

## Reporting Sexual Abuse, Sexual Harassment or other Harmful Sexual Behaviours: What Happens Next?

We recognise that it is always possible that a student may be a victim of (or witness to) sexual violence, sexual harassment or other forms of other harmful sexual behaviour. Students learn about the characteristics of such behaviour in the school's PSHE and RSE programmes. In such situations it is very important that appropriate help and support can be arranged straight away. However we also know that it can be very difficult to speak about these topics, and that students may feel nervous about what might happen next when they speak to an adult. This leaflet is designed to explain exactly what would happen next and reassure anyone who may be fearful of seeking help.

### What kind of things might I need to report?

- Sharing of nude/semi-nude images
- Any form of sexual activity which takes place without consent
- Sexual harassment – unwanted sexual comments or jokes, whether online or face-to-face
- Sexual violence, including rape and other forms of sexual assault
- Any other behaviour of a sexual nature which makes you feel uncomfortable, including someone exposing themselves to you or pressurising you to do something you don't want to

### How do I report these things to the school?

- Speak to a member of staff that you trust. Particularly good people might be:
  - Your Form Tutor
  - Your Head of Year
  - Pupil Wellbeing Lead (Ms Banner)
  - Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ms Atwell) or Deputies (Mr Englefield, Ms Banner)You can contact them by email first if you prefer.
- Complete the anonymous [Report a Concern](#) form on the School Website (*Remember that if it is anonymous it will be very difficult for us to provide help to the right person*)

## Making the report

We know that it can be daunting speaking to someone about these topics. A few ideas that might help you before you speak to someone include:

- **Write down what has happened** – perhaps in an email or a letter, or even just a series of bullet points to jog your memory as you speak to someone. That way you don't have to say anything at all if you don't want to, you can simply give someone the letter to read. It will also help you make sure you don't forget anything you wanted to say.
- **Ask someone you trust to support you** – if you feel able to share what has happened with a friend or family member, you can ask them to come along when you tell someone to give you some moral support.
- **Pick a time and place where you won't be rushed or disturbed** – if you ask to speak to your teacher at the end of a lesson and they are about to teach another lesson then you might not have time to say everything you wanted to. It is fine to ask someone when a convenient time for a conversation would be and go back to speak to them then.
- **Trust that you will be taken seriously** – it is very common to feel embarrassed, nervous or even ashamed about what you are reporting. You might worry that the person you speak to will think that what has happened "isn't a big deal" or was a long time ago. Rest assured that every report will be taken seriously, no matter how long ago it happened and whether it was online or face-to-face. It is not your fault and there is no reason to feel ashamed.

## What happens after I make a report?

- The staff member will listen carefully to what you tell them. They may ask you a few questions of clarification so that they fully understand what has happened.
- The staff member will reassure you that your report is being taken seriously and explain that, although they cannot keep what you have said a secret, they will only pass on what you have said to anyone who strictly needs to know to be able to help you or anyone else who may need support.
- They will tell you who they are going to tell about your conversation – in most instances this would be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ms Atwell) or one of her Deputies (Mr Englefield and Ms Banner). This is because they have specialist training on how to support people in this situation and know how to get further help from outside of school if it is needed.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy) would arrange to speak to you privately, perhaps with your Head of Year or the staff member you originally spoke to present if you would like that. If your original report was in writing/online, then this would be the first in person conversation you would have. We would try to make you feel as comfortable as possible.
- You will again be reassured that your report is being taken very seriously and that we want to help and support you. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will listen to the details of your report and ask you what you want to happen next – your views and needs are very important. You will have a chance to ask any questions. Together you will talk through the next steps, which will be different depending on what has happened to you. These might include:
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead investigating what has happened with disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator. Ongoing school based support (such as the School Nurse, Counsellor or Child Wellbeing Practitioner) being arranged to look after you, depending on what you would like.
  - Your report being referred to social workers in the borough where you live. We have a legal duty to pass your report on if you have been harmed or are at risk of harm and will tell you if we are doing this. At this point, with your knowledge, we would normally inform your parents of what has happened. We would talk to you about how you would like this to happen and whether you would like to be present for this conversation. We will not inform your parents if doing so would put you at greater risk. If this option is taken, it is possible that a social worker will then come to see you to speak to you about what has happened and how best to keep you safe.
  - If you have reported rape or any other form of sexual assault, we also have a duty to report the matter to the Police. Again, we will tell you that we are doing this. It is likely that the Police would then want to speak to you about what has happened. It is entirely your decision whether you would like to speak to them or not, and whether you want to pursue a criminal investigation if it is relevant. We would support you carefully through this process and make sure that you are able to access any support you need while the investigation takes place.

### I still don't feel comfortable speaking to someone at school, where else can I turn for support?

- **Your GP**
- Report a crime directly to the **Police**: <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rsa/rape-and-sexual-assault/how-to-report-rape-and-sexual-assault>
- **Another adult** you trust, such as a parent, grandparent, neighbour, friend's parent or religious leader
- **The Havens** – specialist centres in London for victims of rape or sexual assault: <https://www.thehavens.org.uk/>
- **Childline** – a free, confidential 24/7 helpline for anyone under 18, 0800 1111. They can also be contacted online via their website <https://www.childline.org.uk/>
- **The Lucy Faithfull Foundation** – working to prevent sexual abuse of those under 18. They have a confidential helpline which can be accessed via their website: <https://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/>
- **Survivors UK** – supporting men and boys who have experienced sexual abuse and rape: <https://www.survivorsuk.org/>