

# Harrow Lodge Primary School



## PEER ON PEER ABUSE POLICY

**DUE FOR REVIEW:**

**Autumn 2022**

**RESPONSIBLE PERSON:**

**MRS S BOYES**



	Name of School	Harrow Lodge Primary
	Policy review Date	April 2021
	Date of next Review	October 2022
	Who reviewed this policy?	Sarah Boyes
	Name of Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Boyes

## Peer on Peer Abuse - Policy and Procedural Guidance Template

### Including sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

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## 1. Context and Definition

**Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others.**

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. School staff, alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy, have to make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

## 2. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2020 states that

*‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with’.*

It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard

*‘Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.’*

Peer on Peer abuse is referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with peer on peer necessitate separate policy guidance.

At Harrow Lodge Primary School we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the

young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

### **3. Purpose of Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of peer on peer abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At Harrow Lodge Primary School we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

3.1 Anti-Bullying including Online Bullying Policy

3.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

3.3 Behaviour Policy

### **4. Framework and Legislation**

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together, 2018, highlighting that every assessment of a child, '*must be informed by the views of the child*'. (Working Together, 2018:21) This is echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

### **5. Abuse and harmful behaviour**

It is necessary to consider

- what abuse is and what it looks like
- how it can be managed
- what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual
- what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'.

**All** staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, 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;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

(KCSIE 2020)

It is important to consider the forms abuse may take and the subsequent actions required.

- Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
- Staff should not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
- Staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significant risk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexual abuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, significant harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

## **6. Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

### **6.1. Physical abuse**

This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

### **6.2. Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will follow the DfE Guidance: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

with consideration of

- Managing internally 65.1, page 27
- Early Help 65.2, page 28
- MASH referral 65.3. page 28
- Reporting to the police 65.4, Page 29

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in

sexually harmful behaviour and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it as to the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may include

- inappropriate sexual language
- inappropriate role play
- sexual touching
- sexual assault/abuse.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Upskirting: where someone takes a picture under a person’s clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

### **6.3. Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### **6.4. Online Bullying / Cyber bullying**

Online Bullying / Cyberbullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, e-mail, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

Online bullying can take many forms

- Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites

- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- Stealing someone's online identity
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chatrooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations

### **6.5. Sexting / Sharing nude or indecent imagery**

The term 'sexting' relates to the sending of indecent images, videos and/or written messages with sexually explicit content; these are created and sent electronically. They are often 'shared' via social networking sites and instant messaging services.

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL will follow the UKCCIS: Sexting in schools and colleges 2016 guidance. (An updated copy of this guidance is due autumn term 2020)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/55157/5/6.2439\\_KG\\_NCA\\_Sexting\\_in\\_Schools\\_WEB\\_1\\_.PDF](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/55157/5/6.2439_KG_NCA_Sexting_in_Schools_WEB_1_.PDF)

### **6.6. Initiation/Hazing**

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are a number of different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

### **6.7. Prejudiced Behaviour**

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – for example disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

### **6.8. Teenage relationship abuse**

Teenage relationship abuse is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a

heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner. This abuse may be child sexual exploitation.

## **7. Recognising peer abuse**

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and consider:

- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
- Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
- What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery
- The effect on the victim
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
- Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary to gather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts. It is equally important to deal with it sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

Staff will talk to the children in a calm and consistent manner. Staff will not be prejudiced, judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

## **8. Actions**

### **DSL and team actions**

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting
- Record all incidents and all action taken

If you think a child is the victim of crime or involved in a crime - this includes current and historic allegations of sexual offences including sexual assault and rape, grooming, indecent images (following the UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes guidance), county lines, criminal exploitation.

1. Phone 101 to make a report. Make a note of the crime number. Tell them you will also be contacting MASH and you will be submitting a MARF – do this even if you believe a parent or other agency has contacted the police.

