

Peer on Peer Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Safeguarding Training



**Wood End Park
Academy**

Peer on Peer Abuse

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



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

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

- ▶ Bullying (including online bullying)
- ▶ Physical abuse
- ▶ Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- ▶ Sexting
- ▶ Initiation/hazing

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:

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

Bullying

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

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

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

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

Online Bullying

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

Online bullying can take many forms:

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

Physical Abuse

This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person.

There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.



Sexting

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

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.

Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a 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.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated.



Sexual harassment can include:

- ▶ Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making offensive 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 and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature

Online Sexual Harassment

This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:

- ▶ Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos.
- ▶ Sexualised online bullying
- ▶ Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- ▶ Sexual exploitation; force and threats

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”;
- ▶ 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

Your Responsibility

Any peer on peer abuse or sexual harassment should always be reported to the DSL immediately and logged onto CPOMS. It is then the responsibility of the safeguarding team to discuss the actions that need to be taken.

- Managing internally
- Early Help
- MASH referral (*Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub*)
- Reporting to the police

Recording sexualised behaviour

- Be clear and explicit - avoid vague statements
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form - CPOMS
 - 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.