Wombridge Primary School

Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

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Approved by: Governing Body
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Next review; September 2028

Introduction

The nature and prevalence of abuse between children clearly remains of serious concern across our country. Preventing and tackling child-on-child abuse plays a key priority for our school.

We believe that children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults and other children in school and at home.

We recognise that some children will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy. Our staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and/or siblings. Abuse is abuse and allof the staff at Wombridge Primary School are clear that it is not tolerated and will never bepassed off as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'just having a laugh'. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of child-on-child abuse and ensure that no form of any such abuse (no matter how 'low level' it may appear) is ever dismissed.

We take a safeguarding approach towards all children in our care who are involved in concerns about, or allegations of, child-on-child abuse, including those who are alleged to have been abused, and those who are alleged to have abused another child/other children. We recognise that research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of child-on-child abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been victimised by children, parents oradults in the community prior to their abuse of another child/other children.

Some forms of child-on-child abuse are not applicable to primary aged children, other forms such as bullying, sexualised or racist language, and/or sexualised or racist behaviour are relevant.

This policy is written in accordance with advice taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023 and the advice listed in Farrer & Co Addressing child-on-child abuse September 2022.

The governors, senior leadership team, and all staff (which term shall apply to all volunteer and externally contracted staff members) at Wombridge Primary School are committed to theprevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse (as defined below) both within and beyond the School.

In particular we:

- believe that in order to protect children, all schools should (a) be aware of the nature and level of riskto which their students are or may be exposed, and put in place a clear and comprehensive strategy which is tailored to their specific safeguarding context; and (b) take a whole-school community Contextual Safeguarding approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse,

- regard the introduction of this policy as a preventative measure. We (a) do not feel it is acceptablemerely to take a reactive approach to child-on-child abuse in response to alleged incidents of it; and (b) believe that in order to tackle child-on-child abuse proactively, it is necessary to focus on all five ofthe following areas: (i) systems and structures; (ii) prevention; (iii) identification; and (iv) response/intervention (v) culture context

If staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child absue, even if there are no reports in our setting, they know to still speak to a DSL immediately.

Parents are encouraged by our school to hold us to account on this issue, so that if their child is feeling unsafe as a result of the behaviour of another child, they should inform the school so that it can ensure that appropriate and prompt action is taken in response. We have an open-door policy with 5 members of staff on duty at the beginning and end of each day. We also have a full-time pastoral team who are trained in supporting parents in dealing with any concerns they have.

This policy –

- is the school's overarching policy for any issue that could constitute child-on-child abuse. It relatesto, and should be read alongside, the school's child protection policy and any other relevant policies including, but not limited to, bullying (including cyber-bullying), online safety, children missing in education and the Behaviour Policy.

- sets out our strategy for improving prevention and identifying and appropriately managing child-on- child abuse. It is the product of a comprehensive consultation – which has involved students, staff andparents, and a risk assessment.

- applies to all (governors, the senior leadership team, and staff). It is reviewed annually, and updated in the interim, as may be required, to ensure that it continually addresses the risks to which students are or may be exposed. A number of staff and students are involved in each annual review which involves, and is informed by, an assessment of theimpact and effectiveness of this policy over the previous year,

- recognises that abuse is abuse, and should never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', or'part of growing up',

- is compliant with the statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (current)

- is written knowing that research has shown that many children who present with harmful behaviour towards others, in the context of child-on-child abuse, are themselves vulnerable and may have been those alleged to have been abused by peers, parents or adults in the community prior to their abuse of peers.

- should be read in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Partnership's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and any relevant Practice Guidance issued by it.

The importance of inequality and discrimination

Staff are fully aware of the role that inequality and discrimination can play in child-on-child abuse. Socio-economic inequality within a school can increase bullying, and racial and ethnic minority status can be a risk factor for victimisation by peers.

We know that research suggests:

(iii) child-on-child abuse may affect boys differently from girls (i.e., that it is more likely that girls will be those alleged to have been abused and boys those alleged to have abused). However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.
(iv) children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers without, and
(v) some children may be more likely to experience child-on-child abuse than others as a result of certain characteristics such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, race or religious beliefs.
(vi) Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children. These can include:
(vii) assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
(viii) the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs; and
(ix) communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. A key provision was a new public sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. This requires Wombridge Primary School to:

(x) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, those alleged to have been victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the act
(xi) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and people who do not share it
(xii) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Contextual Safeguarding is about changing the way that professionals approach child protection when risks occur outside of the family (ie in extra familial contexts), thereby requiring all those within a Local Safeguarding Partnership to consider how they work alongside to create safe spaces in which children may have encountered child-on-child abuse.

What is child-on-child abuse?

'Child-on-child abuse': the DfE states that: *"All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child-on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online."* Child-on-child abuse is the term chosen by the DfE and, by definition, it applies to abuse by one child of another child – regardless of the age, of stage of development, or any age differential between them.

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include but may not be limited to:

Bullying: including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying. Bullying: Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. This includes any repeated words or actions, which are aimed at causing someone to feel frightened, miserable and helpless. Bullying can takemany forms, including:

(xiii) Verbal: e.g. name calling, sarcasm, threatening & teasing
(xiv) Physical: e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, punching or any use of physical aggressive contact
(xv) Social: e.g. ignoring, spreading rumours or treating someone like an outsider
(xvi) Psychological: e.g. stalking & intimidation
(xvii) **Cyber-bullying**: 'Virtual' bullying using technology (e.g. chat rooms, instant messaging, email& mobile phone) which can occur in or outside College. Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, as people can forward on content very quickly and easily.
(xviii) **Sexting / Youth produced sexual imagery:** KCSIE 2022 refers to sexting as 'consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos' Many professionals consider sexting to be sending or posting sexually suggestive images, includingnude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet but learners may be more likely to interpret sexting as writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s, including selfies, is illegal and itis important that young people are aware of this, even if the sharing is consensual[1].

Harassment: any conduct which is unwanted by a learner, which affects the dignity of thepupil or groups of pupils. Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated occurrence againstone or more pupils.

Hate incidents and hate crimes: which may also include an online element.

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).

Racism – occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of their skin colour, nationality, ethnicity, or cultural group. Racist behaviour can include verbal abuse, physical attacks, exclusion from activities or opportunities and microaggressions, which can be conscious and unconscious. It can occur in person or online.

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.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB): is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people which is harmful or abusive. HSB can occur online and/or face to face, and can also occur simultaneously between the two – and includes, for example: Sexual violence

Sexual harassment: which is 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school – can include (but is not limited to): – sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, interfering with someone'sclothes, displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature, – upskirting – which is a criminal offence, and typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission.

Online sexual harassment: this may be stand-alone or part of a wider pattern of sexual violence and/or harassment. It may include: » non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nudeimages and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery), sharing of unwanted explicit content, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages, including on social media » sexual exploitation, coercion and threats, and » coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they are not comfortable with online.

