



Penryn College

Child on Child Abuse

Policy

Approved by:	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Date Approved:	Pending Approval Feb 26
Reviewed:	January 2026
Responsible SLT member:	Assistant Head
To be reviewed:	January 2027



Key safeguarding contacts

Role	Name / Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Fiona Williams
Deputy DSL(s)	Liza Edgson, Megan Collins
Contact Details:	Safeguarding@penryn-college.cornwall.sch.uk
Local Authority – Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU)	Tel: 0300 123 1116 Email: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk
Out of Hours Social Work Service (Cornwall)	Tel: 01208 251300
Early Help Hub (Cornwall)	Email: earlyhelphub@cornwall.gov.uk Web: www.cornwall.gov.uk/earlyhelp
Police	Emergency: 999 Non-emergency: 101

Policy Summary:

At Penryn College, keeping every child safe, respected and supported is at the centre of everything we do. This policy explains how we prevent and respond to any unkind or harmful behaviour between pupils — whether in person or online — and how we work together with families and local services to protect children. We teach pupils about healthy relationships, online safety and kindness, and provide clear ways for them to ask for help. Staff listen carefully, act quickly and support all children involved with compassion and fairness. Our aim is simple: to ensure every pupil feels safe, valued and able to thrive.

Statement of Intent

At Penryn College, the safety and wellbeing of every pupil is at the heart of all we do. We know that harm can sometimes come from other children, and we are committed to creating a culture where pupils feel respected, supported, and able to speak up.

Our whole-school approach focuses on preventing child-on-child abuse, recognising concerns early, and responding with care and clarity. Guided by statutory safeguarding expectations, we aim to ensure every pupil understands what safe, respectful behaviour looks like and knows that help is always available.

All staff and governors share responsibility for safeguarding and are trained to identify, report, and act on concerns promptly.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Fiona Williams

In her absence, child protection matters will be managed by the Deputy DSL(s).



1. Legal Framework

This policy is based on the most current laws and national safeguarding guidance, including:

Key legislation

- **Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.**
- **Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004** (framework for safeguarding duties).
Current statutory guidance
 - **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** – the main safeguarding guidance all schools must follow. It now includes updates on online harms such as misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories, and strengthened expectations around filtering, monitoring, AI and cyber-resilience.
 - **Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated June 2025)** – sets out how all agencies (school, police, health, social care) must work together to protect children.
 - **Working Together to Improve School Attendance (now statutory within KCSIE 2025).**

Non-statutory but essential guidance

- **UKCIS: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (updated March 2024)** – advice for schools on responding to incidents safely and appropriately.
- **NPCC: When to call the police (Guidance for schools and colleges)** – outlines when incidents should be reported to police.
- **DfE Filtering & Monitoring Standards (updated 2025)** – expectations for protecting children from harmful online content and ensuring safe digital environments in school.

Related Penryn College policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Suspension & Exclusion Policy

2. Definitions

Child-on-child abuse

This means any situation where a child harms, threatens, or abuses another child. It can happen in person or online, inside or outside school.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

This refers to sexual behaviour by a child that is not appropriate for their age or stage of development. It may be unsafe, coercive, abusive or exploitative. It can occur online, face-to-face, or both.

How we talk about children involved

- **Victim** – the child who may have been harmed.
- **Perpetrator** – the child showing harmful or abusive behaviour.
- **Alleged perpetrator** – a child who has been reported to have caused harm, before the facts are confirmed.

We recognise that children may prefer different language. Staff will use the terms a child is most comfortable with while ensuring care, respect and fairness for everyone involved.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Be Respectful, Be Responsible



At Penryn College, keeping children safe is a shared responsibility. Everyone in our community plays an important part.

Governing Board

Our governors make sure the school follows all safeguarding laws and guidance. They ensure we have strong systems in place so children know how to get help and staff know what to do if they are worried about a pupil.

Headteacher

The headteacher makes sure all safeguarding policies are put into practice every day. They ensure staff receive the right training and that safeguarding remains a whole-school priority.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Fiona Williams

The DSL oversees all safeguarding work in school. She coordinates support for children who may be at risk, works closely with external agencies, and ensures concerns are acted on quickly.

Deputy DSLs support this role so a trained safeguarding lead is always available.

All Staff

Every adult in school helps to keep children safe. Staff are trained to notice concerns, respond sensitively, and pass information to the safeguarding team straight away. They promote kindness, respect and inclusion, and help pupils understand what safe behaviour looks like—both in person and online.

