THE SPIRE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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# The Spire Church of England Learning Trust

# Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

## Including Sexual Violence and Harassment Between Children

## 2026 - 2027

This policy has been reviewed and updated by the Trust Safeguarding Lead. It is approved annually by the Trust Board and implemented by all schools within the Trust.

To the best of our knowledge, we do not feel it impacts negatively on any specific group or individual within our school or Trust community.

**This policy will be subject to an ongoing annual review in line with the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education by the Trust Safeguarding Lead. This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026. It will be checked and may be amended prior to the scheduled date to reflect changes in legislation where appropriate. It will be presented to the Trust Board for further approval and to be ratified if significant changes are to be applied.**

Reviewed: September 2026

Ratified: September 2026

Next Review: September 2027

In collaboration with

**List of Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and school office telephone numbers for all schools within The Spire Church of England Learning Trust:**

**St John's Middle School, Bromsgrove**
School Office tel no : 01527 832376

**St John's Primary School, Kidderminster**
School Office tel no : 01562 745558

**St Matthias Primary School, Malvern**
School Office tel no : 01684 574984

**Witton Middle School, Droitwich**
School Office tel no : 01905 773362

**Catshill Middle School, Bromsgrove**
School Office tel no : 01527 872431

**Catshill First School and Nursery, Bromsgrove**
School Office tel no : 01527 872913

**Please contact your local school for your named Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

## 1. Context and Definition

This policy sets out how schools within The Spire Church of England Learning Trust should respond to all signs, reports and concerns of child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school premises, and/or online. As set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here', and this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse.

- Schools in the UK have a statutory responsibility to protect children from abuse. They play a very important role in keeping children and young people safe. Schools should create a culture where:
    - children feel confident to speak out if they have a concern about their own or another child's safety
    - adults feel confident to recognise and respond to safeguarding and child protection concerns.

All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing other children (including online). It is essential that all our staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers. 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 such and not coming forward to report it.

Child-on-child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually, financially or emotionally harm others using coercion, power and/or control. It can happen to children of a similar age or stage of development and can be harmful to the children who display it as well as those who experience it. Staff must recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, but that all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and must be taken seriously. Children with disabilities may have heightened vulnerability to abuse, and staff should be alert to the additional risks they may face, as recognised in KCSIE 2026.

All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from child-on-child abuse including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, including bullying motivated by race, religion, faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics)

- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (also known as teenage relationship abuse)

- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm

- sexual violence and sexual harassment and sexually harmful behaviour. This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, including Part 5: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). It forms part of our safeguarding suite under Education Act 2002 s.175.

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery): The UKCIS Education Group has published Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) - GOV.UK which outlines how to respond to an incident of nude and/or semi-nude images and/or videos being shared

- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party

- upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm

- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals:

    - Prejudice-based abuse and hate incidents, including those motivated by race, religion or faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics
    - Misogyny and misandry, including gender-based insults, sexualised language, harmful stereotypes, harassment or online content targeting someone because of their sex or gender.
    - Hate crime
    - Child Criminal Exploitation
    - Child Sexual exploitation
    - Gang association and serious violence – County Lines
    - Radicalisation

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 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, must make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

Children might not report sexual abuse because they are afraid of the following:

- Being ostracised by their peers
- Their peers getting into trouble
- Losing control of what will happen after they tell someone
- Not being believed
- Being blamed
- Being shamed

## 2. Responsibility

**Information Sharing**

Effective safeguarding relies on appropriate information being shared at the right time. In accordance with *KCSIE 2026* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, staff understand that:

- Information sharing is **essential** for early identification, assessment and targeted support.
- We will share information **lawfully, proportionately and securely** with relevant professionals, including children's social care and the police, where appropriate.
- Safeguarding concerns **must not be withheld** because of uncertainty about data-protection rules; the **child's safety is paramount**, and legislation permits sharing information for safeguarding purposes.
- The DSL (or deputy) leads decision-making on what to share, when and with whom, ensuring decisions are **recorded with clear rationale**, including situations where information is not shared.
- Information may be shared **without consent** where there is reasonable cause to believe a child is at risk of significant harm, or where seeking consent could increase the risk. Staff must never promise a child that information disclosed to them will remain confidential. Staff should explain, in an age-appropriate way, that they may need to share information with the appropriate safeguarding professionals if this is necessary to keep the child or another person safe.

Information should only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard and support the child. The DSL will determine what information needs to be shared, with whom and when.

All staff follow the principles set out in *KCSIE 2026 Part 1 and Part 2*, including that concerns should be shared **immediately** with the DSL and that uncertainty must never delay protective action.

**All** staff should be aware of systems within their school 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)

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.

Schools within The Spire Church of England Learning Trust should 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.

