



<b>Policy document control box</b>	
Policy title	<b>Dealing with Peer on Peer Abuse</b>
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## **1. Purpose**

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

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1. This policy applies to all Red Balloon colleagues, Trustees, Governors and volunteers at Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir).
- 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 peer on peer abuse are unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Peer on peer 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’.
- 3.2. 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.
- 3.3. It is vital that if peer on peer abuse is alleged it is investigated (in line with our Red Balloon Behaviour policy) and, if substantiated, affirmative and supportive action is implemented.
- 3.4. We will mitigate against incidents of peer to peer 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.
- 3.5. Further, we will:
  - 3.5.1. create a protective ethos in which peer on peer abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment will not be tolerated
  - 3.5.2. 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 Red Balloon’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 Red Balloon ethos.

3.5.3. 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.

3.6. At RBAir, we recognise that peer on peer 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.

3.7. 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 Red Balloon community have a responsibility in implementing this policy and taking pro-active action to challenge and eliminate peer on peer abuse.

4.3. Our response to concerns/allegations of peer-on-peer 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 peer on peer abuse we will consider:

4.4.1. the context in which an incident of peer-on-peer abuse occurred i.e. in a Red Balloon Centre, the local community, or the wider physical and online environment

4.4.2. The influence of peer 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 Red Balloon ethos?

4.4.3. How and when peer-on-peer 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 Red Balloon'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 Red Balloon works with students to raise their awareness of and/or prevent peer-on-peer 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 Red Balloon engages with parents to address peer-on-peer 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 Red Balloon?

## 5. Records management

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

## 6. Definitions

- 6.1. **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020** defines peer on peer abuse as “most likely to include, but may not be limited to”:
  - 6.1.1. bullying (including cyberbullying);
  - 6.1.2. physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
  - 6.1.3. sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
  - 6.1.4. 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;
  - 6.1.5. upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
  - 6.1.6. sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
  - 6.1.7. initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.”

## 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 2020

7.1.2. 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' (2018)

7.2. The following Red Balloon 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. E-Safety 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