Child exploitation: Child sexual exploitation (CSE): including in the context of abusive relationships, and/or gang activity, and/or county lines – including in the context of modern slavery and human trafficking; and/or ›

Child criminal exploitation (CCE): including in the context of abusive relationships, and/or youth or serious youth violence, and/or gang activity, and/ or county lines – including in the context of modern slavery and human trafficking.

(xix) Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female, and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation. CSE and CCE do not always involve physical contact; CSE and CCE can also occur through the use of technology.

Online child-on-child abuse: is any form of child-on-child abuse where an element might be facilitated by digital technology, for example, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudeand semi-nude images and/or videos (sometimes called 'sexting'), online abuse, coercion andexploitation, child-on-child grooming, threatening and hate speech delivered via online means,the distribution of sexualised content (which might be youth-produced, commercial pornography or pseudo sexual images), and harassment.

Please refer to Appendix 1 - Overview of child-on-child abuse diagram.

What is meant by sexual violence and sexual harassment between children?

Sexual violence

All staff believe that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not betolerated.

Our staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peersin this way both inside and outside of our setting. We refer to sexual violence as sexual offences underthe Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Sexual consent

(xx) a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity;
(xxi) the age of consent is 16;
(xxii) sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

We understand that sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

We recognise that children who are those alleged to have been abused of sexual violence and sexual harassment 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 to have been abused and those alleged to have abused(s) attend our setting. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable.

Staff are aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. We know that evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the importance of:

- challenging inappropriate behaviours;
- 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; and,
- challenging physical behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or toleratingsuch behaviours risks normalising them.

Along with providing support to children who are those alleged to have been abused of sexual violence or sexual harassment, we will provide those alleged to have abused with an education, safeguarding support as appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions. We recognise that a child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of wider issues that require addressing within the culture of our setting. Taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support, can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary.

We understand that reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are extremely complex to manage. We know it is essential that those alleged to have been abused are protected, offered appropriate support and every effort is made to ensure their education is not disrupted. We also knowit is also important that other children and our staff are supported and protected as appropriate.

We will try to be aware of, and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns, including those outside of our setting, and or online.

Harmful sexual behaviour

"Harmful sexual behaviour Children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to 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 [KCSIE 2022]. HSB can occur online and/or face-to-face and can also occur simultaneously between the two. HSB should be considered in a child protection context." KCSIE 2022

When considering HSB, both ages and the stages of development of the children are critical factors. Sexual behaviour between children 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 is disabled or smaller in stature… 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."

We will follow the specialist support and advice on HSB available from the specialist sexual violence sector. Our DSLs will undertake training in HSB and incorporate this into our approach to managing sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline both inside and outside of our setting. 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:

(iii) sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
(iv) sexual "jokes" or taunting
(v) physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature, and
(vi) on-line sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
(vii) consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos.

We will follow the guidance set out in UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people.

Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. We recognise 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause those alleged to have been abused humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any sex, can be a those alleged to have been abused.

What we do in our setting?

All staff are trained in our settings policy and procedures with regards 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.

We actively seek to raise awareness of and prevent all forms of child-on-child abuse by:

- educating all governors, senior leadership team, staff, students, and parents about this issue
- educating children (in an age-appropriate way) about the nature and prevalence of child-on-child abuse, positive, responsible and safe use of social media, and the unequivocal facts about consent, viathe curriculum;
- engaging parents on these issues
- supporting the on-going welfare of children through e.g., our support from our pastoral team.
- working with children, governors, senior leadership team, and all staff, and parents to address equality issues, to promote positive values, and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect amongst allmembers of the school community
- creating conditions in which our children can aspire to, and realise, safe and healthy relationships fostering a whole-school culture;
- responding to cases of child-on-child abuse promptly and appropriately; and
- ensuring that all child-on-child abuse issues are fed back to the DSL and deputies so that they can spot and address any concerning trends and identify students who may be in need of additional support. In this school we report child-on-child abuse numbers in our Contextual Information Summary(CIS report)

We will actively engage with Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership (TWSP) in relation to child-on-child abuse, and work closely with, for example, children's social care, the police and other schools. We understand that the relationships our setting has built with these partners is essential to ensuring that we are able to prevent, identify early, and appropriately handle cases of child-on-child abuse. The DSL (or deputy) will regularly review behaviour incident logs & CPOMS which can help to identify any changes in behaviour and/or concerning patterns or trends at an early stage. (CIS report).

Safeguarding allegations:

Child-on-child abuse often involves an imbalance of power between those alleged to have abused and those alleged to have been abused. This could involve those alleged to have abused having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they abuse to defend themselves.

Very occasionally, allegations of a safeguarding nature may be made against children by other children in the school. Though very rare, safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse both in person and via social media, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

We recognise that children who have disabilities and/ or SEND may have additional barriers to disclosing incidents of a Child Protection nature. For pupils who are non-verbal and / or have SEND barriers, we would use different methods such as the persona dolls or strategies in use already with these children to support them to share any concerns that they may have. Staff are trained to a high level in recognising signs of abuse and neglect and are fully aware of the policies and procedures to be followed in these instances.

In the case of child-on-child abuse, it is likely that some or all of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

(iii) is made against an older child and refers to their behaviour towards a younger child.
(iv) is where a more vulnerable child is those alleged to have been abused.
(v) is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence.
(vi) raises risk factors for other children in the school.
(vii) indicates that other children may have been affected by this child.
(viii)indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this child

Our response to child-on-child abuse, including reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment We understand the best responses to child-on-child abuse are based on a whole setting approach to safeguarding and child protection and we will involve our whole community in this.

Systems are in place, well promoted throughout our setting, and understandable and accessible for our

pupils to confidently report abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback.

As part of our commitment to our pupils, we have identified the following deputy DSLs, who are not part of our setting's senior leadership team, as staff in our setting, pupils can report child-on-child abuse too, if they choose not to report directly to a member of the senior leadership team.

Miss E Partridge

All staff in our setting will undertake training in how to respond to child-on-child abuse, including reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Our DSLs will undertake training to manage a report.

We accept the most effective preventative education programme will be through a whole setting approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Our setting will has a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of Wombridge Primary School. This is underpinned by our behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and byour planned programme of evidence-based content delivered through the whole curriculum. Our programme is developed to be age and stage of development appropriate. The DSLs will support teachers in their delivery of this part of our curriculum. We recognise good practice allows children an open forum to talk through things. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. Allstaff are aware of how to support children and how to manage a safeguarding report from a child.

The DSLs will consider if external support or intervention is necessary as part of our approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. We recognise specialist organisations can offer a different perspective and expert knowledge.

It is our aim to always recognise, acknowledge and understand the scale of harassment and abuse. We aim to never downplay some behaviours related to abuse that can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Where necessary, we will work with other professionals, agencies and partners in our response. This may include the TWSP partners, the relevant local authority children's social care departments, the police, the NSPCC, the Anti-Bullying Alliance and online services, such as The UK Safer Internet Centre, Internet Watch Foundation and Thinkuknow.

We recognise that children may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react. In some cases, those alleged to have been abused may not make a direct report.

Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool, (see appendix 2) demonstrates the range of sexual behaviours presented by children and young people, which may be helpful when seeking to understand a child's sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it.