**Our staff**

**All staff should:**

- Recognise the increasing national concern regarding this issue as highlighted in the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Are aware of the level and nature of risk that our pupils are or may be exposed to
- Understand the important role that they play in the culture of vigilance
- Recognise child-on-child abuse of all types

- Are confident and competent in responding promptly and appropriately with timely challenge of the attitudes and behaviours of child-on-child abuse
- Listen to children, capture their voice and help to create a culture in which our children feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non-judgemental environment
- Will not downplay behaviours and recognise that if they do this, it can lead to an unsafe environment for children and, in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not having the confidence to come forward, speak out and report what has happened to them
- Report and record their concerns following safeguarding referral processes
- Understand that even if there are no reports of this type of abuse that it 'does happen here'
- Are committed to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within the school setting and beyond
- Recognise and understand that children who harm others, may have additional or complex needs of their own, e.g. significant disruption in their own lives, exposure to domestic abuse, witnessing/suffering abuse as well as educational under-achievement and possibly and involvement in criminal activity and therefore, they too, will need support
- Encourage parents/carers to communicate with us so that we can work together to ensure and enable a prompt and appropriate response to any type of child-on-child abuse
- Know that putting a stop to child-on-child abuse of any type and ensuring the safety of our children is a priority
- Regard this policy as a positive, proactive and preventative measure

Staff within The Spire Church of England Learning Trust work hard to create a culture where child-on-child abuse does not happen. We strive to create an ethos of mutually respectful behaviour. However, if this type of abuse is seen, heard or reported, all staff are confident in their actions and subsequent support.

Staff will inform their children that there are other ways to report abuse if they are worried about themselves or other children and for whatever reason, don't feel that they can speak to staff in school. For example:

NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline 0800 1111 https://www.childline.org.uk/

## Our Children

**All** children are at risk of child-on-child abuse, but some groups are more vulnerable than others to abuse and include the following:

- A child with additional needs and disabilities
- A child living with domestic abuse
- A child who is at risk of suffering significant harm
- A child who is at risk of/or has been exploited or at risk of being exploited, criminally/sexually
- A Child who is Looked After
- A child who goes missing from school/home or is missing education
- Children who identify as or are perceived as LGBT+

At all schools within The Spire Church of England Trust, we are confident that our children know:

- Who to speak to and/where to go for support
- That they will be listened to, taken seriously and not dismissed
- That they will receive the right help at the right time
- That they will receive ongoing support
- That they will be supported to feel safe at school
- That they will be supported to continue to access their education

## 3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clarity on what is meant by child-on-child abuse in all its forms
- Understand the culture within our schools
- Evidence how staff support the children in our schools
- Give children confidence that they will be supported and informed
- Give parent/carers the assurance that staff know how to deal with abuse
- Evidence how our safeguarding staff handle reports/concerns/disclosures
- Inform of the post incident management process/ongoing support/safety planning

## 4. Framework and Legislation

This policy is issued under the statutory safeguarding duties placed upon schools by Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (for maintained schools) and Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 (for academies and independent schools). Schools must safeguard and promote the welfare of children and follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

This policy is supported by the Children Act 1989 (welfare of the child is paramount), Working Together to Safeguard Children, and KCSIE 2026 requirements to hear the voice of the child in assessments and decision-making.

This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect future statutory safeguarding guidance issued by the Department for Education.

**Local Safeguarding Partnership Guidance**
"In addition to national statutory guidance, the Trust follows the local safeguarding partnership's threshold guidance, escalation procedures and multi-agency arrangements, to ensure that decisions about early help, referrals and intervention are consistent with local expectations."

- **Abusive and harmful behaviour**

Staff consider what abuse looks like, how it is managed, what support/interventions are needed, and what prevention strategies reduce risk. Abuse by peers must be treated as seriously as abuse by adults and is subject to the same child protection procedures.

It is necessary to consider:

- what abuse is and what it looks like
- how it can be managed and by whom (which members of staff)
- 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.

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.
- 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 be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people. This includes a type of blackmail widely known as 'sextortion'. Sextortion involves people being forced into paying money or meeting another financial demand, after an offender has threatened to release nude or semi-nude photos of them. This could be a real photo taken by the victim, or a fake image created of them by the offender.
- 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.

- **Types of abuse**

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. This includes (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse (e.g., hitting, kicking, biting, hair pulling); sharing of nudes/semi-nudes; initiation/hazing; teenage relationship abuse; prejudiced/discriminatory bullying; harmful sexual behaviour (HSB).

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

**6.2 Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes serious harm to their emotional development. It may involve making a child feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only for meeting others' needs; silencing or mocking them; or imposing age-inappropriate expectations, including overprotection or restricting normal exploration and social interaction. It can include exposure to the mistreatment of others, serious bullying (including cyberbullying), exploitation, or situations that cause the child to feel frightened or unsafe. Emotional abuse is present in all forms of child maltreatment, though it can also occur on its own.

**6.2 Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or

grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

**6.3 Sexual Violence (SV), Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexually Harmful Behaviour (SHB)**

Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and Sexually Harmful Behaviour (SHB) must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Trust adopts a zero-tolerance approach; such behaviour will not be normalised or dismissed.

The DSL will refer to the DfE guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges.

Where there is a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the starting point is that it should be referred to the police and children's social care in line with KCSIE 2026 and local safeguarding procedures. The school will work with police and children's social care, agree information-sharing, and implement proportionate safety and support plans for all children affected.

Guidance and our procedures reflect KCSIE 2026 Part 5 and local multi-agency arrangements.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between children and young people of any age or sex, from primary through secondary school and into college. Incidents may involve individuals or groups, and may occur both online and face-to-face. These behaviours exist on a continuum, may overlap, and are never acceptable.

Schools within the Trust must be committed to:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh", "a part of growing up" or "boys being boys". Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported
- challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them

This policy reinforces our commitment to providing a safe, respectful environment where all children and young people feel able to report concerns and are supported appropriately.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school.

