



Response to reports of Sexual violence, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour – refer to KCSiE Part 5 guidance

The whole school approach is clear there is a **zero-tolerance** to SVSH, that it is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. Dismissing or tolerating behaviours risks normalizing them.

The school/college has a clear set of values and standards, these are underpinned by the behaviour policy and pastoral support system.

All staff know to report all incidents as a safeguarding concern to the D/DSL, including those that have happened outside of school premises and/or online.
All staff maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here.'

Definitions

Sexual violence:

Rape
Assault by penetration
Sexual assault
Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent

Sexual harassment: is likely to violate a child's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded, or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment and includes:

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual remarks, sexual taunts, physical behaviour, sexual exploitation or online sexual harassment

Harmful sexual behaviour:

(exists on a wide continuum, ranging from normal and developmentally expected to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent.) **We use the Hackett Continuum to consider level of concern – see policy)**
HSB should be considered in a safeguarding context.

SVSH & HSB exists on a continuum and may overlap; can occur online and offline (or simultaneously) and both inside and outside of school/college/settings.

Report received

Victim reassured

- Victim is taken seriously, and supported and kept safe; and never given the impression they are creating a problem, nor should a victim be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Confidentiality not promised at this stage
- If possible, managing report with two members of staff present
- Listen carefully to the victim, non-judgmentally
- Record the disclosure (facts as reported) **it is essential a written record is made**
- If victim does not give consent to share, staff may still lawfully share in order to protect child from harm and to promote the welfare of children (see [KCSiE 2024 para 480-483](#))
- **Staff should inform the DSL or DDSL as soon as practically possible; with careful management of reports that include an online element, refer to KCSiE 2024 para 477**

Anonymity

Note that in cases of sexual violence there is legal protection of the victim's identity. Remember that this also includes sharing on social media and rumours amongst pupils in school and school should do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment.

DSLs will need to consider: (SVSH and HSB)

Immediately: Consider how to support the victim, the alleged perpetrator, all other pupils and staff and keep them safe.

- wishes of the victim
- nature of the alleged incident/s
- ages and developmental stages of the children involved
- any power imbalance between the children, for example, age difference, disability or learning difficulty
- is the alleged incident a one off or a sustained pattern of behaviour
- abuse can happen within intimate personal relationships between children
- importance of understanding intra familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following an incident
- time and location of incident, and any action required to make the location safer.
- Contextual safeguarding approach, for example, are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, environmental risks, links to child criminal or sexual exploitation
- engaging with parents and carers – refer to [KCSiE 2024 paras 554-559](#) ([csacentre – parents](#))

Options to manage a report of SVSH or HSB

(refer to: [Wiltshire HSB protocol](#), [NSPCC harmful sexual behaviours framework](#), [NSPCC Stages of child sexual development](#), [Lucy Faithful Foundation HSB prevention toolkit](#), [SWGfI HSB professional support line](#), [SEA Rightchoice HSB resources](#) [KCSiE 2024](#))

Internally

One-off incidents which the school believes that the child(ren) is not in need of early help or statutory interventions, which would be appropriate to deal with internally under the school's behaviour policy and provide pastoral support via school's early help offer.

Early Help

(Eg non-violent HSB)

- Referral to multi-agency Early Help services

Refer to MASH/ family Support and Advice Line

(where a child has been harmed, is at risk, or is in immediate danger)
D/DSL should not wait for outcome before protecting the victim and other children in the school.

Report to police

Any report to the police will generally be in parallel with a referral to Children's social care.

Refer to [KCSiE 2024 para 512-534](#)

DSL to make an immediate risk and needs assessment (this may require multi-agency input) to put adequate measures in place to protect all children and keep them safe.

Risk and needs assessment

(case by case basis, consider proportionality of the response)

It should be recorded and kept under review.

A contextual safeguarding approach should be used to ensure assessment considers risks posed by any wider environmental factors present in a child's life.

The DSL must ensure they are engaging with Children's social care and specialist services as required.

REMEMBER: All concerns, discussions, decisions and rationale should be recorded.