4. Types of Child-on-Child Abuse

Children can sometimes hurt or harm one another in different ways. At Penryn College, we take every concern seriously, no matter how small it may seem. These are the main types of behaviour we look out for:

Physical abuse

This includes actions like hitting, kicking, pushing, scratching or any behaviour that causes physical harm.

Sexual behaviour that is unsafe or harmful

This covers a range of behaviours, from inappropriate sexual comments to unwanted touching, sexual pressure, or sharing sexual images. These behaviours may happen in person or online.

Bullying (including online bullying)

Bullying can be verbal, physical or emotional. It can happen face-to-face or through phones, messaging apps, or social media. Any behaviour that hurts, humiliates or frightens another child is taken seriously.

Online abuse

This includes threats, harassment, sharing hurtful content, pressuring someone for images, or targeting others on social media or in group chats. We help pupils understand how to stay safe online and how to report anything that worries them.

Discriminatory abuse

Hurtful behaviour linked to someone's race, religion, gender, disability, sexuality, or any protected characteristic is never acceptable. We challenge prejudice and foster an inclusive environment.

Abuse within young relationships

Sometimes children experience controlling, threatening or harmful behaviour within friendships or romantic relationships. We support pupils to understand healthy boundaries and seek help if they feel unsafe.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Keeping Children Safe

AI is now part of everyday life, and while it can support learning, it can also create new risks for children. At Penryn College, we want parents and pupils to feel confident and informed about how we manage these risks.

5. Our Whole-School Approach to Prevention and Support

At Penryn College, we work hard to create a community where every child feels safe, respected and able to thrive. Preventing child-on-child harm is not just about reacting to incidents — it's about building a positive, supportive culture every day.

Be Respectful, Be Responsible



Creating a safe and respectful school culture

We promote kindness, inclusion and respect throughout the school. Staff model positive behaviour, challenge unkind or inappropriate comments straight away, and make it clear that harmful behaviour is never "just banter" or "a joke." Every pupil deserves to feel safe and valued.

Helping pupils understand healthy behaviour

Through lessons, assemblies, tutor time and wider school activities, pupils learn:

- What respectful relationships look like
- How to set boundaries and recognise when something feels wrong
- How to stay safe online
- How to be an upstander — not a bystander — if they see someone being harmed
- Who they can talk to if they're worried about themselves or a friend

We adapt teaching so it is age-appropriate and inclusive of all pupils, including those with additional needs.

Spotting concerns early

Sometimes children show signs they are struggling. We act quickly to support pupils when concerns arise, and we may involve early help services if a family or child would benefit from extra support. Early action often prevents issues from getting worse.

Working with families and the wider community

We recognise that families know their children best. We communicate openly with parents and carers, provide clear information about safeguarding, and work together to keep children safe. When needed, we also work alongside local services to ensure the right help is in place.

Responding with care

If a child reports a concern, we listen carefully, act promptly and support all those involved. Every child is treated with empathy, fairness and respect: this includes victims and alleged perpetrators of abuse.

6. Supporting Pupils Who May Be More Vulnerable

Some children may face extra challenges that put them at greater risk of unkind or harmful behaviour. At Penryn College, we take thoughtful, proactive steps to support all pupils, especially those who may be more vulnerable.

Girls and gender-based harm

Girls can sometimes be more affected by unwanted or inappropriate behaviour. We act quickly to challenge sexism or any form of disrespect, and we teach all pupils what healthy, respectful interactions look like.

LGB and Gender-Questioning pupils

Children who identify as LGBT, or who are exploring their gender identity or questioning how they feel, may be more likely to face teasing, misunderstanding or targeted behaviour.

We make it clear that **any form of discrimination, including homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language, is not acceptable**. Our aim is to create a school where every child feels safe to be themselves, without pressure or judgment.

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

Some children with SEND may find it harder to express worries or understand when behaviour is unsafe. Staff take extra care to communicate clearly, check understanding, and work closely with families and specialist teams to ensure these pupils feel supported and heard.

Children from minority ethnic backgrounds

We know that children from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds can sometimes face prejudice or discrimination. We challenge this immediately and promote a culture that celebrates diversity and values every child's identity.

Pupils with overlapping vulnerabilities



Some children may belong to more than one vulnerable group. For example, a child may be LGB and have SEND, or be from a minority ethnic background and also gender-questioning. These children may face additional pressures, and staff are trained to recognise this and provide sensitive, tailored support.