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more

likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with disabilities may have heightened vulnerability to abuse; staff should be alert to these additional risks, as recognised in KCSIE 2026.

Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

**Sexual Violence** (SV)

For this policy we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

- Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably

  believe that B consents.
- Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents. (NOTE – this could include forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party).

**Sexual Harassment (SH)**

Sexual harassment means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online or offline, inside or outside school. It is likely to violate a child's dignity and/or create a hostile, degrading, humiliating or sexualised environment. Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- Sexual comments, such as telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance, and calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting.
- Physical behaviour, such as deliberating brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature; and
- Upskirting is a specific criminal offence (SOA 2003 s67A via Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019) and will be treated as such.
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos.

  Taking and sharing nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence. Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK provides detailed advice for schools and colleges
- sharing of unwanted explicit content
- sexualised online bullying and unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats, and

- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online

It is important that schools consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

**Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB**)

In this policy we recognise the importance of distinguishing between healthy, problematic, and harmful sexual behaviour.

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.

Children's sexual behaviour exists along a continuum, ranging from developmentally typical to inappropriate, problematic, abusive, or violent. Behaviour that is problematic, abusive, or violent is developmentally inappropriate and may cause harm to those involved. The umbrella term *harmful sexual behaviour* (HSB) is widely used within child protection practice and is adopted in this guidance. HSB may occur online, face-to-face, or across both contexts, and should always be considered within a safeguarding framework.

When assessing HSB, both the age and developmental stage of the children involved are critical. Sexual behaviour may be considered harmful where there is a significant age or developmental disparity, particularly where there is an age difference of more than two years, or where one child is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, harm may also occur where a younger child abuses an older child, especially where there is an imbalance of power, such as where the older child is disabled or physically smaller. Confidential specialist advice and support regarding HSB is available through the specialist sexual violence sector, with further details provided in Annex B in the latest version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Sexually harmful behaviour may include:

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

Consent is when someone agrees by choice and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice. It is important to note that:

- A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
- The age of consent is 16;
- Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

All schools within The Spire Trust have systems that enable pupils to report abuse with confidence, assured that concerns will be taken seriously. Reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment are often complex and require timely, informed professional judgement. Effective pre-planning, training and clear policies support a calm, proportionate and appropriate response. Governing bodies and proprietors must ensure schools engage in multi-agency working in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.
Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, led by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), using professional judgement and, where necessary, in consultation with external agencies including

children's social care and the police. Where a criminal offence may have occurred, children's social care and the police are key partners, and referrals to the police will often follow a referral to children's social care. The DSL (or deputy) is responsible for leading the school's response and for understanding local referral procedures.

**6.4 Bullying**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a realor 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 potentialto happen more than once.
- Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, or targeting someone because of a protected characteristic or perceived difference, including race, religion or faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, culture or ethnicity. This includes antisemitic, Islamophobic and other faith-based bullying, prejudice or harassment. Bullying may also involve deliberately excluding someone from a group or activity.

**6.5 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 include abusive/threatening messages, abusive posts, sharing humiliating material, identity theft, rumours, trolling, hate sites, prank messages, group exclusion, anonymous messages, encouragement of self-harm, and pressuring children to send sexual messages.

In line with KCSIE 2026, the Trust uses the DfE four-category model of online risk:

• Content: exposure to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material (e.g., pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm and suicide content, extremism, misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories).

• Contact: harmful online interactions, including unwelcome contact, grooming, peer pressure or exploitation.

• Conduct: behaviours that cause harm or increase risk, such as creating or sharing explicit images (consensual or non-consensual), online bullying, and aggressive behaviour.

• Commerce: risks such as online gambling, phishing, scams, and financial exploitation.

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

**Prejudiced 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 prejudice around belonging, identity and equality in wider society, e.g. disabilities and special educational needs, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, faith or belief, gender, home life (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class), sexual orientation and gender identity. This includes prejudice motivated by a person's actual or perceived faith, religion or belief.

**Filtering, Monitoring and Technology Safety**

We meet the DfE's **Filtering and Monitoring core standard** (roles, annual review, proportionate controls) and align with **KCSIE** online-safety expectations

**6.6 Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (UKCIS 2024):**

The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes is a safeguarding concern, whether the image has been created by the child themselves, shared without consent, digitally altered or generated using artificial intelligence.

This includes digitally manipulated images, deepfakes and deep nudes, where an image appears to show a child nude or in a sexualised situation but has been altered or wholly generated using AI. Staff should be aware that a child may be the victim of image-based abuse even where the image is not a genuine photograph of them. The creation, possession, sharing or threatened sharing of such images may cause significant emotional harm, humiliation, intimidation or exploitation and should be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Nudes and semi-nudes may be shared through social media, gaming platforms, messaging apps, forums or between devices using offline services. The motivations for creating or sharing them are not always sexually or criminally motivated.

If an incident comes to the attention of a member of staff, it must be reported immediately to the DSL.

- **Staff must not view, copy, print, save, store, share or forward an indecent image of a child, or ask a child to send, download or show them an image.**
- Staff should not delete the imagery or ask the child to do so.
- If imagery has been viewed accidentally, for example because a pupil has shown it to a member of staff before they could intervene, this should be reported immediately to the DSL.
- Staff should not investigate the incident, ask pupils to disclose further information about the imagery or share information about the incident with other members of staff, pupils or parents/carers unless directed to do so as part of the safeguarding response.

