PINVIN C OF E ACADEMY

Child-on-child Abuse Policy

Policy LAB Approval: September 2026
Date of last review: Autumn Term 2025
Date of next review: September 2027
Policy Owner: Headteacher- Emma Rose

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

TO LOVE | TO LEARN | TO SERVE

Our Vision

At Pinvin we are a caring inclusive school, where everyone is welcome as Jesus welcomed all. We work closely with all stakeholders to support our children in achieving their God given potential.

At Pinvin C of E Academy, we believe that every child is a unique creation of God, with a bright future as promised in ***Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."***

We strive to create a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child can achieve their full potential. Our vision is to ensure that all our pupils can ***'Be happy, grow and flourish.'*** in a safe and supportive community. Through innovative teaching and a commitment to Christian values, we prepare our pupils to become confident, compassionate, and resilient individuals, ready to thrive in a changing world.

Equality and Diversity Statement

At Pinvin C of E Academy we promote equality of opportunity. We promote positive attitudes and encourage active participation of all stakeholders regardless of race, gender, disability, age, religion, belief and sexuality. In so doing we strive to eliminate any unlawful discrimination or harassment of any group and where any such harassment is found appropriate action will be taken immediately.

This policy has been reviewed; to the best of our knowledge, we do not feel it impacts negatively on any specific group or individual within our school community.

Child-on-child Abuse Policy 2026

Including sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

Contents

Child-on-child Abuse Policy 2026 2

Including sexual violence and sexual harassment between children 2

1. Context and Definition 3

2. Responsibility 4

2.1 Key Staff Responsibilities 5

3. Purpose of Policy 7

4. Framework and Legislation 7

4.1 Terminology sensitivity 7

5 Abuse and harmful behaviour 7

6 Types of abuse 8

6.4 RSHE Curriculum Integration (Jigsaw PSHE) 10

6.5 Online Safety 11

7 Generative AI 15

8 Expected Staff Action 17

9 Recognising child-on-child abuse 17

10 Points to consider 19

11 Next Steps 19

12 Preventative Strategies 21

13 Where to go for further information 26

ANNEX A 27

1. Context and Definition

Pinvin C of E Academy who work 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.

'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 or college 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.

We are aware 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.

Child-on-child abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to hurt others physically, sexually or emotionally.

All our staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from child-on-child abuse including:

- bullying (including online bullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. School staff, alongside their Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy, need to make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

2. Responsibility

Our staff are aware of the reporting systems within our school/ college which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- Safeguarding/child protection policy (which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse)

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

'*Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishesand feelings are considered when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback.Ultimately, all system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.*'

Child-on-child abuse is referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitivenature and specific issues involved with child-on-child necessitate separate policy guidance.

At **Pinvin C of E Academy** we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful

behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with fullconsideration to the impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

2.1 Key Staff Responsibilities

To ensure a whole-school approach to preventing and responding to child-on-child abuse, all staff have a role to play. The following outlines the responsibilities of key roles within the setting:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Mrs Emma Rose

- Lead on all child-on-child abuse concerns, ensuring timely and appropriate responses.
- Maintain accurate records and liaise with external agencies (e.g., social care, police).
- Ensure staff are trained in recognising and responding to child-on-child abuse, including online harm and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Monitor trends and patterns in incidents and report to senior leadership and governors to identify emerging safeguarding concerns and evaluate the effectiveness of preventative measures.
- Oversee curriculum integration (e.g., RSHE) and ensure safeguarding themes are embedded.

Deputy DSL(s): Mrs Rebecca Suckling, Mrs Laura Barker, Mrs Sophie Denton and Mrs Nicola Bennett

- Support the DSL in managing cases and ensuring continuity of safeguarding provision.
- Take lead responsibility in the DSL's absence.
- Assist with staff training and pupil support.

Headteacher: Mrs Emma Rose

- Ensure the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy is implemented and reviewed regularly.
- Promote a culture of safeguarding and inclusion across the school.
- Ensure sufficient resources and time are allocated for staff training and pupil support.
- Work with the DSL to respond to serious incidents and liaise with parents and external agencies.

Classroom Teachers and Teaching Assistants

- Create safe, respectful classroom environments where children feel able to disclose concerns.
- Recognise signs of child-on-child abuse and report concerns immediately to the DSL.
- Deliver RSHE and online safety content in line with the curriculum and safeguarding guidance.
- Use child-preferred language and avoid labels unless necessary for safeguarding clarity.

TIS Practitioner- Miss Lucy Rushen

- Provide emotional support to children affected by abuse, including those displaying harmful behaviour.
- Work with the DSL to develop support plans and referrals to external services.
- Promote trauma-informed approaches and restorative practices.

IT and Online Safety Lead- Mrs Taylor Steele

- Monitor digital platforms used within the school for signs of online abuse or misuse.
- Support staff and pupils in understanding the risks of online grooming, peer pressure, and AI-generated content.
- Ensure filtering and monitoring systems are effective and regularly reviewed.

RSHE/PSHE Lead- Mrs Emma Rose

- Ensure RSHE curriculum reflects current guidance and includes child-on-child abuse themes.
- Work with the DSL to embed safeguarding into lesson planning and delivery.
- Support staff with resources and training for sensitive topics.