7. How Pupils Can Report Worries or Concerns

We want every child at Penryn College to know that they can ask for help at any time. No worry is too small, and no child should ever feel they have to cope alone. We make sure pupils have several safe, simple ways to speak up if something is bothering them — whether it has happened in school, online or elsewhere.

Talking to a trusted adult in school

Pupils can always talk to:

- Their tutor
- A member of the pastoral or wellbeing team
- Any teacher or trusted adult they feel comfortable with

We encourage children to come forward early, even if they're unsure whether something is "serious" — if it feels wrong, it's worth sharing.

Speaking directly to the Safeguarding Team

Our **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, *Fiona Williams*, and our Deputy DSLs are available for pupils who want to speak privately. Pupils know how to find them, and staff can help arrange a quiet, safe space for a conversation.

Using confidential reporting options

Some pupils feel safer sharing concerns without speaking face-to-face. We provide:

- A confidential reporting inbox called the @talk app
- Opportunities to share concerns anonymously if needed
- Our safeguarding email: safeguarding@penryn-college.cornwall.sch.uk

We treat all reports seriously, whether named or anonymous.

Telling a parent or carer

If a child feels more comfortable speaking to you, we welcome that. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the safeguarding team directly if a child shares a concern at home. This can be done in person, over the phone or via our email safeguarding@penryn-college.cornwall.sch.uk

What pupils are encouraged to report

We help pupils understand that they can speak up about:

- Bullying or unkind behaviour
- Anything that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- Harmful online interactions
- Worries about a friend who may be struggling
- Any behaviour that feels pressured, threatening or confusing

Our message to pupils

We reassure children that telling someone is not "snitching" or "getting someone into trouble." It is about keeping themselves and others safe — and we will always listen, take them seriously, and support them.

8. How Staff Notice and Respond to Concerns

Every adult working at Penryn College has a responsibility to keep children safe. Our staff are trained to spot signs that something may be wrong — whether it's happening in school, at home, online, or in the community — and to act quickly and sensitively.

How staff recognise when a child may need help

Children show worries in different ways. Staff look out for:

Be Respectful, Be Responsible



- Changes in mood or behaviour
- Friendship difficulties or sudden withdrawal
- Unexplained injuries
- Signs of distress or anxiety
- Worrying online behaviour
- A child spending time with older pupils or becoming isolated

These signs don't always mean harm is happening — but they tell us a child may need extra support.

What staff do when they have a concern

If a member of staff notices something worrying, or a pupil shares a concern, they will:

1. **Listen carefully and kindly**
2. **Reassure the child** that they've done the right thing by speaking up
3. **Act quickly** by passing the information to the Safeguarding Team
4. **Never investigate themselves** — this protects all children involved

Staff understand that even small incidents matter. Addressing concerns early helps prevent things from escalating.

No concern is ever ignored

We want parents to feel reassured that:

- All reports are taken seriously
- Concerns are recorded accurately
- The DSL (Fiona Williams) reviews every concern and decides the next steps
- Support is put in place for any child who needs it

Creating a culture where children feel safe to talk

Staff know that some children find it difficult to speak up. They work hard to:

- Build warm, trusting relationships
- Make time to listen
- Use language children understand
- Create an environment where pupils feel safe asking for help

What this means for families

Our aim is to work *with* parents and carers, not in isolation. If we have a concern about your child, we will usually speak with you promptly — unless doing so would put them at further risk. Your partnership is invaluable in helping us understand and support your child's needs.

How We Handle Allegations of Harm Between Pupils

When a child shares a worry about another pupil, we know this can feel upsetting for everyone involved.

At Penryn College, we respond with care, clarity and fairness. Our goal is always to keep children safe, support their wellbeing and handle concerns sensitively.

Listening with care

If a child reports something that has happened between pupils, staff will:

- Listen calmly and without judgement
- Reassure the child that they've done the right thing by speaking up
- Make sure they feel safe and supported
- Explain what will happen next in a gentle, age-appropriate way

We never blame a child for sharing a concern, and we make sure they are treated with dignity and respect.

Acting quickly and appropriately

All concerns are passed straight to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead, Fiona Williams**, or a Deputy DSL.

They will:

- Gather information in a careful, sensitive way
- Decide what support each child needs



- Consider whether external agencies (such as children's social care or the police) should be involved
- Make sure no child is left feeling unsafe
- Conduct a risk assessment where appropriate

Our response is guided by what is best for the children involved, taking into account their age, understanding and emotional needs.