The DSL will determine the appropriate safeguarding response and should follow the relevant UKCIS guidance. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for the DSL or equivalent to view an image to safeguard a child. This should only be done where necessary and based on professional judgement.

Children should not be blamed, shamed or made to feel responsible for the actions of another person. Staff should reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by telling an adult and explain, in an age-appropriate way, that the concern needs to be reported so that they can receive appropriate support.

The school will consider the use of Report Remove, provided by the Internet Watch Foundation and Childline, where appropriate, and will record the safeguarding response and actions taken.

**6.7 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 several 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.

**6.8 Teenage relationship abuse**

Teenage relationship abuse is a pattern of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse—actual or threatened—by an adolescent (ages 13–18) toward a current or former partner. It can include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats, or physical or sexual violence, and is used to gain power and control in both heterosexual and same-gender relationships. In some cases, this abuse may constitute child sexual exploitation.

- **Expected Staff Action**

The school will decide, case-by-case, whether to: (a) manage internally with pastoral intervention and sanctions; (b) provide Early Help; (c) refer to the Police; and/or (d) refer to Children's Services. We work with parents/carers (unless doing so places a child at additional risk), and apply proportionate sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy, ensuring that any police investigation is not jeopardised.

For police referrals: where a report concerns rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, it must be reported to the police. The school will protect victim anonymity as appropriate and coordinate support with statutory agencies.

**There are four likely scenarios we will need to consider when managing any reports of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment:**

- **a) Manage internally -** In some cases of sexual harassment (for example, one-off incidents), we may take the view that the pupil/s concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally using our own sanctions in line with relevant school policies and by providing pastoral intervention and support.

- **b) Early Help -** We may decide that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from early help where we are the lead professional. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life. Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help can be particularly useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence. This will help to evidence the support that we have given, the work undertaken and if desired outcomes have been achieved.

- **c) Referral to the police –** Reporting to the Police. We understand our responsibilities to call the Police and reporting forms of child-on-child abuse. This does not mean that we are looking to criminalise children, and this may not always be necessary.

  In any form of child-on-child abuse where it is believed that an offence has been committed, a report may be made to the Police. Where a report has been made to the police, we will consult with the police and agree what information is appropriate to disclose to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents or carers. We will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. This may also include the development of a clear and robust safety and support plan as part of this early help process. However, risk assessing and safety planning is a key aspect of all child-on-child abuse. With regard to sexual violence and sexual harassment between children, where there is a report of a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the starting point is that this should be passed to the police who will advise and log according to their own guidelines.

- **d) Referral to Children's Services.** In all cases of child-on-child abuse, but in particular with sexual violence and sexual harassment, consideration will be given to the reporting of the matter to Children's Social Care. In making this decision, we must consider whether a child is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger. At this referral stage, we will inform parents or carers, unless there are compelling reasons not to (if informing a parent or carer is going to put the child at additional risk). Any such decision will be made with the support of children's social care. If a referral is made, children's social care will then make enquiries to determine whether any of the children involved need protection or other services. Where statutory assessments are appropriate, we will work alongside, and cooperate with, the relevant lead social worker. This collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator and any other children requiring support. We will not wait for the outcome, or even the start of a children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school. It will be important for us to work closely with children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions we take do not jeopardise a statutory investigation.

**Working with our parents and carers**

- We will in most instances, engage with both the victim's and the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers when there has been a report of child-on child abuse including sexual or sexual harassment. The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe that informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk.

- We will carefully consider what information provided to the respective parents or carers about other children involved and when to do so.

- In some cases, children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view on this aspect, and it will be important for us to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

- It should be the case that we will meet the victim's parents or carers with the victim present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard the victim and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

- It is also likely that we will meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact the alleged perpetrator, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with the victim and what this means for their education. We will be clear and transparent and explain the reason behind any decisions.

- Support for the alleged perpetrator will be discussed including any referrals, if appropriate.

- We realise that parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been the victim of an assault or is alleged to have assaulted another child.

**Sanctions**

- We will decide appropriate sanctions on a case-by-case basis in line with our Behaviour Policy and any graduated response required. It may be that other children in our setting start to 'take sides' and become involved and may behave in ways that cause upset and distress to other children. We will take their behaviour seriously and again use a graduated response to this, whilst also educating them the importance of resolving any conflict in a respectful and restorative way. If there is police involvement, we will work closely with them to ensure that any disciplinary action taken by us, as a result of the incident, does not jeopardise the police investigation.

**Searching, screening and confiscation**

- Where devices/items may be involved (e.g., imagery, weapons, drugs), we follow DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation (July 2022). Any strip-search can only be conducted by police, with an appropriate adult present, and the DSL informed to coordinate safeguarding and after-care.

## 8. Recognising Child-on-child 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
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/carers 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.

### 8.1 Taking Action

- Always take complaints seriously
- Listen to the pupil, record their words accurately and use open questions where necessary. Do not investigate or interrogate; refer to the DSL for further action.
- 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

The school should conduct a proactive assessment to determine the risks to which their pupils are or may be exposed, as well as any protective factors which may exist, and monitor those risks and protective factors. They should put in place action plans to address any identified risks and keep these under regular review.

