THE SPIRE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST

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ANTI-BULLYING

INCLUDING

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE POLICY

INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT BETWEEN CHILDREN

2022-2024

This policy is updated by Virginia Beale (Trust Safeguarding Lead) and is reviewed bi-annually by The Trust: to the best of our knowledge we feel it does not impact negatively on any specific group or individual within the trust community.

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Adopted by:

Date Approved by Local Governing Body:

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Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

Section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on schools to make arrangements for its pupils and states that:

"Schools/colleges must make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children."

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2018) requires all schools to follow the procedure for protecting children from abuse. This Anti-Bullying and Child on Child Abuse Policy was written with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) which defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding children is consequently more than contributing to the protection of individual children and the school is committed to the development of policy and practice that supports children, and their families to be safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, contribute positively and achieve economic wellbeing.

Witton Middle School strives to promote the welfare of our pupils by:

1. Creating and maintaining a safe learning environment
2. Identifying child welfare concerns and taking appropriate action
3. Using the curriculum to enable our children to develop keep safe strategies
4. Operating safe recruitment and selection procedures to prevent unsuitable people working with our children.

The school policies are designed to meet these needs and are available on request or via the school website. This policy applies mostly to points 1 and 3 above and reflects current legislation, accepted best practice and complies with government guidance.

At Witton Middle School we recognise the importance of promoting healthy friendships and relationships through the whole school Christian ethos, child protection, PSHE and RSE Curriculum, anti-bullying work and the Behaviour and Relationships policy. Positive relationships with school staff will encourage children to disclose any concerns about their own safety or the safety of another pupil. Key messages about healthy relationships are taught to all pupils using age and stage appropriate language to explore topics such as friendships, appropriate touch, keeping safe, recognising and assessing risk and knowing how and where to get help when needed.

1. Introduction

The School's Anti-Bullying (Child-on-Child abuse) policy is reviewed by the Governor's annually. It is available on the school's website and has been shared with staff. It is highlighted to parents/carers on entry to the school and forms part of the staff handbook. This policy is also applicable when pupils are on trips, including residential trips and for pupils walking to, or from, school. It will also apply where a pupil's behaviour impacts on another pupil who attends the school. This policy will still be applicable during these times and the same sanctions can be imposed as if the incident occurred on the school site.

This policy supports and is supported by:

- Positive Behaviour Strategy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Early Help Statement
- Child friendly Anti-Bullying policy
- 2010 Equality Act
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Children Act 1989
- Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children safe in Education
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (Sept 2021)

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It uses information and research-based evidence from the following:

- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE, 2018)
- Timpson Exclusion Review (2019)
- Improving Behaviour in Schools (EEF, 2019).
- Guide to developing a Relational Approach (Babcock)
- Preventing and tackling bullying- Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE 2017)
- Behaviour in schools 2022
- Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (June 2021)

2. Values and Aims

Our School Vison encapsulates our ethos:

At Witton Middle School our vision is to be a school where every individual in our community is valued and where care and concern for others is key.

ASPIRE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE

'Our school family, values us all as unique individuals and children of God.
We **aspire** to be the best version of ourselves; **believing** that through the gifts God has given us, we can make a positive contribution, flourish and **achieve** together to make a difference in our ever-changing world.'

We will be guided by the Christian values of Thankfulness, Peace, Dignity, Hope, Wisdom and Community. As well as the values of Democracy, The rule of law, Individual liberty and Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

We will expect all our pupils to 'Give of their Best', achieve their full potential, be good citizens and respect difference in our growing global world.

Our anti-bullying procedure aims to:

- Promote respect and tolerance for each other.
- Provide a secure, stimulating, positive and inclusive environment for learning.
- Make clear to pupils and staff what bullying is and that it is always unacceptable.
- Explain to staff, pupils and the whole school community why bullying can occur and the impact on individuals and the school as a whole.
- To have in place an anti-bullying support system, that all staff and pupils understand and to apply the system consistently.

3. Context and Definition of Child-on-Child Abuse

It is essential that **all our staff** understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Witton Middle School staff, who work with children, are advised to maintain an attitude of **'it could happen here'** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

Child on Child 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 child on child abuse including:

- bullying (including online bullying)

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- 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.

4. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2022 states that:

All staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)

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.'*

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

At Witton Middle 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.

