# Hornsea School & Language College

# Peer Conflict / Unpleasantness and Peer on Peer Abuse (Anti-Bullying) Policy

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**Introduction**

*Keeping Children Safe in Education,* September 2021, (KCSiE 2021) maintains emphasis on the duty for schools to guard against the negative impact on children's welfare, happiness and development, caused by peer on peer abuse. In Annex B of *KCSIE* (September 2021, pp 137/8) the following is stated:

> *"Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse) and it can take many forms. It can happen both inside and outside of school/college and online. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer on peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to reports. This can include (but is not limited to): bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); abuse within intimate partner relationships; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexual violence and sexual harassment; consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and/or videos; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party; upskirting and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future"*

Specific additional emphasis is placed in KSCiE 2021 on 'Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges." Please refer to the HSLC Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour, Harassment and Violence between Children Policy' for further information.

Peer on peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group of individuals which can be a one-off incident or repeated over time. It involves behaviour that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. HSLC takes the stance that bullying and the features of bullying behaviour(s) (in line with the accepted definition adopted within this policy – see below), with the inherent capacity to cause harm, is synonymous with and a form of peer on peer abuse. Any form of abuse or harmful behaviour will be dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to those involved. School staff will seek to work positively with parents and carers and where appropriate, partner agencies, to successfully resolve identified difficulties.

Although peer on peer abuse is referenced in the HSLC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with peer on peer abuse necessitates separate policy guidance, but this should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies (see below).

A key priority at Hornsea School and Language College (HSLC) is ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils. To this end a whole school approach has been fashioned, underpinned by zero tolerance of any form of unacceptable behaviour. The Positive Discipline system is the mechanism by which unacceptable and inappropriate behaviours are challenged and managed. This is seen as essential to developing and maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for all. In pursuit of this, school staff will remain vigilant and when identified, respond and work to address all forms of behaviour involving:

1. **instances of unpleasantness / peer conflict**
2. **peer on peer abuse, including harassment and discriminatory behaviours and inappropriate abusive sexual behaviour in all forms**

It is the case that such behaviours can be located on a broad spectrum of severity, impact and risk (potential and actual for victim and perpetrator) and school will always endeavour to make full sense of the situation when making professional judgements and to inform decision making (i.e. in terms of context, pupil response, support required, risk issues and sanctions necessary).

Obviously, and it is fully accepted by school, that situations arising that involve the above behaviours can quite rightly generate a clear strength of feeling and an equally strong desire for issues to be addressed. But it is also clear that terminology in relation to 1. and 2. above can be confusing and

can overlap. As such, it is important to be clear about how such behaviours are defined and what the pertinent characteristics are and what the warranted response is. For example, incidents that may initially be described as 'bullying' may in fact be more accurately described as "instances of unpleasantness / peer conflict".

In recent years there has been growing recognition that children can suffer significant harm, and abuse, at the hands of other children or young people. There is an increased understanding of the negative impact of these behaviours and potential for harm coupled with an appreciation of the potential prevalence within education settings – particularly and more recently with regard to all types of peer on peer abuse and sexually inappropriate / abusive behaviour. Specific concerns are highlighted in KCSiE, 2021 in the form of *Part 5: Child on child sexual violence and harassment.*

Our aim is to ensure that the response of school to alleged incidents (that may be highly charged situations and very complex) is characterised by decision making that is evidence based, thorough, consistent, fair, balanced and informed. This approach underpins the whole school approach and commitment to maintaining the safeguarding culture and inclusive ethos of HSLC and our duty of care in relation to dealing with any form of such unacceptable behaviour(s) that become evident within the school community.

This policy documents the HSLC policy in relation to behaviour(s) involving unpleasantness / peer conflict, bullying and peer on peer abuse. It reflects a belief such behaviour(s) are not acceptable and that it is best prevented through the development of a school wide ethos based on mutual respect, fairness and equality. Staff model and champion these values and seek to fashion an environment in which pupils reflect this stance through their own attitudes and behaviours.

This is stance is further reinforced through the school's continued efforts to instil the importance of respect, tolerance and acceptance through the RESPECT campaign and the British Values agenda. It also acknowledges that behaviours involving unpleasantness / peer conflict, bullying and peer on peer abuse behaviour are problematic for the victim and perpetrator alike and embodies support and management strategies that are supportive, pragmatic and non-oppressive.

Staff when identifying or when made aware of such problematic behaviour(s) will make every effort to act promptly, consistently, fairly and in a structured manner to address and resolve difficulties and any safeguarding issues emerging (action taken will be in accordance with the HSLC Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy). Parents / carers will be kept fully informed and follow up monitoring and review will take place to ensure that issues are satisfactorily addressed and remain resolved. HSLC has established procedures for managing safeguarding and pastoral related concerns along with problematic behaviour.