Alongside the notion of a continuum of HSB, the Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool and training can help professionals to identify, understand and respond appropriately to sexual behaviours in children. The Brook Traffic Light Tool catagorisation:

- Green behaviours (Brook) are those that constitute normal behaviours on the continuum model.
- Amber behaviours (Brook) are those that are likely to [constitute] inappropriate or problematicbehaviours on the continuum model.
- Red behaviours (Brook) are likely to be those classified as abusive or violent behaviours on Hackett's continuum.

Once identified harmful sexual behaviour (ie those behaviours that are not part of a child's normal sexual development) should be viewed within a child protection context and Children's Services should be contacted to provide assessment and recommendations if more specialist help is need. In some cases,

children's HSB may be a marker of their own histories of abuse that need to be addressed.

In terms of identifying the sexualised behaviour, and what to consider in deciding where it sits on the continuum, the NSPCC suggests the following:

• **The age of the child or young person who has displayed the sexual behaviour.**

• **The age of the other children or young people involved.**

• **Is the behaviour unusual for that particular child or young person?**

• **Have all the children or young people involved freely given consent?**

• **Are the other children or young people distressed?**

• **Is there an imbalance of power?**

• **Is the behaviour excessive, degrading or threatening?**

• **Is the behaviour occurring in a public or private space?**

It also states that other behaviours might give cause for concern if they are particularly secretive or are being carried out in private after intervention from adults.

Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards children from other children:

These children will need an individual risk management plan to ensure that other children are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. (See appendix 3) There is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.
How can a child that is being abused by another child be identified?

All staff should be vigilant in respect of the dynamics of peer groups in their school or college and should be alert to the wellbeing of students and to signs of abuse. They should engage with these signs, as appropriate, to determine whether they are caused by child-onchild abuse. However, staff should be mindful of the fact that the way(s) in which children will disclose or present with behaviour(s) as a result of their experiences will differ.

Signs that a child may be suffering from child-on-child abuse can also overlap with those indicating other types of abuse and can include – for example:

- being afraid of particular places and/or situations and/or making excuses to avoid particular people
- being afraid/reluctant to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- running away or regularly going missing from home, care or education
- experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or emotional wellbeing
- becoming nervous, anxious, distressed, clingy or depressed
- becoming isolated from peers/usual social networks, losing confidence and becoming withdrawn
- self-harming or having thoughts about suicide
- having problems eating (including developing eating disorders) and/or sleeping (including suffering from nightmares)
- regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- unexplained gifts, money or new possessions (eg clothes and/or mobile phone)
- unexplained physical injuries and other signs of physical abuse
- changes in appearance – e.g weight loss

- changes in performance and/or behaviour at school
- knowing about or being involved in 'adult issues' which are inappropriate for their age orstage of development, for example, alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour
- involvement in abusive relationships
- involvement in gangs or gang fights
- having angry outbursts, or behaving aggressively or abusively (including displaying HSB) towards others

Staff are trained to be alert to behaviour that might cause concerns, to use their professional curiosity and think about what the behaviour might signify, to encourage children to share with them any underlying reasons for their behaviour (by asking open questions at the right time to prompt discussion) and, where appropriate, to engage with their parents so that the cause(s) of their behaviour can be investigated.

Where a child exhibits any behaviour that is out of character or abnormal for their age, staff should always consider whether an underlying concern is contributing to their behaviour (for example, whether the child is being harmed or abused by their peers) and, if so, what the concern is and how the child can be supported going forwards. The power dynamic that can exist between children is also very important when identifying and responding to their behaviour: in all cases of child-on-child abuse a power imbalance will exist within the relationship. This inequality will not necessarily be the result of an age gap between the child responsible for the abuse and the child being abused. It may, for example, be the result of their relative social or economic status. Equally, while children who abuse may have power over those who they are abusing, they may be simultaneously powerless to others.

What to do:-

If a member of staff thinks for whatever reason that a child may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by their peer(s), or that a child may be at risk of abusing or may be abusing their peer(s), they should discuss their concern with the DSL (or deputy) without delay.

Our initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all those alleged to have been abused are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A those alleged to have been abused will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will those alleged to have been abused ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. We will reassure all those alleged to have been abused that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of our setting will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously.

As per Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education, all staff are trained to manage a report:

- not promising confidentiality at this initial stage as it is very likely a concern will have to be shared further (for example, with the designated safeguarding lead or children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessaryin order to progress it. It is important that those alleged to have been abused understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to;
- recognising a child is likely to disclose information to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school staff. It is important that the person to whom the child discloses recognises that the child has placed them in a position of trust. They should be supportiveand respectful of the child
- listening carefully to the child, being non-judgmental, being clear about boundaries and howthe report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc
- for nonverbal and or SEND pupils, use other communication methods that they are familiarwith, such as persona dolls, lego build to express or Makaton
- considering the best way to make a record of the report. Best practice is to wait until the end of the report and immediately write up a thorough summary. This allows the staff member to devote their full attention to the child and to listen to what they are saying. It may be appropriate to make notes, especially if a second member of staff is present.

However, if making notes, staff should be conscious of the need to remain engaged with the child and notappear distracted.

"What school and college staff should do if they have concerns about a child Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately." Extracts from KCSIE 2022
Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the school's or college's own pastoral support processes
- undertaking an early help assessment, or
- making a referral to statutory services, for example as the child might be in need, is in need or suffering, or is likely to suffer harm.

The [DSL] or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns. If in exceptional circumstances, the [DSL] (or deputy) is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Staff should consider speaking to a member of the senior leadership team and/or take advice from local authority children's social care. In these circumstances, any action taken should be shared with the [DSL] (or deputy) as soon as is practically possible.

Staff should not assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan)

If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the [DSL] or a deputy. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Early help assessment If early help is appropriate, the [DSL] (or deputy) will generally lead on liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment, in some cases acting as the lead practitioner. Any such cases should be kept under constant review and consideration given to a referral to local authority children's social care for assessment for statutory services if the child's situation does not appear to be improving or is getting worse.

At Wombridge Primary School, a factual record will be made of the allegation. The incident will be recorded on CPOMS.

- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation;
- where the report includes an online element, being aware of searching, screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCCIS sexting advice (for schools and colleges). The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. The highlighted advice (links above) provides more details on what to do when viewing an image is unavoidable.
- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, (preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy). However, this might not always be possible;
- informing the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), as soon as practically possible, if the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is not involved in the initial report

Considering confidentiality and anonymity

Staff taking a report should never promise confidentiality as it is very likely that it will be in the best interests of those alleged to have been abused to seek advice and guidance from others in order to

provide support and engage appropriate agencies. The school should only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation.

Those alleged to have been abused may ask the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a those alleged to have been abused makes this request. If those alleged to have been abused does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if it can be justified to be in the public interest, for example, to protect children from harm and to promote the welfare of children. The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put those alleged to havebeen abused at greater risk);
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or hasbeen harmed, a referral should be made to children's social care;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assaultby penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst the ageof criminal responsibility is ten, if those alleged to have abused is under ten, the starting principle of referring to the police remains. The police will take a welfare, rather than a criminal justice approach, in these cases.

