



# Child on Child Abuse Policy

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|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------------|
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| <b>Signature:</b>           |           |                       |                |

## 1. Context and Definition

This policy should be read alongside the WFS's Safeguarding Policy (Including Child Protection), Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

The school recognises that children can abuse other children (child-on-child abuse) and that it can occur both inside and outside of school, online and offline. All staff should maintain the attitude that "it could happen here." Child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue and must never be tolerated, passed off as banter, part of growing up, harmless fun, or dismissed as "boys being boys."

The school adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, prejudice, discrimination, sexual violence, and sexual harassment.

It is essential that **all our staff** understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. 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 normal and not coming forward to report it.

Staff at Wyre Forest School maintain an attitude of '**it does happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a pupil, staff will always act in the **best** interests of the child.

**Child on Child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others that can happen both inside and outside of school, as well as online**

All staff should recognise that children can abuse their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from child-on-child abuse including, but not limited to;

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse)
- sexual violence such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence)
- sexual harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- 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
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
- upskirting 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, and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element)

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 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 leadership and 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.

## 2. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2026 states that:

“..... All staff should be clear as to the school policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. All staff should understand that even if there are no reports in their schools or colleges it does not mean it is not happening. It may be the case that abuse is not being reported. As such it is important that when staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse they should speak to their designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) (**KCSIE p13,2026**)

It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard ;

It is important that all children feel heard and understood. Therefore, designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them, and,
- understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication (**KCSIE p176,2026**)

Child on Child abuse is also referenced in our Safeguarding Policy but makes clear that the severity of this issue requires a separate policy particularly as “children with SEND are three times more likely to be abused than their peers” (KCSIE,2026).

At Wyre Forest School we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with thoughtfully, timely and appropriately 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.

### 3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of child-on-child abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At Wyre Forest School we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- 3.1 Anti-Bullying (including Online Bullying Policy)
- 3.2 Safeguarding (including Child Protection Policy)
- 3.3 Managing Allegations / Whistleblowing Policy
- 3.4 Behaviour Policy
- 3.5 Health & Safety Policy
- 3.6 Online Safety Policy

### 4. Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026, highlighting that "children's wishes and feelings are sought, heard and responded to" (Working Together, 2026:11) This is echoed by Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

### 5. Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider

- what abuse is and what it looks like
- how it can be managed
- how the additional learning needs of all pupils involved impact on their understanding of the behaviour
- 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.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. 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 not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people and should not develop high thresholds before taking action.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.
- 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, including their learning needs.

There are many forms of abuse that may occur between peers and this list is not exhaustive. Each form of abuse or prejudiced behaviour is described in detail followed by advice and support on actions to be taken.

### *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 accidentally or as an unmet sensory need, before considering the action to be undertaken.

### *6.2 Sexual violence and sexual harassment*

Wyre Forest School has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and harassment and must always be referred immediately to the safeguarding team. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Head teacher will respond from this point and record any/all subsequent actions on CPOMS. The DSL will follow guidance from the most up to date KCSIE document.

## **Sexual Violence**

It is important that staff at Wyre Forest School are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence in this advice, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual violence. When referring to sexual violence 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. (NOTE – Staff at WFS should be aware that sexual assault covers a very wide range of behaviour so a single act of kissing someone without consent or touching someone's bottom/breasts/genitalia without consent, can still constitute sexual assault).

**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**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. 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.

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 deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes.
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence)
- **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 of unwanted explicit content
  - sexualised online bullying
  - unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
  - sexual exploitation; coercion and threats
  - coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

It is important that Wyre Forest School considers 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**

Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected, to sensory-seeking, inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. A useful umbrella term is "harmful sexual behaviour" (HSB). The term has been widely adopted in child protection and is used in this advice. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two.

