

## **KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN EDUCATION 2020 SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES.**

All staff at Wathen Grange School have an awareness of safeguarding issues through regular training and briefings, some of which are listed below. We enable our staff to be aware that these behaviours put children in danger. All staff are aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is the expert within our School and is there to support staff, volunteers and Governance body further.

- • Abuse
- • Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues
- • Children and the courts system
- • Children with family members in prison
- • Children missing from education
- • Child missing from home or care
- • Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- • Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- • County Lines
- • Domestic abuse
  
- • Drugs
- • Fabricated or induced illness
- • Faith abuse
- • Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- • Forced marriage
- • Gangs and youth violence
- • Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- • Homelessness
- • Mental health
- • Missing children and adult's strategy
- • Online safety
- • Peer on peer abuse/child on child abuse
- • Private fostering
- • Preventing radicalisation
- • Prevent Duty and Channel
- • Serious violence
- • Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- • Sexting
- • Trafficking
- • Upskirting

## **Behaviours linked to safeguarding issues**

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

## **Children Missing Education**

“All professionals working with children, as well as the wider community can help by remaining vigilant to children’s safety”. The law states every child should be receiving an education, and we stand a better chance of ensuring a child’s safety if we know where and how they are receiving this. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities in England and Wales to make arrangements to identify children and young people of compulsory school age missing education in their area; we work closely to ensure we put appropriate safeguarding responses in place for children who go missing from education.

A child going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of them going missing in future.

Wathen Grange will hold two or more emergency contact numbers for each pupil. It is good practice to give Wathen Grange additional options to make contact with a responsible adult when a child missing education, is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Wathen Grange must notify the Local Authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly after making reasonable enquiries or has been absent without the school’s permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. Wathen Grange (regardless of designation) must also notify the Local Authority of any student who is to be deleted from the admission register because s/he:

- • Has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system (e.g., home education);
- • Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school at which s/he is registered (moved within the city, within the country or moved abroad but failed to notify the school of the change);
- • Displaced as a result of a crisis e.g. domestic violence or homelessness;
- • Has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither s/he nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- • Is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe that s/he will return to the school at the end of that period; or has been permanently excluded. Wathen Grange will demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of children that would be considered ‘missing’.

- **Child Missing from Home or Care**

There are strong links between children involved in sexual exploitation and other behaviours such as running away from home or care, bullying, self-harm, teenage pregnancy, truancy and substance misuse. In addition, some children are particularly vulnerable, for example, children with special needs, those in residential or foster care, those leaving care, migrant children, particularly those who are unaccompanied, those forced into marriage, those involved in gangs and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. The majority of children who go missing are not in care and go missing from their family home. However, children who are looked after are much more likely to run away than those who live at home, and over 50% of young people in care have run away at some point.

Guidance documents:

- [Promoting the Welfare & Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances](#)
- [Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines) forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim – whether she/he has been deceived, because it is not considered possible for children to give informed consent.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

[Safeguarding children who may have been](#) **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Child Sexual Exploitation: - Definition and Guidance, Feb 2017. Gov.uk)

CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, as well as 16 years old who can legally consent to have sex;

- • Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual;
- • Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity;
- • Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both;
- • Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- • May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media);
- • Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse; and Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

The above CCE indicators can also be signs of CSE, as can: -

- • Unexplained gifts or new possessions
- • Association with other young people involved in exploitation
- • Older boyfriends or girlfriends
- • Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- • Changes in emotional well-being
- Misuse of drugs and alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and Regularly missing school or education or do not take part in education

Guidance documents

- • [Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation](#)
- • [Child Sexual Exploitation Definition & Guidance](#)
- • [Promoting the Welfare, Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances](#)
- • [Know about CSE](#)

### **County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism<sup>103</sup> should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Like other forms of abuse and exploitation, county lines exploitation: -

- ● Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years;
- ● Can affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years;
- ● Can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual;
- ● Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence;
- ● Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
  
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
  
- Emotional

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the

abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Domestic abuse affecting young people can also occur within their personal relationships, as well as in the context of their home life. We will signpost and support our children/ young people.