Ultimately, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will have to balance those alleged to have been abused wishes against their duty to protect those alleged to have been abused and other children.

If the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) do decide to go ahead and make a referral to children's social care and/or a report to the police against those alleged to have been abused's wishes, this should be handled extremely carefully, the reasons should be explained to those alleged to have been abused and appropriate specialist support should be offered.

Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, schools should be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general so they can offer support and act appropriately.

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, schools should do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Amongst other things, this will mean carefully considering, based on the nature of the report, which staff should know about the report and any support that will be put in place for the children involved.

Schools should also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing those alleged to have been abused identities.

The DSL should **contact Family Connect (Tel: 01952 385385)** to discuss the case. It is possible that Family Connect are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this young person. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a Family Connect referral. There will need to be a referral for both those alleged to have been abused and perpetrator, with subsequent requests for service.

The DSL will make a record of the concern on CPOMS (if this has not already been created) and the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy on file.

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the student being complained about and the alleged those alleged to have been abused).

It may be appropriate to exclude the child being complained about for a period of time according to

the school's behaviour policy and procedures.

Risk Assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or a deputy) will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but as good practice should be completed.

The risk and needs assessment should consider:

- those alleged to have been abused, especially their protection and support;
- whether there may have been other those alleged to have been abused,
- those alleged to have abused and
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from those alleged to have abused, or from future harms.

If any of the children involved has SEND, the DSL will liaise with the SENDCO to assist in the management of the report.

Risk assessments must be recorded (written or electronic) and will be kept under review. At all times, we will be actively considering the risks posed to all of our pupils and students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The DSL (or a deputy) will engage with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required. Our risk assessment is not intended to replace the detailed assessments of expert professionals. Any such professional assessments will be used to inform our approach to supporting and protecting our pupils and students and updating our own risk assessment.

The DSL may use and consider the TWSP Sexually harmful behaviour - risk assessment tool.

After the case

No matter what the outcome is of an allegation of abuse against another child, the school will review the case to see if there are any improvements that can be made in its practice or policy that may help to prevent similar cases in the future. Reviews will be ongoing and long lasting, with information being passed at the point of transition.

Action following a report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment

What to consider

Schools should carefully consider any report of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment. Our DSL (and deputies) have a complete safeguarding picture and they are the most appropriate people to advise on our initial response. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of those alleged to have been abused in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Those alleged to have been abused s should be given as much control as is reasonably possible over decisions regarding how any investigation will be progressed and any support that they will be offered. This will however need to be balanced with our duty and responsibilities to protect other children;
- the nature of the alleged incident(s), including whether a crime may have been committed and/or whether HSB has been displayed;
- the ages of the children involved;
- the developmental stages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children. For example, are those alleged to have abused significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does those alleged to have been abused

have a disability or learning difficulty?;
- if the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse (sexual abuse can be accompanied by other forms of abuse and a sustained pattern may not just be of a sexual nature);
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between peers;
- are there ongoing risks to those alleged to have been abused, other children, adult students or school or college staff; and,
- other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, all staff will act in the best interests of the child. In all cases, we will follow general safeguarding principles. Immediate consideration will be given as to how best to support and protect those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused (and any other children involved/impacted).

The starting point regarding any report will always be that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment and it is never acceptable and it will not be tolerated.

As a matter of effective safeguarding practice, we will do all we reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, especially where a case is progressing through the criminal justice system.

Children sharing a classroom: Initial considerations when the report is made

Any report of sexual violence is likely to be traumatic for those alleged to have been abused.

However, reports of rape and assault by penetration are likely to be especially difficult with regard to those alleged to have been abused and close proximity with those alleged to have abused is likely to be especially distressing. Whilst the school establishes the facts of the case and starts the process of liaising with children's social care and the police, those alleged to have abused should be removed from any classes they share with those alleged to have been abused.

The school should also consider how best to keep those alleged to have been abused and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport to and from the school or college, where appropriate. These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of those alleged to have abused.

For other reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused and considerations regarding shared classes, sharing school premises and school or college transport, should be considered immediately.

In all cases, the initial report should be carefully evaluated, reflecting the considerations set out earlier. The wishes of those alleged to have been abused, the nature of the allegations and the protection of all children in the school will be especially important when considering any immediate actions.

Options to manage the report

When to inform those alleged to have abused will be a decision that will be carefully considered. Where a report is going to be made to children's social care and/or the police, then, as a general rule, we will speak to the relevant agency and discuss next steps and how those alleged to have abused will be informed of the allegations. However, as per general safeguarding principles, this does not and will not stop us taking immediate action to safeguard our children, where required.

We will regularly review our decisions and actions, consider our relevant policies and any lessons learnt. We will look out for potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour. Where a

pattern is identified, we will decide on a course of action. Consideration will be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within our setting that enabled the inappropriate behaviour to occur and where appropriate extra teaching time and/or staff training could be delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

The DSL (or deputy) will use their professional judgement to: (a) assess the nature and seriousness of the alleged behaviour, and (b) determine whether it is appropriate for the alleged behaviour to be to be dealt with internally and, if so, whether any external specialist support is required.

In borderline cases the DSL (or deputy) will consult with Family Connect, and/or other relevant agencies on a no-names basis (where possible) to determine the most appropriate response.

Where the DSL (or deputy) considers or suspects that the alleged behaviour in question might be abusive or violent on a spectrum or where the needs and circumstances of the individual child/children in question might otherwise require it, the DSL (or deputy) will contact Family Connect or the local social care team for the child and/or the police immediately and, in any event, within 24 hours of the DSL (or deputy) becoming aware of the alleged behaviour. The DSL (or deputy) will discuss the concern(s) or allegation(s) with the agency and agree on a course of action, which may include:

1. manage internally;
2. early help;
3. referral to children's social care; and
4. reporting to the police.

All concerns, discussions, decisions, and reasons for decisions will be recorded (written or electronic).

If bail conditions are in place, we will consider what additional measures may be necessary to manage any assessed risk of harm that may arise within our setting.

There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. We will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting those alleged to have been abused, those alleged to have abused and other children and adult students in the school. The DSL (or a deputy) will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions we take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, we will update our risk assessment. We understand it is important that we ensure both those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused remain protected. Where cases are classified as "no further action" (NFA'd) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, we will continue to offer support to those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused.

If a report is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the DSL will consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation is in need of help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to Family Connect or the relevant children's social care team may be appropriate. If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, we will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it as per our own behaviour policy.

Reporting to the police

- Any Report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to children's social care.
- It is important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are clear about the local process for referrals and follow that process.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, the starting point is

this should be passed on to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if those alleged to have abused is under ten, the starting principle of reporting to the police remains. The police will takea welfare, rather than a criminal justice, approach.

- At this stage, schools 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 circumstanceswhere parents or carers have not been informed, it will be especially important that the school or college is supporting the childin any decision they take. This should be with the support of children's social care and any appropriate specialist agencies.

