Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Pupils Policy

IMPORTANT

OAKWOOD ACADEMY WILL NOT TOLERATE
ANY FORM OF ABUSE, RADICALISATION OR
EXTREMISM TOWARDS
CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE

OAKWOOD ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

"Promoting learning excellence – Inclusion beyond the barriers".

OAKWOOD ACADEMY: MORAL PURPOSE

"We are united in the belief that together we can inspire all learners to dream, persevere and achieve so that we can change lives for the better, now and for future generations to come"

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

If you are worried About a Child or Young Person
speak to any of the following staff immediately
to the DSL or DDSL

'SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY'

Last Reviewed	**September 2026**
Next Reviewed	**September 2027**

Introduction

This policy should always be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Peer on Peer/Child on Child Abuse 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. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part 1 clearly sets out what to look out for, and indicators of abuse.

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 sexual violence and sexual harassment, **i**ncluding those that have happened outside of the school or college premises, and or online.

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two 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.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment 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 sexual violence and sexual harassment, 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.
- Whilst **any** report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, staff will be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys.
- 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 sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

Terminology - Victims and alleged perpetrator(s)

There are many different ways to describe children who have been subjected to sexual violence and/or sexual harassment 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 sexual violence and/or sexual harassment 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 2003

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 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; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

Vulnerabilities

As a school we will recognise any child can be vulnerable to peer on peer sexual abuse and harassment- 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

Oakwood Academy has a clear set of values and standards. All staff have received training to recognise that instances of sexually inappropriate behaviour are much more common than previously assumed. All staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to appropriately respond to any instances of sexual abuse or harassment.

Our approach to preventing peer on peer sexual abuse and harassment 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 Behaviour 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 violence and sexual harassment is always wrong
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment

Dealing with Incidents

In the first instance, normal safeguarding procedures of referral will be followed as detailed in the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy). The initial response to a report from the student is important. All victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of the school staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a young person has been harmed. As with all safeguarding concerns, it is important that in such instances staff take appropriate action in accordance with our Child Protection policy. They should not assume that someone else is responding to any incident or concern. Staff will speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy). In such cases, the basic safeguarding principles remain the same. "This includes ensuring that comprehensive records of all allegations are kept" record on CPOMS.

School Procedure Following a Report:
When an allegation is made by a pupil against another member of the peer group, members of staff will consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a Safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will be informed.

A factual record will be made of the allegation, use of CPOMS, but no attempt at this stage will be made to investigate the circumstances. The DSL/DDSL will contact The Bridge Partnership to discuss the case. The DSL/DDSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate.

If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, the school will refer the case to The Bridge and where appropriate the police will become involved.
Parents of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral.

The DSL/DDSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in both the pupil's files. (CPOMS)

It may be appropriate to carry out a risk assessment to identify potential risks to both the victim and the young person/people who have sexually harmed.
The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator; and

- All the other children (and, if appropriate staff) at the school This **must include** any actions that are appropriate to protect the young people involved.

Where neither Social Services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the usual disciplinary procedures. Situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment will be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan. The plan will be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

Following the outcome of an allegation there are several ways in which students will be supported in school:

1. Social Services support.
2. Early Help Team
3. 1:1 session with school counsellor/inclusion team.
4. Support from Form Tutor and Head of Year
5. Completion and revision of a Preventative Supervision Plan.
6. Through RSHE and a whole school approach to challenging sexual violence and harassment

Links with other policies: -

- Safeguarding Policy
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- Pupil Behaviour & Anti- bullying Policy
- E-safety Policy