When considering HSB at Wyre Forest school, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between pupils can be considered harmful if one of the children is much older, particularly if there is more than two years' difference or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not. However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them, for example, if the older child has more severe disabilities or smaller in stature. Confidential specialist support and advice on HSB is available from the specialist sexual violence sector, and sources are listed in Annex B. At Wyre Forest School we have strong links with Barnardos who work with us to support affected pupils and their families. It is effective safeguarding practice for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) to have a good understanding of HSB. Both the DSL and the headteacher have undertaken training delivered by the AIM project as well as a masterclass in managing sexual abuse and violence in schools. This will aid in planning preventative education, implementing preventative measures, drafting and implementing an effective child protection policy and incorporating the approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment into the whole school or approach to safeguarding. . HSB can, in some cases, progress on a continuum- Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the

future. Children displaying HSB have often experienced their own abuse and trauma. It is important that they are offered appropriate support

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. Sexually harmful behaviour may include

- inappropriate sexual language
- inappropriate role play
- sexual touching •
- sexual assault/abuse.
- Sensory seeking behaviours that are sought in inappropriate places, eg in a classroom, in a public space within school

### **Wyre Forest School Response to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment**

As advised in KCSIE 2026 Wyre Forest School will respond to any reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL, alongside the Head teacher, taking a leading role. They will use their professional judgement supported by other agencies such as children's social care and the police as required. Any reports of sexual violence and harassment that are referred to the police will be referred to social care (see Section 8)

Parents and carers will be informed of any incident, unless there is a risk of harm to a pupil by doing so.

Appropriate safeguarding cover arrangements will be in place for all out of school hours activities, educational visits, extended services, and activities taking place during school holidays. Effective cover arrangements will be considered and coordinated by the Head Teacher and DSL.

### **Manage Internally**

In some cases of sexual harassment, for example, one-off incidents, Wyre Forest School may take the view that the children concerned are not in need of early help or that referrals to statutory services are not required, and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, perhaps through utilising our behaviour policy and by providing pastoral/intervention support. Whatever the response, it will be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, and it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Parents/carers of all pupils involved will be informed, unless there is a risk of harm to a pupil by doing so. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded on CPOMS.

### **Early Help/ Family Support**

In line with managing internally we may decide that the children involved do not require referral to statutory services but may benefit from early help. 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 HSB and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

If the DSL and Headteacher decide this is the best route forward, a referral for Level 3 support will be made to the local authority, using their procedures .

Early help and the option to manage a report internally do not need to be mutually exclusive: Wyre Forest School may manage internally and seek early help for both the victim and alleged perpetrator(s). Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded on CPOMS

**Referrals to local authority children's social care** Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, Wyre Forest School will make a referral to social care.

At the point of referral to local authority children's social care, we will generally 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 local authority children's social care.

If a referral is made, local authority 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, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)) should be working alongside, and cooperating with, the relevant lead social worker. Collaborative working will help ensure the best possible package of coordinated support is implemented for the victim and, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children that require support.

We will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a local authority children's social care investigation before protecting the victim and other children in the school. It will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) to work closely with local authority children's social care (and other agencies as required) to ensure any actions WFS takes do not jeopardise a statutory investigation.

A risk assessment/safety plan will help inform any decision. Consideration of safeguarding the victim, alleged perpetrator(s), any other children directly involved in the safeguarding report, and all children at the school will be immediate.

In some cases, local authority children's social care will review the evidence and decide that a statutory intervention is not appropriate. Wyre Forest School will be prepared to refer again if they believe the child remains in immediate danger or at risk of harm or if circumstances change. If a statutory assessment is not appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) will consider other support mechanisms such as early help, specialist support and pastoral support. Whatever the response, it will be under-pinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions will be recorded on CPOMS.

### **Reporting to the Police**

Any report to the police will be in parallel with a referral to local authority children's social care (as above). Where a report of rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault is made, the starting point for the DSL is that this will be passed on to the police and then a referral to social care made. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator(s) is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach. Where a report has been made to the police, WFS will consult the



police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator(s) and their parents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity. At this stage, we will generally inform parents or carers unless there are compelling reasons not to, for example, if informing a parent or carer is likely to put a child at additional risk. In circumstances where parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that WFS is supporting the child in any decision they take. This should be with the support of local authority children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies. In some cases, it may become clear very quickly that the police (for whatever reason) will not take further action. In such circumstances, it is important that WFS continues to engage with specialist support for the victim and alleged perpetrator(s) as required. Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator(s), it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) to work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions we take do not jeopardise the police investigation. The police will help and support WFS as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions) Whatever the response, it will be underpinned by the principle that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and that both are never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for decisions will be recorded on CPOMS

