

Peer on Peer Abuse

Peer-on-Peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).

This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

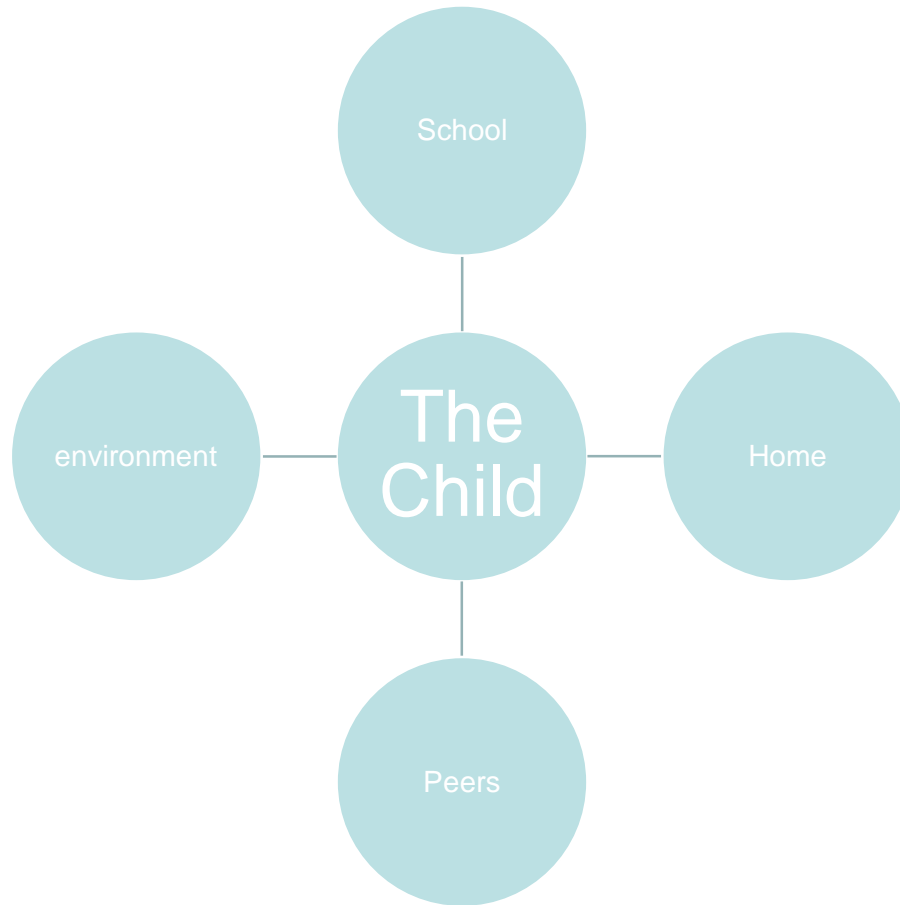
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals



Contextual Safeguarding

This simply means assessments of children involved in peer on peer incidents should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

The Context



Including and recognising all forms of sexual orientation

Peer on peer bullying can occur between children of all forms of sexual orientation. The Stonewall School Report 2017 found that:

- Nearly half of LGBTQ students are bullied because of their sexuality
- 64% of trans pupils are also bullied
- 1 in 5 LGBTQ pupils have been taught about safe sex in relation to same sex relationships

Do we need a policy?

Keeping Children Safe in Education recommends a policy.

This should...

- Be as a preventative measure rather than merely a reactive approach
- Show that the school recognises national and increasing concern about this issue.
- Encourage parents to hold it to account on this issue

16
17

Keeping children
safe in education

Statutory guidance for schools and
colleges

September 2016

Where to start ?

- Do all staff have a clear and full understanding of what constitutes peer-on-peer abuse?
- What have we experienced as a school community in the past in terms of peer-on-peer abuse, and have we learned from it? If so, how?
- Do we take a contextual whole-school approach to preventing and responding to peer-on-peer abuse?
- Do we have any concerns about existing peer-on-peer relationships?
- Do we have relationships and sex education? If so, is it effective and designed in such a way that our pupils engage positively with it?
- Do we know of any physical locations which may be particularly vulnerable to being used by pupils to threaten or inflict abuse on other pupils? One practical approach to this question could, for example, be to walk around your school, and talk to pupils and ask them about their physical space, and any potential concerns they may have about it, and to ask pupils to map out "hot and cold zones."