### 8.2 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
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form/ or internal online safeguarding recording system.
- 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

### 8.3 Gathering Initial Information

Where a concern involves more than one pupil, staff should not attempt to investigate the incident or interview all pupils involved.

The pupil who has raised the concern should be listened to calmly and sensitively. Staff should use open questions only where necessary to clarify what the pupil is telling them and should avoid leading questions, interrogation or asking pupils to repeatedly recount their experience.

Staff should record the pupil's words as accurately as possible, including relevant dates, times, locations and any information about other people involved. The DSL should be informed as soon as possible and will determine how any further information should be gathered safely and appropriately.

Where pupils need to be spoken to separately, this should be coordinated by the DSL and carried out in a way that protects the safety and wellbeing of all pupils involved and does not compromise any police or social care investigation.

### 8.4 Consider the Intent

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

### 8.5 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/carers to come to school to be spoken to. It is important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

### 8.6 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.

Where a pupil does not want information to be shared with their parent or carer, the DSL should consider the pupil's wishes, age, understanding and capacity, alongside the nature and level of safeguarding risk.

The DSL should consider whether the pupil has sufficient understanding to make an informed decision about information sharing and whether sharing information with parents or carers could increase the risk of harm.

Gillick competence and, where relevant, the Fraser guidelines should be considered where appropriate. There should not be a blanket assumption that a pupil of a particular age can or cannot make decisions about information sharing.

Where there is a safeguarding concern requiring information to be shared to protect a child or another person from harm, the pupil's wishes should be considered but cannot prevent necessary safeguarding action.

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).

## 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, 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.

### 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? Is it covered by CCTV? 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 and consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

### 10.1 For the young person who has been harmed (the victim)

The level of support required will depend on the individual pupil and the circumstances of the incident. They may wish to access counselling or one-to-one support from a mentor, or may feel able to manage the situation with support from family and friends. In these circumstances, the pupil should continue to be monitored and offered support should their needs change. Where incidents involve bullying, support may focus on developing positive peer relationships, alongside restorative work with those involved where appropriate.

The wishes and feelings of the pupil who has experienced abuse should be sought and taken into account throughout the safeguarding response. Pupils should be given as much control over decisions as is reasonably possible, while recognising that safeguarding responsibilities may mean that the school cannot always follow their wishes.

The DSL should explain to the pupil, in an age-appropriate way, what may happen next, including where information may need to be shared with parents/carers, Children's Services, the police or other professionals. The pupil should be kept informed of relevant decisions and supported throughout the process.

A pupil's preference for confidentiality or for no further action should not prevent appropriate safeguarding action where there is a risk of harm.

Other interventions may include support for a whole class or year group, such as input from an external speaker on online bullying or relationship abuse. Relevant issues may also be explored through the ongoing curriculum, including Relationships and Sex Education, PSHE and SMSC.

Where a pupil feels particularly vulnerable, a risk assessment may be put in place to support their safety and wellbeing in school. This may identify a named member of staff they can speak to, strategies for managing future concerns and appropriate services that can provide additional support.

### 10.2 For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour (the alleged perpetrator)

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.

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 those agencies involved including the young person and their parents/carers. 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 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.

### 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.

In accordance with KCSIE 2026 Part 5, schools provide ongoing, proportionate support for victims following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Support continues irrespective of police or social care involvement, and actions must avoid re-traumatising the child. Regular reviews will ensure support remains effective for all children involved, including those who have displayed harmful behaviour.

## 11. 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.

The Spire Church of England Learning Trust Schools have 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 PSHCE/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.