## **Support**

- National Crime Agency's CEOP Safety Centre: The CEOP Safety Centre aims to keep children and young people safe from online sexual abuse. Online sexual abuse can be reported on their website and a report made to one of its Child Protection Advisors.
- The NSPCC provides a helpline for professionals at 0808 800 5000 and [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff and will be especially useful for the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies)
- Support from specialist sexual violence sector organisations such as Rape Crisis or The Survivors Trust
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance has developed guidance for schools about Sexual and sexist bullying. Online: Schools and colleges should recognise that sexual violence and sexual harassment occurring online (either in isolation or in connection with face-to-face incidents) can introduce a number of complex factors. Amongst other things, this can include widespread abuse or harm across a number of social media platforms that leads to repeat victimisation. Online concerns can be especially complicated and support is available from:
  - The UK Safer Internet Centre provides an online safety helpline for professionals at 0344 381 4772 and [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk). The helpline provides expert advice and support for school and college staff with regard to online safety issues
  - Internet Watch Foundation: If the incident/report involves sexual images or videos that have been made and circulated online, the victim can be supported to get the images removed by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
  - Childline/IWF Report Remove is a free tool that allows children to report nude or sexual images and/or videos of themselves that they think might have been shared online
  - UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes advice: Advice for education settings working with children and young people on responding to reports of children sharing non-consensual nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting and youth produced sexual imagery). Please see footnote 8 for further information

- National Crime Agency's CEOP Education Programme provides information for the children's workforce and parents and carers on protecting children and young people from online child sexual abuse.
- LGfL 'Undressed' provided schools advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders

### *6.3 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

**Repetition**

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, disability, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

### *6.4 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 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

### *6.5 Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes*

We will respond to incidents involving the sharing of nude or semi-nude images in accordance with national guidance and safeguarding procedures.

Staff must not:

- Print images.
- Copy images.
- Share images.

- Forward images.
- Save images to personal devices.

Staff should immediately report concerns to the DSL.

The welfare of the child will remain the primary consideration when determining the most appropriate response.

### *6.6. AI-Generated Nude and Semi-Nude Images*

We recognise increasing safeguarding risks arising from Artificial Intelligence (AI), including:

- Deepfake imagery.
- Nudity applications.
- AI-generated sexual content.
- AI-enabled sextortion.
- AI-generated child sexual abuse material.

The creation, possession or sharing of AI-generated nude or semi-nude images involving children may constitute a criminal offence and can cause significant emotional and psychological harm. Such incidents will be treated with the same level of concern and safeguarding response as any other child sexual abuse imagery incident.

The DSL will assess:

- The nature of the incident.
- Learning disability/cognisance of all pupils involved
- Level of harm.
- Consent.
- Coercion or exploitation.
- Distribution of material.
- Ongoing risks to any child involved.

Appropriate referrals will be made where necessary.

### *6.6 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.

### *6.7 Prejudiced Behaviour*

The term prejudice-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 prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – for example disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

### *6.8 Teenage relationship abuse*

Teenage relationship abuse is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, in order to gain power and maintain control over the partner. This abuse may be child sexual exploitation.

## **7. Expected staff action**

Any incidents will be recorded on CPOMS and the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy DSL will agree any further in-school actions.

## **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 – if the incident involves behaviour of a sexual nature, the AIM tool kit and Brook Traffic Light system will be referred to
- 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 obtain the 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, judgmental, dismissive, or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

### *8.1 Taking Action*

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Consider referral to Police and/or Social Care
- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Produce a safety plan/risk assessment that is shared with all appropriate parties
- Discuss incident with parents/carers if advised by Police/Social care to do so
- Record all incidents and all action taken on CPOMS

### *8.2 Recording sexualised behaviour*

- Record factually as soon as possible on CPOMS
- Inform DSL/Deputy DSL
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary used by the pupil. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.
- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around.

### *8.3 Gather the Facts*

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them, and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. Ask the young people to tell you what happened. Use open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Do not interrogate or ask leading questions.

