

Student Bullying & Harassment Policy

Version 2023

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Related Documents:	Safeguarding Policy E-safety Policy Positive Behaviour Management Policy Search & Confiscation Policy IT Acceptable Use Policy Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Joseph Chamberlain College aims to create a community which is supportive, where all individuals (staff and students) are treated with respect and their contribution to the learning process is valued. The College will not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form and will take firm and decisive action to protect the interests of its students whenever incidents are identified.

The Equality Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The Equality Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises legislation to provide the UK with a united discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and actively promotes a fair and more equal society.

Bullying and harassment can have a detrimental effect on all who experience it, however, for vulnerable students with reduced coping strategies, the effects as detailed below may be very much amplified:

- Stress and anxiety
- Absenteeism and low achievement
- Lowered self-esteem and depression
- Health related problems such as digestive upset, insomnia and self-harm
- Trouble with relationships both at College and home due to stress

Bullying, harassment of any kind is unacceptable at Joseph Chamberlain College. If it does occur, students are urged to voice their grievances in the secure knowledge that incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively.

- All students and staff are responsible for creating a learning environment free of bullying, threat, harassment and intimidation.
- All staff and students should know what the college policy is on bullying and harassment and what they should do if bullying or harassment occurs. All allegations of bullying will be addressed through the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures and specified as misconduct and potentially gross misconduct.
- Students should be assured that they will be supported and listened to when bullying or harassment is reported.
- No one deserves to be a victim of bullying or harassment. Students who are bullying or harassing others need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. This College and its staff recognise its responsibility to challenge and change the behaviours of others to ensure a positive learning environment for all.
- Any person alleging or being accused of bullying or harassment will be provided with help and support throughout the process and will be safeguarded against victimisation.

2. Aim & Scope of the Policy

- This policy outlines behaviour that would be considered inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour which has the potential to make someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended. The behaviours listed in this policy are not exhaustive, there may be other behaviours that cause individuals to feel uncomfortable or are unwanted that will be acted upon under this policy.
- This policy also provides clear guidance concerning the procedures in place to deal with any allegations of bullying or harassment.
- As such, all students, staff, volunteers and visitors to Joseph Chamberlain College will be made aware of this policy.

3. Definitions

Bullying is treating someone differently because of who they are, not because of anything they have done. It is the persecution of an individual by another person or group of people. Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. Bullying involves dominance of one person by another, or group of others. The following are common examples of bullying, but not an exhaustive list:

- Intimidation/threatening behaviour
- Any form of physical abuse e.g. punching, kicking
- Verbal abuse – shouting at, insulting, “putting down”
- Psychological abuse – isolating an individual, preventing them from becoming part of a group or involved in certain activities
- Anonymous letters or spreading rumours that they are designed to upset
- Demanding money
- Demanding coursework to copy against a person’s will
- Stealing, hiding or damaging belongings e.g. books, clothing bags
- Teasing people about their physical appearance
- Intimidating or threatening emails or text messages on any form of media

Harassment may be defined as any conduct that is unwanted by the recipient, or any conduct which affects the dignity of any individual, or group of individuals including cases where the recipient is not offended or not present. Harassment may be repetitive, or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals.

- **Physical Harassment** includes unwanted contact (e.g. unnecessary touching), assault or gestures, intimidation or aggressive behaviour.
- **Verbal Harassment** includes unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter which are based on a person’s sex or race or which refer to a person’s age, disability, sexuality, religion or personal experience.
- **Non-verbal Harassment** includes offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation or non-co-operation and exclusion from social activities. Harassment may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual(s).
- **Disability Harassment** includes threats, physical or verbal abuse against a person or group because of their disability or jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people on the grounds of their disability.
- **Racial Harassment** includes threats, physical or verbal abuse against a person or group because of colour or ethnicity. Discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or ethnicity, jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people on the grounds of their colour, race or ethnicity.
- **Religious Harassment** includes threats, physical or verbal abuse against a person or group because of their religion or belief, jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people on the grounds of religion or belief.
- **Gender Harassment** includes threats, physical or verbal abuse against a person or group because of their gender. Discrimination on the grounds of gender, jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people on the grounds of their sexual orientation, verbal or physical sexual advances which are coercive or unwelcome, whether they are intended to offend or not.

- **Sexual Harassment** includes the use of stereotypes to demean either sex or derogatory or discriminatory statements and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people on the grounds of their sexual orientation.
- **Age Harassment** includes threats, physical or verbal abuse against a person or group because of age, jokes, mockery, unwarranted remarks, graffiti or innuendo which offends people on the grounds of their age.
- **Provocative behaviour** includes the wearing of badges, clothing or insignia which may cause offence or display or circulation of offensive material (emails and text) and stereotyping [labelling].