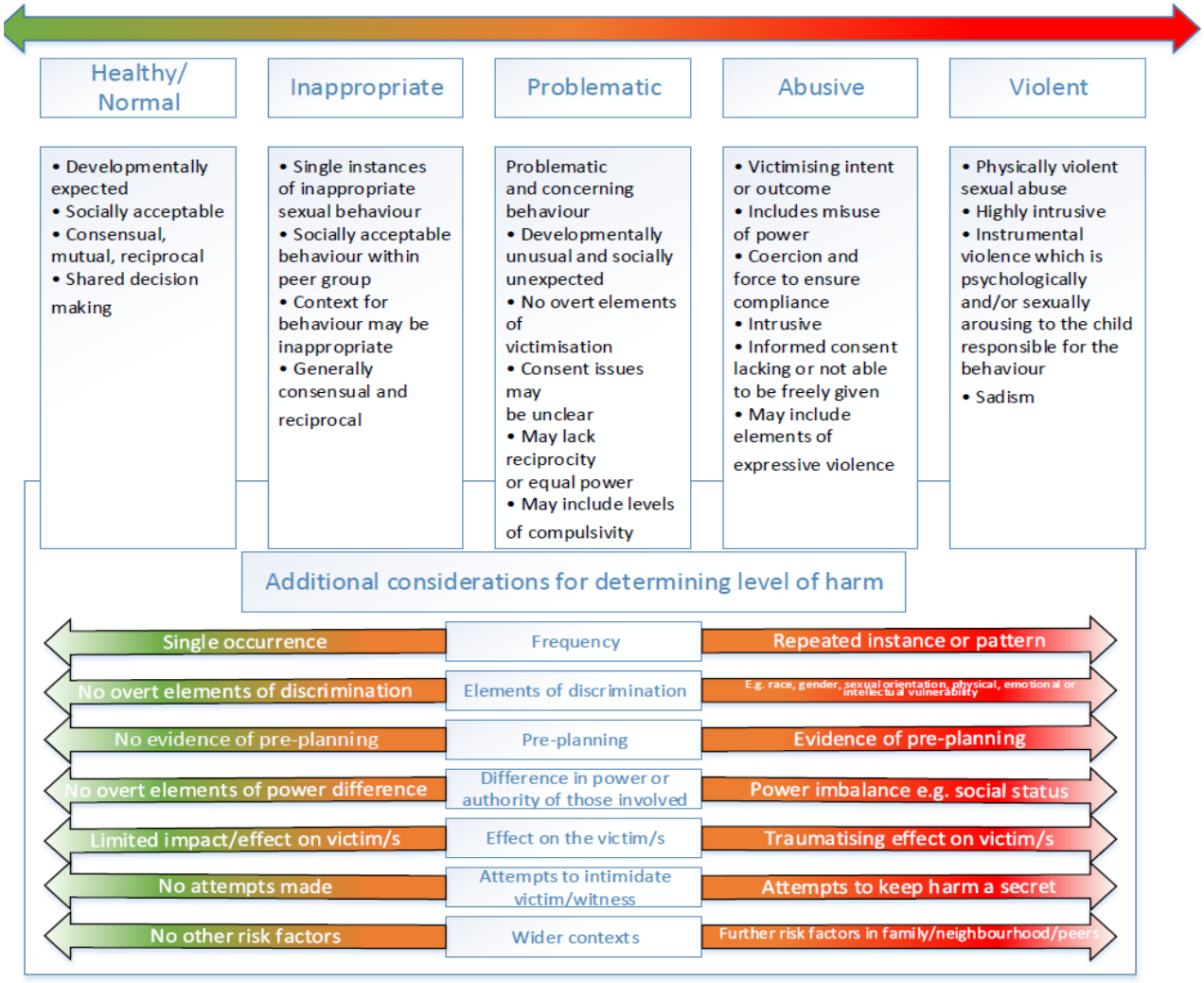
The school will seek to identify and address harmful attitudes and behaviours at an early stage. This includes sexualised language, misogynistic or misandrist comments, harmful gender stereotypes, the normalisation of sexual harassment, prejudice-based language and attitudes influenced by harmful online content.
Staff should not dismiss such behaviour as simply ‘banter’ where it has the potential to cause harm or contribute to a culture in which abuse is normalised.
Appropriate responses may include education, restorative approaches, pastoral support, sanctions in line with the school's behaviour policy, parental engagement and safeguarding intervention. The response will be proportionate to the behaviour and the needs and circumstances of the pupils involved.

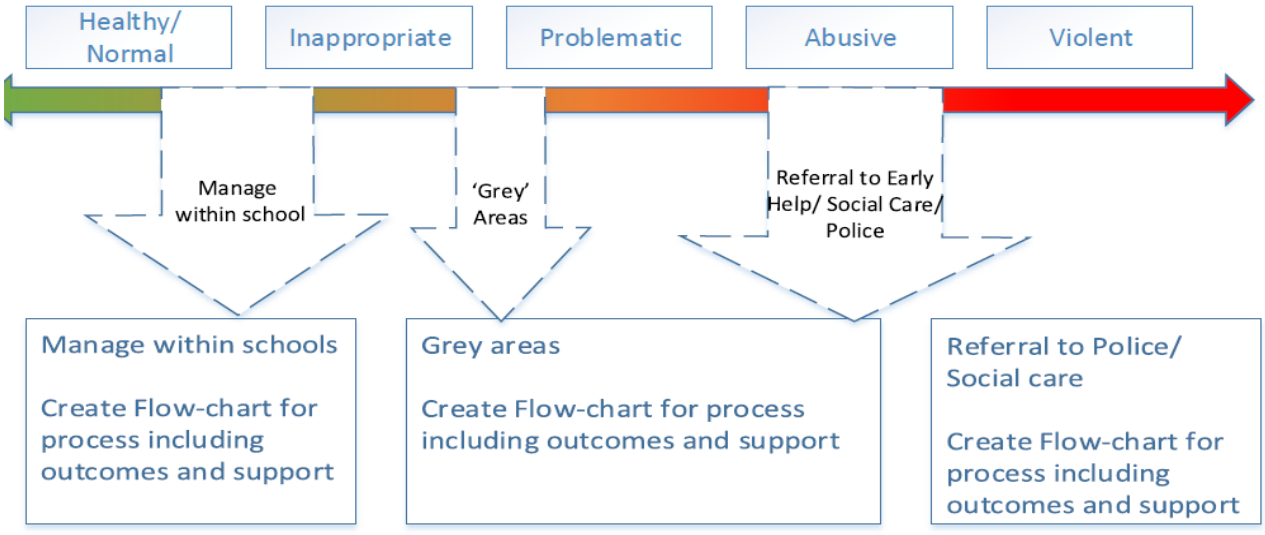
**RSHE Compliance**
This policy aligns with the updated statutory RSHE guidance applying from 1 September 2026, ensuring curriculum content on respectful relationships, consent, online safety and harmful sexual behaviours remains compliant.

