

Policy for Managing allegations against other pupils

Introduction

At St Nicholas Church of England (Controlled) Primary 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 adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that sometimes a pupil will negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others. Their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy.

The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance published in April 2014 says that 'governing bodies... should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.

Allegations may

- be made against an older pupil and refer to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- be of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raise risk factors for other pupils in the school
- indicate that other pupils have been or may be at risk of being affected by this pupil
- indicate that young people outside the school may be affected by this pupil

Safeguarding Allegations

Occasionally, allegations may be made against pupils by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature.

Such safeguarding issues may include:

- Physical abuse
 - involving violence, particularly pre-planned
 - forcing others to use drugs or alcohol
- Emotional abuse,
 - blackmail or extortion
 - threats and intimidation
- Sexual abuse
 - Indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
 - forcing others to watch pornography or take part in sexting
- Sexual exploitation.
 - encouraging other children to attend inappropriate parties
 - photographing or videoing other children performing indecent acts

Minimizing the risk of safeguarding concerns towards pupils from other pupils

When the school is informed that a young person has experienced serious abuse, this raises safeguarding concerns for other pupils. The pupil will need an individual risk management plan to ensure that other pupils are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. There is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.

Action following an allegation

When an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil, members of staff will consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed. A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.

The DSL will contact social services to discuss the case. It is possible that social services may already be aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate.

The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a confidential record, for both pupils, and kept separate from other pupils' files.

If the allegation indicates a potentially criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim).

It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil being complained about for a period of time, according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures.

Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter, using the school's usual procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan. The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation, with everyone concerned.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
Behaviour, Safeguarding and Managing allegations against Staff.