Victimisation is the act of targeting mistreatment towards an individual or individuals who may have submitted a complaint on the grounds of discrimination or harassment. This includes those individuals who are vulnerable and open to abuse because of their diminished ability to challenge such behaviour. Therefore, this includes victimisation of anyone that has supported someone else in making a complaint.

Child on Child Abuse can occur at any age and it can happen inside and outside of the college and online. Child on child abuse may include (but is not limited to

- Bullying
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence
- Sexual harassment

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to Choose. Consent can be withdrawn at any time and each time activity occurs.

Harmful Sexual Behaviour is problematic, abusive and violent sexual behaviour which is developmentally inappropriate and may cause developmental damage. Harmful sexual behaviour can occur face to face or online and can occur simultaneously.

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Joseph Chamberlain College will;

- Address any situation where concerns arise regarding allegations of bullying or harassment using the College's disciplinary policy and procedure.
- Review this policy every 3 years and in response to major changes in legislation or significant events.
- Bullying, harassment and victimisation will be included within the college My Development tutorial programme.
- Ensure that this policy is accessible to all staff and students.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1	Potential Indicators of Bullying, Harassment or Victimisation
Appendix 2	How to report Allegations of Bullying, Harassment or Victimisation
Appendix 3	Dealing with Bullying & Harassment Flowchart
Appendix 4	Guidelines for the Use of Restorative Practice
Appendix 5	Allegations of child-on-Child Abuse
Appendix 6	Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Appendix 1 – Potential indicators of bullying or harassment

These signs and behaviours could indicate other concerns, but bullying, harassment or victimisation will be considered a possibility and will be investigated when the student:

- is frightened of travelling to or from college
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to college
- begins to truant or begins to avoid certain lessons
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away from home
- begins to do poorly in college work
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for extra money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- no longer wants to talk about 'the college day'
- avoids certain areas of the college
- feels they are prevented from participating in some college activities

Appendix 2: How to Report Allegations of Bullying or Harassment

Students

1. If you feel you are a victim of bullying or harassment, **TELL SOMEONE**. This may be, in the first instance, your teacher, your tutor, someone in Student Services or any other member of staff.
2. Once a member of staff has been alerted, they will then inform the Safeguarding Officer. You will be listened to sympathetically and your concerns taken seriously.
3. All incidents that are reported will be formally logged on the Safeguarding database My Concern.
4. As a result of the interviews the Student Disciplinary Procedure may be followed or support offered.
5. If you are under 18, the College may feel it necessary to involve your parents or carers.