Safeguarding Governor- Mr John Gardener

- Monitor the implementation and impact of the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy.
- Ensure the school meets statutory safeguarding duties.
- Receive regular updates from the DSL and challenge where necessary to ensure accountability.

- Receive assurance that filtering and monitoring systems are effective and subject to regular review, including annual scrutiny of safeguarding risks associated with online activity and AI technologies.

3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify, prevent and respond to all forms of child-on-child abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues.

At **Pinvin C of E Academy** we have the following policies in place that should be read inconjunction with this policy:

3.1 Anti-Bullying including Online Bullying Policy

3.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

3.3 Managing Allegations / Whistleblowing Policy

3.4 Behaviour Policy

3.5 Health & Safety Policy

3.6 Online Safety Policy

4. Framework and Legislation

This policy is supported by the key principles of the Children's Act, 1989 that the child's welfare is paramount. Another key document is Working Together, 2023 highlighting that every assessment of a child, *'must be informed by the views of the child'*. (Working Together, 2023) This is echoed byKeeping Children Safe in Education, 2026 through ensuring procedures are in place in schools and settings to hear the voice of the child.

4.1 Terminology sensitivity

In addressing child-on-child abuse, it is essential to use language that is both accurate and sensitive to the experiences of all children involved. The terminology used in our policy, practice, and communication should reflect a trauma-informed, non-judgmental approach that prioritises the wellbeing and dignity of children, unless labels are necessary for safeguarding clarity.

5 Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider

- what abuse is and what it looks like
- how it can be managed

- what appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of theindividual
- what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

As a school we adopt 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

- Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should be taken asseriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
- Children can abuse other children. This can include (but is not limited to): abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling,or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Staff should be aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying andabusive behaviour between young people.
- Staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they mayrespond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable unmet needs as well as posing a significantrisk of harm to other children. Evidence suggests that such children may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, may have witnessed or been subjected to physical or sexualabuse, may have problems in their educational development and may have committed other offences. They may therefore be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, significant harm and be in need of protection. Any long-term plan to reduce the risk posed by the alleged perpetrator must address their needs.

6 Types of abuse

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

6.1: Physical abuse

This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwisecausing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidently before considering the action or punishment to be undertaken.

6.2: Sexual violence and sexual harassment

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassinga single child or group of children.

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour, and it may be just as distressing to the young person who instigates it asto the young person it is intended towards. Sexually harmful behaviour may include

- inappropriate sexual language
- inappropriate role play
- sexual touching
- sexual assault/abuse.

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, willnever be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter","part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys"; and
- challenging behaviours (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing ortolerating such behaviours risks normalising them
- Upskirting: where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without permission and or knowledge, with the intention ofviewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim

6.3a: Image- Based Abuse

Image-based abuse, including the non-consensual sharing, creation or manipulation of images using digital technologies, including AI-generated or altered images.

6.3: Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a realor perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both young people who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

To be considered bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Young people who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to

control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

- Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Child-on-child abuse may be motivated by prejudice or discrimination. This includes racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, misogyny, disability discrimination, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and other forms of identity-based targeting.

The school recognises that misogynistic attitudes and behaviours can contribute to a culture in which sexual harassment and sexual violence become normalised. Staff will actively challenge misogynistic language, stereotypes and behaviours.

6.4 RSHE Curriculum Integration (Jigsaw PSHE)

In line with the 2025 statutory RSHE guidance, our setting integrates child-on-child abuse education throughout the **Jigsaw PSHE curriculum**, ensuring that our children are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and emotional literacy to recognise, prevent, and respond to abuse in all its forms.

Curriculum Alignment

Jigsaw's spiral, progressive curriculum supports age-appropriate learning from Early Years to Key Stage 3. It embeds safeguarding themes across six core Puzzles (units), including:

- **Being Me in My World** – exploring identity, belonging, and responsibility.
- **Relationships** – focusing on healthy relationships, consent, respect, and boundaries.
- **Changing Me** – supporting understanding of physical and emotional changes, including puberty and personal safety.

These themes are revisited and deepened each year, allowing children to build confidence and resilience over time.

Safeguarding Themes in RSHE

The curriculum explicitly addresses:

- **Child-on-child abuse**, including bullying, coercion, and harmful sexual behaviour.
- **Consent and bodily autonomy**, taught in a developmentally appropriate way.

- **Online harm**, including exposure to misogyny, pornography, and harmful ideologies.
- **Peer pressure and grooming**, both online and offline.
- **Commercial exploitation**, including financial manipulation and data misuse.

Jigsaw's updated 2025 materials include **video content**, **teacher guidance**, and **pupil-led discussions** to support sensitive topics without placing undue pressure on staff. [RSHE Guide...5 - Jigsaw]

The Four Cs of Online Safety

Jigsaw integrates the **Four Cs framework** to help children navigate digital risks:

- **Content** – Teaching children to critically evaluate online material, including misinformation, disinformation, and AI-generated content.
- **Contact** – Helping children recognise unsafe interactions and respond to grooming or peer manipulation.
- **Conduct** – Promoting respectful online behaviour and addressing cyberbullying and harassment.
- **Commerce** – Educating children about financial exploitation, scams, and the commercialisation of online platforms.

