



Sholing Junior School

Managing Allegations Against Other Pupils Policy

Child on Child

Kindness, Curiosity, Success

At Sholing Junior School, we aim to ensure that learning is meaningful, stimulating and challenging, reflecting the ever-changing world around us. We want to empower children to be independent, resilient, creative, collaborative, responsible and feel valued as members of the community with a passion for learning. We believe in educating the whole child, nurturing every child's talents to realise their potential and achieve their dreams.

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Reviewed by:	Marcella Dobson/Danielle Lebbern
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Summary of Changes:	Updated in line with KCSIE 2024

Approved by: _____ (Headteacher) Date: 05.02.26

Managing allegations against other pupils

This should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

At Sholing Junior School we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and this will be dealt with under our child protection policy and in line with KCSiE (2024).

We recognise that some students will sometimes negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy or the school's anti-bullying policy.

We are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

All persons who need to report any unwanted, inappropriate, or hurtful behaviours whether they be on-line, in text type communications, on social media or in person to any member of staff can be reassured that they will be taken seriously and supported to take any appropriate actions which may be in school or with external agencies as needed.

Prevention

As a school we will minimise the risk of allegations against other pupils by:

- Taking a whole school approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- Providing a clear set of values and standards, underpinned by the school's behaviour policy and pastoral support system.
- Providing a planned, developmentally appropriate RSHE syllabus which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe.
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued.
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those pupils identified as being at risk through the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA).
- Developing robust risk assessments and providing targeted work for pupils identified as being a potential risk to other pupils.
- Providing training to staff.
- Engaging with specialist support and interventions whenever required.

Allegations against other pupils which are safeguarding issues

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature.

Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, sexual

violence, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation.

Procedure:

- Children making a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be taken seriously, kept safe and be well supported.
- If the report includes an online element staff will be mindful of the Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools (DfE 2023) guidance.
- Staff taking the report will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as soon as practicably possible.
- Staff taking a report will never promise confidentiality.
- Parents or carers will normally be informed (unless this would put the child at greater risk).
- If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care.

Risk Assessment:

Following a report, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment on a case-by-case basis.

The Risk assessment will consider;

- The victim, especially their protection and support.
- The alleged perpetrator, their support, needs and any discipline action.
- All other children at the school.
- The victim and the alleged perpetrator sharing classes and space at school.

The risk assessment will be recorded and kept under review.

Where there has been other professional intervention and/or other specialist risk assessments, these professional assessments will be used to inform the school's approach to supporting and protecting pupils.

Action: The DSL will consider:

- The wishes of the victim.
- The nature of the incident including whether a crime has been committed and the harm caused.
- Ages of the children involved.
- Developmental stages of the children.
- Any power imbalance between the children.
- Any previous incidents.
- Ongoing risks.
- Other related issues or wider context.

Options: The DSL will manage the report with the following options:

- Manage internally.
- Refer to Early Help.
- Refer to Children's Services.
- Report to the police (generally in parallel with a referral to Children's Services).

Ongoing Response:

- The DSL will manage each report on a case-by-case basis and will keep the risk assessment under review.
- Where there is a criminal investigation into a rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes they share with the victim.
- The DSL will consider how best to keep the victim and perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises and on transport where appropriate.
- Where a criminal investigation into a rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, the school will take suitable action. In all but the most exceptional of circumstances, the rape or

assault is likely to constitute a serious breach of discipline and lead to the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the same school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the victim (and potentially other pupils or students).

- Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school will, if it has not already, consider any suitable sanctions in light of their behaviour policy, including consideration of permanent exclusion. Where the perpetrator is going to remain at the school, the headteacher would need to ensure that the victim and perpetrator were always in separate classes and continue to consider the most appropriate way to manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution and wishes of the victim will be especially important in determining how to proceed in such cases.
- The victim, alleged perpetrator and other witnesses (children and adults) will receive appropriate support and safeguards on a case-by-case basis.
- The school will take any disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator in line with the behaviour policy.
- The school recognises that taking disciplinary action and providing appropriate support are not mutually exclusive actions and will occur at the same time if necessary.

Physical Abuse

While a clear focus of child on child abuse is around sexual abuse and harassment, physical assaults and initiation violence and rituals from pupils to pupils can also be abusive.

These are equally not tolerated and if it is believed that a crime has been committed, will be reported to the police.

The principles from the anti-bullying policy will be applied in these cases, with recognition that any police investigation will need to take priority.

The school may use the Southampton City Toolkits and CERAf guidance to better understand and respond to situations of Child-on-Child Abuse and exploitation.

Child-on-Child (Peer-on-Peer) abuse toolkit

Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework CERAf Guidance 2024.pdf

Sexual Violence and harassment

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers and it can take various forms – we robustly hold the view that it could happen here. Children can be victims, and perpetrators, in their own relationships. This will be dealt with in line with the statutory guidance set out in KCSIE 2024 and as outlined in the guidance Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges . In KCSIE 2024, the definition of child-on-child abuse includes:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Bullying (including cyberbullying) and
- Upskirting
- Abuse within intimate partner relationships

All these behaviours are not acceptable, and it will be taken seriously. There is a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse.

We uphold the importance of making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, that it is never acceptable, and it will not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys” or “girls being girls”. Failure to

do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

We recognise, acknowledge, and understand the scale of harassment and abuse and that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported.

We will challenge physical behaviour (potentially criminal in nature) such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

The Southampton Safeguarding toolkits provide further guidance:

[Risk Assessment for Child-on-Child \(Peer-on-Peer\) harmful sexual behaviours](#)

Online abuse

If the alleged abuse involves an online element staff including the DSL will be mindful of the Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools DfE guidance (2018) and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)guidance (2022) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people. If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, the DSL will report to children's social care through contact with Children's Resource Service/MASH, and this will be in conjunction with having contacted the police first (irrespective of the child's age). Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to, such as immediate safety or risk to the child be they the victim or alleged perpetrator. The police will advise what information can or should be shared.