

September 2018

Dear Parents / Carers,

I am writing to inform you of the new guidance by the DFE on “***Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges***” (May 2018).

As you are aware, all schools and colleges have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children at their school/college. As part of this duty, schools and colleges are required to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Therefore, CVC will put into place new measures in response to the Government’s guidance around how we will respond to sexual violence and sexual harassment at our school/college.

Please note that the school will take a zero-tolerance approach to any incidences that fall within or between these two definitions. Our behaviour policy will be updated to make clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and **is not** an inevitable part of growing up. Therefore we will not tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or sexual harassment as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “it wasn’t aimed at anyone”. Challenging behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing or touching (including with other items such as pencils, rulers etc) bottoms, breasts and genitalia and flicking bras and lifting up skirts could lead to a fixed term exclusion. It is also a child protection offence and all incidences will be logged and referred to relevant agencies such as Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children’s Board and the police.

Please refer to the appendix for further information about this topic and definitions.

Regards,



Mr Christopher Quach
Senior Assistant Principal

Appendix A

Context

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.

Definitions

Sexual violence

It is important that schools and colleges are aware of sexual violence and the fact children can, and sometimes do, abuse their peers in this way. When referring to sexual violence in this advice, we are referring to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual harassment

For the purpose of this advice, 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 that it 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 or sexual violence such as rape or sexual molestation;
- 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. (UKCCIS sexting advice provides detailed advice for schools and colleges);
- sexualised online bullying;
- unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and
- sexual exploitation; coercion and threats

It is important that schools and colleges consider sexual harassment in broad terms. Sexual harassment (as set out above) creates an atmosphere that, if not challenged, can normalise



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inappropriate behaviours and provide an environment that may lead to sexual violence. Students making comments about “rape” or any other comment on a sexual nature directed at or about another member from the school/college will be challenged as stated in our behaviour policy.