Inclusive and Trauma-Informed Delivery

- Lessons use **child-preferred language** and avoid labels unless necessary for safeguarding clarity.
- Content reflects **diverse families, cultures, and identities**, supporting inclusion and belonging.
- Staff are supported with **CPD**, **ready-to-teach resources**, and **parent communication materials** to ensure confident and consistent delivery.

Whole-School Impact

Jigsaw's approach fosters a **whole-school ethos of kindness, safety, and respect**, reinforced through assemblies, songs, and shared language. This helps embed safeguarding principles into everyday school life and ensures that children feel safe, heard, and supported.

6.5 Online Safety

Online Safety: Preventing and Responding to Child-on-Child Abuse in Digital Spaces

Children increasingly interact online through social media, gaming platforms, messaging apps, and educational tools. While these environments offer opportunities for learning and connection, they also present risks that can lead to child-on-child abuse. This section outlines how Pinvin C of E Academy addresses these risks, with reference to the **Four Cs of Online Safety**: **Content, Contact, Conduct, and Commerce**.

Our Approach

- We use **child-preferred language** when discussing online safety and avoid labels unless necessary for safeguarding clarity.
- All staff receive training on digital safeguarding, including recognising signs of online abuse and responding appropriately.
- We work in partnership with parents and carers to promote consistent messages about online safety at home and in school.
- Children are empowered to speak up about online experiences and are supported in a non-judgmental, trauma-informed way.

1. Content: Exposure to Harmful or Misleading Information

Children may encounter:

- **Misinformation**: False or misleading information shared without harmful intent.
- **Disinformation**: Deliberately false content designed to deceive or manipulate.
- **Conspiracy Theories**: Narratives that can distort reality, foster mistrust, and isolate children from peers or trusted adults.

We educate children to critically evaluate online content and encourage open discussions about what they see online. Staff are trained to identify signs that a child may be influenced by harmful narratives and respond with sensitivity and support.

2. Contact: Risk of Harmful Interactions

Children may be exposed to:

- **Online Grooming**: Manipulative behaviours by peers or adults aiming to exploit or abuse.
- **Peer Pressure**: Encouragement or coercion to engage in risky or harmful online behaviours, including sharing explicit images or participating in bullying.

We promote safe digital communication and teach children how to recognise and report inappropriate contact. Safeguarding procedures are in place to respond swiftly to concerns, including peer-to-peer grooming.

3. Conduct: Behaviour That Causes Harm

Children may:

- Engage in or be targeted by **cyberbullying**, **harassment**, or **exclusion**.
- Share harmful content or participate in abusive group chats or forums.

We foster a culture of respectful online behaviour and provide clear guidance on acceptable conduct. When incidents occur, we respond proportionately, ensuring support for all children involved and avoiding unnecessary labelling unless required for safeguarding clarity.

4. Commerce: Exploitation Through Online Platforms

Children may be vulnerable to:

- **Commercial Exploitation**: Pressure to spend money on games, apps, or influencers.
- **Data Exploitation**: Sharing personal information that may be used for marketing or manipulation.

We educate children about online advertising, in-app purchases, and the value of personal data. Staff monitor for signs of financial exploitation and work with families to promote safe online habits.

6.5a Online Bullying

Online Bullying is the use of technology (social networking, messaging, text messages, e-mail, chat rooms etc.) to harass threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as stated above.

- Online bullying can take many forms
- Abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites
- Sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- Stealing someone's online identity
- Spreading rumours online
- Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chatrooms or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages

- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm
- Pressuring children to send sexual messages or engaging in sexual conversations

6.6 Sharing nude and Semi-Nude Images and Videos

The term "sharing nude and semi-nude images and videos" refers to the creation, possession and sharing of images or videos of children that are nude or semi-nude. Staff should follow DfE and UKCIS guidance and immediately report concerns to the DSL.

Upskirting: typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification,or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

This must always be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

6.7 Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are several different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as partof a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

6.8 Prejudiced Behaviour

The term prejudice-related bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – for example disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues ofcare, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity.

6.9 Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts ofphysical or sexual abuse.

The abusive teen usesthis pattern of violent and coercive behaviour, in a heterosexual or same gender relationship, to gain power and maintain control over the partner. This abuse may be child sexual exploitation.

6.10 Gender-questioning Children

The school recognises that children who are questioning their gender may be vulnerable to bullying, harassment and other forms of child-on-child abuse. Concerns will be managed through safeguarding procedures, with the welfare of the child remaining paramount.

7 Generative AI

Use of Generative AI in the Context of Child-on-Child Abuse

As generative AI tools become increasingly accessible to children through apps, websites, and social platforms, it is essential to recognise both the opportunities and risks they present in relation to child-on-child abuse. This section outlines our approach to safeguarding children from harm associated with the use and misuse of generative AI technologies.

Children should be aware that AI tools can create, alter or manipulate images and videos of others without consent. The creation, sharing or possession of AI-generated nude or semi-nude imagery of another child will be treated as a safeguarding concern and may constitute child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, bullying or criminal behaviour.

