

Peer on Peer Abuse Policy – Now known as Child-on-Child Abuse

Policy date: April 2023
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The Create Approach Ltd is an online mentoring provision and does not currently provide physical face to face sessions. All sessions conducted are on a 1:1 basis with the parent present. Aspects of this policy have been written to accommodate any possible future changes.

Introduction

The Create Approach Ltd is committed to a whole centre approach to identifying, tackling & responding to peer-on-peer abuse, sexual harm/violence and harassment.

This policy supports the guidance issued to centres, that helps understand, identify and provides tools to respond to problematic/harmful sexual behaviours in centres.

Although The Create Approach Ltd is not classed as a centre, we still support and follow as best practice guidance for which centres abide by and create their policies to safeguard.

A child/learner as described in the policy is a child and young person up until 18 years.

The Context

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education. Statutory Guidance for centres and colleges](#) All staff in a centre should be familiar with the relevant sections that deal with Child on Child Sexual Violence and Harassment.
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Centres and Colleges](#). DfE, **latest** guidance for HeadTeacher, Principals, Senior Leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads.
- The non-statutory UKCCIS guidance: '[Sexting in centres and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people](#)' and [KSCB](#) guidance: "Responding to youth produced sexual imagery"
- The non-statutory guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi- nudes Advice for Education Settings, Working with Young People](#)
- [Teaching Online Safety in Centres, DfE 2019](#)
- [The Voyeurism Act, 2019 \(Section Up skirting\)](#)

We are committed to a whole centre approach to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of peer-on-peer abuse in our centre and beyond.

In cases where peer on peer abuse is identified we will use the local safeguarding procedures as set out by the LA Safeguarding partnership.

Some of these behaviours we will refer to other policies:

- Our safeguarding Policy;
- Our thought and emotion support Policy;
- The Anti- Bullying policy;
- The Online safety Policy;
- The Acceptable Use of the Internet and Electronic Communication Policy.

We recognise that peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation.
- Sexting (youth produced digital imagery).
- Bullying- name calling, physical.
- Prejudiced behaviour- homophobic, disabilities.
- Cyber bullying & online abusive behaviour.
- Radicalisation.
- Abuse in intimate relationships, including teenage relationship abuse.
- Children who display sexually problematic/harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment.
- Gang association and serious violence- County Lines, initiation, hazing.
- Race hate and Racism.

Vulnerable Groups

We recognise that all children are at risk but that some groups are more vulnerable than others and includes:

- A child with additional needs and disabilities.
- A child living with domestic abuse.
- A child who is at risk of/suffering significant harm.
- A child who is at risk of/or is been exploited or at risk of exploited (CRE – child at risk of exploitation, CSE – child sexual exploitation).
- A looked after child.
- A child who goes missing or is missing education.
- Children who identifies as or are perceived as LGBTQI+ and/or any of the protective characteristics.

Research tells us that girls are more frequently identified as been abused by their peers and more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching, and sexual harassment. They often are exploited into gangs and are victims of sexual violence when in gangs. However, we are aware as a centre that these are behaviours are not just confined to girls.

Boys are less likely to report intimate relationship abuse and may display other behaviour such as anti-social/criminal behaviours. Boys are more likely to be exploited /entrapped into gangs and subject to violence because of gang culture.

Bullying and Online bullying and behaviour

Peer on peer abuse, can happen online and through social media. This centre will respond to this form of abuse, cyber bullying and related behaviour.

This centre has other policies which relate to identifying, responding to and reporting this type of behaviour by learners. We will take a robust approach and educate all staff to help prevent and tackle this.

Responding to Racism

We acknowledge that Britain is a multi-racial and multi-faith country, and everyone has the right to have their culture and religion respected by others. Racist bullying is not just about the colour, it can be about your ethnic background or religion too.

We recognize that racism is illegal. We will, therefore, notify the police if we believe an offence may have been committed.

We will provide education in our centre about racism and its impact on children and their families. We will use a whole centre approach of tackling and eradicating this type of behaviour.

Hate crime

Hate crimes happen because of race, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and disability.

Hate crimes can include:

- Physical attacks - physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti, neighbour disputes and arson.
- Threat of attack - offensive letters or emails, abusive or obscene telephone calls, groups hanging around to intimidate you and unfounded, malicious complaints.
- Verbal abuse or insults - harassment over the phone, by text or face to face, abusive gestures and remarks, bullying and threats.

Hate crime can happen anywhere - at home, centre, work or on the street. It can be frightening for the victim and witnesses. Hate crime can happen in centre. It is an offence, and we will notify the police if we believe an offence may have been committed.

Sexual Harm, Violence and/or Sexual Harassment

Sexual harm, violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age or gender; this can either be a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. We recognise that this behaviour can take place in a centre or any setting where learners are together.

The impact of this behaviour on children can be very distressing having an impact on academic achievement and their emotional health & wellbeing.

All behaviour takes place on a spectrum. Understanding where a learner's behaviour falls on a spectrum is essential to being able to respond appropriately to it.

In this policy we recognise the importance of distinguishing between healthy, problematic and sexually harmful behaviour (HSB).

As a centre therefore, we may use the Parents Protect Traffic light Tool to support <https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/traffic-light-tools.htm> . These are nationally recognised and acclaimed tools to assist in determining healthy, problematic and harmful sexual behaviours in children and young people.