Supporting every child involved

When an allegation is made, we support:

- **The child who may have been harmed**, ensuring they feel safe, heard and believed
- **The child who may have caused harm**, recognising they may also need help, guidance or support
- **Any other pupils affected**, including friends or witnesses

We understand that all children deserve care and support, and our approach reflects that.

Protecting confidentiality

We handle these situations discreetly. We avoid sharing information unnecessarily and only involve those who need to know in order to keep children safe.

Keeping parents informed

In most cases, we will contact parents or carers promptly to explain what has happened and how we are supporting their child.

If sharing information with a parent could put a child at greater risk, we may seek advice before contacting home.

Creating a safe environment during investigations

While we look into a concern, we may take steps like:

- Adjusting timetables or supervision
- Ensuring pupils don't have unsupervised contact
- Providing extra pastoral support

These steps are not about deciding guilt — they are about keeping everyone safe and supported.

Reassuring pupils and families

Our message to pupils is simple:

If something worries you, tell us. We will listen, we will help, and you won't be in trouble for speaking up.

10. Ongoing Support for Pupils

When a child has been involved in a worrying incident — whether they may have been harmed or may have harmed someone else — our support does not stop once the immediate concern has been addressed. At Penryn College, we walk alongside children and families for as long as they need us.

Supporting the child who may have been harmed

Our priority is to help the child feel safe, understood and able to move forward. Depending on their needs, support may include:

- Regular check-ins with pastoral or safeguarding staff
- A quiet, safe space for breaks when things feel overwhelming
- Help with friendships, confidence or worries about being in school
- Referrals to external services if additional emotional or therapeutic support would be helpful
- Adjustments to school routines or learning environments if these help them feel more secure

We listen carefully to how each child feels and involve them in planning what support looks like.

Supporting the child who may have caused harm

Children who display harmful behaviour often need support too. They may be struggling with their own emotions, relationships, or personal experiences. We:

- Help them understand boundaries and respectful behaviour



- Offer mentoring or pastoral support
- Work with families to explore any underlying worries or needs
- Involve external agencies if specialist help is required

Our aim is to guide them towards positive change and prevent further harm.

Keeping communication open with families

Parents and carers are key partners in helping children recover and move on. We:

- Keep you updated (unless doing so would put a child at risk)
- Listen to your insights and concerns
- Work together on plans that support your child both at home and at school

Supporting friendships and the wider peer group

Sometimes other pupils may also feel upset or unsure after a safeguarding incident. We provide:

- Quiet conversations, reassurance and guidance
- Reminders about respect, empathy and online safety
- Opportunities for restorative approaches if appropriate and safe for everyone involved

Helping children regain confidence

We understand that some children may feel nervous returning to normal routines. Staff will gently check in and make any adjustments that help them feel safe — whether that's new seating arrangements, extra supervision, or time with a trusted adult.

Our message to every family

Your child's wellbeing matters deeply to us. We don't expect children to "bounce back" straight away — healing takes time, and can require support.

11. Online Safety, Filtering & Monitoring (Parent-Friendly Version)

The online world plays a huge role in young people's lives — it offers wonderful opportunities, but it also comes with risks. At Penryn College, we work hard to help children learn how to stay safe, make good choices, and speak up if something online doesn't feel right.

Helping pupils understand online safety

We teach pupils how to:

- Spot unsafe or unkind online behaviour
- Recognise when something may be fake, misleading or harmful (including misinformation and AI-generated content)
- Protect their personal information
- Respond safely to online pressure or upsetting messages
- Report anything that worries them — to a trusted adult at home or in school

We revisit these topics regularly so that pupils feel confident navigating the changing digital world.

(KCSIE 2025 includes online harms such as misinformation and conspiracy theories.)

How we keep children safe online in school

To protect pupils when they use school devices or our internet connection, we have strong systems in place that:

- **Filter** harmful or inappropriate websites
- **Monitor** online activity for signs of risk or distress
- Alert staff to potential safeguarding concerns

Our systems are reviewed at least once a year to make sure they are working well and keeping up with new online risks.

(DfE's filtering and monitoring standards require regular reviews and clear roles for school leaders and DSLs.) [learning.n...pcc.org.uk]

What this means for your child

These systems help us:

- Block harmful content



- Identify pupils who might need support
- Step in quickly if something concerning appears online
- Keep lessons safe without overly restricting learning

We also make sure pupils are not over-blocked — we want them to learn how to navigate the online world safely, not fear it.