Potential Risks

Generative AI can be used in ways that contribute to child-on-child abuse, including:

- **Misinformation and Disinformation**: AI-generated content may spread false narratives, reinforce harmful stereotypes, or promote conspiracy theories that influence children's beliefs and behaviours.
- **Manipulative Content Creation**: Children may use AI tools to create fake messages, images, or videos (e.g., deepfakes) to bully, harass, or deceive peers.
- **Online Grooming and Peer Pressure**: AI chatbots and avatars may be used to simulate peer interactions or manipulate children into unsafe behaviours.
- **Commercial Exploitation**: Children may be targeted by AI-driven advertising or encouraged to spend money on AI-generated content, often without understanding the implications.

Safeguarding Through the Four Cs of Online Safety

We apply the **Four Cs framework** to guide our response to generative AI risks:

1. Content

- We educate children about the difference between human-created and AI-generated content.
- Children are taught to critically evaluate digital media and recognise when content may be misleading, harmful, or fabricated.

2. Contact

- We monitor for AI-enabled impersonation or simulated peer contact that could lead to grooming or abuse.
- Children are supported to report suspicious or uncomfortable interactions, including those involving AI-generated personas.

3. Conduct

- We promote responsible use of AI tools and discourage harmful behaviours such as using AI to create bullying content or spread false information.
- Incidents involving AI misuse are treated seriously and addressed through safeguarding procedures, with support for both the child harmed and the child displaying harmful behaviour.

4. Commerce

- Children are made aware of the commercial nature of many AI platforms, including in-app purchases and data collection.
- We work with families to promote safe and informed use of AI tools, including privacy settings and parental controls.

Our Approach

- Staff are trained to understand the implications of generative AI in safeguarding contexts.
- Children are taught digital literacy skills that include ethical and safe use of AI technologies.
- We use child-preferred language when discussing incidents involving AI and avoid labels unless necessary for safeguarding clarity.

- Any use of AI within the setting (e.g., for learning or creativity) is carefully monitored and aligned with safeguarding principles.

8 Expected Staff Action

Staff should consider the seriousness of the case and make a quick decision whether to informthe Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately before taking any further in-school actions.

9 Recognising child-on-child abuse

An assessment of an incident between peers should be completed and consider:

a. Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved
b. Difference in their power or authority in relation to age, race, gender, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
c. All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
d. Whether the behaviour involved inappropriate sexual knowledge or motivation
e. What was the degree of physical aggression, intimidation, threatening behaviour or bribery?
f. The effect on the victim
g. Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
h. The child or young person's motivation or reason for the behaviour, if they admit that it occurred
i. Whether this was a one-off incident, or longer in duration

It is important to deal with a situation of peer abuse immediately and sensitively. It is necessary togather the information as soon as possible to get the true facts. It is equally important to deal withit sensitively and think about the language used and the impact of that language on both the children and the parents when they become involved. Avoid language that may create a 'blame' culture and leave a child labelled.

Staff will talk to the children in a calm and consistent manner. Staff will not be prejudiced,judgmental, dismissive or irresponsible in dealing with such sensitive matters.

The DSL will monitor incidents for emerging patterns, themes, locations, times, groups or individuals that may indicate wider safeguarding risks.

9.1 Taking Action

- Always take complaints seriously
- Gain a statement of facts from the pupil(s)
- Assess needs of victim and alleged perpetrator
- Consider referral to Police or Social Care

- Contribute to multi-agency assessments
- Convene a risk management meeting
- Record all incidents and all action taken

9.2 Recording sexualised behaviour

- Be clear, explicit and non-avoidant, and avoid vague statements or euphemisms
- Record as soon as possible, as you can quickly forget or confuse detail
- Follow the prompts on your safeguarding and child protection recording form
- Use proper names for body parts but record exactly any language or vocabulary usedby the child. Use the child's exact words in quotation marks.
- Note where and when the incident happened and whether anyone else was around.

9.3 Gather the Facts

Speak to all the young people involved separately, gain a statement of facts from them and use **consistent language** and **open questions** for each account. Ask the young people to tell you what happened. Use open questions, 'where, when, why, who'. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene?). Donot interrogate or ask leading questions.

9.4 Consider the Intent

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a young person to be able to harmanother?

9.5 Decide on your next course of action

If you believe any young person to be at risk of significant harm you must report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately; they will follow the school's Safeguarding andChild Protection Policy.

If MASH and the police intend to pursue this further, they may ask to interview the young people in school or they may ask for parents to come to school to be spoken to. Itis important to be prepared for every situation and the potential time it may take.

9.6 Informing parents/carers

The best way to inform parents/carers is face to face. Although this may be time consuming, the nature of the incident and the type of harm/abuse a young person may besuffering can cause fear and anxiety to parents/carers whether their child is the child who was harmed or who harmed another.

Is the pupil 13+ and does not want to share with parents? Use the 'Gillick' test and the 'Fraser' guidelines.

NSPCC | Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines

In all circumstances where the risk of harm to the child is evident then the school should encourage the young person to share the information with their parent/carer (they may bescared to tell parents/carers that they are being harmed in any way).

