



Greenfields Community School

Child on Child Abuse Policy



September 2026

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Revision date	Author of changes	Summary of changes
Sept 2026	Lou Maltby (ADSL/HT)	Updated to reflect Keeping Children Safe in Education document 2026



This policy remains current and in line with the statutory guidance contained within **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023), and the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership.

What is Child-on-Child Abuse?

All children are capable of abusing their peers. KCSIE 2026 emphasises that child-on-child abuse exists on a **continuum of harm**, ranging from low-level concerning behaviour through to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other forms of abuse. These behaviours may occur **online or offline**, between individuals or groups, and between children of any age.

Child-on-child abuse can manifest in a wide spectrum of behaviours, including but not limited to:

- **Bullying**, including **cyberbullying**
- **Sexual harassment** (verbal, non-contact, online, image-based)
- **Sexual violence**
- **Physical abuse** (hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair-pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm)
- **Sexting / sharing of self-generated intimate images**, including coercion
- **Upskirting** (a criminal offence with clear reporting requirements)
- **Initiation / hazing-type violence and rituals**
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)**, including AI-generated intimate images (deepfakes, nudification tools)
- **Weapon-related behaviour** between children (added emphasis in KCSIE 2026)

All schools must include child-on-child abuse within their safeguarding policies and procedures. All staff must understand these behaviours, recognise early indicators, and ensure that responding to child-on-child concerns is part of everyday safeguarding practice. Children must know how to report concerns and be confident that they will be listened to, taken seriously, and supported.

Policy Requirements

Our procedures include:

- **Clear strategies to minimise the risk** of child-on-child abuse, including proactive education, supervision, and culture-building
- **Robust processes for recording, investigating and responding** to all allegations or concerns
- **Clear support pathways** for victims, perpetrators, and any other children affected, including safety planning and multi-agency involvement where required
- **Recognition of the gendered nature** of child-on-child abuse (with girls disproportionately likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators), while recognising that **all forms of abuse are unacceptable** and will be taken seriously
- **Consideration of developmental stage and age**, ensuring responses are appropriate for the pupil group
- **Awareness of online risks**, including coercion, sharing of intimate images, and AI-generated sexual content
- **Clear links to our Behaviour Policy**, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Additional Guidance

Further detailed guidance can be found in:

- *Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges* (2021)
- KCSIE 2026 Part 5: Child-on-Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence
- NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour Framework
- Lucy Faithfull Foundation HSB Toolkit
- Contextual Safeguarding Network resources

Definitions (Updated for KCSIE 2026)

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as **unwanted conduct of a sexual nature** that can occur **online or offline**. In the context of this policy, it refers specifically to **child-on-child sexual harassment**. Sexual harassment is likely to violate a child's dignity, make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd remarks, commenting on appearance or clothing, or using sexualised names
- Sexual "jokes", taunting or unwanted sexualised humour
- Online sexual harassment, including coercive messaging, unsolicited sexual content, and **AI-generated sexualised images** (deepfakes, nudification tools)

KCSIE 2026 emphasises that sexual harassment creates an atmosphere which, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviour and may escalate into sexual violence.

Sexting (Youth-Produced Sexual Imagery)

Sexting refers to the sharing of sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of oneself or others, or sending sexually explicit messages. These can be shared using any device capable of sending media or messages (phones, tablets, laptops, gaming consoles).

KCSIE 2026 includes **self-generated intimate images**, including those created or manipulated using **AI technologies**, within this definition. Sexting may occur consensually or non-consensually; coercion, pressure, threats or exploitation must always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Upskirting

Upskirting involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm.

Upskirting is a **criminal offence** and may constitute sexual harassment. All cases have a **mandatory reporting requirement**.

Sexual Violence

In this policy, sexual violence refers to **child-on-child sexual violence**. Children can and do abuse other children. Sexual violence covers a spectrum of behaviours and includes offences under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*, such as:

- **Rape:** Intentional penile penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth without consent



- **Assault by Penetration:** Intentional penetration of the vagina or anus with any body part or object without consent
- **Sexual Assault:** Intentional sexual touching without consent

KCSIE 2026 highlights that sexual violence may occur **online**, including through threats, coercion, or the creation/sharing of sexualised images (including AI-generated content).

Consent

Consent is about having the **freedom and capacity to choose**.