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

## Determining Level of Harm for sexualised behaviours




**Manage within schools**

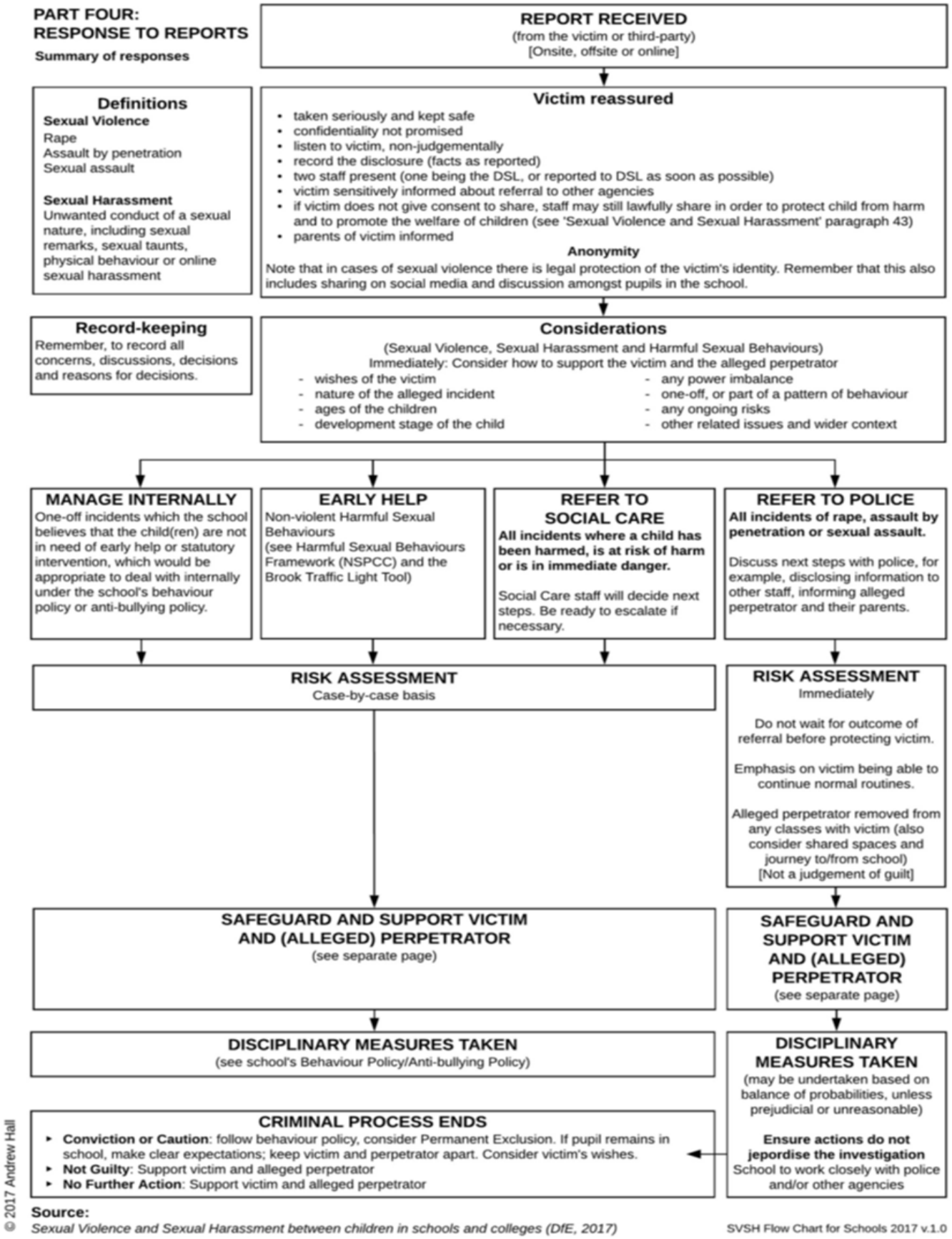
Create Flow-chart for process including outcomes and support