10 Points to consider

10.1 What is the age of the children involved?

How old are the young people involved in the incident and is there any age difference between those involved? In relation to sexual exploration, children under the age of 5, in particular 1-4 year olds who are learning toileting skills may show a particular interest in exploration at around this stage. This, however, should not be overlooked.

10.2 Where did the incident or incidents take place?

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, is more,supervision required within this particular area?

10.3 What was the explanation by all children involved of what occurred?

Can each of the young people give the same explanation of the incident and what is the effect on the young people involved? Is the incident seen to be bullying for example, in which case regular and repetitive? Is the version of one young person different from another and why?

10.4 What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?

Do the young people know/understand what they are doing? E.g. do they have knowledge of body parts, of privacy and that it is inappropriate to touch? Is the young person's explanation in relation to something they may have heard or been learning about that has prompted the behaviour? Is the behaviour deliberate and contrived? Does the young person have understanding of the impact of their behaviour on the other person?

10.5 Repetition

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? In the sameway it must be considered has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

11 Next Steps

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and consider the support and intervention required forthose involved.

11.1 For the young person who has been harmed

What support they require depends on the individual young person. It may be that they wish to seek counselling or one to one support via a mentor. It may also be that they feel able to deal with the incident(s) on their own or with support of family and friends; in which case it isnecessary that this young person continues to be

monitored and offered support should they require it in the future. If the incidents are of a bullying nature, the young person may need support in improving peer groups/relationships with other young people, or some restorative justice work with all those involved may be required.

Other interventions that could be considered may target a whole class or year group for example a speaker on online bullying, relationship abuse etc. It may be that through the continued curriculum of Relationship and Sex Education (from 2020), PSHE andSMSC that certain issues can be discussed and debated more frequently.

If the young person feels particularly vulnerable it may be that a risk assessment can be put in place for them whilst in school so that they have someone named that they can talk to, support strategies for managing future issues and identified services to offer additional support.

11.2 For the young person who has displayed harmful behaviour

It is important to find out why the young person has behaved in such a way. It may be thatthe young person is experiencing their own difficulties and may even have been harmed themselves in a similar way. In such cases support such as one to one mentoring or counselling may also be necessary.

Specialised support from identified services may be necessary through an early help referral and the young person may require additional support from family members.

Once the support required to meet the individual needs of the young person has been met, it is important that the young person receives a consequence for their behaviour. This may be in the form of restorative justice e.g. making amends with the young person they have targeted if this has been some form of bullying. In the cases of sexually harmful behaviour, it may be a requirement for the young person to engage in one-to-one work with a particularservice or agency (if a crime has been committed this may be through the police or youth offending service). If there is any form of criminal investigation ongoing it may be that this young person cannot be educated on site until the investigation has concluded. In which case, the young person will need to be provided with appropriate support and education elsewhere.

It may be that the behaviour that the young person has displayed may continue to pose a risk to others, in which case an individual risk assessment may be required. This should be completed via a multi- agency response to ensure that the needs of the young person and the risks towards others are measured by all those agencies involved including the youngperson and their parents. This may mean additional supervision of the young person or protective strategies if the young person feels at risk of engaging in further inappropriate or harmful behaviour.

The school may also choose a punishment as a consequence, such as exclusion or internal exclusion/inclusion/seclusion for a period of time to allow the young person toreflect on their behaviour.

11.3 After care

It is important that following the incident the young people involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stagethan the incident. It is important to ensure that the young people do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). For this reason, regular reviews with the young people following the incident(s) are imperative.

12 Preventative Strategies

Peer on peer abuse can and will occur on any site even with the most robust policies and supportprocesses. It is important to develop appropriate strategies to proactively prevent peer on peer abuse.

This school has an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. There is a strong and positive PSHE/RSHE curriculumthat tackles such issues as prejudiced behaviour and gives children an open forum to talk things through rather than seek one on one opportunities to be harmful to one another. The school makes sure that 'support and report' signposting is available to young people.

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

Young people are part of changing their circumstances and, through school council and pupil voicefor example, we encourage young people to support changes and develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour'. We involve pupils in the positive ethos in school; one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