**Where appropriate, relevant law, statutory guidance and HSLC policies have been used to inform the creation of this policy.**

This includes:

- The Children Act 1989
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (DfE)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2021) (DfE)
- Ofsted Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges, June 2021
- Sexting in Schools and Colleges.(UKCCIS)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (HMG)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (2017) (DfE)
- HSLC Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- HSLC Behaviour Policy
- HSLC Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy
- HSLC Positive Discipline Policy

**The following key principles, drawn from KCSiE 2021, guide the approach of HSLC**

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at HSLC is the responsibility of *all* staff.
- HSLC adopts a wholes school approach based upon zero tolerance of any form of abuse and inappropriate behaviour
- Staff should always consider what is in the best interests of pupils
- No single staff member can have a full picture of each child and so prompt action and sharing of information is crucial.
- Staff should be aware that abusive behaviour amongst peers can put children in danger; abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up", or "having a laugh".
- Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers and all staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This may include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyber bullying) gender based violence/sexual assaults, youth produced sexual imagery, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying
- Such abuse should be dealt with as seriously as abuse by an adult and must be subject to the same child protection procedures. Abusive behaviour can happen to any pupil in a school setting and may be perpetrated by a child of the same or different sex.
- Regarding any safeguarding issue, all members of the community are asked to cultivate an understanding that 'it could happen here' and be prepared to 'think the unthinkable'
- The alleged perpetrator is likely to have considerable vulnerability and unmet needs as well as posing a risk of harm to other children. It is likely that perpetrators will have suffered considerable disruption in their lives and may have witnessed or been subject to physical or sexual abuse. They may have committed other similar offences and may have problems with their educational development. They may therefore also be at risk of harm and in need of protection and any plans to reduce the risk posed by the perpetrator must take in account their own needs
- Finally, staff are aware of the crucial importance of sharing any concerns immediately to allow a timely response and allowing support and management of any risk to be made available as soon as possible

**Unpleasantness between pupils / peer conflict, bullying and peer on peer abuse**

There is a spectrum of potential unpleasant behaviours and conflict between peers that may or may not reach the threshold for being classified as Bullying or indeed Peer on Peer abuse / safeguarding concerns. Each incident(s) will be viewed according to the circumstances and supporting evidence and responded to in line with this, in an attempt to ensure a "proportionate" response. This may involve seeking guidance from relevant partner agencies in respect of safeguarding concerns identified and on occasions where criminal offences may have been committed.

**1. Unpleasantness between pupils / peer conflict**

HSLC has a large and diverse school community numbering over 1000 pupils. Whilst regrettable, it is inevitable that on occasions, individual pupils will find themselves in situation where conflict may arise. This could involve behaviours ranging from incidents that are easily managed within school pastoral / behaviour structures to more significant issues that require a higher level of response and follow up after the initial disclosure or information sharing.

This would normally involve behaviours that do meet the expectations of the HSLC RESPECT campaign (See Appendix 1) and would as a result initially at least be brought to the attention of and addressed by the Pastoral Team. This will often involve work with individual pupils (or groups) to resolve differences, working in a restorative manner wherever possible.

When deemed appropriate, sanctions in line with the Positive Discipline and HSLC Behaviour Policy system will be applied, but this is not a default position and every case will be reviewed on individual circumstances and often, the response of the pupils involved to the intervention will be factored in. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead monitor all incidents categorised under this section – 'Unpleasantness between pupils / peer conflict' – and will take a view as to whether concerns need to be escalated to an instance deemed to be 'Bullying' or 'Peer on Peer abuse'.

## Bullying and Peer on Peer Abuse

There is no clear cut boundary between incidents that should be regarded as of a bullying nature that can and should initially be dealt with by the HSLC behavioural and disciplinary systems and those that meet the threshold for being deemed as abusive and as such, generating potential safeguarding concerns. HSLC takes the stance that bullying and the features of bullying, with the inherent capacity to cause harm, is a form of peer on peer abuse.

However, If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be categorised or dealt with as abuse: unkindness, physical fighting and harassment between children are not always or inevitably seen as child protection issues or as peer on peer abuse. This is a matter of professional judgement.

HSLC adopt the following definition of Bullying:

> *"behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally"*

(Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department of Education, July 2017).

Bullying behaviours can include a range of behaviours including physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, cyber and racial.