- Where a report has been made to the police, the school should consult the police and agree what information can be disclosed to staff and others, in particular, those alleged to have abused and theirparents or carers. They should also discuss the best way to protect those alleged to have been abused and their anonymity.

- All police forces in England have specialist units that investigate child abuse. The names andstructures of these units are matters for local forces. It will be important that the designated safeguarding lead (and their deputies) are aware of their local arrangements.

- 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 the school continue to engage with specialistsupport for those alleged to have been abused as required.

- Whatever the response, it should be under-pinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexualharassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

- All concerns, discussions, decisions and reasons for decisions should be recorded (written orelectronic CPOMS).

Managing any delays in the criminal process

There may be delays in any case that is being progressed through the criminal justice system. Schools should not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of a police investigation before protecting those alleged to have been abused, alleged perpetrator and other children in the school or college. The risk assessment will help inform any decision.

Whilst protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against those alleged to have abused, it will be important for the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) to workclosely with the police (and other agencies as required), to ensure any actions the school or college take do not jeopardise the police investigation.

If schools or colleges have questions about the investigation, they should ask the police. The police will help and support the school as much as they can (within the constraints of any legal restrictions).

The end of the criminal process

If a child is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the schoo lshould update its risk assessment, ensure relevant protections are in place for all the children at the school and, if it has not already, consider any suitable action in light of their behaviour policy.

If those alleged to have abused remain in the same school as those alleged to have been abused, the school should be very clear as to their expectations regarding the perpetrator now they have been convicted or cautioned. This could include expectations regarding their behaviour and any restrictions the school thinks are reasonable and proportionate with regard to the those alleged to have abused timetable.

Any conviction (even with legal anonymity reporting restrictions) is potentially going to generate interest among other pupils or students in the school. It will be important that theschool ensures both those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused remainprotected, especially from any bullying or

harassment (including online).

Where cases are classified as “no further action” (NFA’d) by the police or Crown Prosecution Service, or where there is a not guilty verdict, the school should continue to offer supportto those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused for as long as is necessary. A not guilty verdict or a decision not to progress with their case will likely be traumatic for those alleged to have been abused. The fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. Schools should discuss any decisions with those alleged to have been abused in this light and continue to offer support. Those alleged to have abused is also likely to require ongoing support for what will have likely been a difficult experience

Safeguarding and supporting those alleged to have been abused

We will consider the principles based on effective safeguarding practice and to help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting those alleged to have been abused and those allegedto have abused.

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting those alleged to have been abused.

- The school should think carefully about the terminology it uses to describe the “those alleged tohave been abused”.

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of those alleged to have been abused, the nature ofthe allegations and the potential risk of further abuse. Schools should be aware that, by the very nature of sexual violence and sexual harassment, a power imbalance is likely to have been created between those alleged to have been abused and alleged perpetrator.

- The needs and wishes of those alleged to have been abused should be paramount (along with protecting the child) in any response. It is important they feel in as much control of the process as isreasonably possible. Wherever possible, those alleged to have been abused, if they wish, should beable to continue in their normal routine. Overall, the priority should be to make those alleged to havebeen abused ’s daily experience as normal as possible, so that the school or college is a safe spacefor them.

- Those alleged to have been abused should never be made to feel they are the problem for making areport or made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support should be tailored on a case-by-case basis.The support required regarding a one-off incident of sexualised name-calling is likely to be vastly different from that for a report of rape. Support can include:

- Children and Young People’s Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs) provide emotional and practical support for those alleged to have been abused s of sexual violence. They are based within the specialist sexual violence sector and will help those alleged to have been abused understand what their options are and how the criminal justice process works if they have reported orare considering reporting to the police. ChISVAs will work in partnership with schools and colleges toensure the best possible outcomes for those alleged to have been abused.

- Police and social care agencies can signpost to ChISVA services (where available) or referrals canbe made directly to the ChISVA service by the young person or school or college. Contact details forChISVAs can be found at Rape Crisis and The Survivors Trust.

- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

- Rape Crisis Centre's can provide therapeutic support for children who have experienced sexual violence.

- Internet Watch Foundation (to potentially remove illegal images)

- Those alleged to have been abused may not talk about the whole picture immediately. It is essential that dialogue is kept open and encouraged. We will offer those alleged to have been abused a designated trusted adult in our setting to talk about their needs.

- Those alleged to have been abused of sexual violence are likely to be traumatised and, in some cases, may struggle in a normal classroom environment. While schools should avoid any action that would have the effect of isolating those alleged to have been abused, in particular from supportive peer groups, there may be times when those alleged to have been abused find it difficult to maintain a full-time timetable and may express a wish to withdraw from lessons and activities. This should be because those alleged to have been abused wants to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation. If required, schools should provide a physical space for those alleged to have been abusedto withdraw.

- It may be necessary for schools to maintain arrangements to protect and support those alleged tohave been abused for a long time. Schools should be prepared for this and should work with children's social care and other agencies as required.

- It is important that the school does everything they reasonably can to protect those alleged to havebeen abused from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made.

- Whilst we will give all the necessary support to those alleged to have been abused to remain in our setting, if the trauma results in those alleged to have been abused being unable to do this, alternative provision or a move to another setting will be considered to enable them to continue to receive suitableeducation. This will only be at the request of those alleged to have been abused (and following discussion with their parents or carers).

- It is important that if those alleged to have been abused does move to another educational institution(for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing support needs. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens (and should discuss with those alleged to have been abused and, where appropriate, their parents or carers as to the most suitable way of doing this) as well as transferring the child protection file.

Safeguarding and supporting those alleged to have abused

The following principles are based on effective safeguarding practice and should help shape any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting those alleged to have abused:

- The school will have a difficult balancing act to consider. On one hand they need to safeguard thosealleged to have been abused (and all other children, adult students and staff at the school or college)and on the other hand provide those alleged to have abused with an education, safeguarding supportas appropriate and implement any disciplinary sanctions.
- A child abusing another child may be a sign they have been abused themselves or a sign of widerissues that require addressing within the culture of the school or college. Schools

should work with professionals as required to understand why a child may have abused a peer. It is important to remember that, as a child, anyone who is alleged to have abused is entitled to, deserving of, and

- should be provided with, a high level of support to help them understand and overcome the reasonsfor their behaviour and help protect other children by limiting the likelihood of them abusing again.

- Consider the age and the developmental stage of those alleged to have abused and nature of the allegations. Any child will likely experience stress as a result of being the subject of allegations and/ornegative reactions by their peers to the allegations against them.

- Consider the proportionality of the response. Support (and sanctions) should be considered on a case-by-case basis. A child who is alleged to have abused may potentially have unmet needs (in some cases these may be considerable) as well as potentially posing a risk of harm to other children.Harmful sexual behaviour in young children may be (and often are) a symptom of either their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and or materials. Advice should be taken, as appropriate, from children's social care, specialist sexual violence services and the police.

- It is important that if the child who is alleged to have abused does move to another educational institution (for any reason), that the new educational institution is made aware of any ongoing supportneeds and where appropriate, potential risks to other children, adult students and staff. The designated safeguarding lead should take responsibility to ensure this happens as well as transferringthe child protection file.