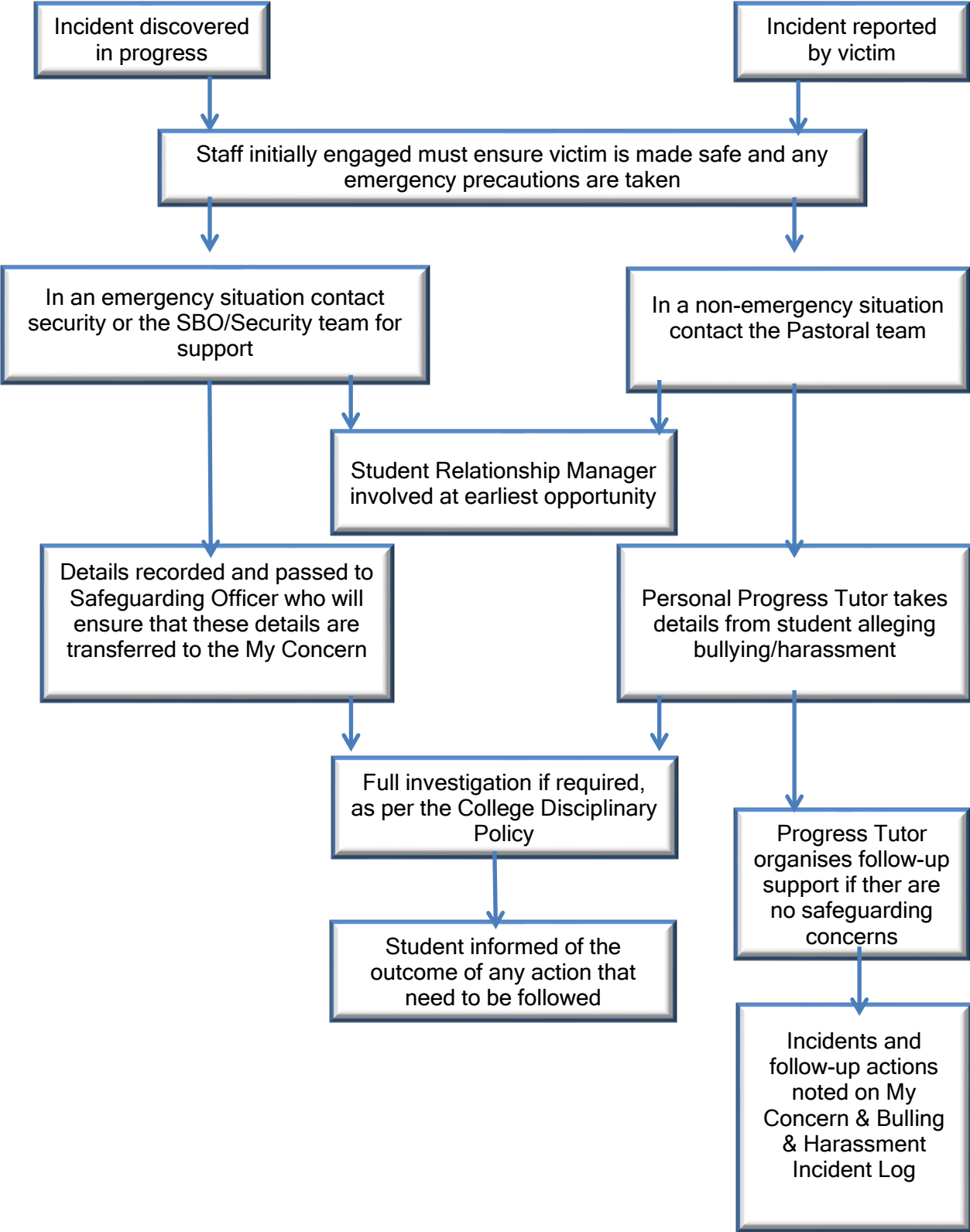
Staff

All reports about bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. It is important to discuss possible strategies with the victim in the first instance and proceed as appropriate.

1. Staff should report the incident via My Concern. This will be picked up by a Safeguarding Officer.
2. It may be helpful to use the restorative questions initially when speaking to the students involved (Appendix).
3. Any follow up action or reports will be uploaded to My Concern by the safeguarding team. Where it is found that a student has failed to observe the College's Bullying and Harassment Policy, then the student Disciplinary Procedure should be followed.
4. Where appropriate staff will contact parents detailing the incident and stating that the College is taking action.
5. Mentoring and other support can be offered to all students involved where appropriate.
6. If appropriate, a specific tutorial on bullying/harassment can be carried out if there are concerns within a curriculum area.

Appendix 3: Dealing with Bullying & Harassment Flowchart

Should you have any doubt as to the actions you should take please follow the flow chart below or contact Student Services for further advice.



Appendix 4: Guidelines for the Use of Restorative Practice

Rationale for Restorative Practice

- This can be used by staff initially when a student comes to them with an issue and when the students agree to it.
- Can help to provide staff with the prompts needed to ask questions and resolve/identify an issue early to prevent it escalating.
- Could be used as an option to give students a chance to resolve their issues before having to go through the disciplinary procedure.
- The use of these questions ensures that all students get the same experience when reporting an issue, no matter which staff member they report it to.
- By all staff using these questions, we will be able to create an environment where they feel comfortable in reporting issues to staff; this could highlight any possible issues.
- Students will realise the impact that their actions (extended to impact on the class, staff and family) can have and will be able to consider this before making choices, rather than after.

Restorative Practice

These are examples of the questions that can be used by staff to try to resolve an incident that has taken place.

Restorative Questions 1 (To respond to challenging behaviour)

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- Who has been affected by what you did?
- In what way have they been affected?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

Restorative Questions 2 (To help those harmed by others' actions)

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What have your thoughts been since?
- How has this affected you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen next?

Where appropriate, agreements/action plans can be decided by students and monitored by the appropriate staff member.

Appendix 5: Allegations of Child on Child Abuse

Staff should recognise that young people and vulnerable adults may also be vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive and incidents that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation, etc. However, it may be appropriate to regard an individual's behaviour as abusive if:

- There is a large difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the individuals concerned; or
- The perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other young/vulnerable people; or
- There are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether or not harm was actually caused.

All staff should be clear as to the school or college's policy and procedures with regards to child-on-child abuse. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment

Appendix 6 Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

*Extract from Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 Part five:
Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment*

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, from primary through to secondary stage and into college. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so 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
- recognising, acknowledging, and understanding the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported
- challenging physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment wherever it happens, may find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college.

Whilst any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously, staff should be aware it is more likely that girls will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment and more likely it will be perpetrated by boys. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are also three times more likely to be abused than their peers .

Ultimately, it is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

Sexual violence

It is important that schools and colleges are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse other children in this way and that it can happen both inside and outside of school/college. When referring to sexual violence in this advice, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual violence. When referring to sexual violence we are referring to sexual offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 as described below:

Rape: A person (A) commits an offence of rape if: he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Assault by Penetration: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally

penetrates the vagina or anus of another person (B) with a part of her/his body or anything else, the penetration is sexual, B does not consent to the penetration and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Sexual Assault: A person (A) commits an offence of sexual assault if: s/he intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B does not consent to the touching and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent: A person (A) commits an offence if: s/he intentionally causes another person (B) to engage in an activity, the activity is sexual, B does not consent to engaging in the activity, and A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

What is consent?