Fig.1 Overview of child-on-child abuse

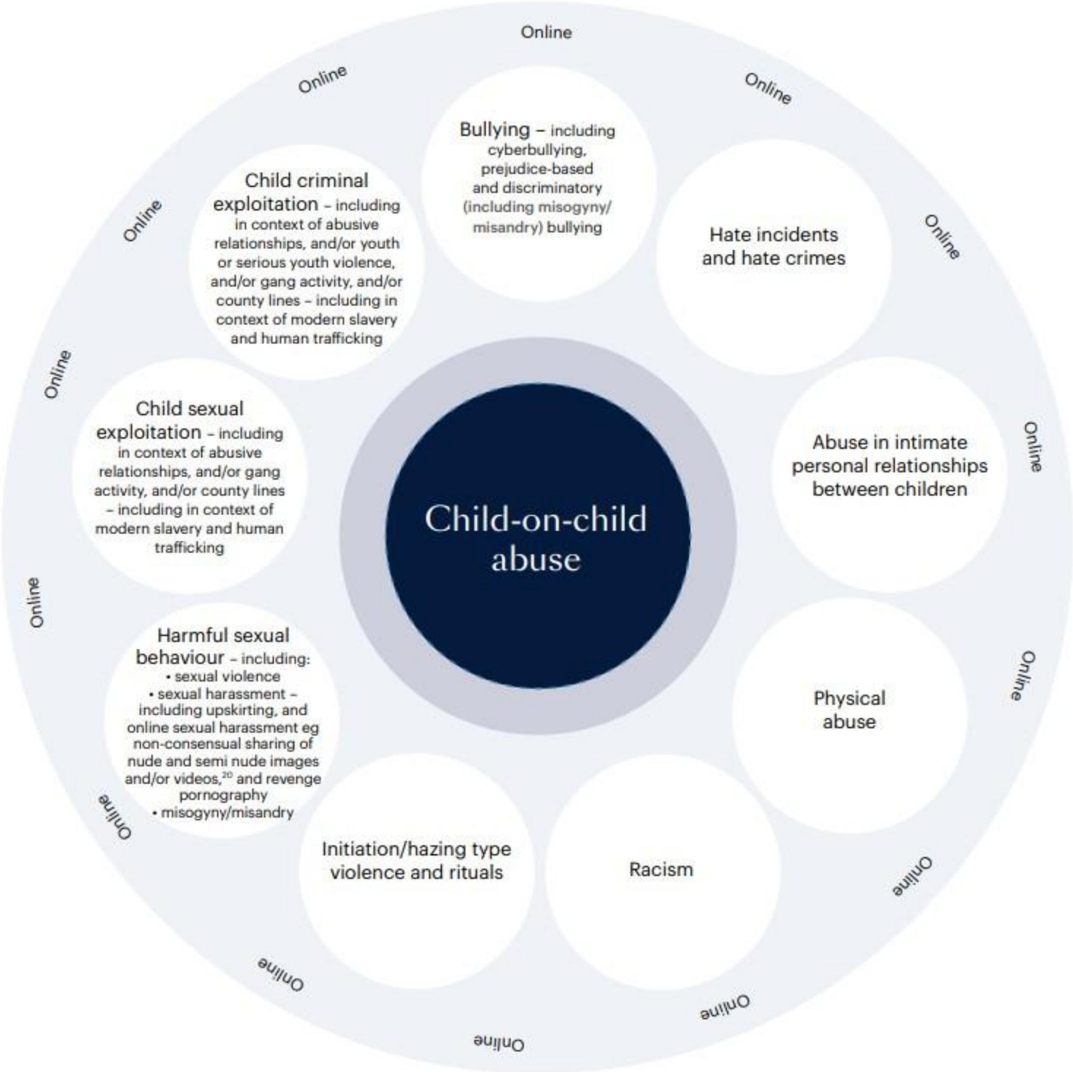
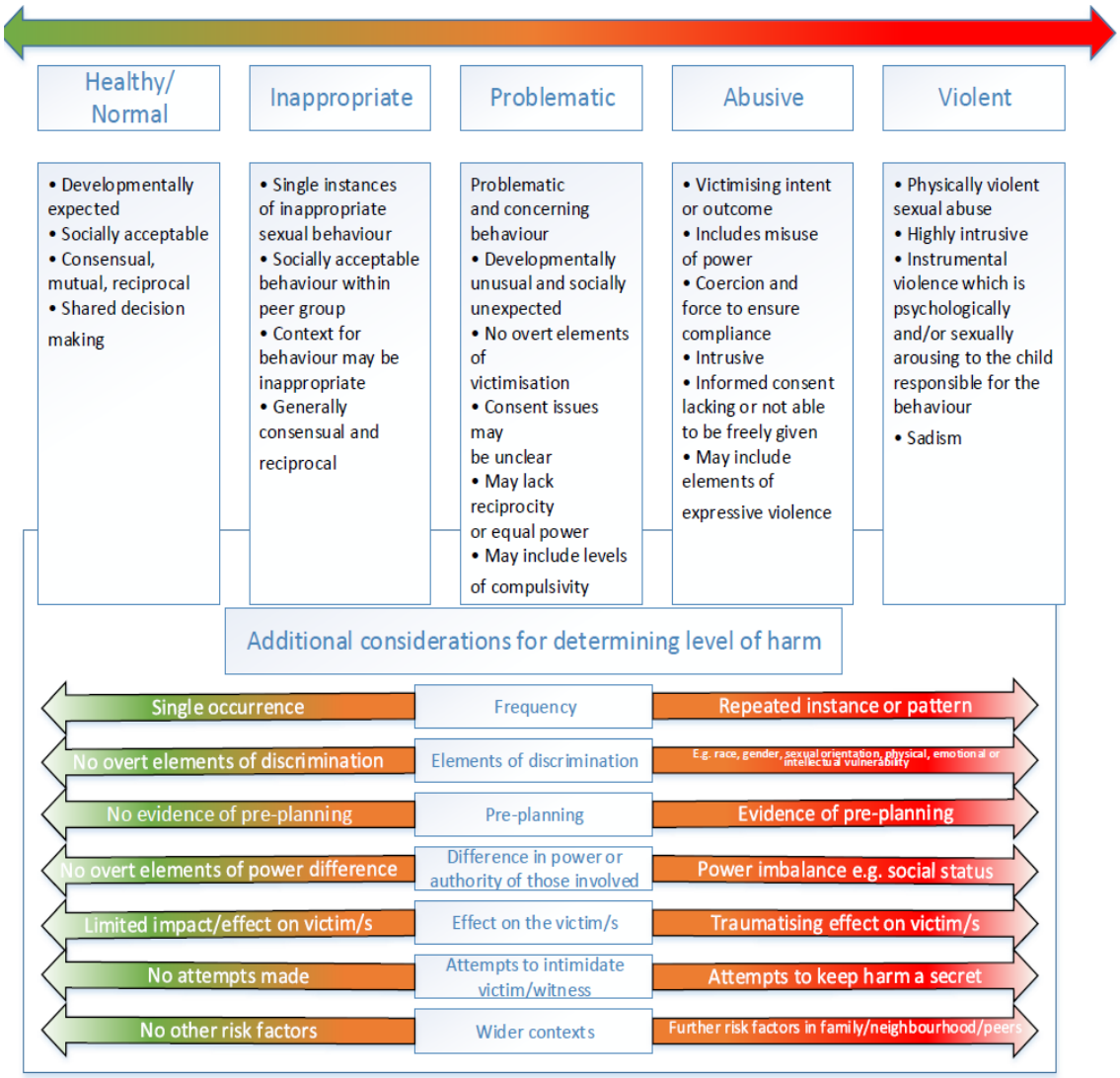