Guidance Documents:

- [Promoting the Welfare & Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances](#)
- [Domestic Violence and Abuse](#)

### **Drugs**

There is evidence that children and young people are increasingly misusing alcohol and illegal drugs. Consequences range from non-attendance and poor attainment at school, poor health, committing crime to support 'habits' and also increased risk of being a victim of violent crime and sexual exploitation.

Guidance Documents:

- • [Working with Parent who misuse substances guidance](#)
- • [Drugs Advise for Schools](#)

### **Fabricated or induced illness**

Fabricated or Induced Illness is a condition whereby a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of their carer, and which is attributed by the adult to another cause.

There may be a number of explanations for these circumstances and each requires careful consideration and review. Concerns about a child's health should be discussed with a health professional who is involved with the child.

Guidance Documents:

- • [Promoting the Welfare & Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances - Section 4R](#)
- • [Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced](#)

### **Homelessness**

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) will be aware of contact details and referral routes into the [Local Housing Authority](#) so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Wathen Grange staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16 year olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and

will require a different level of intervention and support. Children's services will be the lead agency for these young people and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

### **Honour-based Abuse**

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA. Actions

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM is known by several names including "cutting", "female circumcision" or "initiation". The term female circumcision suggests that the practice is similar to male circumcision, but it bears no resemblance to male circumcision, has serious health consequences and no medical benefits.

FGM is also linked to domestic abuse, particularly in relation to "honour-based abuse".

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies

Teachers **must and will** personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they will still consider and discuss any such case with the school's designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers will follow local safeguarding procedures.

Guidance Documents:

- [Promoting the Welfare & Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances](#)
- [Multi Agency Statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)

Further guidance to be found on [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)

### **Forced Marriage**

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived culture practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. All schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

There are some significant differences between the referral of a concern about a young person being forced into marriage and other child protection referrals. Professionals must be aware that sharing information with a young person's parents, extended family or members of their community, could put the young person in a situation of significant risk. Any disclosure that indicates a young person may be facing a forced marriage must be taken seriously by professionals who should also realise that this could be 'one chance to save a life. A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In cases of vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

Guidance Documents:

- • [Promoting the Welfare & Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances](#)
- • [Forced Marriage](#)

### **Mental Health**

Wathen Grange has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood,

adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Guidance Documents:

- [Mental Health & Behaviour in schools](#)

### **Online Safety**

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school or college to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content; being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- contact; being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- conduct; personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Education Guidance Documents:

### [Children's Commissioner Publications](#)

The governance body and Principal have systems in place to limit children' exposure to safeguarding issues through IT. We have filters and monitoring systems in place, and these are regulated, and risk assessed as part of the prevent duty. We have an [online safety policy](#) which identifies the usage and expected behaviour of children/students. As a school we appreciate the value of technology and that appropriate filters are in place, yet this does not lead to unreasonable restrictions which would limit online teaching and safeguarding.

Education at home: - Where children are being asked to learn online at home, our school will refer to and use the links and resources provided by the DfE;  
Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers and Safeguarding in remote education

### **Peer on peer/child on child abuse**

All Wathen Grange School staff are aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: abuse within intimate partner relationships; bullying (including cyber bullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, biting, hair

pulling or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting; upskirting and initiating/ hazing type violence and rituals..

Staff **must challenge** any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour. Staff **should be vigilant** to sexualised/aggressive touching/grabbing particularly towards girls. Behaviours by children should **never be passed off** as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. The DfE states 'peer on peer abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.

Professionals **should not dismiss** abusive behaviour as normal between young people and **should not develop high thresholds** before taking action.' Concerns should be referred to senior staff who may need to consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Victims of peer on peer harm will be supported by the school's pastoral system and referred to specialist agencies if appropriate

School has an anti-bullying policy to guide children, staff and parents.