5. Purpose of Policy

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

At Witton Middle School, we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

5.1. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
5.2. Managing Allegations procedures
5.3. Whistleblowing Policy
5.4. Positive Behaviour Strategy
5.5. Early Help Statement

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5.6. Health & Safety Policy
5.7. Online Acceptable Use agreement
5.8. Mobile Phone Policy
5.9. Online Safety Policy
5.10. Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy alongside this Ant bullying Policy

6. 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 echoedby Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

7. Abusive 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'. 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 asseriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
- Children can abuse other children. 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.
- 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.

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8. 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.

8.1 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 accidently before considering the action or sanction to be undertaken.

8.2 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 Sept 2021 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 harassinga 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.

8.3 Bullying

Witton Middle School, we define bullying to our pupils as, *“the **repetitive**, **intentional hurting** (physically or emotionally) of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. It can happen face to face or online.” (Anti-Bullying Alliance)*

*If someone is doing something to a pupil that they do not like. We encourage use of the word “**STOP**.” It makes it clear that the person does not want it to continue in an assertive manner. Aggression and retaliation should never be encouraged and will result in sanctions for both children.*

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*Bullying is something that happens **S**everal **T**imes **O**n **P**urpose and they should **S**peak-out **T**ell **O**ne **P**erson*

Bullying is a direct contradiction of our school values. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems and would need support.

On-going patterns of making and breaking of friendships, where both parties are equally responsible, **does not** constitute bullying. Nevertheless, such behaviour can have a negative effect on pupils' ability to focus on learning and will be addressed where identified or reported.

In order to be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and can 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 portential to happen more than once.
- **Physical aggression**, such as hitting, kicking, taking or damaging possessions;
- **Verbal aggression**, such as name calling (e.g. about size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose) threatening comments, insults, remarks, teasing, spreading rumours, sending nasty notes or making nuisance calls.
- **Electronic or cyber bullying**, such as the sending of inappropriate text messaging and electronic messaging through websites or social media.
- **Indirect social exclusion**, such as deliberately leaving someone out, ignoring someone, spreading rumours about someone or their family.

Bullying can happen to anyone. The procedure covers all types of bullying including:

- Race, religion or culture.
- Special educational needs.
- Appearance or health concerns.
- Sexual orientation.
- Bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances.
- Sexist or sexual bullying/harassment.
- Cyber bullying.

Bullying can be difficult to identify because it is often subtle, covert and rarely witnessed by adults.

Pupils are made aware that discriminating, teasing or bullying someone is unacceptable in any circumstance

If a pupil is subject to bullying, has witnessed bullying or fears that they may be guilty of bullying, They should **immediately report concerns to a trusted adult.**

Following being informed, the staff member will record the incident on CPOMs with the child's name and the tag 'bullying victim' which, regardless of the outcome, will be kept on file to record actions and identify patterns. Once reported, investigation will take place and the outcomes will be recorded by the investigating member of staff. Any other relevant information will be shared with the Senior Leadership team, class teacher and any other relevant staff. Sometimes, an initial monitoring period can be required and investigation may take longer.

8.4 Online Bullying

Online Bullying 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

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- 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

8.5 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. Theyare often 'shared' via social networking sites and instant messaging services.
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. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

8.6 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.

8.7 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.

8.8 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.

9. Expected staff action

Staff should consider the seriousness of the case and make a quick decision whether to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately **before taking any further in-school actions**.

10. Recognising peer abuse

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

a) Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
b) Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
c) All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
d) Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
e) What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery

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f) The effect on the victim
g) Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
h) The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
i) 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, judgemental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

11 Anti-Bullying: Responsibilities (For Child on Child sexual abuse process, see sections 13-16)

11.1 All Staff

All staff have the responsibility to:

- model appropriate behaviour in relationship with other staff and with pupils.
- confront bullying in any form including where passed off as **'banter' (**It's not banter if**.)**
- confront the use of words which promote fear about reporting such as **'snitch'** or **'grass'**
- record the concern on **'CPOMs'** under the tag **'Bullying'**
- take appropriate action (and refer to Class Teacher/Headteacher/SLT as appropriate)
- promote the use of a range of learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behaviour
- Ensure that parents, and children are aware of the school 'Child Friendly anti-bullying policy' available on the website which outlines the approaches taken by school.

