Chadwick High School.

Harmful sexual behaviour policy.

Version 1.

September 2022.

Introduction:

Chadwick High School is committed to a whole school approach to identifying, tackling and responding to child on child abuse, sexual harm/violence and harassment. Chadwick High School has high expectations in relation to safeguarding our pupils.

We recognise that it is normal in a secondary school setting that some pupils will form relationships and will develop sexualised behaviours towards peers. However, sexualised behaviour that is not age appropriate, is harmful or abusive is unacceptable and must be addressed.

We recognise that young people are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers sexually. Any allegation of child on child sexual abuse is taken seriously and we do not tolerate or pass off these behaviours as “banter” or “part of growing up.”

Links to statutory guidance:

* Keeping children safe in education (Department for Education)
* Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school and colleges. (Department for education)

Links to other policies:

* Safeguarding Policy
* SRE policy
* PSHE Policy
* Behaviour policy

Definition:

According to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment guidance from the DfE:

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

Keeping children safe in education define it as:

*“Forcing or enticing a child or a young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may not include non-contact activities such as children looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.*

*The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.”*

What is harmful sexual behaviour?

Harmful sexual behaviour can include:

* Inappropriate or unwanted sexualised touching
* Sexual violence and sexual harassment
* Up-skirting or down topping
* Pressuring, forcing or coercing someone to share nude images
* Sharing of sexual images
* Bullying of a sexual nature
* Using sexually explicit words or phrases.

The PSHE Curriculum:

Relationship sex education (RSE) is used to help pupils understand what harmful sexual behaviour is including peer on peer abuse. Lessons cover the knowledge they need to recognise and report abuse. The curriculum also covers the importance of making sensible decision to stay safe whilst making it clear that if abuse happens it is never the victims fault and that any form of victim blaming will not be tolerated.

Parent/Carers:

It is important that parents and carers understand what is meant by harmful sexual behaviour, and reinforce key messages from school at home. Parents and carers should understand:

● the nature of harmful sexual behaviour

● the effects of harmful sexual behaviour on young people

● the likely indicators that such behaviour may be taking place

● what to do if it is suspected that peer on peer sexual abuse has occurred

As well as speaking to staff further information to support parents and carers in relation to harmful sexual behaviour is available online, including on the NSPCC and Lucy Faithfull Foundation websites.

Staff training.

All staff at Chadwick High School undertake annual safeguarding training where the different types of abuse and neglect are discussed. This includes information about harmful sexual behaviour.

Alongside this the PSHE coordinator Jennifer Pye has received additional training from the PSHE association in order to ensure accurate and safe delivery of the curriculum.

Responding to an incident / allegation.

The wellbeing of our pupils is always central to our response to an allegation or incident of harmful sexual behaviour. Any young person reporting a concern will be treated respectfully. We will reassure them that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. No young person will be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse or made to feel ashamed. Staff will never promise confidentiality to the young persons as the concern will need to be shared further.

The school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (Val Manwaring) must be informed as soon as possible of any incidents. Next steps will be explained to the young person so they understand what will happen, including who will be informed. Where the young person already has Social Care involvement, such as a Looked After Child, a Child In Need or a child with a Child Protection Plan, we will inform the child’s Social Worker and work in partnership with them as appropriate.

Whilst facts are established of the case and start the process of liaising with other agencies as appropriate, we will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises, and where applicable, on transport to and from the school. Our staff will never view, copy, print, share, save an indecent image of a young person or ask a pupil to download and save it.

Risk assessments will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and fit for purpose. Where appropriate, the affected young people and their parents and carers will be invited to contribute to the completion and review of the risk assessment.

Supporting the young person who has allegedly experienced harmful sexual behaviour

We will assess what short-term and long-term support a young person may need to help them manage the immediate aftermath of an incident, and to recover from what they have experienced. The young person’s existing support network will be central to this work; we will work with other partners as appropriate and in accordance with the young person’s wishes and, wherever appropriate, in discussion with parents / carers. We will consider what is necessary to support the young person straightaway, for example by making adaptations to their timetable and in-school support and taking steps to protect them from attention or peer pressure they may experience due to making a report.

This work will be guided by a robust risk assessment process and we will ensure that the young person and their parents / carers have an opportunity to contribute. We will also ensure there is regular review of arrangements to be confident they meet the needs of all involved.

Supporting the young person who has allegedly displayed harmful sexual behaviour

We have a duty of care to all pupils and we will protect and support young people who have displayed abusive or harmful sexual behaviour. We will do this through considering the needs of the young person, any risks to their safety and what multi-agency responses are needed to support them and their family. This work will be guided by a robust risk assessment process and we will ensure that the young person and their parents / carers have an opportunity to contribute. We will also ensure there is regular review of arrangements to be confident they meet the needs of all involved.

Some young people may not realise they have behaved abusively. We will avoid using language that may make them feel judged or criminalised and ensure that any intervention will be at the least intrusive level required to effectively address the behaviour. We will consider appropriate sanctions using our behaviour policy, and work with the young person and their support network to consider measures that may help to address the young person’s behaviour.