

Addendum Annexe A

Peer-on-peer abuse including Sexual Violence and Harassment

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 and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

(Hazing is any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional or physical harm)

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. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will likely adversely affect their educational attainment.

The school recognises that children are capable of abusing their peers and this can manifest itself in many ways, which may reflect gender issues. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk. Where there are concerns or allegations of peer abuse, an adult will follow the procedures and guidance in this policy, in the same way as if the matter was in respect of abuse by an adult. All reports should be made through Cjoms to the DSL and/or deputies immediately so these can be investigated. Sexual violence and sexual harassment involving children at the school is a form of peer on peer abuse.

Sexual violence refers to sexual offences defined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sexual Harassment defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. This can include online and offline (both physical and verbal) Staff need to be aware that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated by the school or dismissed as “banter” or “part of growing up” or “boys will be boys” Challenging behaviours such as grabbing bottoms, breasts or genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them. School take all such reports seriously and children will receive the same high standard of care and support that any other safeguarding concern receives. A multi-agency approach will be undertaken when responding to all such complaints; however, the school will always take immediate action to protect children despite the actions of any other agency. These actions may include an immediate risk assessment in respect of the needs of the child victim and will address any risks identified to any child in respect of an alleged perpetrator of sexual violence or sexual harassment to ensure children are protected from harm. Any risk assessment will be fluid and may change to reflect any developments during the management of the case.

There are a number of options the school may consider in respect of the management of a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment between children and each case will receive an appropriate bespoke response once all the facts are known. Irrespective of any potential criminal outcome, the school has a duty to safeguard all children and may deal with any such report on a balance of probability basis when considering the outcomes for children involved. Should an outcome involve a move to an alternative school for any child then full information sharing of the case will be undertaken with the Designated Safeguarding Lead professional at that school. DfE national guidance is available [here](#).

Concerns or allegations of all forms of peer abuse must be reported to the DSL, who will have regard to the NYSCP child protection guidance and procedures and make referrals in respect of both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator, where appropriate. Where the concerns are of a sexual nature the DSL will have regard to the NYSCP guidance [‘Children and Young People Who Display Sexualised Behaviour’](#)

Wherever concerns of peer abuse arise, the DSL will undertake an immediate risk assessment, and put all necessary measures in place to ensure that the alleged victim, perpetrator and all children in the school are safeguarded and their welfare is supported. The Inclusive Education Service, on request, can advise schools in undertaking these risk assessments.

Where there are concerns or allegations of youth generated sexual imagery, (often referred to as ‘sexting’) these must always be reported to the DSL, who will have regard to the 2017 guidance: ‘UK Council for Child Internet Safety Guidance [‘Sexting In Schools and Colleges Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People’](#)’.

The DSL, having had regard to this guidance, will make referrals to police and children’s social care where appropriate.

The school will make every effort to minimise the risk of peer abuse by teaching pupils, in an age appropriate way: how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships; self-respect and respect for others; commitment; tolerance; boundaries; consent; how to manage conflict; and how to recognise unhealthy relationships. This awareness will be delivered through Relationship Sex Education (RSE) –LIFE lessons

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). As of April 2019, upskirting is now a criminal offence, with offenders facing up to 2 years in jail and being placed on the sex offenders register. For further statutory guidance see here. The school seeks to minimise risk and raise awareness amongst pupils through PSHE lessons, dropdown days, school campaigns and displays. The school seeks to minimise risk and raise awareness amongst staff by providing staff with the NYSCP guidance and the UKCCIS guidance.

The following information is available to pupils-

NSPCC- Helpline for victims of sexual abuse- DFE 0800 136 663