Any behaviour(s) that are judged by school to meet the above **'bullying'** definition will be thoroughly investigated. This will be overseen by a member of the HSLC Senior Leadership Team. A member of the Safeguarding Team (DSL and / or DDSL Safeguarding Officer) will take the lead in coordinating the school response. This will involve a systemic approach

Bullying when proven, will be viewed as a failure to comply with school expectations outlined in the HSLC Behaviour Policy and RESPECT campaign and as such is likely to involve school sanctions even though the HSLC approach is based upon a supportive / preventative stance as opposed to a punitive one.

**PEER ON PEER** involves a potential escalation of concerns and is seen as behaviour by an individual or group of individuals, which can be a significant one-off incident or repeated over time. It may be *appropriate to regard peer on peer behaviour as abusive* if harm is caused because:

· There is a significant **POWER IMBALANCE** between the young people concerned. The abuse of children is often constructed around an age differential between the abuser and the abused, but in cases of peer-on-peer abuse this may not always be the case. In such circumstances, power imbalances can manifest in other ways, for example gender, social status within peer groups, intellectual ability, physical development, economic wealth, social marginalisation, SEND factors etc. It is important to note that the perpetrator and/or victim

may well be subject to power imbalances with other individuals in an incident of abuse and so it is important to investigate any incident as fully as possible.

· The perpetrator has **<u>REPEATEDLY</u>** tried to harm one or more other children.

· There are concerns about the **<u>INTENTION</u>** of the alleged perpetrator. If evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim, this should be regarded as abusive whether severe harm was caused or not. The extent to which a deliberate or contrived situation has been created for a young person to be able to harm another is carefully considered.

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

As result of the clear potential for serious harm and distress caused by inappropriate sexual behaviour, harassment and violence, incidents of this nature between pupils will be viewed initially as incidents of Peer on Peer abuse / serious one off incidents, even if the criteria of power imbalance, intent and repetition (in particular) are not fully met.

Different forms of abuse are well documented in and the HSLC Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which can be found on the school website. It is the case that peer on peer abuse can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups steered by a dislike for a person's:

· race
· religion
· gender
· sexual orientation
· special educational needs or disabilities

or where a child:

· is adopted or in care;
· has caring responsibilities;
· is suffering from a health problem;
· is frequently on the move (e.g. those from military families or the travelling community)
· is experiencing a personal or family crisis
· has actual or perceived differences, (e.g. physical or cultural differences)

Examples of peer on peer abuse include physical, emotional, sexual, cyber abuse and neglect:

· Teenage relationship abuse (both physical and emotional),
· Sexual touching/harassment, comments, sexual violence or assault
· Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals,
· Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery),
· Prejudiced behaviours such as sexism, racism and social marginalisation,
· Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm.

Please see Appendix 2 for further information relating to Types of Peer on Peer Abuse and Appendix 3 for Sexual Harm and Harassment

Issues surrounding Honour Based Violence (HBV), Forced Marriage and Radicalisation may also be relevant where coercion or power imbalances are involved between peers. It is also important to recognise that peer on peer abuse may well involve pupils in school and young persons and children in other contexts, thus making a full range of abuse types possible.

When dealing with any disclosure of abuse it is important to remember the three bullet points above regarding

- **Power**
- **Frequency**
- **Intention**

The extent to which any victim has given consent is also important and if indeed 'consent' can be understood to have been given.

## Contextual Safeguarding

Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to peer on peer abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of peer on peer abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences. This can be done by adopting a 'contextual safeguarding' approach and by ensuring that our response to incidents of peer on peer abuse takes into account any potential complexity.

This Policy and procedures encapsulate a contextual safeguarding approach, which:

- is an approach to safeguarding children that recognises their experiences of significant harm in extra-familial contexts and seeks to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;
- recognises that as children enter adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time outside of the home in public environments (including on the internet) within which they may experience abuse; and
- considers interventions to change the systems or social conditions of the environments in which abuse has occurred.

## Bullying which occurs outside the school premises

We will follow the procedures outlined in the HSLC Behaviour Policy and our disciplinary powers to address the conduct of pupils when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.  This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, off site during lunchtimes, during the evening at weekends or during the school holidays. Where abuse outside of school is reported to the school, we will investigate and take appropriate action. We will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police if we believe an offence has taken place.