Ongoing Considerations: Those alleged to have been abused and alleged perpetrator sharing classes

Once the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) has decided what the next steps will be in terms of progressing the report, they should consider again the question of those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused sharing classes and sharing space at school. This will inevitably involve complex and difficult professional decisions, including considering their duty to safeguard children and their duty to educate them.

It is important each report is considered on a case-by-case basis and risk assessments are updated as appropriate. As always when concerned about the welfare of a child, the best interests of the child should come first. In all cases, schools and colleges should follow general safeguarding principles as per this guidance.

Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, those who are alleged to have abused should be removed from any classes they share with those alleged to have been abused. The school should also consider how best to keep those allegedto have been abused and those who are alleged to have abused a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport to and from school or where appropriate. This is in the best interests of both children and should not beperceived to be a judgement on the guilt of those alleged to haveabused. Close liaison with the police is essential.

Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to aconviction or caution, the school should take suitable action, if they have not already done so. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing those alleged to have abused to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of those alleged to have been abused (and potentially other pupils or students).

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school should,if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light

of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion.

Where those alleged to have abused is going to remain at the school, the principle would be to continue keeping those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the those alleged to have been abused will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.

In all cases, schools should record and be able to justify their decision making.

Reports of sexual assault and sexual harassment will, in some cases, not lead to areport to the police (for a variety of reasons). In some cases, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or sexual harassment are reported to the police and the case is not progressed or are reported to the police and ultimately result in a not guilty verdict. Noneof this means the offence did not happen or that those alleged to have been abused lied.

The process will have affected both those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused. Appropriate support should be provided to both as required and consideration given to sharing classes and potential contact as required on a case-by-case basis.

In all cases, schools should record and be able to justify their decision-making.

All of the above should be considered with the needs and wishes of those alleged to have been abused at the heart of the process (supported by parents and carers as required). Any arrangementsshould be kept under review.

Discipline and those who are alleged to have abused

Schools

With regard to those alleged to have abused, advice on behaviour and discipline in schools is clear that teachers can discipline pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them.

Disciplinary action can be taken whilst other investigations by the police and/or children's social care are ongoing. The fact that another body is investigating or has investigated an incident does not in itself prevent a school from coming to its own conclusion, on the balance of probabilities, about what happened, and imposing a penalty accordingly. This is a matter for the school and should be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should take a leading role. The school should consider if, by taking any action, they would prejudice an investigation and/or any subsequent prosecution. Careful liaison with the police and/or children's social care should help the school make a determination.

It will also be important to consider whether there are circumstances that make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to reach their own view about what happened while an independent investigation is considering the same facts.

Discipline and support

Taking disciplinary action and still providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions. They can, and should, occur at the same time if necessary. The school or college should be very clear as to what its approach is.

On the one hand there is preventative or forward-looking action to safeguard those alleged to have been abused and/or those alleged to have abused, especially where there are concerns that the perpetrator themselves may have been a those alleged to have been abused of abuse; and, on the other, there is disciplinary action to punish those alleged to have abused for their past conduct.

The school should be very clear as to which category any action they are taking falls or whether it is really both and should ensure that the action complies with the law relating to each relevant category.

Working with parents and carers

The school will, in most instances, engage with both the parents/ carers of those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused when there has been a report of sexual violence (this might not be necessary or proportional in the case of sexual harassment and should be considered on a case-by-case basis). The exception to this rule is if there is a reason to believe informing a parent or carer will put a child at additional risk. Schools should carefully consider what information they provide to the respective parents or carers about the other child involved and when they do so. In some cases, children's social care and/or the police will have a very clear view and it will be important for the school or college to work with relevant agencies to ensure a consistent approach is taken to information sharing.

It is good practice for the school to meet those alleged to have been abused 's parents or carers with those alleged to have been abused present to discuss what arrangements are being put in place to safeguard those alleged to have been abused and understand their wishes in terms of support they may need and how the report will be progressed.

It is also good practice for the school to meet with the parents/ carers of those alleged to have abused to discuss any arrangements that are being put into place that impact those alleged to have abused, such as, for example, moving them out of classes with those alleged to have been abused and what this means for their education. The reason behind any decisions should be explained. Support for those alleged to have abused should be discussed.

The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) would generally attend any such meetings. Consideration to the attendance of other agencies should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Clear behaviour policies and child protection policies, especially policies that set out the principles of how reports of sexual violence will be managed and how those alleged to have been abused s and those alleged to have abused are likely to be supported, that parents and carers have access to, will, in some cases, help manage what are inevitably very difficult conversations.

Parents and carers may well struggle to cope with a report that their child has been those alleged to have been abused of an assault or is alleged to have assaulted another child. Details of organisations that support parents are provided in Annex A of *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads May 2018*; Schools and colleges should consider signposting parents to this support.

Safeguarding other children

Consideration should be given to supporting children (and adult students) who

have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration. Witnessing such an event is likely to be traumatic and support may be required.

Following any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, it is likely that some children will take "sides". The school should be doing all they can to ensure both those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused, and any witnesses, are not being bullied or harassed.

Social media is very likely to play a central role in the fall out from any incident or alleged incident. There is the potential for contact between those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused and a very high likelihood that friends from either side could harass those alleged to have been abused or those alleged to have abused online and/or become those alleged to have been abused of harassment themselves.

School transport is a potentially vulnerable place for a those alleged to have been abused or those alleged to have abused following any incident or alleged incident. The school or college, as part of its risk assessment, should consider any additional potential support needs to keep all of their children safe.

A whole school or college approach to safeguarding, a culture that makes clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always unacceptable, and a strong preventative education programme will help create an environment in which all children at the school or college are supportive and respectful of their peers when reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment are made.

It is important that schools and colleges keep their policies, processes and curriculum under constant review to protect all their children. Reports of sexual violence and/or harassment (especially where there is evidence of patterns of behaviour) may point to environmental and or systemic problems that could and should be addressed by updating relevant policies, processes or relevant parts of the curriculum.

The role of education in prevention

The most effective preventative education programme will be through a whole-school approach that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Wombridge Primary School has a clear set of values and standards, and these will be upheld and demonstrated throughout all aspects of school life. This is underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system, and by a planned programme of evidence- based content delivered through the whole curriculum.

Such a programme has been developed to be age and stage of development appropriate (especially when considering SEND children and their cognitive understanding), and may tackle such issues as:

- 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; and
- addressing cultures of sexual harassment.

Good practice allows children an open forum to talk things through. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children should be made aware of the processes to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer.