**Grey areas**

Create Flow-chart for process including outcomes and support

**Referral to Police/ Social care**

Create Flow-chart for process including outcomes and support


PART FOUR:
RESPONSE TO REPORTS
Summary of responses
REPORT RECEIVED
(from the victim or third-party)
[Onsite, offsite or online]
Definitions
Sexual Violence
Rape
Assault by penetration
Sexual assault
Sexual Harassment
Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual remarks, sexual taunts, physical behaviour or online sexual harassment
Victim reassured
taken seriously and kept safe
confidentiality not promised
listen to victim, non-judgementally
record the disclosure (facts as reported)
two staff present (one being the DSL, or reported to DSL as soon as possible)
victim sensitively informed about referral to other agencies
if victim does not give consent to share, staff may still lawfully share in order to protect child from harm and to promote the welfare of children (see 'Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment' paragraph 43)
parents of victim informed
Anonymity
Note that in cases of sexual violence there is legal protection of the victim's identity. Remember that this also includes sharing on social media and discussion amongst pupils in the school.
Record-keeping
Remember, to record all concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions.
Considerations
(Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and Harmful Sexual Behaviours)
Immediately: Consider how to support the victim and the alleged perpetrator
wishes of the victim
nature of the alleged incident
ages of the children
development stage of the child
any power imbalance
one-off, or part of a pattern of behaviour
any ongoing risks
other related issues and wider context
MANAGE INTERNALLY
One-off incidents which the school believes that the child(ren) are not in need of early help or statutory intervention, which would be appropriate to deal with internally under the school's behaviour policy or anti-bullying policy.
EARLY HELP
Non-violent Harmful Sexual Behaviours
(see Harmful Sexual Behaviours Framework (NSPCC) and the Brook Traffic Light Tool)
REFER TO SOCIAL CARE
All incidents where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger.
Social Care staff will decide next steps. Be ready to escalate if necessary.
REFER TO POLICE
All incidents of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault.
Discuss next steps with police, for example, disclosing information to other staff, informing alleged perpetrator and their parents.
RISK ASSESSMENT
Case-by-case basis
RISK ASSESSMENT
Immediately
Do not wait for outcome of referral before protecting victim.
Emphasis on victim being able to continue normal routines.
Alleged perpetrator removed from any classes with victim (also consider shared spaces and journey to/from school)
[Not a judgement of guilt]
SAFEGUARD AND SUPPORT VICTIM AND (ALLEGED) PERPETRATOR
(see separate page)
SAFEGUARD AND SUPPORT VICTIM AND (ALLEGED) PERPETRATOR
(see separate page)
DISCIPLINARY MEASURES TAKEN
(see school's Behaviour Policy/Anti-bullying Policy)
DISCIPLINARY MEASURES TAKEN
(may be undertaken based on balance of probabilities, unless prejudicial or unreasonable)
Ensure actions do not jepordise the investigation
School to work closely with police and/or other agencies
CRIMINAL PROCESS ENDS
Conviction or Caution: follow behaviour policy, consider Permanent Exclusion. If pupil remains in school, make clear expectations; keep victim and perpetrator apart. Consider victim's wishes.
Not Guilty: Support victim and alleged perpetrator
No Further Action: Support victim and alleged perpetrator
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Source:
Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2017)
SVSH Flow Chart for Schools 2017 v.1.0

## Annex A - Risk and Needs Assessment 2026 – 2027

| **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?<br>Who was involved?<br>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? | | | | |
| Does the child understand the impact of their behaviour? | | | | |
| Are there any identified safeguarding needs or vulnerabilities for the child alleged to have caused harm?<br>Are there any unmet needs which may have contributed to the incident? | | | | |
| Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved?<br>*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? 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? | | | | |
| Is there a risk of online abuse, including sharing of images, videos, messages, AI-generated content or harmful content through social media, gaming platforms or other online services? | | | | |
| Is there any indication that the incident involved prejudice, discriminatory behaviour or hate-related conduct (including race, religion or faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or other protected characteristics)? | | | | |
| Has the incident been recorded and reported in accordance with the school's procedures for prejudice-related incidents and hate incidents? | | | | |

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

| Action | YES/NO | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Police informed | | |
| Referral to Family Front Door | | |
| Referral to external support services | | |
| Referral to internal support services | | |
| Referral to CAMHS | | |
| Referral to Early Help | | |
| Other | | |

## Annex B –Terminology

This annex includes contextual safeguarding, children absent from education, and learning from serious case reviews.

For the purposes of this resource, unless otherwise specified, for consistency, we use the same terminology as the DfE in KCSIE, as follows: 'Child', 'children': means a person/persons under the age of 18.

- 'Boy(s),' 'girl(s)': means a child/children whose biological sex is male and female respectively, as well as trans boys and trans girls, whose gender identity will be different from their biological sex. It is acknowledged that there will also be some children who identify as non-binary or gender fluid and who will not recognise the term boy or girl in respect to themselves.
- 'Victim' and 'alleged perpetrator': the DfE states that, with respect to: 'victim': "It is a widely recognised and understood term. It is important that schools and colleges recognise that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way. Ultimately, schools and colleges should be conscious of this when managing any incident and be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.
- 'Alleged perpetrator(s)' and, where appropriate, 'perpetrator(s)': "These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate aid to effective drafting of guidance. However, schools and colleges should think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the abusive behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. As above, the use of appropriate terminology will be for schools and colleges to determine, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis."
- 'Child-on-child abuse': the DfE states that: "All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online." Child-on-child abuse is the term chosen by the DfE and, by definition, it applies to abuse by one child of another child – regardless of the age, of stage of development, or any age differential between them.
- 'Zero- tolerance': in using this term, we adopt the following principles from the UN Women's definition of zero tolerance with respect to harassment, as follows:

"At the heart of zero tolerance practice is the certainty that the organisation will never do nothing in response to knowledge of child-on-child abuse, will always support those who report, and will proactively ensure that equality and non-discrimination inform its work. Zero-tolerance means an ambition to create contexts and cultures where child-on-child abuse is not tolerated and taking a proportionate and appropriate response to every alleged incident. It does not necessarily mean the use of sanctions in all cases, and where sanctions may be considered, schools and colleges should ensure that they do not disproportionately impact racially minoritised children, those with disabilities and those already known to local authority children's social care.

'Child protection policy': however, it is recognised that some schools and colleges will have in place a 'safeguarding policy,' or a 'safeguarding and child protection policy,' which encompasses the promotion of the welfare of children as well as the child protection element which refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.