Key principles:

- A child under **13** can never consent to any sexual activity
- The age of consent is **16**
- Sexual intercourse without consent is **rape**

Schools must differentiate between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age and behaviour involving **power imbalance, coercion, exploitation or manipulation**. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must lead on all cases, and expert advice should be sought where needed.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a continuum from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. "Harmful Sexual Behaviour" is an umbrella term used widely in child protection.

HSB may:

- Be developmentally inappropriate
- Cause developmental harm
- Occur **online and/or offline**, often simultaneously
- Include coercion, exploitation, or manipulation
- Include **AI-generated sexual content**, threats, or image-based abuse

HSB must always be considered within a **child protection context**, with early identification and intervention essential to prevent escalation

Prevention (Updated for KCSIE 2026)

In addition to having clear strategies for responding to incidents, schools must actively foster **healthy, respectful relationships** and a culture where inappropriate behaviours are consistently challenged. Preventative education is a statutory expectation and should be delivered through **Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)** and **Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)** education.

Whole-School Approach

The most effective preventative education is delivered through a **whole-school approach** that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. This includes:

- A clear set of values and standards, upheld across all aspects of school life
- A behaviour policy that reinforces respectful conduct and sets out consequences for harmful behaviour
- A pastoral system that supports early identification of concerns



- A planned, evidence-based curriculum delivered across subjects and key stages

Preventative education must be **age-appropriate**, **developmentally appropriate**, and **accessible for all pupils**, including those with SEND who may require adapted materials or additional support to understand concepts such as consent, boundaries and respectful behaviour

Child-on-Child Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

(Updated for KCSIE 2026)

Introduction

Greenfields Community School recognises that children are vulnerable to, and capable of, abusing their peers. We take such abuse **as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult**, including verbal, physical, emotional, online and image-based abuse. **Child-on-child abuse will not be tolerated.**

We are committed to a **whole-school approach** that ensures the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within school and in the wider community. Where child-on-child abuse is identified, we follow our safeguarding and child protection procedures, taking a **contextual safeguarding approach** to support all children affected.

Child-on-child abuse can manifest in many ways, including:

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Sexting / youth-produced sexual imagery (including AI-generated intimate images)
- Upskirting
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Radicalisation
- Abuse within intimate relationships
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)
- Gang association, serious violence and County Lines
- Weapon-related behaviour between children
- Technology-facilitated abuse, including coercion, threats, image-based abuse and online harassment

Some behaviours will be managed with reference to other school policies, including the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Protection Policy and Online Safety Policy.

This section focuses specifically on **child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence**, in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**. It should be read alongside Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and relevant practice guidance.

This policy will:

- Set out our strategies for preventing, identifying and managing child-on-child abuse
- Take a contextual approach to safeguarding all children involved
- Acknowledge that children who display harmful sexual behaviour may themselves be vulnerable or victims of abuse

Understanding Child-on-Child Abuse

Sexual harassment and sexual violence can occur:



- Between two children of any age or sex
- Between groups of children
- Online or offline
- As isolated incidents or patterns of behaviour

The impact on children can be significant, affecting emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, relationships and academic achievement.

The Context

All behaviour exists on a **continuum of harm**. Understanding where a child's behaviour sits on this continuum is essential for an appropriate response.

We distinguish between:

- **Problematic sexual behaviour**
- **Abusive sexual behaviour**
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)**

We adopt the NSPCC definition of HSB:

"Sexual behaviours expressed by children that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or be abusive towards another child or adult."

KCSIE 2026 expands this definition to include:

- Online sexual harassment
- Coercion, threats or manipulation
- Image-based abuse
- **AI-generated sexual content** (deepfakes, nudification tools)

Vulnerable Groups

All children can be victims or perpetrators of child-on-child abuse. However, some groups may be more vulnerable, including children who:

- Have experienced abuse within their family
- Live with domestic abuse
- Are in care or have previously been in care
- Go missing from home or care
- Have SEND or disabilities
- Identify as, or are perceived to be, LGBT+
- Have other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- Experience social isolation or exclusion

Research shows:

- Girls are more frequently identified as victims of sexual harassment and unwanted sexual touching
- Boys may be less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may show distress through externalising behaviours



- Boys report high levels of victimisation linked to gangs and criminal exploitation
- Children experience abuse in **gendered ways**, but **all children** can be victims and perpetrators

Serious Violence Indicators

Staff must be alert to indicators of serious violent crime, including:

- Increased absence
- Changes in friendships or associations with older individuals
- Decline in academic performance
- Signs of self-harm
- Unexplained injuries
- Unexplained gifts or possessions
- Increased online activity linked to risk

Responding to Alleged Incidents

Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

All reports will be managed **case-by-case**, led by the DSL using professional judgement and supported by children's social care, the police and other agencies as required.