2. Contact MASH, complete a MARF, make sure the crime number is quoted with the date and time you rang 101

### **Recommendations**

1. For incidents of sexual harassment or sexual violence phone MASH, always MARF. Take advice; if you know the actions to be a crime you must report to the police.
2. Follow up any pastoral conversations with children and/or their parents putting support routes in writing (in school support, counselling offers, external advice organisations)
3. Advertise support routes around school in an age appropriate way, including how children can come to the DSL and team. Keep these displays active and up to date.
4. Where the incident involves two or more children from your school make sure there is a safety plan in place for all the children. A safety plan should identify the risks posed by or to a pupil involved in sexualised behaviour.
5. All DSL team members to have email out of office message (for school holidays) that offers support and advice routes (local and national).

### **Recording sexualised behaviour**

- Be clear, explicit and non-avoidant, and avoid vague statements or euphemisms
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the child. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.
- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around.

### **Gather the Facts**

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. Ask the young people to tell you what happened. Use open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not interrogate or ask leading questions.

### **Consider the Intent**

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harm another?

### **Decide on your next course of action**

If you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately; they will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

If MASH and the police intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

## **Informing parents/carers**

The best way to inform parents/carers is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may be suffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents/carers whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

Is the pupil 13+ and does not want to share with parents? Use the 'Gillick' test and the 'Fraser' guidelines.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines/>

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent/carer (they may be scared to tell parents/carers that they are being harmed in any way).

## **9. Points to consider**

### **9.1. What is the age of the children involved?**

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however should not be overlooked.

### **9.2. Where did the incident or incidents take place?**

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so was it observed? If not, is more supervision required within this particular area?

### **9.3. What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?**

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and also what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

### **9.4. What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?**

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

### **9.5. Repetition**

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the same way it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

## **10. Next Steps**

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

### **10.1. For the young person who has been harmed**

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that

they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends; in which case it is necessary that this young person continues to be monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people, or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on cyber bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of PHSE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

## **10.2. For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour**

It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be that the young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary.

Particular support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that the young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one to one work with a particular service or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education elsewhere.

It may be that the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others, in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi- agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all of those agencies involved including the young person and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person to reflect on their behaviour.

## **10.3. After care**

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). For this reason, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

## 11. Preventative Strategies

Peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most robust policies and support processes. It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent peer on peer abuse.

This school has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. There is a strong and positive PHSE/SMSC curriculum that tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. The school makes sure that 'support and report' signposting is available to young people.

Staff will not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.

Young people are part of changing their circumstances and, through school council and pupil voice for example, we encourage young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. We involve pupils in the positive ethos in school; one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

## 12. NSPCC helpline: Report Abuse in Education

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 the NSPCC launched a new dedicated helpline for children and young people who have experienced sexual harassment or abuse at school.

Young people and adults (e.g. parents/carers and professionals in schools) can contact Report Abuse in Education on 0800 163 663 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## 13. Where to go for further information

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/peer-on-peer-sexual-abuse>

DfE - Keeping Children Safe in Education KCSIE – September 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

DfE - Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges – May 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

UKCIS - Sharing nudes and semi-nudes guidance – January 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

DfE – Exclusions guidance

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/921405/20170831\\_Exclusion\\_Stat\\_guidance\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/921405/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf)

Brook – Traffic Light Tool (now requires training to access)

<https://www.brook.org.uk/training/wider-professional-training/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool/>

## Hackett - Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours.

CONTINUUM OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (Hackett, 2010)

NORMAL	INAPPROPRIATE	PROBLEMATIC	ABUSIVE	VIOLENT
Developmentally expected Socially acceptable Consensual, mutual, reciprocal Shared decision-making	Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group Context for behaviour may be inappropriate Generally consensual and reciprocal	Problematic and concerning behaviours Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected No overt elements of victimization Consent issues may be unclear May lack reciprocity or equal power May include levels of compulsivity	Victimising intent or outcome Includes misuse of power Coercion and force to ensure compliance Intrusive Informed consent lacking, or not able to be freely given by victim May include elements of expressive violence	Physically violent sexual abuse Highly intrusive Instrumental violence which is physiologically and/or sexually arousing to the perpetrator Sadism

