and lessons that address underlying attitudes or behaviour such as gender and equalities work?;
 - 4.4.10. are there any lessons to be learnt about the way in which Heartwood House engages with parents to address child on child abuse issues?;

- 4.4.11. are there underlying issues that affect other schools in the area and is there a need for a multi-agency response?;
- 4.4.12. does this case highlight a need to work with certain students to build their confidence and teach them how to identify and manage abusive behaviour?
- 4.4.13. were there opportunities to intervene earlier or differently and/or to address common themes amongst the behaviour of other students in Heartwood House?

5. Records management

- 5.1. Responsibility for the safekeeping of this policy lies with the Headteacher who will file it accordingly on the shared Google Drive.

6. Definitions

- 6.1. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 defines child on child abuse as “most likely to include, but may not be limited to”:
 - 6.1.1. bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
 - 6.1.2. Abuse in intimate personal relationships between students;
 - 6.1.3. 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;
 - 6.1.4. 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;
 - 6.1.5. 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;
 - 6.1.6. Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage sexual activities with a third party;
 - 6.1.7. Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
 - 6.1.8. 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;
 - 6.1.9. 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).”

7. Related legislation and documents

- 7.1. The following DfE statutory guidance are directly relevant to this policy

- 7.1.1. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- 7.1.2. 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' (2018)

- 7.2. The following Heartwood House policies are directly relevant to this policy
 - 7.2.1. Anti Bullying Policy
 - 7.2.2. Behaviour or Learning Policy
 - 7.2.3. Code of Conduct for Staff
 - 7.2.4. Complaints Policy
 - 7.2.5. ESafety Policy
 - 7.2.6. Exclusion Policy
 - 7.2.7. PSHEE Policy
 - 7.2.8. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - 7.2.9. Whistle Blowing Policy