## Process

1. School made aware and log of concerns (this may be from a variety of sources)
2. Information logged, shared within Inclusion, Safeguarding and Pastoral Support structure and reviewed to establish level of concern, type of behaviour (category), immediate risk / safeguarding / support issues to be addressed and how to progress and level of support needed to address concerns
3. Any behaviours that are judged by school to meet the above criteria will be thoroughly investigated (form example, taking statements, checking school CCTV).  This will be overseen by a member of the HSLC Senior Leadership Team, and a member of the Safeguarding Team (Deputy DSL and / or Safeguarding Officer) will take the lead in coordinating the school response
4. School decision making response formulated, recorded and put in place – involving designated staff to lead and undertake specific work – investigate / report / feedback / share information via contact home / complete identified follow up work / establish safety and risk management plans where necessary for those involved / follow up review (pupils / home)

5. Consider and discuss referral to partner agency or Safeguarding and Partnership Hub (SaPH) contact if safeguarding concerns identified or need for partner agency involvement via Early Help Assessment process.
6. Consider school based intervention e.g. ELSA or targeted work to support identified need (victim and perpetrator)
7. Confirmation of how to access ongoing support if required and agreed arrangements and expectations
8. Subsequent post incident review to ensure that concerns remain resolved

## Preventative Strategies

At HSLC we recognise that it is important to develop appropriate strategies in order to prevent the issue of peer on peer abuse rather than manage the issues in a reactive way.

Firstly, and most importantly we recognise that peer on peer abuse can occur on any site even with the most stringent of policies and support mechanisms. In which case it is important to continue to recognise and manage such risks and learn how to improve and move forward with strategies in supporting young people to talk about any issues and through sharing information with all staff.

This is done by ensuring that we have an open environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them. This is linked to the requirement explicitly placed upon staff to be "*useful*", "*kind*" and to "*make a difference*" to the lives of the young people attending HSLC. This is supported by our strong and positive Life Studies curriculum (PHSE) that 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.

We also strive to have an open and honest environment and school community where all staff feel confident and able to talk about issues and challenge perceptions of young people including use of inappropriate language and behaviour towards one another. All staff treat each other with respect, and everyone is encouraged to listen to each others' views, needs and concerns.

Finally, our pupils are given a voice in changing their circumstances and that of the procedures within school. In 2019/20, HSLC is developing student participation and plans a school council to build upon the 'pupil voice' arrangements, this will encourage pupils to support changes and aims to develop 'rules of acceptable behaviour' and will help to create a positive ethos in school and one where all young people understand the boundaries of behaviour before it becomes abusive.

### Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually and by exception should legislation or statutory guidance change.

**R**IGHT — Place, time, **equipment**, **uniform** and ATL

**E**TIQUETTE — **Moving** around school in a **sensible way**

**S**WEARING — **Express** yourself in an **appropriate** way

**P**OLITE — **Manners** - saying **please** and **thankyou**

**E**STEEM — Be **respectful**, **tolerant** and **proud**

**C**OURTESY — Being **kind** to others

**T**IDY — Put **litter** in the bin, leave **classrooms as you find them**

## Appendix 2 - Types of Peer on Peer Abuse

There are many forms of abuse that can occur between peers and the following list is not exhaustive:

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may include hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action to take or sanctions to introduce.

### Bullying – physical, name calling, homophobic etc.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Young people who bully and those who are bullied can have long-term problems.

To be considered as 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. .

### Cyberbullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a medium for cyberbullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience. Cyberbullying involves the use of mobile devices, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc. to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as outlined in 3.2 above.

Cyberbullying can fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 (Section 1) which states that a person who sends electronic communications which are "indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim" would be deemed to be have committed an offence. The Communications Act 2003 (Section 127) further supports this and states that a person is guilty of an offence if he/she sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character or if for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another he/she sends a message by means of a public electronic communications network knowing that the message is false.

If the behaviour involves the taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, the school will have no option but to involve the Police to investigate these allegations.

### Bullying which occurs outside the school premises

We will follow the procedures outlined in the Whole School Behaviour Policy and our disciplinary powers to address the conduct of pupils when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This may include bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, off site during lunchtimes, during the evening at weekends or during the school holidays. Where abuse outside of school is reported to the school, we will investigate and take appropriate action. We will also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the Police if we believe an offence has taken place.

### Sexting

Sexting / youth produced sexual imagery is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video. This includes sending 'nude pics' or 'rude pics' or 'nude selfies'. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

Once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and the image could end up anywhere. By having in their possession or distributing to others indecent images of a person under 18, many young people are not aware that they could be committing a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Any direct disclosure by a pupil (male or female) will be taken very seriously. A child who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in school is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves. When an incident involving sexting / youth produced sexual imagery comes to a school's attention we will follow the guidance as set out in the UKCCIS publication Sexting in Schools and Colleges : Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.

### Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a school or sports team etc. Hazing can also be used as initiation into a street or other 'gang'. There are several different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it 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 or established members of the organisation or 'gang', because they have all experienced this as part of a 'rite of passage'. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse and harassment.

### Prejudiced bullying/behaviour

The term prejudiced-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 – in particular, prejudices related to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

### Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. Abuse can occur online and offline and is never acceptable.

### Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children

**Sexual Violence** - Rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

**Sexual Harassment** - Sexual comments, sexual "jokes" or taunting, physical behaviour, online sexual harassment, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes images and videos, sharing of unwanted explicit content, up skirting, sexualised online bullying, unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media), sexual exploitation (coercion and threats

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the

experience stressful and distressing. Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to highly abnormal and abusive. We recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour.

A model continuum to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children can be used when seeking to understand a pupil's sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it. This model is replicated below in Appendix 3. In relation to any reports or disclosures of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children we will:

- make it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- challenge behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and other private areas of the body.

Ultimately any decisions on how to proceed with an allegation of sexual violence and sexual harassment will be made on a case by case basis with the DSL (or deputy) taking a leading role and using their professional judgement, supported by other agencies, such as children's social care and the Police as required.

Some situations, however, are statutorily clear:
- 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;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law; and
- creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal (see above info – Sexting / UKCCIS publication Sexting in Schools and Colleges : Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.). This includes children making and sharing sexual images and videos of themselves.

## Appendix 3 - Model continuum for sexual behaviour

This model relates exclusively to sexual behaviour and is not exhaustive. The Brook Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool can also be very helpful in identifying sexual behaviours by children. Staff should always use their professional judgement and discuss any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Where an (alleged) incident involves a report of sexually harmful behaviour, staff should consult the DfE's Advice 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges : advice for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (May 2018).

|  | HEALTHY | PROBLEMATIC | HARMFUL |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Type of sexual behaviour** | Age appropriate, mutual, exploratory | Not age appropriate, sexualised language, touching under clothing | Penetrative, aggressive, violent, highly coercive |
| **2. Context** | Open, spontaneous, playful, light hearted | No secrecy or force but other child/ren are uncomfortable | Planned, secretive, elements of threat or coercion |
| **3. Child's emotional response when challenged** | Embarrassed, takes responsibility, understands the impact on others | Ashamed, may struggle to accept responsibility but can show empathy / remorse | Angry, denying, aggressive – cannot take responsibility, blames others |
| **4. Response of other children / adults** | Engaging freely, happy, may be embarrassed | Uncomfortable but not fearful | Unhappy, distressed, frightened – possible physical injuries |
| **5. Relationship between the children** | Similar age / ability, would normally play together | Would not normally play together and / or one child may be more in control than the other | Clear power differences – age, size, status, gender, strength, personality, ability |
| **6. Frequency of the behaviour** | Ad hoc or single incidents | Intermittent but may be increasing in frequency | Frequent and disproportionate to other aspects of their life |
| **7. Persistence** | Behaviour is ad hoc and the child is easily diverted | Recurring behaviour and difficult to distract / deter but child is responsive | Compulsive / cannot be distracted / appears to be a means to gain comfort or attention |
| **8. Background information** | No known concerns | Few or some concerns about the family / other difficult behaviours | Poor attachments / previous abuse / trauma / fire setting / abuse of animals / poor peer relationships |

## APPENDIX 4 - Useful Resources and Contacts:

**THE ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE (ABA):**
Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues
http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

**KIDSCAPE:**
Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and parents about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people.
http://www.kidscape.org.uk

**NSPCC**
Helpline to talk to child protection officers
0808 800 5000
Text to 88858

**CHILDLINE**
24 hour helpline for children and young people under 18 providing confidential counselling
0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

**PAPYRUS**
Offers a helpline for anyone who is concerned that a young person is suicidal
0870 170 4000
www.papyrus-uk.org

**MIND**
Information on mental health
030 123 3393
www.mind.org.uk

**NHS 24**
24 hour advice
08454 24 24 24

**SAMARITANS**
Confidential emotional support for anybody who is in crisis
08457 90 90 90
www.samaritans.org.uk

Think U Know: resources provided by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) for children and young people, parents, carers and teachers.

Barnardos: through it's LGBTQ hub, offers guidance to young people, parents and teachers on how to support LGBTQ students and tackle prejudice based bullying

Mencap: Represents people with learning disabilities, with specific advice and information for people who work with children and young people.

Educate against Hate: provides teachers , parents and school leaders practical advice and information on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation

Disrespect NoBody: a Home Office led campaign which helps young people understand what a healthy relationship is.