11.2 SLT/DSL

The SLT/DSL have the **primary responsibility** in co-ordinating how bullying incidents are dealt with. In addition to the above, they also have the responsibility to:

- Ensure all parties are listened to, where involved in incidents, and that actions are recorded against the initial bullying concern
- Ensuring that incidents are investigated promptly, discreetly where necessary, and as fully as possible
- Confirm the outcome of the investigation within the open bullying concern.
- share with parents/carers of the victim and bully, incidents of persistent and/or serious bullying, working with all parties to create a plan.

11.3 Senior Leadership Team/ DSL/ Headteacher

The Senior Leadership Team have, in addition to the 'All Staff' responsibilities, has the responsibility to:

- promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation within the school and relevant outside agencies when appropriate
- promote the use of interventions which are least intrusive and most effective.
- Monitor types of bullying and instigate responses, as appropriate
- Monitor a the CPOMs thread and sharing concerns with relevant staff so it can be dealt with discreetly.

11.4 Parents/Carers

All parents should make themselves familiar with the school's policies on bullying when their child joins the school and how to encourage and maintain safe use of technology and social media as well as modelling appropriate language and behaviour.

If a parent/carer believes that their son/daughter is being bullied they should:

- Reassure their son/daughter: It is not their fault and the matter will be dealt with sensitively. The child has done the correct thing in 'telling'.

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- Contact their son/daughter's class teacher initially and SLT if the situation escalates. (all concerns recorded by the class teacher, will be shared with the DSL/SLT via CPOMs.)
- Where required, a meeting with the pupil's Class teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership team may be arranged.

Note:

If a serious incident/assault occurs after school or during weekends/school holidays, parents should contact the Police and then inform school so support can be organised or appropriate measures taken.

If cyber bullying via social media takes place after school or during weekends/school holidays, pupils/parents must evidence the details through a screen shot and contact the social media provider and/or the police before informing the school. https://www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/

All social media has a minimum recommended age of 13 years with some, such as WhatsApp, being 16. (See Appendix 1)

11.5 The opportunities for bullying behaviour will be reduced through a combination of:

- Raising awareness for staff and pupils of what bullying is and how it affects people.
- Creating 'connectedness' and ensuring that pupils know who to talk to or how to report concerns.
- Emphasising the important role that bystanders play in tackling bullying and teaching pupils how to safely challenge bullying behaviour.
- Developing pupils' social and emotional skills including resilience and their ability to manage relationships constructively and assertively.
- Training all staff including lunchtime staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying.
- Creating "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.

There are regular meetings with the school council with representatives from each class across the school. The message is clearly given that they are important in reducing bullying behaviour by reporting back anything that they become aware of.

12. Discriminatory Language

Racist, Homophobic, Transphobic, anti-disability, sexist, sexualised and language to discriminate against faiths.

The use of any language to discriminate against someone based on race, gender, sexuality, disability or religion is taken **extremely seriously.** Some homophobic language is used to describe something as being inferior. Phrases such as: 'those trainers are so gay!' may be passed off as as 'harmless banter'. However, the use of homophobic language to describe something, or someone, in a negative way will **ALWAYS** be challenged, and dealt with.

Bullying (including Cyber) and its consequences are taught to every pupil through our PSHE programme of study. Parents must also take responsibility to educate and advocate the safe and acceptable use of the internet and social media via monitoring their child's use outside of school hours. (Appendix 1)

12.1 Reducing incidents involving the inappropriate use of language.

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- Having clear steps to follow in the event of inappropriate language being used allows all adults in school to have the confidence to challenge it when it occurs.
- Raising awareness of what racist, homophobic, transphobic, anti-disability and language that discriminates against faiths, and how it affects people
- Emphasising the important role that 'bystanders' play in tackling improper use of this language and teaching pupils how to safely challenge the behaviour, becoming 'defenders';

12.2 Dealing with Racist, Homophobic, Transphobic, anti-disability and language that discriminates against faiths if it occurs.

All adults in school have a responsibility to deal with incidents of this nature and will do the following:

The first time inappropriate language is used:

- The child is spoken to about their use of the word and **educated** on why its use in this way is offensive.
- The incident details and child's name are recorded on 'CPOMs' with the relevant tag. (e.g 'racism', 'homophobic comment', 'anti-SEN')
- The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or DSL/DDSL shares the record, along with any historical records relating to the same language being used with the head of year and form tutor.
- The child is informed that any further use would result in a letter/call going home.