### **Bullying, including Cyberbullying**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to protect themselves. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- • Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft)
- • Verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling)
- • Emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group)
- • Cyberbullying (including sexting)

### **Private Fostering**

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or immediate relative. If the arrangement is to last, or has lasted, for 28 days or more, it is categorised as private fostering. Close relatives are defined as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), or a stepparent.

People become involved in private fostering for all kinds of reasons. Examples of private fostering include:

- • Children who need alternative care because of parental illness;
- • Children whose parents cannot care for them because their work or study involves long or antisocial hours;
- • Children sent from abroad to stay with another family, usually to improve their educational opportunities;
- • Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children;
- • Teenagers who stay with friends (or other non-relatives) because they have fallen out with their parents;
- • Children staying with families while attending a school away from their home area.

Our staff at Wathen Grange School will notify the DSL/DDSL when they become aware of a private fostering arrangement. There is a mandatory duty on the school to inform Warwickshire Children's Social Care of a private fostering arrangement by contacting First Response who then has a duty to check that the young person is being properly cared for and that the arrangement is satisfactory.

Guidance Documents:

- [Promoting the Welfare & Safety of Children in Specific Circumstances](#)
- [Children Act 1989 – Private Fostering](#)

## Preventing Radicalisation

Children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools' or colleges' safeguarding approach.

- **Extremism** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

- **Radicalisation** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

- **Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

Wathen Grange School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Pupils/students and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability. Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. Wathen Grange School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation must be viewed as a safeguarding concern

and that protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the school's safeguarding duty.

The school's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

## **Prevent Duty and Channel**

### **Prevent**

The school Directors/governors, the Principal and the DSL will assess the level of risk within the school and put actions in place to reduce that risk. Risk assessment may include consideration of the school's SEND policy, the use of school premises by external agencies, integration of students by gender and SEN, anti-bullying policy and other issues specific to the school's profile, community and philosophy.

With effect from 1 July 2015, all schools are subject to a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism" (section 26, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015). This is known as The Prevent Duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads and other senior leaders should familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 57-76, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

There are indicators of vulnerability to radicalisation in Appendix 5.

Our school, like all others, is required to identify a Prevent Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who will be the lead within the organisation for safeguarding in relation to protecting individuals from radicalisation and involvement in terrorism: this will normally be the DSL. The SPOC in our school is Rob Maddox.

Our School will monitor online activity within the school to ensure that inappropriate sites are not accessed by students or staff.

Guidance Documents:

- • [The Prevent Duty](#).
- • [Educate Against Hate](#)

### **Serious Violence**

All staff will be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff will be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the links below:

[Home Office Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults; County Lines](#)

## **Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment**

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 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. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable. It is important that **all** victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support. Staff should be aware that some groups are potentially more at risk. Evidence shows girls, children with SEND and LGBT children are at greater risk.

Staff will be aware of the importance of:

- • Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- • Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment 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 or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.
- Upskirting which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitalia or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

It is important that our school staff are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. 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.

**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.

### **Sexual harassment**

When referring to sexual harassment we mean 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. 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) and displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature; and online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. It may include:
  - Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
  - Sexualised online bullying;
  - Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
  - Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

### **Sexting**

Sexting is when a young person takes an indecent image of them self and sends this to their friends or boy / girlfriends via mobile phones.

The problem is that once taken and sent, the sender has lost control of these images and these images could end up anywhere. They could be seen by your child's future employers, their friends or even by paedophiles.

By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under 18 on to someone else – young people are not even aware that they could be breaking the law as these are offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Guidance Documents:

[Disrespect Nobody • CEOP](#)

## **Upskirting**

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

## **Wathen Grange School Response to a report of Sexual Violence or Sexual Harassment**

The initial response to a report from a child is important. It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. 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.

If staff have a concern about a child or a child makes a report to them, they should follow Wathen Grange School's safeguarding referral process. As is always the case, if staff are in any doubt as to what to do, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). Schools behaviour policy will support any sanctions.

Guidance Document:

- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)