Spotlight Review: Peer on Peer Abuse

16th December 2019

Contextual Safeguarding Network
Quotes from peer on peer toolkit Farrer&Co

"Yes, I got groomed by…I don't know if it was a girl or not…I told my mum, then my mum didn't listen and she went to the police and that's it. Then my mum was like, if she ever contacted me again…started having a go at me."
(girl, year 8)

Sometimes the people that you chill with want you to do certain things that you don't want to do, but you have to do it because you're part of that crew, you're part of it.
(participant, 13)

"I would just go home and my mum would say, 'Did you have a good day?' and I would just say 'Yes' knowing that it wasn't okay, but there was nothing I could do about it. But what would be better [is] if the teachers checked the cameras more often because it is mostly right in front of the cameras and this has happened from Year Seven and no one has discovered about it."
(boy, year 9)

"Can you help me? People at school have been calling me "gay" and "queer" and saying I'm "a girl". Since I've started high school it's been getting worse. They write things on a social network site about me – calling me more names. I feel sick and scared of going into school. How can they know I'm gay when I don't know myself yet? Please help."
(gender and age unknown)

"I am not in school today as I am pretending to be ill. I have been bullied every day since I started school and have been having thoughts about ending my own life. I am called fat and ugly and have been told that nobody would care if I died. I feel really sad and want them to stop. Sometimes I think the only way it would all be over is if I killed myself."
(gender unknown, 15)

He walks along with her 'whole life', in his mobile phone, ready to share it with anyone at any time.
(girl, 17)

What is peer on peer abuse?

The policy 'children who abuse others' from West Midlands Procedures defines peer on peer abuse as:

A child can be subject to, or at risk of harm by another child or children as result of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. This can be through direct or isolated incidents, or as a result of ongoing behaviour over a longer period of time, for example bullying.

The abuse can also be perpetrated through the use of technology, for example 'sexting' (youth produced sexual imagery) and 'cyber-bullying', or as a result of association with gangs.

What is peer on peer abuse?

Keeping Children safe In Education states that it is:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- 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
- Up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation type events including violence and rituals.

Peer on peer abuse data Herefordshire

- There is no national data collected on this

- Herefordshire started collecting data in November 2018

- Over the past 12 months data analysis and collection has become more thorough

- The data collected is based on MARFs (Multi Agency referral Forms) submitted to the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Peer on peer abuse data Herefordshire

63 MARFs relating to peer on peer abuse (Nov 18 – Oct 19)

From May-October 2019 (32 MARFs):
- 4 incidents related to bullying
- 13 were sexually related incidents - including verbal abuse
- 15 were for physical assault
- 4 were for verbal assault
  - *Some statistics fulfil more than one criteria, so are counted twice*
- In 18 of these incidents from May- October, the pupils were not attending the same school and
- 23 of these incidents happened out of school

Statutory Guidance for schools

- Prior to December 2017 there was no national guidance for schools/colleges specifically on peer on peer abuse

- DFE Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children In Schools And Colleges May 2018

- (KCSIE) Keeping Children Safe In Education (Part 5) September 2019

- Non statutory, regional guidance: West Midlands Safeguarding Procedures: Children Who Abuse Others 2.26

- All schools must have their own contextualised safeguarding/child protection policy that is publically available and this must include peer on peer abuse

What does KCSIE state should be included in a school safeguarding policy?

The safeguarding policy must cover the following:

- 'Procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse.
- How allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with.
- Reflect the different forms that peer on peer abuse can take.
- Make it clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as banter or part of growing up.
- Be clear on how the victims and perpetrators of peer on peer abuse will be supported.'

In addition in Herefordshire we recommend:

- It is good practice to add a link to the Brook traffic light tool which is useful for dealing with sexualised peer on peer abuse and the DFE guidance on sexual violence and sexual harassment

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Monitoring of safeguarding policies

- Every school who is inspected by OFSTED has their policy checked as part of the pre inspection work. Safeguarding policies have not been highlighted as an issue in any inspection report since 2018/19.