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another, e.g. to vaginal but not anal sex or penetration with conditions, such as wearing a condom. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs. Someone consents to vaginal, anal or oral penetration only if s/he agrees by choice to that penetration and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice.

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity .
- the age of consent is 16.
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Sexual Harassment

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline and both inside and outside of school or college. When we reference sexual harassment, we do so in the context of child-on-child sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Whilst not intended to be an exhaustive list, sexual harassment can include:

- sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting
- physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes.

Schools and colleges should be considering when any of this crosses a line into sexual violence – it is important to talk to and consider the experience of the victim.

- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature
- upskirting (this is a criminal offence)
- online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
 - consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos. Taking and sharing nude photographs of those aged under 18 is a criminal offence.
 - Sharing unwanted explicit content

- Sexualised Online bullying
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats,
- coercing others into sharing images of themselves or performing acts they're not comfortable with online.

It is important that staff consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates a culture that, if not challenged, can normalise inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence.

Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment

Reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment are likely to be complex and require difficult professional decisions to be made, often quickly and under pressure. Pre planning, effective training and effective policies will provide schools and colleges with the foundation for a calm, considered and appropriate response to any reports. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that the school or college contributes to multi-agency working in line with statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children

The immediate response to a report Responding to the report

It is important to understand 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 to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. As per Part one of this guidance, if staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

The initial response by a college to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the college responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

It is essential that all victims are reassured 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 the college should not be downplayed and should be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. It is important to explain that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this should be explained in such a way that avoids alarming or distressing them.

All staff should be trained to manage a report. Local policies (and training) will dictate exactly how reports should be managed. However, effective safeguarding practice includes:

- if possible, managing reports with two members of staff present, preferably one of them being the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)
- careful management and handling of reports that include an online element. Including being aware of searching screening and confiscation advice (for schools) and UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education

settings working with children and young people. The key consideration is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the police for inspection

- 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 deputy) or local authority children's social care) to discuss next steps. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to
- recognising that a child is likely to disclose to someone they trust: this could be anyone on the school or college 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 supportive and respectful of the child .
- recognising that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory and so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse .
- keeping in mind that certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation .
- listening carefully to the child, reflecting back, using the child's language, being non-judgemental, being clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed, not asking leading questions and only prompting the child where necessary with open questions – where, when, what, etc. It is important to note that whilst leading questions should be avoided, staff can ask children if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was
- 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 during the report (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 not appear distracted by the note taking. Either way, it is essential a written record is made.
- only recording the facts as the child presents them. The notes should not reflect the personal opinion of the note taker. Schools and colleges should be aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by local authority children's social care and/or part of a criminal investigation,
- 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 the victim to seek advice and guidance from others in order to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

The college should only engage staff and agencies who are required to support the children involved and/or be involved in any investigation. The victim may ask the college not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment. There are no easy or definitive answers when a victim makes this request. If the victim does not give consent to share information, staff may still lawfully share it, if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies.

For example, the public task basis may apply, where the overall purpose is to perform a public interest task or exercise official authority, and the task or authority has a clear basis in law. Advice should be sought from the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), who should consider the following:

- parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk)
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to local authority children's social care, and
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is ten, if the alleged perpetrator 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 deputy) will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.

If the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) decides to go ahead and make a referral to local authority children's social care and/or a report to the police against the victim's wishes, this should be handled extremely carefully, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support should be offered.

Anonymity

Where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system, colleges 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, colleges 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.

Colleges should also consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

Risk assessment

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The risk and needs assessment for a report of sexual violence should consider:

- the victim, especially their protection and support
- whether there may have been other victims
- the alleged perpetrator(s)
- all the other children, (and, if appropriate, adult students and staff) at the school or college, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them from the alleged perpetrator(s), or from future harms, and
- The time and location of the incident, and any action required to make the location safer.

Risk assessments should be recorded (paper or electronic) and should be kept under review. At all times, the college should be actively considering the risks posed to all their students and put adequate measures in place to protect them and keep them safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should ensure they are engaging with local authority 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.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen anywhere, and all staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Colleges should be aware of and respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment both online and offline, including those that have happened outside of the school/college. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the initial response by the school or college. Important considerations will include:

- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Victims 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 the school or college's 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, is/are the alleged perpetrator(s) significantly older, more mature, confident and well known social standing? Does the victim 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 children
- importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following incidents
- are there ongoing risks to the victim, 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 should act in the best interests of the child. Immediate consideration should be given as to how best to support and protect the victim and the alleged perpetrator(s) and any other children involved/impacted.