Using tools like this will help us:

- Decide next steps and make decisions regarding safeguarding children.
- Assess and respond appropriately to sexual behaviour in learners.
- Understand healthy sexual development and distinguish it from problematic/ harmful behaviour.
- Assist with communicating with parents/cares about the concerns we have about their child/children.
- Assist with communicating with our partners and agencies about the concerns we have regarding a learner in the centre.

Action following a report of Sexual Harm, Violence and/or Sexual Harassment



We will inform all staff that should they see or hear of any sexual behaviour they will stop the behaviour immediately; report the behaviour to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a written record of the incident.

We will speak to the learner to establish their view about what happened and why, what understanding they have, what responsibility they take for their actions, and their willingness/ability to work on their behaviours.

We will speak to the learner/s who has been targeted to establish the impact on them of the behaviour. How the other learner/s managed to get in a position to carry out the behaviour, how they are feeling about the other learner now, and what support they require.

This will only be to ascertain clarification; any further investigation may have to be undertaken by the statutory agencies.

We will contact the parents/carers of those involved and share the information.

Following an incident, we will consider:

- The wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed.
- Whether they want to make a police complaint. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- The nature of the alleged incident(s) e.g. the intention, mitigating circumstances AND Including: whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour.
- The ages of the learners involved.
- The developmental stages of the learners involved.
- Any power imbalance between the learners concerned. For example, is the alleged abuser significantly older, more mature or more confident? Does the victim have a disability or learning difficulty?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern.
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other learners, siblings, adult students or centre staff; or other related issues in the wider context?

Whilst the centre establishes the facts of the case:

- The alleged abuser will be removed from any sessions or areas they share with the victim.
- We will consider any reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of the alleged

abuser, victim and all other learners we have a duty to safeguard.



- We will consider how best to keep the victim and alleged abuser/s at a reasonable distance apart on centre premises, including transport to and from the centre.
- We will work with other professionals to create and use a Victim Support Plan.

These actions are in the best interests of the learners involved and should not be perceived to be a judgment on the guilt of the alleged abuser/s.

Responding to an incident/disclosure

Where abuse or violence, including sexual harm and/or sexual harassment, has taken place outside of the centre, we will seek further advice from the LA/school for guidance of continued support of the learner within the centre. We will also consider if we should notify the police if we believe an offence may have been committed.

Where behaviour between peers is abusive or violent, including sexual harm or sexual harassment within the centre; we will use our procedures as set out by the centres child protection and safeguarding policy, and the procedures as set out by the local Childrens Safeguarding Partnership. This will mean a referral to the police and a referral to Childrens' Social Care Services.

All staff understand that all concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead; however, we acknowledge that anyone can make a referral.

We will record all instances of bullying, prejudice, violence and sexual violence and related incidents involving peers. This will include racism and racist bullying. We will inform parents/carers of this.

Our records will show what actions have been taken and any outcomes. We will produce these for an OFSTED/LA inspection if requested and we will also demonstrate how we have tackled any of these incidents to prevent recurrence. The Create Approach Ltd is not OFSTED registered but will work to support.

Reporting

Any incident of racism, race hate or incitement to hate will be reported to the police if it is believed an offence may have been committed.

Any incident of alleged or an actual incident of sexual harm, violence and/or sexual harassment will be reported to the police if it is believed an offence may have been committed. In all cases consideration is given to reporting the matter to Children Social Care Services.

There are circumstances in some cases of sexual harassment/touching which dependent upon age and understanding/age of criminal responsibility, (e.g. one-off incidents), which we may decide that the child/ren concerned are not in need of Early Help or statutory intervention.

In these situations, it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally, for example by utilising

the behaviour and bullying policies, providing pastoral intervention and support.



Early Help support may be sought. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, this can be at any point in a child's life.

Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of child/ren than reacting later. This centre acknowledges that an Early Help Assessment can be useful to address non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

Sanctions

We recognise disciplinary actions rarely resolve issues of peer-on-peer abuse and this centre will consider all courses of action and intervention.

We recognise that emotions and feelings can run high, and we will endeavour to respond to concerns from any learner, other learners, parents and the local community.

We will ensure all necessary parties including the parents/carers are informed and kept up to date. We will listen to any concerns and will work to attempt to resolve these.

Multi-Agency Working

This centre will work with partners and agencies; Children's Social Care, the Police, Youth Offending Service, Health and CAHMS.

We recognise that we will be invited to share information, being a part of local partnerships and local partnership groups to help identify risk and issues both within the centre and in our local community.

Our local point of contact will be the chair of our local group and the Head of Service for our locality in the Local authority.

Prevention and Training

The Create Approach Ltd will always be working hard to create a culture where peer on peer abuse does not happen.

We aim to create an ethos of good and respectful behaviour, and this should extend to all areas of the centre and in a centre day, including travelling to and from centre.

We will work to ensure that all learners know who to talk to, how to receive advice and help within the centre. We will be able to signpost children to relevant local and national helplines and websites through information on the centre website.

Management of the Policy

We will ensure all staff and volunteers are trained in the awareness and response to all forms of bullying, all forms of peer on peer abuse, racism and race hate and including any local issues and concerns in the wider context (Contextual Safeguarding).

In addition, we will ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and the supporting guidance, in order that they are clear regarding their role and responsibilities.

We will ensure that parents/carers are made aware of this policy and its availability on the centre website.