Immediate Response

- All reports will be taken seriously
- Victims will be reassured, supported and kept safe
- Staff will be trained to manage disclosures sensitively
- Staff will not promise confidentiality
- Only relevant information will be shared with those who need to know
- A written factual record will be made as soon as possible
- All reports will be recorded on **MyConcern**
- The DSL will be informed immediately

DSLs: Lou Maltby, Sarah Simpson, Danielle Siriboe, Clare Thomas

Risk and Needs Assessment

Where sexual violence is reported, the DSL (or deputy) will complete an **immediate risk and needs assessment**. For sexual harassment, the DSL will consider whether a risk assessment is required.

Risk assessments will be:

- Recorded
- Uploaded to MyConcern
- Kept under review
- Updated as circumstances change

The DSL team will ensure engagement with **Nottingham City Social Care**.

Action Following a Report

We will consider:

- The wishes of the victim
- The nature of the incident(s)
- Whether a crime may have been committed
- Whether behaviour indicates harmful sexual behaviour
- Ages and developmental stages of the children
- Any power imbalance
- Whether the incident is isolated or part of a pattern
- Ongoing risks to the victim, other children or staff
- The wider context, including online behaviour

Follow-Up Actions

While establishing the facts and liaising with social care and the police:

- We will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator **a reasonable distance apart** on school premises
- We will consider timetable adjustments, supervision arrangements, safe spaces and pastoral support
- We will ensure ongoing communication with parents/carers where appropriate
- We will review safety plans regularly

Managing Reports of Child-on-Child Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

(Updated for KCSIE 2026)

Principle

Any actions taken are in the **best interests of all children involved** and must **not** be interpreted as a judgement on the guilt or innocence of the alleged perpetrator. Decisions are made to safeguard, stabilise and support all pupils while statutory processes progress.

Options for Managing a Report

1. Internal Management (One-Off Sexual Harassment Incidents)

In some cases of sexual harassment—particularly **one-off, lower-level incidents**—we may determine that statutory intervention is not required and that the matter can be managed internally. This may involve:

- Applying the Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Pastoral support, including intervention from our Learning Mentor, **Ms Glover**
- Restorative approaches where appropriate
- Increased supervision or adjustments to routines

This decision will always be made in line with the principle that **sexual harassment and sexual violence are never acceptable and will not be tolerated**.

All decisions and the rationale behind them will be **recorded and stored** by:

- **Lou Maltby (Headteacher)**
- **Sarah Simpson (AHT)**



- **Danielle Siriboe (AHT)**
- **Clare Thomas (AHT)**

Records will be uploaded to **MyConcern**.

2. Early Help

Where statutory intervention is not required but children may benefit from additional support, we may offer **Early Help**. Early Help provides support **as soon as a problem emerges**, and is often effective in addressing:

- Non-violent harmful sexual behaviour
- Emerging patterns of concerning behaviour
- Online sexual harassment
- Peer-influenced behaviour
- Situations where contextual factors are present

Early Help may prevent escalation into sexual violence and can involve:

- Pastoral support
- Targeted interventions
- Family support
- Multi-agency Early Help assessments

3. Referral to MASH (Statutory Intervention)

Where a child:

- **Has been harmed,**
- **Is at risk of harm,** or
- **Is in immediate danger,**

we will make a referral to **Nottingham City MASH** following local protocols.

Where statutory assessments are appropriate:

- The DSL or deputy will work collaboratively with the lead social worker
- Multi-agency working will ensure coordinated support for the victim, alleged perpetrator and any other affected children
- Risk assessments will be updated and reviewed regularly

Support for Children Affected by Sexual Assault

Support for victims of sexual assault is available from a range of specialist agencies. Greenfields Community School is committed to ensuring that:

- Victims are supported to **remain in school** wherever possible
- If a child is unable to remain in school, we will support them to continue their education elsewhere
- Any move will only occur **at the request of the child and their family**
- If a child moves school, we will ensure the receiving school is fully aware of the **ongoing support needs**, safety planning and multi-agency involvement



- The DSL team will oversee and support any transition

Support may include:

- Pastoral support and mentoring
- Counselling or therapeutic services
- Safety planning
- Adjustments to timetable, environment or routines
- Multi-agency involvement (social care, police, health services)

Prevention

(Updated for KCSIE 2026)

Greenfields Community School actively seeks to raise awareness of, and prevent, all forms of child-on-child abuse through a comprehensive whole-school approach.