If the incident is repeated, then:

- The child is reminded that their use of the word is inappropriate and informed of the negative effects it could have on others.
- The incident and child's name are recorded on 'CPOMs' with the relevant tag.
- Parents are called by the **Headteacher/SLT** and notified that this is the second time their child has used inappropriate language. Appropriate sanction/action applied from Behaviour and relationships policy in response to findings of investigation.
- Parents invited into school to create plan to improve the situation; support their child.

Further repeats:

- Further incidents would mean involvement from the Headteacher and could result in internal or external exclusions.
- The incident and child's name are recorded on 'CPOMs' with the relevant tag.
- If there are a number of children in a class using the inappropriate language. The sharing of incidents with the Class Teacher allows for the whole class to be spoken to in a discussion over the effects that the negative use of these words can have on people.

13. Process in event of Sexual Violence or Harassment being identified/reported following section 10.

13.1 Taking Action

- 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

13.2 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

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- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form/ CPOMs (Tag Child on Child sexual abuse)
- 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

13.3 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.

13.4 Consider the Intent

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

13.5 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.

13.6 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.
NSPCC | Legal definition of a child
NSPCC | Gillick competency and 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).

14. Points to consider

14.1 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, inparticular 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.

This helps to inform any checks of age appropriate behaviours against the Brook Traffic Light Tool.

14.2 Where did the incident or incidents take place?

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

14.3 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?

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14.4 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?

14.5 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?

15. Next Steps

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

15.1 For the young person who has been harmed

The level of support required will depend 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 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 online bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of Relationship and Sex Education (from 2020), PSHE and SMSC that certain issues can be discussed ad 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.

15.2 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 practices 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.

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The school may also choose a sanction 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.

15.3 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.

16. Preventative Strategies

Child on child 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 child on child 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 PSHE/RSHE 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.

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 victimisation 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 victim 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/sexual arousing to the perpetrator Sadism

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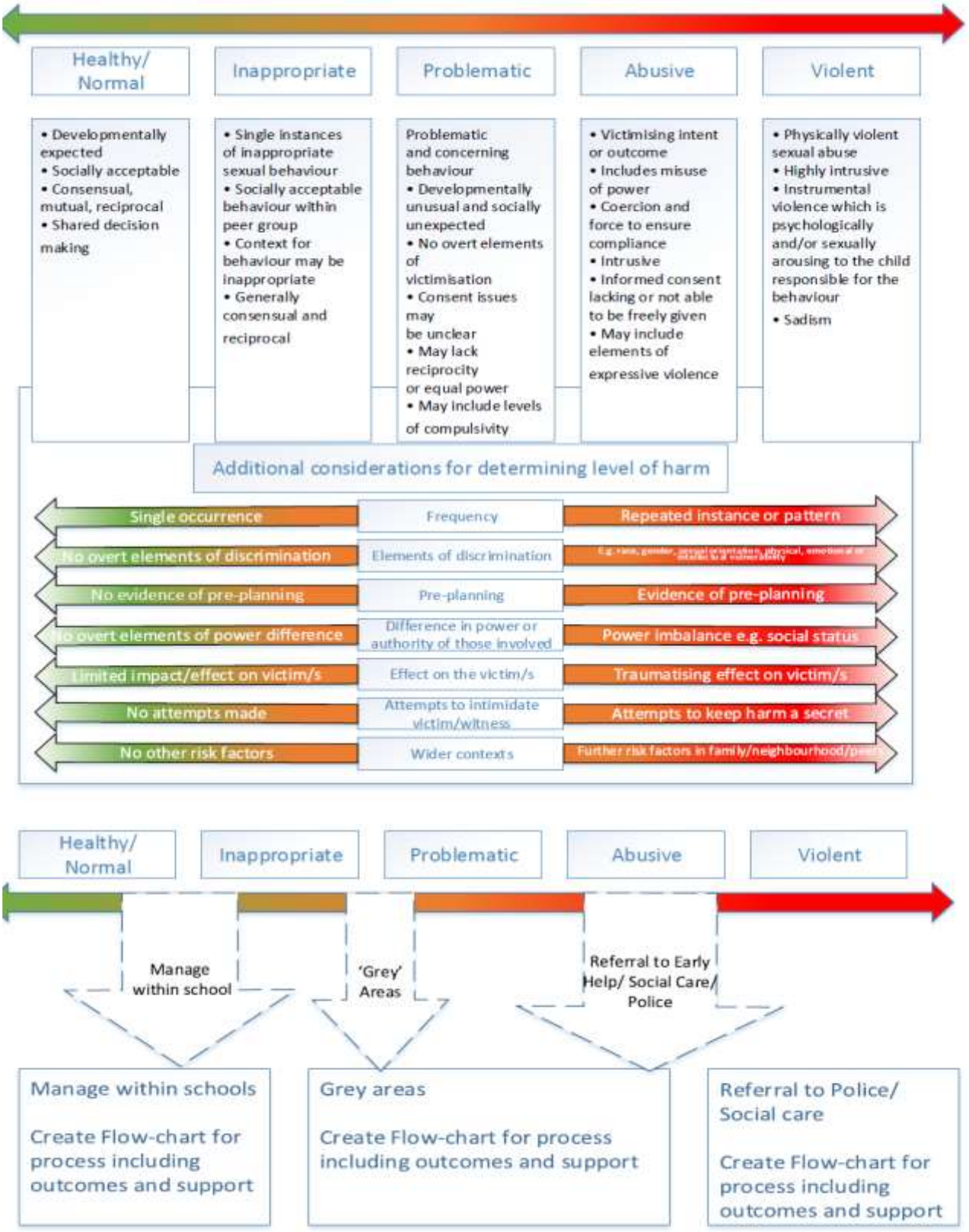
Determining Level of Harm for sexualised behaviours