- 2017-19: desktop reviews of 47 safeguarding policies, including 17 for secondary schools.

- The 'council note of visit form' that records visits into schools has a section on safeguarding. This form has recently been updated to ensure it includes information on the safeguarding policy. Since September 2019, 15 primary schools and 4 secondary schools have had a note of visit form shared with them.

- Section 175/157 Audit is completed annually

Section 175/157 audit

In 2018/19 there was:

- 98.2% response rate (including independent schools and colleges) to the audit
- The audit includes a question about the safeguarding policy and there is one question on peer on peer abuse
- 100% of responses to the peer on peer abuse and safeguarding policy question stated that policies and procedures are in place
- 7 quality assurance visits were conducted: the self-assessments were broadly in line with the evidence produced during QA visits. The school response to QA was constructive and a useful learning experience for all parties.

In 2017/18:

- 97.27% of responses to the peer on peer abuse question stated that policies and procedures were in place

What has monitoring/desk top review of safeguarding policies told us?

- All policies have a section on peer on peer abuse

- Some schools have a separate peer on peer abuse policy but the majority include it within their safeguarding policy

- The policies are good at defining what peer on peer abuse is and that it should never be tolerated

- Aspects of policies that need further refinement are linked to support for the victim and perpetrator and how the school will prevent and reduce incidences of peer on peer abuse

Summary of DFE (May 2018 and September 2019) guidance on peer on peer abuse

- It states that decisions must be made by a school/college on a case by case basis

- The wishes of the victim should be considered and immediate thought should be given on how best to support the victim and perpetrator

Summary of DFE (May 2018 and September 2019) guidance on peer on peer abuse

How to manage a report of peer on peer abuse:

- Internally initially using the school policies and providing pastoral support
- Early Help – no statutory intervention is required but those involved may benefit from early help
- Referral to children's social care – where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger (Level 4 threshold is met)
- Reporting to the police – this is normally done in parallel with a referral to social care. Where there is a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made the <u>starting point</u> is a referral to the police

Summary of DFE (May 2018 and September 2019) guidance on peer on peer abuse

Support for victims to help ensure they can remain in their school:

- Firstly, consider the wishes of the victim
- Consider the proportionality of the response: Support should be tailored on a case by case basis.
- Support can include: Children and Young People's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ChISVAs),
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Rape Crisis Centres
- Internet watch Foundation
- Early Help

If despite the support given the victim remains too traumatised to remain in their school, alternative provision or a move to another school should be considered. This should only be at the request of the victim and in consultation with parents and carers

Summary of DFE (May 2018 and September 2019) guidance on peer on peer abuse

Support and sanctions for perpetrators:

- Schools have to provide the alleged perpetrator with an education, ensure they are safeguarded and implement any disciplinary sanctions

- Support should be considered on a case by case basis

- Should the perpetrator move at any point to another school, the new educational institution should be made aware of any ongoing support needed and where appropriate any potential risks to other children and staff

Summary of DFE guidance – separating the victim and perpetrator

- In incidents of sexual violence, including whilst the facts are still being established, the alleged perpetrator should be removed from any classes that they share with the victim. Further consideration must be given on how to keep the pupils involved apart on the school premises and on transport to/from school

- When there has been a report of sexual violence an immediate <u>written</u> risk assessment should be completed. This document should be kept under constant review and should be completed using information from other agencies

Summary of DFE guidance - separating the victim and perpetrator

- If 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 and consideration given on how to keep the pupils apart on the school site as well as to and from school

- If the criminal investigation leads to a conviction for the offences listed above, it is likely that a breach of the school disciplinary policy will have occurred and suitable sanctions should be considered including permanent exclusion. If the perpetrator is to remain at the same school separate classes should continue.