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/peer-on-peer-sexual-abuse>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/managing-allegations-made-against-a-child>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/january/podcast-harmful-sexual-behaviour-in-schools>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/january/podcast-assessing-sexualised-behaviour>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/february/podcast-preventing-harmful-sexual-behaviour>

In the podcast on preventing harmful sexual behaviour, the presenters consider the importance of quality PSHE provision and the need for a co-ordinated approach to RSE provision. The following link gives you access to a range of teaching resources for planning your RSE provision.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/schools/relationships-health-and-sex-education-resources>

### Childnet research and resources for educators and parents/carers

The Childnet International Project deSHAME aims to tackle peer-based online sexual harassment by empowering local communities to work together to increase reporting among young people.

The research report presents findings from quantitative and qualitative research conducted with over 3,000 13-17 year olds in Denmark, Hungary and the UK providing a unique insight into their experiences of online sexual harassment.

The project includes resources to support parents, carers and educators of children aged 9–17 to talk/teach about online sexual bullying.

<https://www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-deshame>

DfE: Statutory guidance: Working together to safeguard children 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation at school 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

DfE: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

DfE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

DfE: Statutory guidance School exclusion 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

DfE: Teaching Online Safety in Schools, 2019

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

DfE: Relationship Education and Relationship and Sex Education, 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

DfE: Behaviour and discipline in schools 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>

DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

DfE: Children Missing Education 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

DfE: Cyberbullying: Advice for head teachers and school staff 2014

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying\\_Advice\\_for\\_Headteachers\\_and\\_School\\_Staff\\_121114.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf)

London Child Protection Procedures, edition 5, 2019

<http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>

UKCIS: Education for a connected World, 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-a-connected-world>

Havering: Online CSE toolkit

<https://www.havering.gov.uk/cse>

[https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20086/safeguarding\\_children\\_information\\_for\\_professionals/416/child\\_sexual\\_abuse\\_and\\_exploitation](https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20086/safeguarding_children_information_for_professionals/416/child_sexual_abuse_and_exploitation)

UKCCIS: Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/660675/Tackling\\_race\\_and\\_faith\\_targeted\\_bullying\\_face\\_to\\_face\\_and\\_online\\_-\\_a\\_guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/660675/Tackling_race_and_faith_targeted_bullying_face_to_face_and_online_-_a_guide.pdf)

Gov.uk: Equality Act 2010: advice for schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-schools-england>

Key messages from research on children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour (PDF)

<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/resources/key-messages/>

NPCC-When to call the police

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf>

Revised April 2021



7<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Havering Headteachers, Governors and Designated Safeguarding Leads

**Re: Everyone's Invited website**

As you will no doubt be aware from national media coverage, the website [Everyone's Invited](#) enables members of the public to post testimonies describing personal experiences of sexual harassment and abuse in education settings. Many of the submissions, most of them posted anonymously, identify the education setting and some name the alleged perpetrator.

To date, no testimonies relating to settings in Havering are known to have been posted. However, as public interest in the website continues to grow, it is possible that your own your school or college could be identified.

Since becoming aware of the website, Metropolitan Police have been making contact with schools and colleges identified and offering specialist support for any potential victims of sexual assaults. The Met have also been in contact with the website owner to request that individuals who make disclosures are signposted to support services, and the Police where necessary.

Detective Superintendent Mal Laremore, the Met's lead for rape and sexual offences, has provided the following statement with advice to people affected by the issues raised:

We welcome any initiative which encourages any victim-survivor of a sexual offence to speak out and seek support. It is deeply concerning to see the number of accounts published on this website, many of which appear to relate to previous or current experiences within educational settings in London and across the country.

We take all allegations of sexual assault very seriously. We understand the complex and varied reasons why many victim-survivors do not contact law enforcement, but I want to personally reassure anyone who needs our help that we are absolutely here for you.

We're working closely with school staff to ensure anyone who may have been a victim-survivor of sexual assault and feels able and willing to report to us can do so.

