



**GOVERNORS
FOR SCHOOLS**

Exploring peer-on-peer sexual abuse in schools - the role of governance

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Aims of this

session



to explore the recently published Ofsted *rapid review* of sexual abuse in schools and its origins;



to clarify how peer-on-peer sexual abuse is an element of safeguarding;



to explore governance best practice in ensuring schools respond to the recommendations in the Ofsted report.

An emerging picture

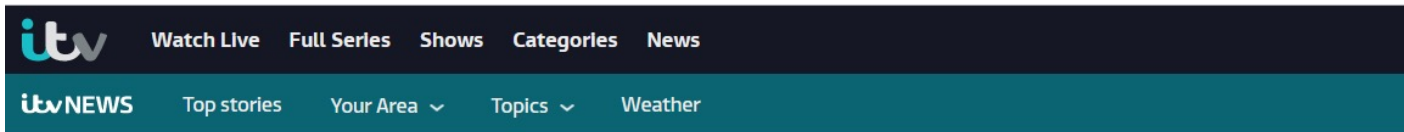


DfE-commissioned Ofsted review



"We are releasing the names of thousands of schools and what this really shows is that rape culture is everywhere."
*Soma Sara - Founder of
Everyone's Invited*

Ofsted's review – *the trigger*



Everyone's Invited names almost 3,000 schools following claims of sexual assault, rape and harassment

EDUCATION | SCHOOLS | ⌚ Wednesday 9 June 2021, 10:57pm



Poll



Ofsted review

- Published June 10th 2021
- DfE asked Ofsted to explore:
 - safeguarding and the curriculum;
 - Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements;
 - Victim's voice and reporting
- Ofsted reported on a number of other factors.
- 32 schools and 900 pupils involved

Ofsted review – key findings:

This rapid thematic review has revealed how prevalent sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are for children and young people.

for some children, incidents are so commonplace that they see no point in reporting them.

sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, such as being sent unsolicited explicit sexual material and being pressured to send nude pictures, are much more prevalent than adults realise.

It recommends that schools act as though sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening, even when there are no specific reports.

Ofsted review - data

- 90% of girls, and nearly 50% of boys, said being sent explicit pictures or videos of things they did not want to see happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers.
- 92% of girls, and 74% of boys, said sexist name-calling happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers.
- Reported child sexual abuse offences have increased 267% since 2013
- In the 5 academic years to 2018/19, permanent exclusions for which the primary reason was sexual misconduct averaged 91 per year, 1.3% of all permanent exclusions.

What should governors take from this?

- Peer-on-peer sexual abuse is an aspect of safeguarding;
- Boards should ensure schools treat peer-on-peer sexual abuse as much of a threat as radicalisation, county lines and other prevalent threats to child safety;
- Boards should seek assurance that schools are adopting a 'it can happen here/is happening here' view.

Recommendations - schools should:

- assume sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening;
- a *carefully sequenced RSHE curriculum* including discussion time for aspects children/young people say they find difficult
- a behavioural approach, including sanctions to reinforce a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated;
- training for staff and governors on definitions, identifying signs and school responses

Definitions – Peer on peer sexual abuse:

- **sexual violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- **sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse
- **upskirting**, typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals/buttocks for sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm
- **sexting** (also known as 'youth-produced sexual imagery')



Definitions – Harmful sexual behaviour:

Sexual behaviours expressed by children and young people under the age of 18 years old that are developmentally inappropriate, may be harmful towards self or others, or abusive towards another child, young person or adult.

Ofsted & DfE definition.

Harmful sexual behaviour:

Figure 1. Definition: Sexual behaviours across a continuum

Normal	Inappropriate	Problematic	Abusive	Violent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developmentally expected - Socially acceptable - Consensual, mutual, reciprocal - Shared decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single instances of inappropriate sexual behaviour - Socially acceptable behaviour within peer group - Context for behaviour may be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problematic and concerning behaviour - Developmentally unusual and socially unexpected - No overt elements of victimisation - May include elements of coercion - May include elements of compulsion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victimising intent or outcome - Includes misuse of power - May include elements of coercion - May include elements of expressive violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physically or sexually abusive - May include elements of coercion - May include elements of expressive violence

Stroking another child's hair

EYFS child kissing another

KS2 child claiming X is their girlfriend

Y8 pupil sending uninvited naked selfie

Y10 pupil pinning another pupil against wall and forcing a kiss

Source: Hackett, S, 'Children, young people and sexual violence' in 'Children behaving badly? Exploring peer violence between children and young people', 2010.

Effective governance of school provision

Ensure by seeking assurance...that

- safeguarding Policy references peer-on-peer abuse;
- school has procedures (inc. appropriate sanctions) to respond;
- *all* staff receive appropriate training;
- data is collected;
- external agencies are engaged with appropriately;
- the curriculum is appropriate
- pupils are empowered to disclose

Effective governance oversight:

- ensure Safeguarding Governor has peer-on-peer abuse as part of their remit;
- regular reporting from DSL to full board;
- cross referencing Keeping Children Safe (2021), Ofsted Framework and DfE guidance;
- Ensuring children and young people are safe in your school from peer on peer sexual abuse and violence.

Questions?



References:

- Ofsted Review

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges/review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges#fn:1>

- DfE Guidance

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719902/Sexual_violence_and_sexual_harassment_between_children_in_schools_and_colleges.pdf

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/999348/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2021.pdf



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Thank you

better  governor

- Please come back again soon
- Please complete the short evaluation
- Stay safe