

# Anti-Child-on-Child Abuse (& Bullying) Policy

## Sponsorship & Review

### Sponsor

Assistant Vice Principal – Safeguarding and Safeguarding Strategy  
Vice Principal – Personal Development and Safeguarding

### Released

January 2021

### Reviewed

January 2024

### Next Review

September 2028 (or when required by statutory updates)

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents and linked policies:**

- Charlton School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Charlton School Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Charlton School Equality and Diversity Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (2020)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017)

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## 1. Our Vision

### 1.1 Building Knowledge. Developing Character. Inspiring Futures.

#### Intent:

Our vision is to nurture happy, healthy young people who have the knowledge, academic achievement and strength of character to lead safe and successful lives in modern Britain; preparing them for their next steps in education or employment with a thirst for lifelong learning.

- **Pastoral Care:** We ensure that every member of our school community knows we are committed to supporting their physical health, safety and emotional wellbeing.
- **Behaviour:** Relationships between staff and students are founded on respect, responsibility and resilience.
- **Belonging:** We celebrate diversity and actively challenge discrimination.
- **Inclusion:** We are unwaveringly inclusive and committed to removing barriers to educational success.

- **Partnership:** Strong relationships with families, community partners and the Learning Community Trust underpin our safeguarding culture.
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## 2. Statement of Intent

### 2.1 Commitment

Charlton School is committed to safeguarding children and young people from Child-on-Child abuse and bullying. This policy sets out how Charlton School will fulfil its statutory and moral duties in this area.

This policy should be read alongside **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)**, statutory guidance for schools and colleges, and **Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)**, statutory guidance setting out expectations for multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy:

- Is the overarching policy for all forms of Child-on-Child abuse
- Applies to all students, staff, volunteers and contractors
- Recognises that abuse is abuse and should never be dismissed as banter, teasing or “part of growing up”
- Takes a safeguarding-led approach for all children involved, including those harmed and those causing harm

### 2.2 Contextual Safeguarding

We recognise that safeguarding risks may occur outside the family home, including within peer groups, online environments and the wider community. Charlton School adopts a whole-school **contextual safeguarding approach**.

### 2.3 Preventative Approach

This policy is preventative. We do not take a purely reactive approach and focus on:

- Systems and structures
- Prevention
- Identification
- Response and intervention

### 2.4 Curriculum

Child-on-Child abuse and bullying, including online behaviours, are addressed through the Personal Development curriculum, PSHE, RSE, SMSC, British Values and the wider school ethos.

### 2.5 Working with Parents

We work in partnership with parents and carers, including where referrals to external agencies are necessary to safeguard children.

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### 3. Legal Framework and Guidance

#### 3.1 This policy has due regard to the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Education Act 2002 (Sections 175 and 157)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2025)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, March 2026)**
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (DfE, 2015)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners (DfE, 2018)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children in Education Settings (2019)
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR**
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003**, as amended by the **Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019**
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023)
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools (2019)
- UKCIS: Education for a Connected World (2018)
- Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement (2013)
- County Lines Guidance (2018)

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### 4. Scope of this Policy

#### 4.1 Definition of a Child

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, or any learner of any age on roll at Charlton School.

#### 4.2 Applicability

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external providers.

#### 4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Angela Bithell – Assistant Vice Principal
- **Deputy DSLs:** Ceri Kinsey and Anna Vickers – Vice Principal
- **Safeguarding Governor:** Mrs Ricki Thiara

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### 5. What is Child-on-Child Abuse?

#### 5.1 Definition

Child-on-Child abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, coercive control and harmful behaviours between children, both in person and online.

All staff must understand that:

- Children can abuse other children
- Abuse may be hidden and under-reported
- Inappropriate behaviour must always be challenged

## 5.2 Forms of Child-on-Child Abuse

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying, including cyber and discriminatory bullying
- Abuse in intimate relationships
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sharing of nude and semi-nude images
- **Upskirting**, which is a criminal offence under Section 67A of the Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Initiation and hazing
- Child sexual exploitation
- Serious youth violence
- Prejudice-based abuse, including racist incidents

Consensual image sharing between older children requires a proportionate response; non-consensual sharing is abusive and illegal.