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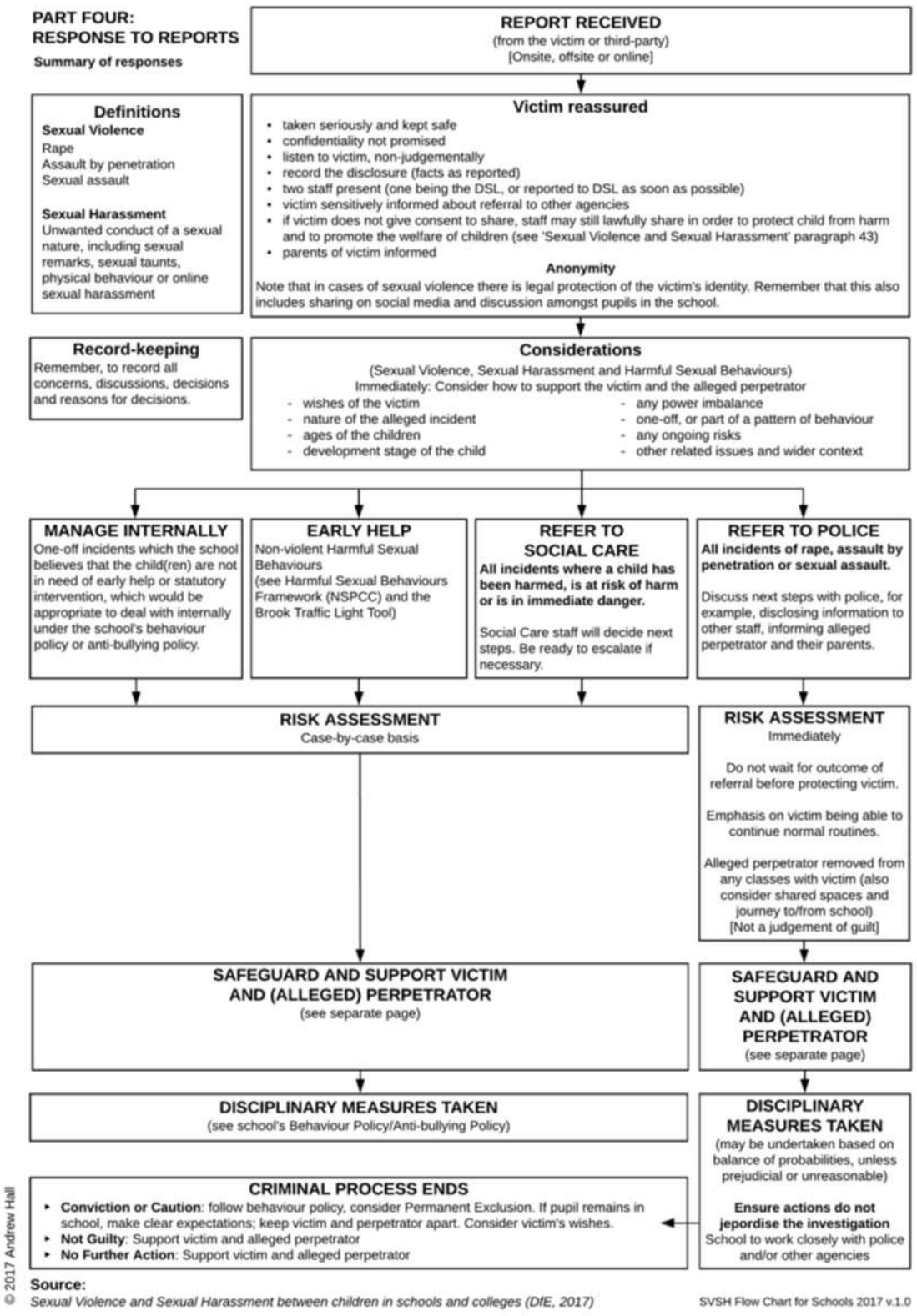
Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Flow Chart for Schools