Our message to pupils and families

Children should never feel embarrassed to talk about something they've seen online. We encourage open conversations at school and at home, reminding them:

- "If something doesn't feel right, it's okay to ask for help."
- "You won't be in trouble for telling us."

Together, we can help every child use technology safely, responsibly and confidently.

12. Working With Local Services to Keep Children Safe

Sometimes children and families need support from services outside of school. At Penryn College, we work closely with local safeguarding partners so that every child can receive the right help at the right time.

Cornwall's Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU)

If we are worried that a child may be at risk of significant harm, we may contact **MARU**, who coordinate support from children's social care, health, police and other agencies.

Parents are usually informed unless doing so would place a child at greater risk.

MARU contact:

- *Phone: 0300 123 1116*
- *Out of hours: 01208 251300*
- *Email: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk*

Early Help Hub

If a family or child would benefit from extra support early on — before worries grow — we may suggest contacting the **Early Help Hub**. This might include emotional support, wellbeing services, parenting support, or help with life's challenges.

Early Help Hub contact:

- *Email: earlyhelphub@cornwall.gov.uk*
- *Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk/earlyhelp*

The Early Help Hub aims to make sure families receive the right support, from the right service, as quickly as possible.

Working together to support your child

Whenever possible, we will speak openly with parents and carers before contacting outside services. We know that families are key partners in supporting children, and we want you to feel informed and involved.

Police involvement

If a child is in immediate danger or a serious offence may have occurred, we may contact the police. This is always done with the child's safety as the top priority.

Police contact:

- *Emergency: 999*
- *Non-emergency: 101*

Our promise to families

We only involve outside agencies when it is necessary to keep a child safe or to provide the support they need. We handle this sensitively, respectfully and in close partnership with you wherever possible.

13. Information Sharing, Record Keeping & Data Protection



At Penryn College, we treat children's information with great care. When it comes to safeguarding, sharing the right information at the right time helps protect children — but we only share what is necessary, and only with people who need to know.

How we store safeguarding information

- We keep clear, accurate records of any safeguarding concerns.
- These records are stored securely and only accessible to members of the safeguarding team.
- Records help us build a full picture of any worries so we can support children effectively.

When we share information

There are times when we must share information with other professionals (such as MARU, Early Help, health services, or the police) to keep a child safe.

We follow national guidance on this and always consider:

- **What is in the best interests of the child**
- **Whether sharing is necessary to protect them**
- **Whether parents can be informed safely and appropriately**

If it is safe to do so, we will usually discuss concerns with parents or carers before sharing information.

Protecting your child's privacy

We never share personal information lightly. We comply with all data protection laws, including the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**, which set strict rules on how information must be used and stored.

Moving between schools

If a child moves to another school, we securely transfer any safeguarding records to the new setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead. This helps them understand any ongoing support the child may need.

Our promise to families

We take privacy seriously. Information is:

- Shared **carefully**
- Stored **safely**
- Used **only to support and protect** your child

If you ever have questions about how safeguarding information is handled, you are welcome to contact the school's Safeguarding Lead for reassurance.

14. Monitoring and Review (Parent-Friendly Version)

At Penryn College, safeguarding is never "finished." We continually review what we do to make sure our approaches stay strong, up to date and supportive of every child.

Regular review of this policy

- This policy is reviewed **every year**, or sooner if national guidance changes.
- We make updates to reflect new laws, safeguarding expectations and the needs of our school community.

Listening to pupils, families and staff

We welcome feedback from parents, carers, pupils and staff. If something isn't working as well as it should, we want to know so we can put it right.

Keeping everyone aware

When changes are made, we:

- Update staff through training and briefings
- Share information with families where appropriate
- Ensure pupils understand how to get help and stay safe

Our goal is to make sure our safeguarding practice remains strong, consistent and child-centred.

15. References (Parent-Friendly Version)

We base our safeguarding work on trusted national guidance and legal duties designed to protect children across England. These documents guide how schools keep pupils safe:



Key national guidance

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** – the government's main safeguarding guidance for schools.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated 2025)** – explains how schools, social care, police, health services and others work together to protect children.
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance (statutory)** – sets out how schools support regular attendance as part of safeguarding.

Online safety and digital safeguarding

- **DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards** – guidance on keeping children safe online in school.
- **UKCIS – Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes (March 2024)** – advice for schools on responding safely to image-sharing incidents.

Other guidance we follow

- **NPCC "When to Call the Police"** – helps schools know when an incident should be reported.
- Relevant equality, data protection and child protection laws.

These documents ensure that our policies, training and day-to-day practice meet the highest national standards.