It's apparent some of the incidents referred to on this website may have occurred some years ago. Regardless of how long ago an offence took place, I would like to remind any victim-survivor that support is available for you should you wish to speak to us.

We have engaged with the platform owner and now have a link on the site for any victims to report directly to us. We're also working with partners who can be approached or consulted anonymously should individuals not want to directly engage with police in the first instance.

Anyone with information about an offence which may have been committed should contact police on 101, or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

As well as supporting and encouraging any victims of crime to report incidents to the police, it is important that all schools and colleges in Havering take proactive steps to engage their communities on this issue and address any safeguarding issues that may arise.

To that end, we hope that the following advice is helpful:

- If a young person has already disclosed relevant information to the school or college, then standard safeguarding procedures apply regarding the reporting the incident to Children's Services (including the LADO if concern arises about the actions of a member of staff, or about a professional failing to take protective action to safeguard a child or young person) and the Police.
- Where adult victims come forward, if they want to make an anonymous report they can do so via Crimestoppers. However, if they report non-recent peer-on-peer abuse to your school or college, you will need to pass this information to the Police as a third-party report.
- While most testimonies posted on Everyone's Invited are from women and girls, some are from men and boys. It is important to remember that men and boys can experience sexual harassment and abuse and may need support.
- Please make children and young people aware that they can make anonymous reports to the police about any crime via [Fearless](#), which is a young-person-friendly version of Crimestoppers.
- Please also encourage students to report concerns through their Designated Safeguarding Lead or directly to the Police. Local Safer Schools Police Officers are available to take reports from students and have specialist investigators who can provide advice and support in relation to offences of a sexual or violent nature.
- Please consider using local Safer Schools Police Officers for PSHE, especially lessons focusing on the subject of sexual consent.
- Schools and colleges in Havering should be aware of the DfE guidance on [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#).
- You may also find resources from the Contextual Safeguarding Network's project on [harmful sexual behaviours](#) helpful. These include advice and guidance for schools on both student and parent engagement, a traffic-light tool for self-assessment, and an online scorecard where you can enter your scores and print tailored reports.
- If you have concerns about any tensions in from the local community, parents or media intrusion, please inform Havering Education Services and liaise with local Safer Schools Police Officers around joint risk assessment and planning to ensure that students are safeguarded on their way to and from school.

The DfE has announced a major review into sexual abuse in education settings alongside a dedicated helpline to provide support and guidance to adults and children who have been victims of abuse.

The new dedicated, confidential helpline will be run by the NSPCC and is available to current or past victims, as well as parents, carers or professionals with concerns.

Sir Peter Wanless, CEO of the NSPCC, has provided the following statement:

The testimonies being shared through Everyone's Invited are extremely upsetting and underline the urgent need to tackle violence against girls.

This is a watershed moment thanks to those who have found the courage to speak out which is why we have been commissioned by the Department for Education to set up an independent helpline for children, parents and professionals to seek expert, sensitive advice from the NSPCC and safely report abuse that has happened or is happening in educational settings.

At least a third of sexual offences against children are committed by other young people and that must be addressed. All children should be able to grow up in a safe community that is free from sexual violence where their rights are respected.

Creating a culture that fosters healthy relationships and challenges harassment and abuse is integral to this. With the right support for teachers, compulsory relationships and sex education has a pivotal role to play in achieving this. But this issue goes beyond schools and we all have a role to play in keeping children safe.

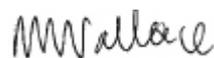
The NSPCC helpline is available at **0800 136 663**, from **8am to 10pm Monday to Friday**, and **9am to 6pm on Saturday and Sunday**.

Ofsted, working with representatives from social care, police, victim support groups, school and college leaders and the Independent Schools Council, will undertake an immediate review of safeguarding policies in state and independent schools.

The review, which will conclude by the end of May 2021, will look at the extent and the severity of the issue and ensure schools have appropriate processes in place to allow pupils to report concerns freely, knowing these will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Thank you for your careful and considered response to this sensitive issue.

Best wishes



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