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St Peter's Church of England Middle School

Managing allegations against other students

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Headteacher: Sharon Yardley
Chair of Local Governing Body: Rebecca Scott Saunders

Values and Ethos

The family of St Peter's school values the uniqueness of every student and is committed to meet the individual needs of each one. We develop and nurture a strong school fellowship based on the understanding that each individual is equal and valuable in the eyes of God. We want all of our students to reach their full potential in body, mind, heart and spirit and to be prepared for life's journey. This is encapsulated in our school motto: 'Rise above the Ordinary'.

At St Peter's School we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Students at school should both be and feel free from harm by either adults or other students.

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy. Bullying is never tolerated at St. Peter's and will be dealt with under the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Safeguarding allegations

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature and go beyond the remit of either the Behaviour Policy or the Anti-Bullying Policy. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a pupil, some of the following features will be found:

- The allegation is made against an older pupil and refers to behaviour towards a more vulnerable pupil
- It is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- Risk factors for other students in the school are raised
- Other students may be affected by the same student
- Vulnerable young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include **physical abuse**, esp. pre-planned violence or forcing the use of drugs, **emotional abuse**, e.g. blackmail, extortion, threats and intimidation, **sexual abuse**, **sexual exploitation** and the **forced involvement in gangs**.

Minimising the risk

Some students may be known to present a risk to others. The school works in collaboration with the Local Authority, Social Care, the Police and other agencies and should be informed of any specific concerns, e.g. a period in custody or having experienced serious abuse themselves. For these students risk will be managed on an individual basis with the need to balance privacy and safeguarding.

What to do

If an allegation is made by a pupil against another pupil staff will consider if this raises a safeguarding concern. If this is the case the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed.

A factual record of the allegation will be made and if deemed appropriate the DSL will discuss the case with social care and / or the police and make a referral if needed. If no referral is made the DSL will investigate the alleged incident, including speaking to any witnesses as soon as possible to establish the facts.

The allegation, any discussion, decisions and further actions will be recorded on an incident sheet and a copy will be placed on the students' files. Parents of all children involved will be informed as soon as appropriate.

The situation should be monitored, especially if neither social care nor the police take any action. The behaviour will then be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour Policy or Anti – Bullying Policy.