Approved by Alfriston Governing Board: 28th April 2021

Section 15 of Annex C, within the existing policy, provides clear guidance on how schools should manage sexual violence and sexual harassment between children. It is made very clear that such behaviours are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up. Similarly, such behaviours should not be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys". This section of the policy is fit for purpose, remains unchanged, and should inform all practice in relation to any Harmful Sexual Behaviours between children, specifically the following section:

15.12   As a school, where we discover incidents of sexualised behaviours between children, we will respond to this in line with the East Sussex Protocol for Managing Peer on Peer Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools, Settings and Colleges and with reference to the following documents:
- Brook Traffic Light Tool
- ESCC Communicating with parents: Toolkit for guided conversations: harmful sexual behaviour
- ESCC Supporting children and young people who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour
- ESCC Supporting children who have experienced sexual abuse

Reviewing the whole policy, it has been determined that the existing Section 14 of Annex C, does not fully define the approaches to the wider context of peer on peer abuse, beyond those incidents of a sexual nature. It is then the following text which should be adopted as an addendum to the existing model policy:

14   PEER ON PEER ABUSE

14.1   Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as peer on peer abuse and can take many forms. This can include, but is not limited to:

- *abuse within intimate partner relationships;*
- *bullying (including cyberbullying);*
- *sexual violence and sexual harassment;*
- *physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;*
- *sexting*
- *initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.*

14.2   Peer on peer abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". The gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse is recognised, however, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will always be taken seriously.

14.3   Where appropriate, incidents of peer on peer abuse involving physical abuse or bullying will be managed through the school's Behaviour or Anti-Bullying Policy. The DSL will always be made aware of all incidents of peer on peer abuse so that further safeguarding actions can be taken as necessary.

14.4   If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- *Staff must record the allegation and inform the DSL.*

- *The DSL will assess the information and ensure that it is categorised and recorded by the nature of the incident i.e. bullying (including the type such as cyber, racial, biphobic*

etc), physical abuse (identifying the specifics: hitting, kicking etc) or a Harmful Sexual Behaviour (identifying the RAG on the Traffic Light Tool, or other specifics such as sexting or whether the incident was potentially criminal).

- *The DSL will identify appropriate outcomes to the incident, which may include school based support or interventions, as well as referrals to other agencies, as necessary, such as SPoA, CSC, CAMHS and the Police (if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence).*

- *The DSL will complete a risk assessment and where necessary create a written support plan for all children involved, including the child/ren who has experienced the abusive behaviour and the child/ren who is alleged to have displayed the abusive behaviour as well as any others affected, with a named person they can all talk to if needed.*

- *The format of any support plan will vary with the exact nature of the incident, but will always be in line with processes outlined in our Behaviour or Anti-Bullying policies or where sexual in nature, will follow the Safeguarding Risk Reduction Plan outlined in the East Sussex Protocol for Managing Peer on Peer Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools.*

14.5   The school will minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse by:

- *Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour, including requesting or sending sexual images.*

- *Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys, whilst at the same time recognising that any of these issues can affect any pupils regardless of their gender.*

- *Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent.*

- *Ensuring pupils are aware of the different ways in which they can speak with a trusted adult in the school, either directly or through other means such as worry boxes or online help buttons, which are monitored by key staff in the safeguarding team.*

- *Ensuring pupils are aware of the different ways in which they can speak with an adult outside of the school through agencies such as Child Line or the NSPCC.*

- *As a school we will gather pupil voice more broadly to understand the experience of pupils at the school, so that this can inform the development of safeguarding practice.*

- *Ensuring that staff are aware of peer on peer abuse and maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', as they do with all areas of safeguarding.*

- *Ensuring that staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves.*