Support for Children who harm other Children, Those alleged to have been abused and their Families

Support for who?	Agency/Organisation	What support is available
Those alleged to have been abused s	Police	Intermediaries for supporting those alleged to have been abused s through court proceedings
	Youth Justice Service (YJS)	Those alleged to have been abused Support Worker
	Axis Counselling	Counselling for 12 years + for sexual abuse.
	Newstart Networks	Support for 3 – 23 year olds for those who experience trauma. Contact details 01743 or 01743 453517.
	BeeU Emotional Health and Wellbeing (0 – 25) service (MPFT)	Referrals need to be made via a single point of access by email at 025SPA@sssft.nhs.uk or telephone at 0300 124 0093.
		Access services directory for Kooth, an anonymous 24-hour online service offering peer support, self-help and have trained counsellors to talk to. Anyone aged 11-25, living in Telford and Wrekin can register to access this service and you don't need to be referred or have an appointment.
		Access services directory for The Children's Society, which deliver health promotion, prevention and early help and support as well as working with young people to aid transition/sign posting to other services or resources. Drop in sessions are available in Telford. You don't need to be referred or have an appointment.
	Glade	Paediatric: 0800 953 4131, email: info@the glade.org.uk, www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/psas .
	NSPCC	Seek advice and guidance. 0808 800 5000. www.nspcc.org.uk Email help@nspcc.org.uk
	Sexual Health Service	0300 123 0994, www.sexualhealth.sssft.nhs.uk
	Midwifery	Vulnerable Midwife
		TIMS (Teenage Identified Midwives) support young people during their pregnancy and early months
		Family Nurse Partnership
	School Nurses	Linked to schools, but support the young person rather than the teachers. Contact the school for details of the designated school nurse.
	Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVAs)	Support for those alleged to have been abused s of domestic abuse
	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	Multi-agency support and signposting

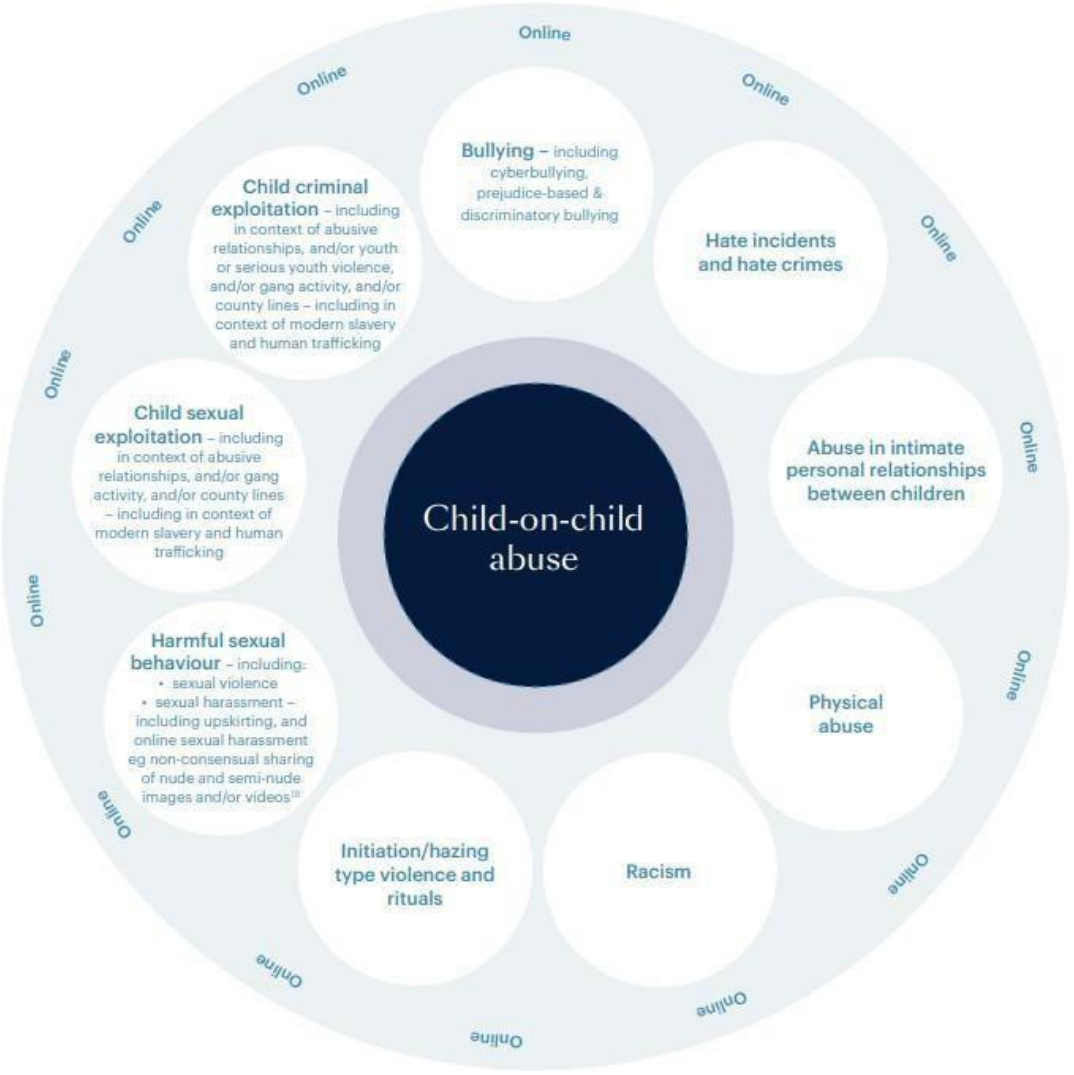
Support for who?	Agency/Organisation	What support is available
	Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	GP internal counselling services
	Social Care (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Contact Family Connect 01952 385385 or www.familyconnect.telford.co.uk
	Early Help & Support (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Contact Family Connect 01952 385385. Delivery of Targeted Group Support
		Whole family working
	Youth Justice Service	Those alleged to have been abused s Officer 01952 385985, wmyos@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
Perpetrator	Police	Appropriate adult
	Youth Justice Service (YJS)	CAMHS worker
		Education worker
		Substance Misuse worker
		AIM assessment (Harmful Sexual Behaviour)
	Newstart Networks	Support for 3 – 23 year olds, not specific to offences, look at those alleged to have been abused s impact and underlying reasons. Contact 01743 453515 or 01743 453517.
	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)	Multi-agency support and signposting
	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	Multi-agency support and signposting
	Social Care (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Contact Family Connect 01952 385385. A referral would be made to the Brokerage Team to commission or signpost to the most appropriate service
	Early Help & Support (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Contact Family Connect 01952 385385. Delivery of Targeted Group Support
		Whole family working
	NSPCC	Seek advice and guidance. 0808 800 5000. www.nspcc.org.uk Email help@nspcc.org.uk
	Sexual Health Service	0300 123 0994, www.sexualhealth.sssft.nhs.uk
Families	Police	Intermediaries for supporting those alleged to have been abused s through court proceedings
		Family Liaison Officer
	Youth Justice Service (YJS)	Refer to safeguarding for further support
		Parenting Orders
		Normally work with the young person
	Newstart Networks	Family work
		Safety plans
		Understanding reasons behind the behaviour
		How to keep the young person safe (those alleged to have been abused and perpetrator)
		Looking at the trauma they have experienced
		Look at the family as a whole, especially with siblings Contact details 01743 or 01743 453517

