Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Peer on Peer Abuse in schools Spotlight Review – Scoping Document

Title of review	Peer on Peer Abuse in schools Spotlight Review
Scope	
Reason for review	The work programme of the children and young people scrutiny committee has identified the issue of peer on peer abuse to be considered at a spotlight review. Department for Education statutory advice[1] defines peer on peer abuse as consisting of (but not limited to): • Bullying (including cyberbullying); • Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; • Sexual violence and sexual harassment; • Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and • Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals. There is a concern regarding reports of increasing levels of peer on peer abuse and this spotlight review will consider available data regarding the incidence of peer on peer abuse in all Herefordshire schools including primary, secondary and post-16 settings. The review will also assess the incorporation of peer on peer abuse into child protection policies.
Links to the corporate plan	The review contributes to the following objectives contained in the Herefordshire corporate plan and other key plans and strategies: • Keep children and young people safe and give then a great start in life; and • Secure better series, quality of life and value for money.
Summary of the review and terms of reference	Summary: The review will receive data on the incidence of peer on peer abuse in Herefordshire schools. It will learn of statutory guidance relating to peer on peer abuse and child protection policies in schools. It will consider policies in place at schools to address peer on peer abuse and assess their effectiveness. It will look at the role of the Council, the Police and voluntary/charitable organisations to assist schools, pupils and their parents. The review will ensure that a focus is retained on the experience of children and young people; to understand how work undertaken by stakeholders supports them, educates them, prevents incidents from occurring and seeks to change behaviour if it has occurred.
	Terms of Reference: The spotlight review will:

[1] Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2018

	• Receive a definition of and understand the nature of peer on peer abuse and consider latest statistics concerning its incidence in Herefordshire schools; • Develop an understanding of recent statutory guidance and the requirement for schools to ensure that child protection policies include procedures to address peer on peer abuse. • Examine selected child protection policies in place at Herefordshire schools to ensure that they take account of statutory guidance and contain procedures to hear the voice of the child. • Receive evidence from teachers and school professionals on the challenge posed by peer on peer abuse and the introduction of polices designed to meet the challenge. • Engage teachers and school professionals to assess the success/effectiveness of policies to address peer on peer abuse in Herefordshire schools. • Develop an understanding of the role of the Council to: provide advice to schools on the production of peer on peer abuse policies; undertake preventative work; and raise awareness. • Engage with West Mercia Police to understand how incidents of peer on peer abuse are dealt with and how the Force works with schools. • Understand how other agencies such as therapy services and voluntary/charitable services assist schools, children and their parents. Witnesses for these sectors will be asked to present the voice of the child. • To look at examples of best practice from other local authority areas and possible implementation in Herefordshire. Membership: Group Leaders have been sent a summary of the spotlight review and have been asked to forward any expressions of interest from members. The membership will be agreed at the committee meeting on 16 September and it is proposed that all members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee will form the membership of the spotlight review together with any other member expressing an interest..
What will NOT be included	• The examination of any individual cases concerning peer on peer abuse.
Potential outcomes	• An understanding of the current statistics and data in respect of peer on peer abuse; • Assurance that the advice schools are receiving is compliant with statutory guidance; and • Assurance that the Council is working with schools and local agencies to support the introduction of effective policies to address peer on peer abuse.
Key Questions	To consider:

	• What is peer on peer abuse and what are the different forms; • What are the latest statistics for the incidence of peer on peer abuse in Herefordshire schools; • What statutory guidance exists regarding the incorporation of peer on peer abuse in schools' child protection polices; • What work does the Council undertake with Herefordshire schools to introduce peer on peer abuse policies; • What preventative work is being undertaken to address peer on peer abuse; • Are those policies that have been introduced in schools effective in addressing peer on peer abuse; • Where a case of peer on peer abuse cannot be resolved at school how is it escalated or what is the course of action followed; • How the police deal with incidents of peer on peer abuse and how they work with local schools; • How other agencies including therapy and voluntary/charitable services assist schools, pupils and their parents?
Cabinet Member(s)	Cabinet member children and families Cabinet member housing, regulatory services and community safety
Key stakeholders / Consultees	Internal – Education (Children's and Families) External – Schools in Herefordshire – Herefordshire pupils and parents of children at schools in Herefordshire – through governing bodies – West Mercia Police – Therapy services
Potential witnesses	• Council officers in Education department at Herefordshire Council. • Teachers and governing body representatives from schools in Herefordshire. • Therapy services • Voluntary/Charitable organisations
Research Required	• Trends and statistics relating to peer on peer abuse in Herefordshire; • Statutory guidance – child protection policies in schools; and • Peer on peer abuse policies for schools.
Potential Visits	
Publicity Requirements	Following the conclusion of the spotlight review, report back to the children and young people scrutiny committee.

Outline Timetable:	
Activity	*Timescale*
Confirm approach, Terms of Reference, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/meeting dates	Committee meeting – 16 September2019
Spotlight Review	Autumn 2019

Present final report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	25 November 2019 or 20 January 2020

Spotlight review members – All Members of children and young people scrutiny committee	
Chair	Councillor Carole Gandy
Support Members	
Co-optees	Education co-optees on children and young people scrutiny committee
Support Officers	J Coleman M Evans