### *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 course of action*

Both DSL (Deputy Headteacher) and Deputy DSL (Headteacher) have undertaken training with the AIM project on Managing Sexualised Behaviours in School project on Managing Sexualised Behaviours in school. Once the facts have been gathered the DSL and Deputy DSL will decide on further actions- these could include;

AIM Sexual Behaviours Continuum Recording Form completed by DSL. Actions set in overall outcome box and discussed / shared with class team, Pathway Leader and Behaviour AHT where appropriate. Continuum checklist and future actions are discussed at Safeguarding meeting. An action plan or RAMP (Risk assessment) is completed as appropriate and shared with relevant staff.

Information and concerns to be shared with parents/carers and social workers/FSW's, where appropriate.

If MASH and the police are informed and intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the pupil in school or they may ask for parents/carers to come to school to be spoken to.

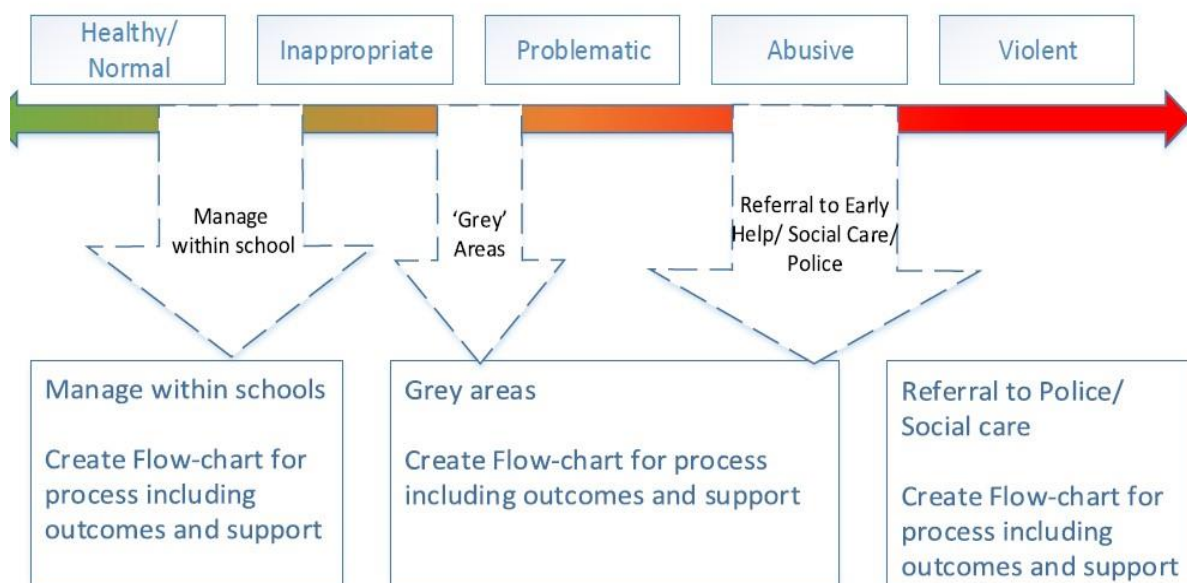
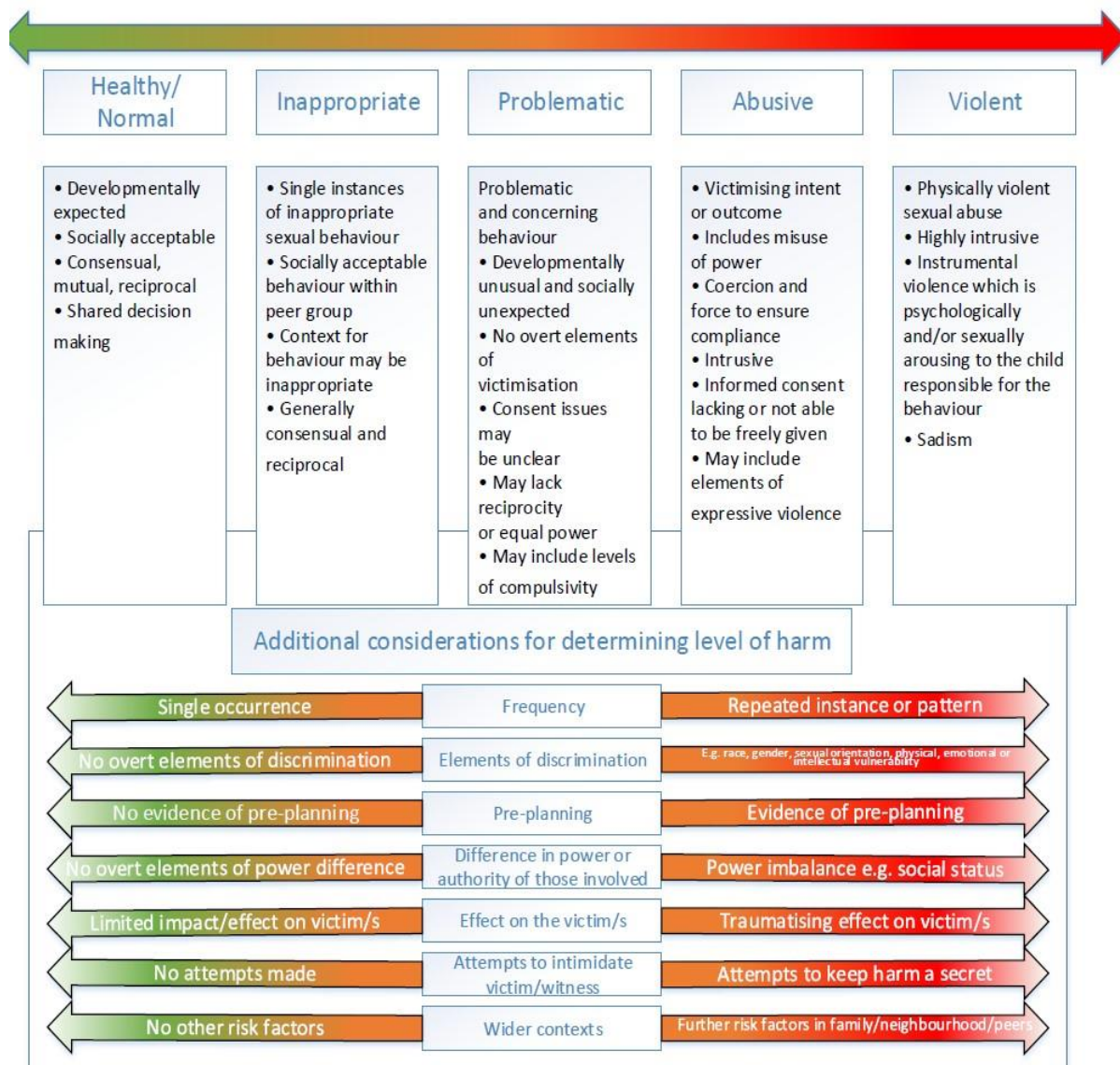
At Wyre Forest School, we may seek further guidance from the Aim Project, the Harmful