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## 6. Contextual Safeguarding

Charlton School adopts a whole-school contextual safeguarding approach, recognising the impact of peer groups, online spaces and community contexts on risk.

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## 7. Understanding Behaviour

Charlton School recognises that behaviours exist on a spectrum. The school uses professional judgement, Hackett's continuum and the Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool where appropriate.

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## 8. Identification of Child-on-Child Abuse

All staff are alert to changes in behaviour, attendance and emotional presentation and record concerns via CPOMS.

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## 9. Prevention

A whole-school preventative approach includes:

- Curriculum delivery
- Assemblies and campaigns
- Improved supervision
- Student voice and mentoring
- Staff training

- Parental engagement
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## **10. Multi-Agency Working**

Charlton School works closely with the Local Safeguarding Partnership, Children's Social Care, police and other agencies in line with statutory guidance.

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## **11. Responding to Concerns or Allegations**

Concerns are handled sensitively, promptly and proportionately, with safeguarding measures in place for all children involved.

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## **12. What to Do if You Have a Concern**

Staff must report concerns to the DSL or DDSL immediately and record on CPOMS.

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## **13. How We Will Respond**

The DSL will assess risk, consult agencies where required and determine appropriate internal or external action.

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## **14. Safety Plans**

Safety plans will be implemented where necessary to protect children and manage risk.

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## **15. Information Sharing, Data Protection and Record Keeping**

Information is shared lawfully, proportionately and securely in line with safeguarding and data protection legislation.

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## **16. Disciplinary Action**

Sanctions may be applied alongside safeguarding responses, taking account of police or social care involvement.

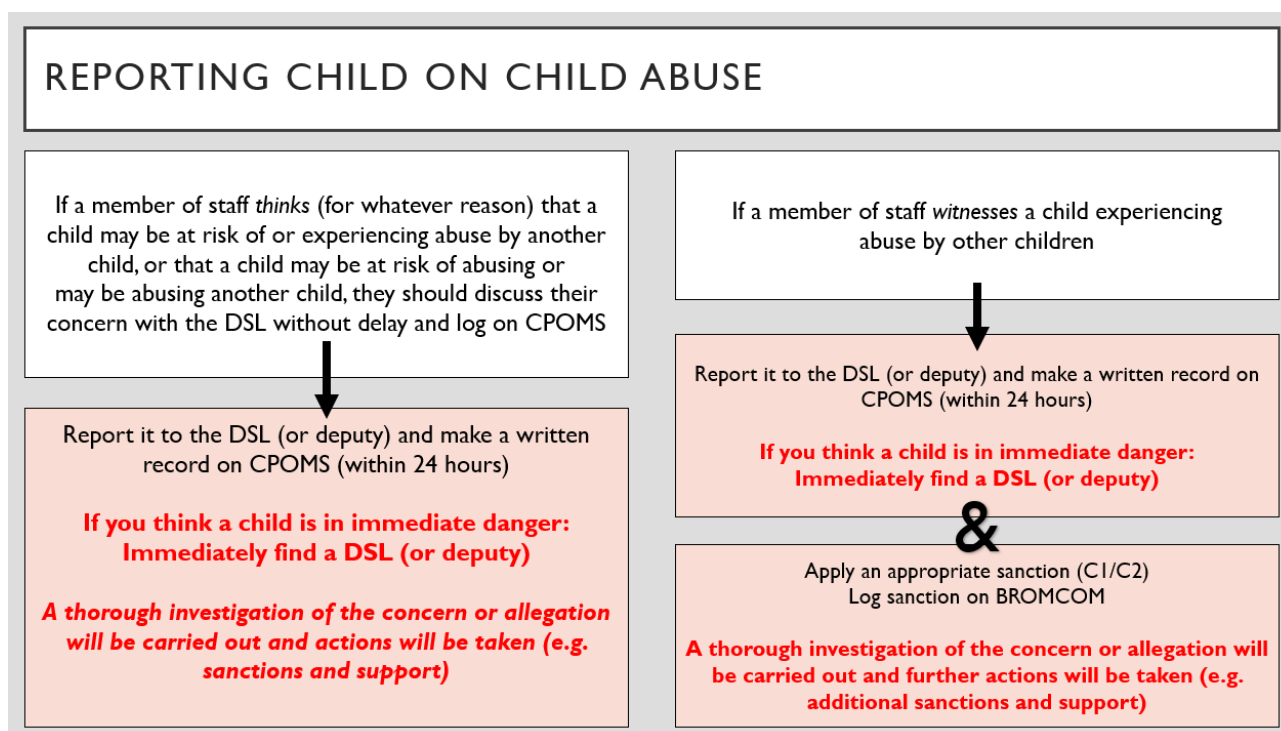
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## 17. Development, Monitoring and Review

The policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.

### Appendix Dealing with Child-on-Child Abuse

18.1 Actions taken by all staff in response to an allegation of a Child-on-Child abuse will follow these steps:



18.2 Actions taken by any member of staff investigating an allegation of a Child-on-Child abuse will follow these steps:

## SCHOOL RESPONSE TO A CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

The response to any concerns or allegations will include:

- A thorough investigation of the concern or allegation
- Treat all students involved as being at potential risk - while the student allegedly responsible for the abuse may pose a significant risk of harm to other pupils, they may also be at risk of harm themselves.
- Consider that the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the student involved

*Staff should be aware of the importance of taking seriously all forms of child-on-child abuse (no matter how 'low level' they may appear) and ensuring that no form of child-on-child abuse is ever dismissed as horseplay or teasing*

### Possible Actions

Manage internally with help from external agencies where appropriate and possible (School based intervention)

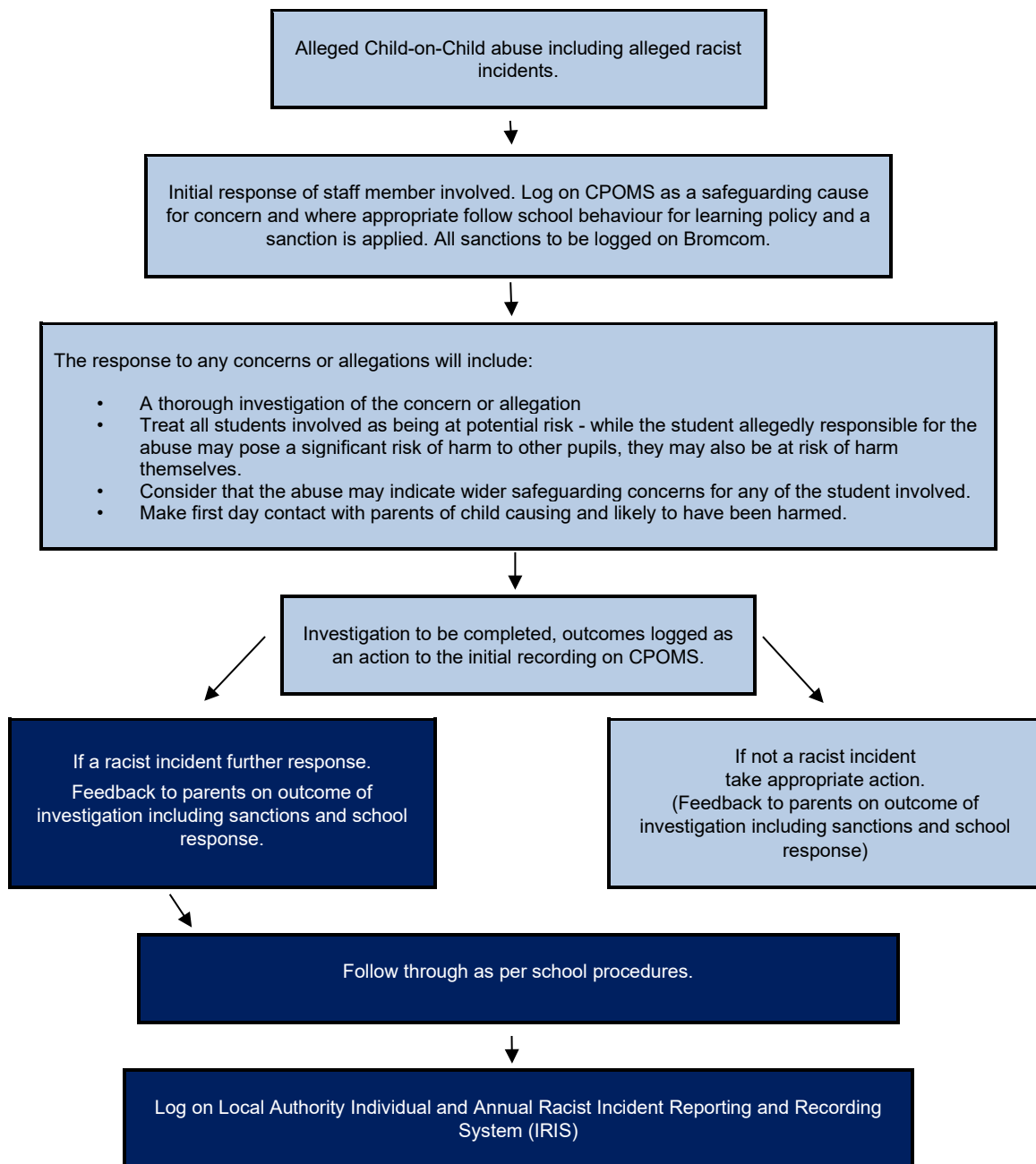
Undertake/contribute to an inter-agency early help assessment, with targeted early help services provided to address the assessed needs of the child/children and their family

Refer the child/children to children's social care for a section 17/47 statutory assessment.

Report alleged criminal behaviour to the police.

## Appendix Dealing with Child on Child and Racist incidents.

18.1 Actions taken in response to an allegation of a child on child, including racist incident, will follow these steps.