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17. Where to go for further information

17.1 DfE: Statutory guidance: Working together to safeguard children, 2018
17.2 DfE: Statutory guidance: Keeping children safe in education
17.3 DfE Guidance: Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, May 2018 between-children-in-schools-and-colleges
17.4 DfE: Searching, screening and confiscation at school, January 2018
17.5 DfE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying, July 2017
17.6 DfE: Statutory guidance School exclusion, September 2022
17.7 DfE: Teaching Online Safety in Schools, June 2019
17.8 DfE: Relationship Education and Relationship and Sex Education, updated 2021
17.9 DfE: Behaviour and discipline in schools, September 2022
17.10 DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018
17.11 DfE: Children Missing Education, September 2016
17.12 DfE: Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff, November 2014
17.13 DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018
17.14 UKCIS: Sexting guidance for schools, 2020
17.15 UKCIS: Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online. May 2017
17.16 UKCIS: Education for a connected world, June 2020
17.17 London Child Protection Procedures, edition 5, 2018
17.18 Gov.uk: Equality Act 2010: advice for schools
17.19 NPCC- When to call the police

(*If you click on one of the links above and you find they are not working please inform the DSL.*)

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Annex A - Risk Assessment

Basic information	
Referrer Name and role	
Referrer Contact details (email address and phone number)	
Name of school(s) for victim(s)	
Name of school(s) for child/ren alleged to have caused harm	
Did incident occur on school premises? If not, where did the incident occur?	

CONSIDERATIONS	**RISK (CONSIDER VICTIM, CHILD ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED HARM, OTHER PUPILS AND STAFF)**	**RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)**	**ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK**	**REVISED RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)**
What is the incident? Who was involved? Where did it happen				
Does this incident constitute a crime? Assault, sexual assault, rape, sharing of indecent images of children, etc etc. As such has this been referred to the police?				
Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSiE and DFE guidance on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools and colleges.				
Is there an actual or perceived threat from the child alleged to have caused harm to the victim and/or others?				
Is either the victim or the child alleged to have caused harm at risk of physical harm as a result of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by peers)?				
Do they share classes?				
Do they share break times?				

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Do they share peer/friendship groups?				
Do they share transport to/from school?				
Are they likely to come into contact with each other (or anyone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school?				
How can such contact be limited?				
Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?				

Further action taken by the school or college: Please complete for each child involved.

Action	YES/NO	Date
Police informed		
Referral to MASH		
Referral to external support services		
Referral to internal support services		
Referral to CAMHS		
Referral to early help		
Other		

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Appendix 1 – Advice for Parents on Cyberbullying (Click Link for electronic version.)

Department for Education

Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying

Who is this advice for?

This advice is for parents and carers about cyberbullying. It provides advice and information about how they can protect their child from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens.

Overview

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved. There are ways to help prevent a child from being cyberbullied and to help them cope and stop the bullying if it does happen.

Parents and carers need to be aware that most children have been involved in cyberbullying in some way, either as a victim, perpetrator, or bystander. By its very nature, cyberbullying tends to involve a number of online bystanders and can quickly spiral out of control. Children and young people who bully others online do not need to be physically stronger and their methods can often be hidden and subtle.

Cyberbullying can also involve adults; even though technology has provided wonderful opportunities for both teaching and learning, it has led to some teachers becoming the victims of internet messaging that undermines or ridicules them. It is important that parents make clear that this is not acceptable behaviour and lead by example. What was once a conversation at the school gate between small groups of parents and carers can now become a conversation with perhaps hundreds of "friends" on social networking sites, permanent, with a large audience, and easily shared. Whilst parents and carers have the right to be critical of decisions made by schools, or even individual staff members, they should raise concerns in an appropriate way and not become abusive, or libellous. Open conversations on social networking sites are not private and can easily be reported to school staff, even if it was not the intention to share their views directly.