Council initiatives

- Information, advice, updates and training have taken place 2017 onwards via a number of different methods:

    - Designated Safeguarding Leads Meeting (DSLs),

    - Primary Heads briefings, HASH (Secondary Heads meetings),

    - Chair of Governors briefings and

    - the educational newsletter 'spotlight on children'

    - Safeguarding Conference 13th November 2019 for DSLs and

    - Safeguarding Governors and Leadership Conference 15th November 2019 for Head Teachers and Chair of Governors

- Desk top reviews of policy

- Notes of visit include a safeguarding focus

Council initiatives

- Section 175/157 safeguarding audits

- Quality Assurance visits to schools

- Multi agency audit of peer on peer referrals to MASH Sept 2019

- Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Workshop - Sexually Harmful Behaviour July 2019

- Public Health led task and finish group established, to use NSPCC multi agency audit approach and make recommendations on any gaps

- Herefordshire peer on peer risk assessment form for schools and colleges issued Nov 2019

- Herefordshire Council Website has statement on peer on peer abuse with links to key guidance

- SRE (Sex and Relationships Education) funding of early adopter schools to help them write an outline programme of study for implementation by all schools in September 2020

- Review of cases referred to MASH Jan 2017 to Nov 2019

Reflecting on and improving processes

- Multi agency audit of MARFs

- Quality assurance visits to schools

- NSPCC audit

- Training and updates provided at DSL meetings, including the use of case studies

- CPD (continuous professional development)

- SRE – Early adopter schools working group to write outline programme of study for Herefordshire Schools

- Funding of wellbeing in schools triad (pilot project) 2019

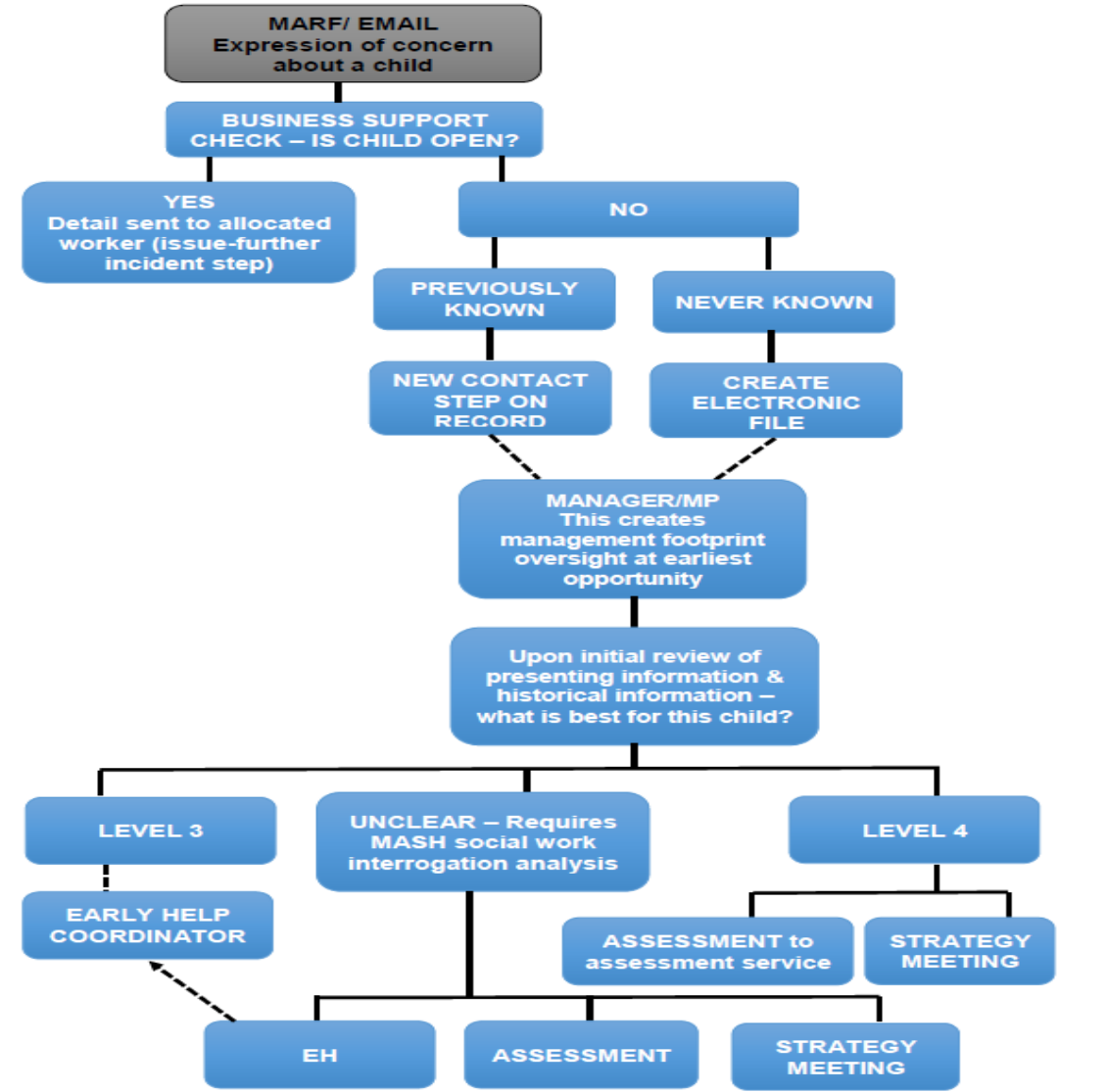# Actions taken by schools include:

