

Mossfield Primary School



Harmful Sexualised Behaviour Policy



Introduction

This policy should always be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges DFE - Sept 2021 statutory guidance sets out the requirement for schools to address the issue of peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment.

In addition, the specific section of the statutory guidance Part Five: Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment details how schools and colleges should respond **to all reports and concerns** of child on child harmful sexualised behaviours, including those that have happened outside of the school or college premises, and or online.

- Harmful sexualised behaviour can occur between children **of any age and sex**, from primary through to secondary stage and into colleges. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.
- Harmful sexualised behaviours exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. All staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**'.
- Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) will be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.
- Children who are victims of harmful sexualised behaviour, wherever it happens, will likely 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.
- The school will be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school, including intimate personal relationships.
- All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting harmful sexualised behaviour. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

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Ofsted recommendations include:

- School and college leaders should create a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated, and where they identify issues and intervene early to better protect children and young people.
- In order to do this, they should assume that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening in their setting, even when there are no specific reports, and put in place a whole-school approach to address them.
- School leaders should identify where there might be 'hot-spots' or "no go" areas in the school.
- All staff delivering the RHSE programme should have access to high quality training.
- **All staff** should have a clear understanding of the prevalence of peer on peer sexual abuse and harassment.
- Schools should put in place robust structures to address peer on peer sexual abuse and harassment.
- The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum must be robust and provide specific focus on consent, respect and navigating friendships and intimate relationships.
- Routine record-keeping and analysis of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online, to identify patterns and intervene early to prevent abuse

It is within this context that the Harmful Sexualised Behaviour Policy aims to ensure the school has a comprehensive preventative strategy.

At Mossfield Primary School, we are committed to the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of harmful sexualised behaviour and to ensure that any form of harmful sexualised behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently. This will reduce the extent of harm to the young person and minimise the potential impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being. This must be achieved within the context of ensuring that any young person exhibiting harmful sexualised behaviour is also provided with appropriate safeguarding and therapeutic support.

This policy applies to governors and all members of staff including volunteers.

Terminology - Victims and alleged perpetrator(s)

There are many different ways to describe children who have been subjected to harmful sexualised behaviour and many ways to describe those who are alleged to have carried out any form of abuse. For the purposes of this policy, we use the term 'victim'. It is a widely recognised and understood term.

It is important that the school recognises that not everyone who has been subjected to harmful sexualised behaviour considers themselves a victim or would want to be described in this way.

When managing any incident, we will be prepared to use any term with which the individual child is most comfortable.

For the purpose of this policy, we use the term 'young people who sexually harm' and where appropriate 'perpetrator(s)/ 'alleged perpetrators(s). These are widely used and recognised terms and the most appropriate to aid effective drafting of advice. However, we will think very carefully about terminology, especially when speaking in front of children, not least because in some cases the sexual behaviour will have been harmful to the perpetrator as well. The use of appropriate terminology will be determined by the school, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis

Definition

Sexual Violence

Children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in a sexually violent way. Sexual violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003¹⁰⁵ as described as

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

Physical Abuse

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

Sexual Harassment

Child on child Sexual Harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment. 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: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes (schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence - it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and

- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of harmful sexualised behaviour. It may include:
- non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos.
- sexualised online bullying.
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

Vulnerabilities

As a school we will recognise any child can be vulnerable to harmful sexualised behaviour - both in and out of the school setting, including:

- Individual and situation factors can increase a child's vulnerabilities to abuse by their peers such as the sharing of an image or photograph
- Children who are socially isolated from their peers
- Children who are questioning or exploring their sexuality may also be particularly vulnerable to abuse
- Children with certain characteristics such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, race or religious beliefs
- Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers without SEND,

Prevention

Mossfield Primary School has a clear set of values and standards. All staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to appropriately respond to any instances of harmful sexualised behaviour.

Our approach to preventing harmful sexualised behaviour will be achieved through all aspects of school life, including our school values, aims, and curriculum. It will include an integral link to our: -

- School Code of Conduct
- Pupil relational Policy
- Pastoral support system.
- Class/tutor group discussions
- Assemblies
- Curriculum – both implicit and explicit
- Staff providing positive role models
- The RSHE Policy and programme - topics include:
 - healthy and respectful relationships
 - what respectful behaviour looks like
 - consent
 - gender roles, stereotyping, equality
 - body confidence and self-esteem
 - prejudiced behaviour
 - that sexual harmful sexualised behaviour is always wrong
 - addressing cultures of sexual harassment

School Procedures following a report of Harmful Sexualised Behaviour

Any member of staff who becomes aware of an incident, or possible incident, of Harmful Sexualised Behaviour should immediately carry out the following actions-

1. **Stop the behaviour** from occurring any further – challenge / distract / separate.

Define the behaviour – clearly articulate to the child or children involved in the behaviour which is causing concern. Be specific in terminology.

State the school rules and expectations – show the children that this is not what we do in our school community, and what the correct behaviour is.

Enforce and redirect – avoid punitive consequences, but point out the consequences of non-compliance in the future, e.g. you will not be able to play or sit together etc.

Staff should avoid personal values and judgements which express disgust, anger or attempt to humiliate.

2. **Report the matter to a Designated Safeguarding Leader as soon as possible.** This should take the form of a verbal report, stating who, when, where and what has occurred.
3. Once the DSL has been informed, staff should make a **written report on our CPOMS** system, as soon as is practicable. It should state all pertinent details of who, when, where and what has occurred. This report should be tagged under the headlines[Harmful Sexualised Behaviour.

Once a verbal report has been received by a DSL, they will start to classify and respond to the incident, using two 'Traffic Light Tools' (one from the NSPCC, the other from Brook Advisory Services).

3 levels of concern are possible.

Green – Developmentally typical, healthy and normal for age. Consensual, mutual, humorous giggling (NOT distressed, forced or upset). Does not display adult sexualised behaviours.

Amber – Problematic, age inappropriate concern for maturity and development may be frequent, long duration, inappropriate context. Unusual, may involve disparate ages or levels of maturity.

Red – Harmful, violent, abusive. Displays adult sexualised behaviour. Secret, coercive, degrading or threatening. Clear age or power differences frequent, context is concerning.

If the DSL assesses the incident as clearly 'Green', then one DSL may follow up and deal with the incident, as appropriate.

However, if the incident is not clearly 'Green', then two DSL's should be involved in assessing the incident and formulating an appropriate response. This discussion is an important part of ensuring a clear and impartial course of action.

It is not possible to identify a full response in advance, as each case will be judged on a number of factors, including, but not limited to-

- Age and maturity of pupils involved
- Context of the incident
- Evidence of any prior incidents
- Evidence of coercion or power imbalances
- Evidence of prior social service involvement

However, a general pointer to responses would be –

Green

- Positive, age appropriate education – Individually / Groups / Whole class / Whole school
- Informal discussions
- Communication and informing parents
- Working with individuals, groups, classes
- Recording incidents

Amber

- As 'Green' plus-
- include emphasis on personal space and body boundaries
- Gain further information and context
- Consider discussions with Social Worker or Early Help
- Referral to the police
- Always inform parents
- Consider use of Safety Plan
- Consistent and repeated messages delivered e.g appropriate conduct
- Active monitoring and recording – staff informed to monitor

Red

- As 'Amber' plus-
- Referral to Local Authority Safeguarding Unit (The Bridge)
- Referral to the Police
- Completion of a Risk Assessment and Safety Plan for pupils involved
- Follow all statutory guidance from UK Gov, L.A. and local safeguarding partners
- All parents informed and kept fully involved
- Detailed and consistent monitoring.

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