Fig 2 Sexual behaviours continuum model

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent
Developmentally expected Socially acceptable Consensual, mutual, reciprocal Shared decision making	Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group Context for behaviour may be inappropriate Generally consensual and reciprocal	Problematic and concerning behaviours Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected No overt elements of victimisation Consent issues may be unclear May lack reciprocity or equal power May include levels of compulsivity	Victimising intent or outcome Includes misuse of power Coercion and force to ensure victim compliance Intrusive Informed consent lacking, or not able to be freely given by victim May include elements of expressive violence	Physically violent sexual abuse Highly intrusive Instrumental violence which is physiologically and/sexual arousing to the perpetrator Sadism

Fig 3 Additional considerations for determining level of harm



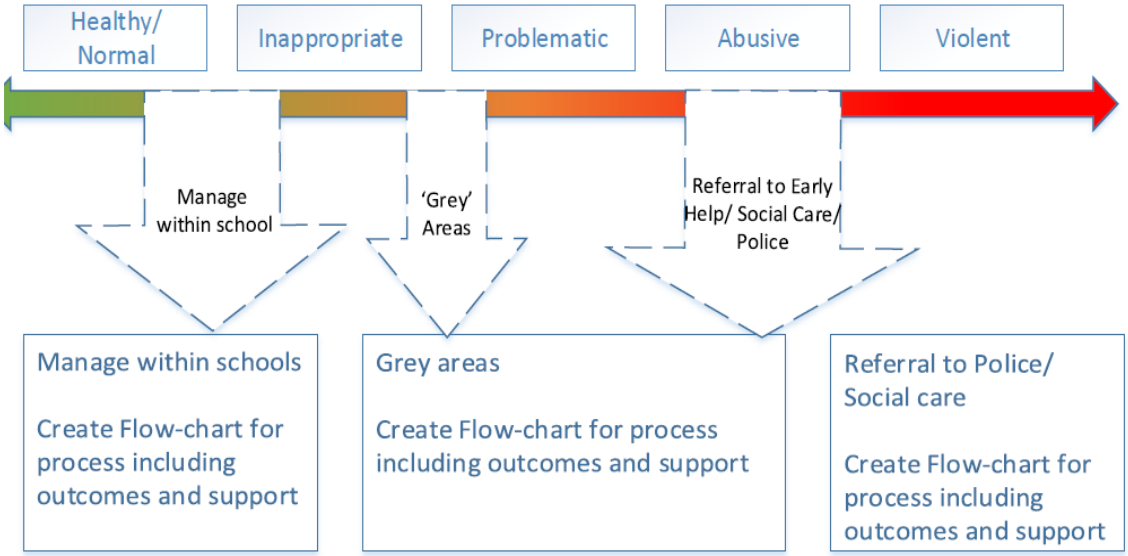
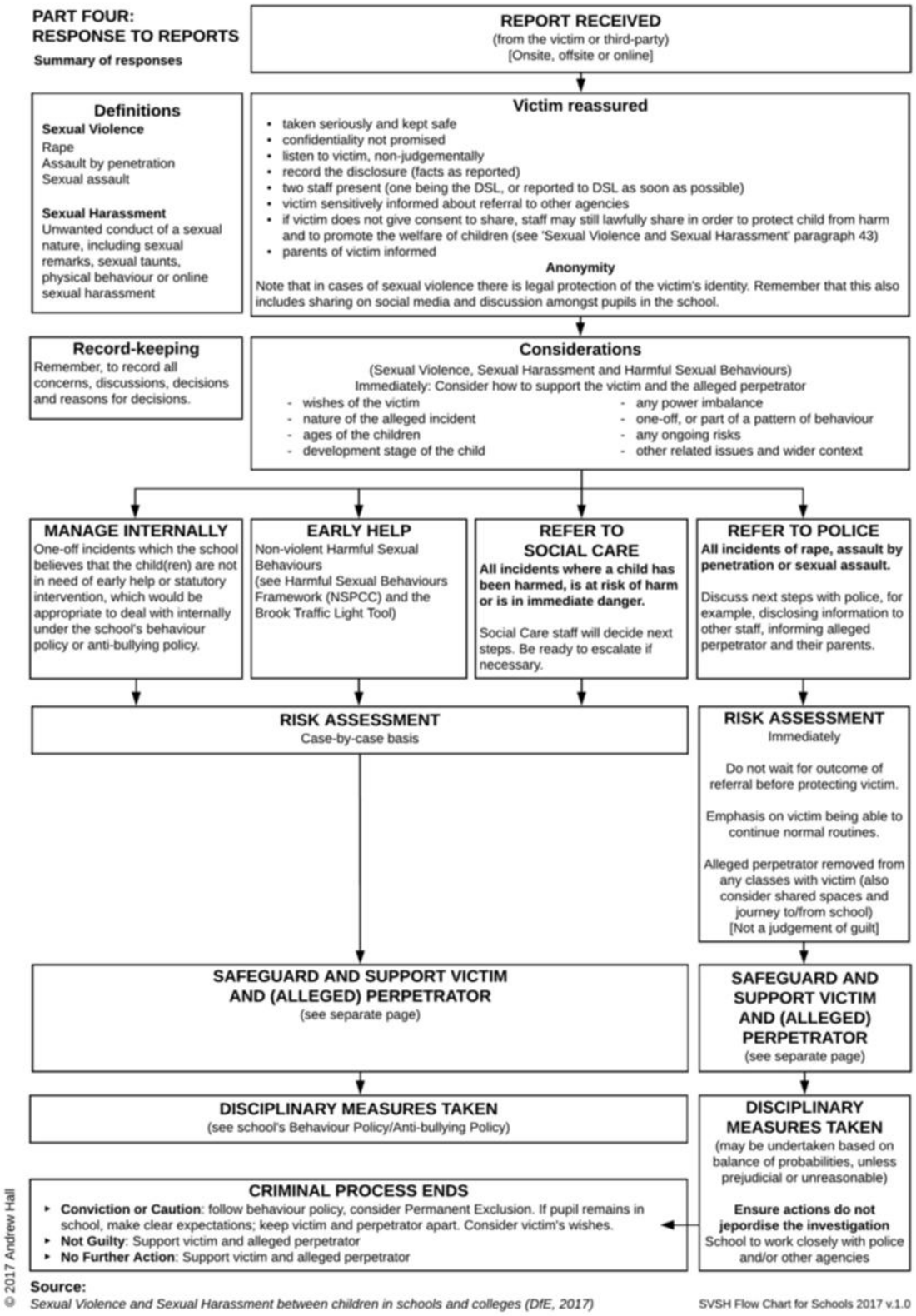


Fig 4 Response to reports



13 Where to go for further information

13.0 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
14.0 Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
15.0 Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools
16.0 Preventing and Tackling Bullying
17.0 Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance
18.0 Teaching Online Safety in Schools
19.0 Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff
20.0 Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and Guidance for Schools
21.0 Sharing Nudes and Semi-Nudes: Advice for Education Settings Working with Children and Young People
22.0 Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools
23.0 Education for a Connected World Framework
24.0 Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools: Filtering and Monitoring