Education and Training for Governors, Senior Leaders, Staff and Volunteers

All Governors, Senior Leadership Team members, staff and volunteers receive training on:

- The nature, prevalence and impact of child-on-child abuse
- How to prevent, identify and respond to concerns
- **Contextual safeguarding**, including online and community-based risks
- Identification and classification of specific behaviours, including harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)
- The importance of taking **all** forms of child-on-child abuse seriously, regardless of perceived severity
- Ensuring no incident is dismissed as “horseplay”, “banter” or “teasing”

Training is refreshed regularly and updated in line with KCSIE 2026.

Education for Pupils

We educate pupils about child-on-child abuse through **PSHE**, **RSHE**, and the wider curriculum.

Greenfields Community School delivers Relationship Education across all year groups. To ensure progression and age-appropriate learning, we follow the **Christopher Winter Project**, which provides a structured, developmental programme from Year 1 to Year 6.

Pupils are taught:

- What child-on-child abuse is and why it is never acceptable
- What to do if they witness or experience abuse
- The impact of abuse on victims
- How vulnerability can influence behaviour
- How to seek help and report concerns
- The school's **zero-tolerance** approach to sexual harassment, sexual violence and abusive behaviour

Engaging Parents and Carers

We work closely with parents and carers to strengthen prevention, including:

- Discussing child-on-child abuse in group sessions and individual meetings



- Seeking parental views on risks affecting their children
- Involving parents in reviewing policies, curriculum content and lesson plans
- Encouraging parents to hold the school to account for maintaining high safeguarding standards

Safeguarding Oversight and Trend Analysis

All child-on-child abuse concerns are fed back to the **Safeguarding Team** to:

- Identify patterns or emerging trends
- Monitor vulnerable pupils
- Inform curriculum planning and pastoral interventions
- Ensure timely support and early help where needed

Culture and Values

We work with Governors, Senior Leaders, staff, volunteers, pupils and parents to:

- Challenge attitudes that underpin abusive behaviour
- Promote equality, respect and positive values
- Address sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia and other prejudiced behaviours
- Create conditions where pupils can develop safe, healthy relationships
- Build a culture where pupils feel able to share concerns openly and without judgement
- Ensure prompt and appropriate responses to all cases of child-on-child abuse

Multi-Agency Working

(Updated for KCSIE 2026)

Greenfields Community School actively engages with local safeguarding partners to prevent, identify early and appropriately manage child-on-child abuse. We work closely with:

- **Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP)**
- **Nottinghamshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**
- Children's Social Care
- Police
- Health services
- Other schools and education settings

Strong relationships with these partners ensure coordinated responses, timely intervention and effective support for victims, alleged perpetrators and other affected children.

Support for Young People: Local and National Services

Nottinghamshire Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs)

Provided by **IMARA**, ChISVAs offer emotional and practical support for victims of sexual violence. They help children understand their options, navigate the criminal justice process and access specialist support.

Website: <https://www.imara.org.uk/>

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)



CAMHS provides mental health support for children experiencing trauma, distress or emotional difficulties linked to abuse.

Website: <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/children-and-families/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/get-help-from-camhs/>

Useful Publications and Websites

(Reviewed and aligned with KCSIE 2026)

- **Christopher Winter Project – SRE** <https://cwpresources.co.uk/home/>
- **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in Schools**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education
- **Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement** www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-to-schools-and-colleges-on-gangs-and-youth-violence
- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying** www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- **Sexting Guidance** Sexting in Schools and Colleges – Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647389/Overview_of_Sexting_Guidance.pdf
- **Stop It Now – Preventing Abuse Among Children and Young People** <https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/>
- **Age-Appropriate Sexual Behaviour Guidance** <http://www.stopitnow.org/ohc-content/what-is-age-appropriate>
- **NSPCC – Harmful Sexual Behaviour** <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>
- **Childnet – Understanding, Preventing, Responding (Project deSHAME)**
<https://www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-desname>
- **Sexism in Schools – “It’s Just Everywhere” Report** <https://ukfeminista.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Report-Its-just-everywhere.pdf>