Support for who?	Agency/Organisation	What support is available
	Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	Services for a young person commissioned on an individual basis where the need is identified
	Social Care (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Contact Family Connect 01952 385385 or www.familyconnect.telford.co.uk
	Early Help & Support (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Contact Family Connect 01952 385385. Delivery of Targeted Group Support
		Whole family working
	NSPCC	Seek advice and guidance. 0808 800 5000. www.nspcc.org.uk Email help@nspcc.org.uk
Foster Carers	Telford & Wrekin Council	All Foster Carers have the same support as other parents or carers, whereby support is accessed via the dedicated Foster Carers Support Service run by the Fostering Support Team. This includes an out of hours service.
Schools	Police	Safer Neighbourhood Teams – Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) link with schools
		Information shared with schools
	Youth Justice Service (YJS)	Education worker provides links and support to schools to manage the perpetrator's behaviour and get them back into school. 01952 385985, wmyos@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
	Newstart Networks	Looking to develop working with schools, including direct work with the young person. Contact details 01743 or 01743 453517
	Education (Telford & Wrekin Council)	Information on the support provided by schools and services available are listed in the Child Protection and Safeguarding in Schools Policies
Professionals	All	Partnership working
		Managers/Supervisors
		Training
		Supervision
		Internal counselling services/Occupational Health
		Resilience training

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding leads.
Next review: September 2023 or more frequently in line with further recommendations

Appendix 1 - Overview of child-on-child abuse diagram.



Appendix 2 Brook sexual behaviours traffic light tool - https://www.brook.org.uk/training/wider-professional-training/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool/

brook

SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL

Behaviours: age 0 to 5 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviours

- holding or playing with own genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about other children's genitals
- attempting to touch or curiosity about breasts, bottoms or genitals of adults
- games e.g. mummies and daddies, doctors and nurses
- enjoying nakedness
- interest in body parts and what they do
- curiosity about the differences between boys and girls

Amber behaviours

- preoccupation with adult sexual behaviour
- pulling other children's pants down/ skirts up/trousers down against their will
- talking about sex using adult slang
- preoccupation with touching the genitals of other people
- following others into toilets or changing rooms to look at them or touch them
- talking about sexual activities seen on TV/online

Red behaviours

- persistently touching the genitals of other children
- persistent attempts to touch the genitals of adults
- simulation of sexual activity in play
- sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects
- forcing other children to engage in sexual play

What is green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What is amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- unusual for that particular child or young person
- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

What is red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Behaviours: age 5 to 9 years

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviours

- feeling and touching own genitals
- curiosity about other children's genitals
- curiosity about sex and relationships, e.g. differences between boys and girls, how sex happens, where babies come from, same-sex relationships
- sense of privacy about bodies
- telling stories or asking questions using swear and slang words for parts of the body

Amber behaviours

- questions about sexual activity which persist or are repeated frequently, despite an answer having been given
- sexual bullying face to face or through texts or online messaging
- engaging in mutual masturbation
- persistent sexual images and ideas in talk, play and art
- use of adult slang language to discuss sex

Red behaviours

- frequent masturbation in front of others
- sexual behaviour engaging significantly younger or less able children
- forcing other children to take part in sexual activities
- simulation of oral or penetrative sex
- sourcing pornographic material online

What is green behaviour?

Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:

- displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability
- reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices

What is amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- unusual for that particular child or young person
- of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences
- of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur

What is red behaviour?

Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening
- involving significant age, developmental, or power differences
- of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur

What can you do?

Green behaviours provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

What can you do?

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and gather information to assess the appropriate action.

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action.

Appendix 3

Risk Assessment for Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse/ Harmful Sexual Behaviour

A risk assessment should:

• Be as clear and user friendly as possible.

• Be proportionate, and not stigmatise or shame the (as relevant to each particular case) alleged perpetrator(s), or victim(s), or other child/children who may be affected by the alleged behaviour.

• Set out all relevant background information – including an overview of: › the context; › the specific concern(s) or allegation(s); › any relevant detail about the relationships, and any power differentials between the children concerned; and › the frequency of the alleged behaviour and any changes in it over time. Details should also be shared of action taken regarding the alleged concern(s) or allegation(s), and any advice provided by local authority children's social care, and/or the police, and/or other relevant agencies in accordance with the locally agreed multiagency safeguarding arrangements, and/or any other practitioner(s) working with the child/ children concerned.

• Set out any relevant information regarding the child/children concerned. For example: › any relevant medical information; › any impact on their academic performance or social life (views of the parents or teachers may be helpful); and › any previous concerns about their behaviour, needs or harm that they may have been exposed to in the past.

Information should be shared on their wishes and feelings regarding the proposed risk assessment.

• Identify and assess the nature and level of risk that is posed and/or faced by the child/ children concerned: a. in school or college – such as that which may arise in relation to locations, activities, contact with particular students and influential peer groups, or transport arrangements to and from school or college; and b. contexts outside the school or college – including at home, in relationships with friends, peer groups, interactions in the neighbourhood and/or during online activity. In order to give children a sense of freedom and opportunity to develop, spaces where no extra supervision is required should be promoted as far as is safe to do so.

NAME OF PERPETRATOR/YEAR GROUP:

NAME OF VICTIM/YEAR GROUP:

DATE: **DSL FILLING IN THIS FORM:**

PLEASE SAVE THIS FORM ON CPOMS DOCUMENT VAULT AND REGULARLY REVIEW.

ASPECTS TO CONSIDER	RISK (CONSIDER THOSE ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN ABUSED, THOSE ALLEGED TO HAVE ABUSED, OTHER PUPILS AND STAFF)	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)	ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK	REVISED RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)
• What are the wishes of those alleged to have been abused?				
• What was the nature of the incident?				
• Was it a crime?				
• What are the ages of the children involved?				
• What are the developmental stages of the children involved?				
• Consider the power balance between those alleged to have been abused and those alleged to have abused – For example, are those alleged to have abused significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does those alleged to have been abused have a disability or learning difficulty?				
• Is the alleged incident one off or a sustained pattern of abuse?				

ASPECTS TO CONSIDER	RISK (CONSIDER THOSE ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN ABUSED, THOSE ALLEGED TO HAVE ABUSED, OTHER PUPILS AND STAFF)	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)	ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK	REVISED RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)
• Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSiE 2022				
• Is there an actual or perceived threat from those alleged to have abused to those alleged to have been abused and/or others?				
• Is either those alleged to have been abused or those alleged to have abused at risk of physical harm as a result of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by peers)?				
• Do they share classes?				
• Do they share break times?				
• Do they share transport to/from school?				
• Are they likely to come into contact with each other (or anyone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school?				

ASPECTS TO CONSIDER	RISK (CONSIDER THOSE ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN ABUSED, THOSE ALLEGED TO HAVE ABUSED, OTHER PUPILS AND STAFF)	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)	ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK	REVISED RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)
• How can such contact be limited?				
• Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?				

Further action taken by the school:

Action	YES/NO	Date and by whom	Reasons for this course of action
Compulsory action: Family connect informed	YES		**Compulsory action**
Police informed			
Referral to MASH			
Referral to external support services – Early help			
Referral to external support services – Children's social care via Family connect			
Referral to internal support services – Pastoral support			
Referral to CAMHS			
Referral to early help			
Other			