25.0 Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education
26.0 UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) Guidance

ANNEX A

Risk Assessment

Basic information		
Referrer Name and role		
Referrer Contact details (email address and phone number)		
Pinvin C of E Academy(s) for victim(s)		
Pinvin C of E Academy(s) for child/ren alleged to have caused harm		
Did incident occur on school premises? If not where did the incident occur?		

CONSIDERATIONS	RISK (CONSIDER VICTIM, CHILD ALLEGED TO HAVE CAUSED HARM, OTHER PUPILS AND STAFF)	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)	ACTIONS TO REDUCE RISK	REVISED RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM OR LOW)
What is the incident? Who was involved? Where did it happen				
Does this incident constitute a crime? Assault, sexual assault, rape, sharing of indecent images of children, etc. As such has this been referred to the police?				
Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSIE and DFE guidance on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools and colleges.				

Is there an actual or perceived threat from the child alleged to have caused harm to the victim and/or others?				
Is either the victim or the child alleged to have caused harm 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 peer/friendship groups?				
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?				
How can such contact be limited?				
Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?				

Further action taken by the school or college: Please complete for each child involved.

Action	YES/NO	Date
Police informed		
Referral to MASH		
Referral to external support services		
Referral to internal support services		
Referral to CAMHS		
Referral to early help		
Other		

Action	YES/NO	Date
Police informed		
Referral to MASH		
Referral to external support services		
Referral to internal support services		
Referral to CAMHS		
Referral to early help		
Other		