Social networking

Young people routinely access social media and much of their social lives are online. This can create a false sense of security; for example chatting online feels different from chatting face to face. It can be easier to say and reveal things that wouldn't be said face to face; be cruel, aggressive or flirtatious. It is important for young people to remember that there are offline consequences to online behaviour.

Comments intended to be funny can often be misinterpreted online whereas if said face to face they could be acceptable as facial expressions, body language, tone of voice and context all help to ensure that comments are taken the right way. This is not the case online. We also know that increasingly younger children are signing up to social network sites and may not have the maturity to handle their online identity in a safe and responsible way.

Social networking can increase existing social pressures and reinforce a sense of isolation; for instance by people purposefully not liking a young person's status update or photo so

they seem unpopular, or by excluding them from group chats. Online bullying often involves a large audience and this increases the pressure.

Parents and carers need to understand the way young people communicate with others, and the potential risks. Asking their child simply not to use technology is not a realistic way to prevent or react to cyberbullying. Internet Matters provides an overview of cyber-bullying in more detail and NSPCC - bullying and cyberbullying prevention

Parents and carers have a challenging job. They need to know what their children are doing online and also help them to do it in a safe way. With technology changing on a day-to-day basis, the best way to stay informed is for parents to be involved.Thinkuknow provides helpful tips on letting your child teach you.

Set boundaries

A good way to supervise children's internet access and set boundaries about what they can and cannot do online is to create an agreement with them. If a child breaks the rules, restrict internet access for an agreed period of time. Thinkuknow provides helpful tips on agreeing and setting boundaries

Ensure you use the privacy settings, parental controls and built in internet safety features provided by the major internet service providers. The UK Safer Internet Centre has guides for parental controls

For parents and carers experiencing any internet safety issues with their children, The Parent Zone provides a national helpline service at - help@theparentzone.co.uk and The Parent Zone - help

Being involved and talking to children

Social Networks have a minimum age restriction, usually age thirteen. Parents should talk to their children about the reasons behind the age restriction as they are there for a reason. Accessing such sites too early can expose children to unnecessary bullying.

It is also very important to ensure children and young people feel comfortable about telling their parents things that have happened online. Talking to their children will help parents to understand the ways in which they are using the internet, social media and their mobile phone. Talking to children about responsible behaviour is important as sometimes children who are victims of cyberbullying may also be involved in cyberbullying others. Ensure they know they can go and talk to an adult or parent if they are being bullied and need support. How parents talk to their children will depend on their age. Childnet gives more detailed information about talking to your child and antibullyingpro provides practical advice for parents

Advice for children

The following are some things that parents may wish to consider teaching their children about using the internet safely:

- Make sure you use the privacy settings.
- Always respect others – be careful what you say online.
- Be careful what pictures or videos you upload. Once a picture is shared online it cannot be taken back.

- Only add people you know and trust to friends/followers lists online. When talking to strangers, keep your personal information safe and location hidden.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself and change it regularly.
- Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Do not retaliate or reply to offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations.
- Save the evidence. Always keep a copy of offending e-mails, text messages or a screen grab of online conversations and pass to a parent, a carer or a teacher.
- Make sure you tell an adult you trust, for example, a parent, a carer, a teacher, or the anti-bullying co-ordinator or call a helpline like Childline on 08001111 in confidence.
- Most social media services and other sites have a button you can click on to report bullying. Doing this can prevent a bully from targeting you and others in the future. Many services take bullying seriously and will either warn the individual or eliminate his or her account.
- While you are on your mobile phone make sure you also pay attention to your surroundings.

Possible signs of cyberbullying

It is not always easy to spot the signs of cyberbullying as it can happen all the time, which is a feature that makes it different from other forms of bullying. Be alert to a change in your child's behaviour, for example:

- Being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone;
- Unwilling to talk or secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use.
- Spending much more or much less time texting, gaming or using social media.
- Many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses show up on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.
- After texting or being online they may seem withdrawn, upset or outraged.
- Not wanting to go to school and/or avoiding meeting friends and school mates.
- Avoiding formerly enjoyable social situations.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Low self-esteem.