### Support for Victim

- An appropriate mentor will speak to the child who has been harmed sensitively and determine the level of support required, stressing that they are not to blame for the bullying and detail strategies to supporting reporting in the future.
- Allocate a Buddy, counselling or support through a peer-to-peer mentor or support group if appropriate.
- Promote pride in their cultural heritage and culture.

## Support for Perpetrator

- Student to be allocated an appropriate mentor who will support with the following:
  - Adults at home should be notified of allegation on the day received
  - Question whether they know what Racism is and the impact of their words and actions on the victim.
  - Explain the legal ramifications including that they could be arrested and prosecuted under the equality act 2010.
  - If appropriate restorative work between the students involved should be conducted the young person causing harm should show an understanding of the impact they have had on another person.
  - Sanction includes Restorative Booklet for Student to complete on Diversity and Equality (Internal)
  - Student to complete letter of apology/verbal apology to victim, where appropriate (Internal)
  - Removal of social times
  - C2/C3/BRR/LCT Respite/Short Break/Suspension

In addition to the actions detailed above, the following actions may also be taken:

- Meeting with adults at home to be arranged (Internal - Head of Year to arrange)
- TAARC (targeted small group work) referral to be considered (External)
- Appropriate sanction
- Channel Panel Referral to be considered
- Targeted Interventions
- Show Racism Red Card
- TAARC Intervention
- Stand against violence workshops
- Behaviour Support