### 1. 8.6 Preventative Strategies

Child on Child abuse can and will occur in any setting even with the most robust policies and support processes. It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent this. Wyre Forest School has 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 PSHE and RSE curriculum that addresses 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.

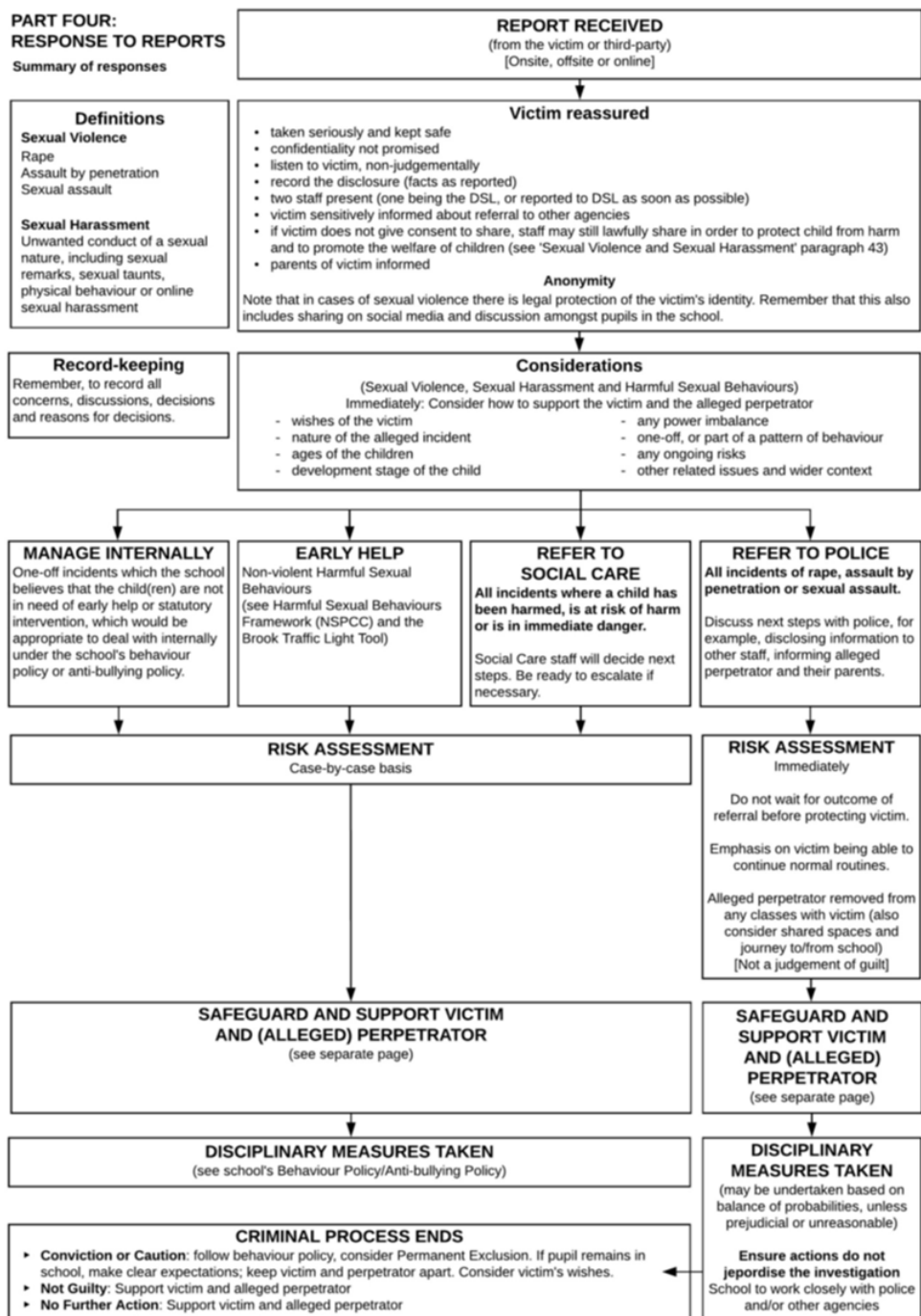
Staff will not dismiss issues as 'banter' or 'growing up' or compare them to their own experiences of childhood. Staff will consider each issue and each individual in their own right before taking action.

| 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/or sexual arousing to the perpetrator |
| Shared decision making         | Generally consensual and reciprocal                | Consent issues may be unclear                   | Intrusive                                                          | Sadism                                                                                   |
|                                |                                                    | May lack or 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                        |                                                                                          |





**PART FOUR:  
RESPONSE TO REPORTS**  
Summary of responses



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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

Where to go for further information

1.1: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

1.2 [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK\(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61622/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

1.3 1.4 [DfE: Searching, Screening and Confiscation July 2022](#) 1.5 [DfE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying, July 2017](#)

1.6 [DfE: Statutory Guidance School Suspension 2023](#)

1.7 [Teaching Online Safety in School, January 2023](#)



- 1.8 [Dfe: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education July 2025](#)
- 1.9 [DfE: Behaviour in Schools February 2024](#)
- 1.10 [DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, November 2018](#)
- 1.11 [DfE: Children Missing Education, September 2016](#)
- 1.12 [DfE: Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff, November 2014](#)
- 1.14 [Gov.uk: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes. Advice for schools](#)
- 1.15 [UKCIS: Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online. May 2017](#)
- 1.16 [UKCIS: Education for a connected world, June 2020](#)
- 1.17 [London Child Protection Procedures, edition 5, 2018](#)
- 1.18 [Gov.uk: Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)
- 1.19 [NPCC- When to call the police 2020](#)