What to do if you suspect a child is being cyberbullied

If you suspect a child or young person is being harassed or bullied either over the internet or via mobile phone, ask them to give you details. If your child tells you that someone is bothering them online, take it seriously. Offer practical as well as emotional support. Print out the evidence for future reference. Talk to a teacher at your child's school if other pupils at the schools are involved. The Parent Zone-Top tips if your child is being bullied

Support for children who are bullied

School staff should support all pupils who are bullied and develop strategies to prevent bullying from happening. Children and young people who have been a victim of images or videos of a sexual nature being uploaded and shared will be particularly vulnerable and in need of support to return to school. To help schools support pupils who are severely affected by bullying the Department has produced advice for schools, available at: supporting bullied children

Cyberbullying on social networks can be upsetting and really knock their confidence. Childline has produced guidance for young people on building their confidence after online bullying available at: Childline - Building confidence after online bullying

It is also important to involve your child in resolving the issues as this can help to strengthen their self-confidence and restore a sense of emotional safety.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has helpfully put together a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools, parents, carers and young people from the anti-bullying sector advice and support from the anti-bullying sector

Facebook has produced a support sheet Empowering Parents and Families which gives guidance on what to do if you child is being bullied.

Useful Resources

Getting offensive content taken down

If online content is upsetting and inappropriate, and the person or people responsible are known, you need to ensure they understand why the material is unacceptable or offensive and request they remove it.

If the person responsible has not been identified, or refuses to take down the material you should contact the social networking site directly to make a report and request the content is taken down. The material posted may be in breach of the service provider's terms and conditions of use and can therefore be removed.

Some service providers will not accept complaints lodged by a third party. In cases of mobile phone abuse, where the person being bullied is receiving malicious calls and messages, the account holder will need to contact the provider directly.

Before you contact a web service provider, it is important to be clear about where the content is, for example by taking a screen shot of the material that includes the web address. If you are requesting they take down material that is not illegal, be clear to point out how it breaks the site's terms and conditions. Where the material is suspected of being illegal you should contact the police directly.

NSPCC Netware: Your guide to the social network your kids use – stay up to date and keep your child safe in todays digital world stay up to date and keep your child safe in todays digital world

The UK Safer Internet Centre works with social networking sites to disseminate their safety and reporting tools.

Social networking site	Useful links
Ask.fm	Read Ask.fm's 'terms of service' Read Ask.fm's safety tips **Reporting on Ask.fm:** You do not need to be logged into the site (i.e. a user) to report. When you move your mouse over any post on someone else's profile, you will see an option to like the post and also a drop down arrow which allows you to report the post.
BBM	Read BBM rules and safety
Facebook	Read Facebook's rules Report to Facebook Facebook Safety Centre
Instagram	Read Instagram's rules Report to Instagram Instagram Safety Centre
Kik Messenger	Read Kik's rules Report to Kik Kik Help Centre
Snapchat	Read Snapchat rules Report to Snapchat Read Snapchat's safety tips for parents
Tumblr	Read Tumblr's rules Report to Tumblr by email If you email Tumblr take a screen shot as evidence and attach it to your email
Twitter	Read Twitter's rules Report to Twitter
Vine	Read Vine's rules Contacting Vine and reporting
YouTube	Read YouTube's rules Report to YouTube YouTube Safety Centre

Mobile phones

All UK mobile phone providers have malicious or nuisance call, text or picture message centres set up and have procedures in place to deal with such instances. They will help you to change the number of the person being bullied if necessary. If you want to prosecute the perpetrator contact the police. The mobile provider will work closely with the police and can usually trace calls for them.

Some service providers such as Vodafone produce annual magazines for parents and carers (Digital Parenting)

, giving information and top tips for keeping your children safe online including cyberbullying.

Service providers

Service provider	From your mobile	Pay as you go	Pay monthly contracts
O2	4445 or 202	08705 678 678	0870 241 0202
VodaFone	191	03333 040 191	03333 048 069
3	333	08433 733 333	08433 733 333
EE	150	0800 956 6000	0800 956 6000
Orange	150	07973 100 450	07973 100 150
T-Mobile	150	07953 966 150	07953 966 150
Virgin	789	0345 6000 789	0345 6000 789
BT		08000 328 751	08000 328 751

Organisations that provide support to parents and carers and children

- The Anti-Bullying Alliance
- CEOP
- Childline
- Childnet
- The Diana Award
- Internetmatters
- Kidscape
- Get connected
- NSPCC
- The Parent Zone
- Thinkuknow
- Young Minds
- UK Safer Internet Centre