Risk Assessment

Schools should conduct a risk assessment to determine the nature and level of risk affecting their pupils. This should look at:-

- (a) the nature and level of risk of the different variants of peer-on-peer abuse within the school;
- (b) which pupils are affected or are more at risk of being affected by peer-on-peer abuse;
- c) any trends; and
- d) the various socio-cultural contexts to which those pupils are associated including, for example, their peer group (both within and outside the school), family, the school environment, their experience(s) of crime and victimisation in the local community, and their online presence - which may impact on their behaviour, and engagement in, school

Ethos and Curriculum

- Schools need to take a safeguarding approach to all children involved in allegations of or concerns about peer-on-peer abuse in addition to any sanctioning work that may also be required
- Ensure that the school actively promotes gender equality, positive values and healthy relationships,
- Incorporates work on peer-on-peer abuse into its curriculum
- In terms of staff training do schools think staff have a good awareness and understanding of peer-on-peer abuse?
- Schools may wish to inform parents about their policy and procedures and seek their views, for example, by providing a stand alone session on peer-on-peer abuse at a parents' evening or another appropriate event

Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)

What is HSB?

Sexual activity displayed by a child or young person that is inappropriate to their age or stage of development, and may be harmful to themselves or others



This can include:-

- Using sexually explicit words and phrases
- Inappropriate touching
- Using sexual violence or threats
- Full penetrative sex with other children or adults

Age difference and Harmful Sexual Behaviour

- Sexual behaviour between children is considered harmful if one child is much older(2 years difference)or one is pre-pubescent and the other is not
- It is also linked with power so a younger child can abuse an older child if they have power over them
- Children with SEND are particularly vulnerable

Tools To Help Assess HSB

Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool- Brook



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges

- Sexual Violence refers to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 which includes rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault
- Sexual Harassment refers to ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ that can occur online and offline. This 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.

How should staff respond?

- The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow the School's Safeguarding referral process. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy DSL)
- All staff need to be aware of the procedures **following** alleged incidents including the support all parties should expect during the investigation (including if other agencies such as the police are involved) and afterwards. This will be set out in the policy.

Online Sexual Harassment

Online Sexual Harassment can be defined as unwanted sexual conduct on any digital platform.

It encompasses a wide range of behaviours that use digital content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages) on a variety of different platforms (private or public).

It can make a person feel threatened, exploited, coerced, humiliated, upset, sexualised or discriminated against.

This includes

- Non-consensual sharing of intimate images and videos
- A person's sexual images and videos being shared without their consent or taken without their consent
- Exploitation, coercion and threats
- A person receiving sexual threats, being coerced to participate in sexual behaviour online, or blackmailed with sexual content
- Sexualised bullying: A person being targeted by, and systematically excluded from, a group or community with the use of sexual content that humiliates, upsets or discriminates against them
- Unwanted sexualisation: A person receiving unwelcome sexual requests, comments and content

Contextual Safeguarding

Sexting and online sexual bullying are part of Contextual Safeguarding, schools must consider:

- Age and developmental stage
- Consent to share the image
- Using the image to blackmail, coerce, and/or damage a person's reputation

How schools can support young people

- Follow the guidelines in 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people' (UKCCS)
- Include discussion on sexting as part of a relationship and sex education programme
- Include online behaviour as part of progressive online safety programme
- Ensure all staff are trained and respond appropriately if issues around sexting and sexual harassment online are reported to them



Guidance for Schools Online Sexual Behaviour



<https://www.childnet.com/resources/step-up-speak-up>

Contains guidance as well as toolkit with lesson plans, films, assembly and peer presentations.



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Thank You- Any Questions