- Contact and work with external agencies including the police and social care

- Arranging a managed move

- Arranging for parents to drop alleged perpetrator at school and collect from school at different times to other pupils

- Ensure a Family support worker is allocated to the family

- Put a specific programme in place to support pupils e.g. small group or 1:1 or class

Actions taken by schools include:

- The use of fixed term exclusions

- Offer support via an onsite mental health specialist or support from WMWRAC or CAHMs

- Ensure pupils are not in the same lessons

- Allocate a Teaching Assistant to an alleged perpetrator and escort the pupil to and from lessons

- Break and lunch times in a supervised designated area

- RSE/PHSE programme which may also include external speakers e.g. SELFIE project

MASH Process

MARF/ EMAIL Expression of concern about a child

BUSINESS SUPPORT CHECK – IS CHILD OPEN?

YES Detail sent to allocated worker (issue-further incident step)

NO

PREVIOUSLY KNOWN

NEVER KNOWN

NEW CONTACT STEP ON RECORD

CREATE ELECTRONIC FILE

MANAGER/MP This creates management footprint oversight at earliest opportunity

Upon initial review of presenting information & historical information – what is best for this child?

LEVEL 3

UNCLEAR – Requires MASH social work interrogation analysis

LEVEL 4

EARLY HELP COORDINATOR

ASSESSMENT to assessment service

STRATEGY MEETING

EH

ASSESSMENT

STRATEGY MEETING

Herefordshire.gov.uk

Check list for social workers in MASH for peer on peer referrals

- In respect of alleged victims and perpetrators

- Contact parent(s)/carer(s)

- Consider with parents what support may best meet need. Early Help, WMRASASC, medical attention.

- Discuss the support parents are providing and their ability to keep the child/YP safe.

- Discuss safety plan and support at home for example internet safety and any exploitation concerns.

- Discuss friendship groups. Consider if any friendships groups would be of concern.

- Request consent for MASH checks if required.

- Consider history of the child/Young Person.

- MASH Education to contact school and discuss the safety plan they have in place i.e. is the alleged victim and perpetrator in the same classes, safety of travelling to school, break times and does the pupil have a safe person as a point of contact. Has the Brook Traffic Light tool been used? Do we need a CSE risk Assessment to be completed?

Next Step

- Social Worker will send the contact to the manager with a holistic view and rationale, considering the risk and protective factors, and a recommendation of how to proceed.

- Possible outcomes from contact are:-

  - Discussion with partner agencies if required. Police, Education, Health

  - No further action. Family are being supportive, safety plan in place, no safeguarding concerns and family have declined Early Help support. Other agencies i.e. Police are dealing with the situation.

  - Refer to Early Help. This could include working with the family to consider the safety planning within the home, working with the child/YP to help them understand what has happened and how to keep themselves safe. Give the child/YP opportunity to talk to someone outside the family. Support in accessing other services.

  - Assessment