



A drawing of a girl with red hair in pigtails, wearing a pink dress with white buttons and pink shoes. She is surrounded by five speech bubbles containing the words: 'Safe', 'Secure', 'Happy', 'Loved', and 'Special'.

Most of all- a place to get ideas and build confidence & positivity!



DSLs from each school attend a regular Trust DSL meeting- if you have anything that you wish to raise please speak to your Safeguarding Team or email me directly:
quare043@rivermeadinclusivetrust.org



Domestic Abuse

Children to be legally defined as victims

Although in the past children have been seen as 'witnesses' to domestic abuse. The new Domestic Abuse Bill, currently in its Third Reading, will define children as 'victims' for the very first time. The Bill says that a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse the adult is their parent or someone who has parental responsibility for the child, or are related to the them. (See Domestic Abuse Bill Part 1, Section 3

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709>)

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour that uses power to control a person with whom the abuser has a close relationship. It's about someone you know trying to control your life. Abuse isn't just physical; it is controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse. This includes (but is not limited to):

psychological abuse physical abuse sexual abuse financial abuse emotional abuse

Worried about a child or family?

It is important to support a child or a family member who's being abused, but it's not always easy. It can take a long time for someone to build up the courage to leave an abusive relationship and having someone there to support them can make a real difference.

If a child, parent, carer or colleague disclose to you:

Use supportive language.

Tell them "I'm here if you want to talk"

Listen to and believe what they are telling you

Acknowledge how strong they are and how well they are coping

Take it seriously.

Help to build their confidence and feel better

Report it to the DSL.

Medway Domestic Abuse Service

Medway Domestic Abuse Service, also known as Choices, is a specialist support service for victims of domestic abuse and their families.

Choices provides:

a confidential helpline offering emotional support

advice on what to do

ongoing one-to-one support to help victims stay safe and recover from their abuse

If you're in immediate danger you may leave your home to get help. The Medway Domestic Abuse Service can help you access emergency accommodation in a refuge.

How to get help

Call the Medway Domestic Abuse Service free confidential number on **0800 917 9948** or email info@choicesdaservice.org.uk



NSPCC Domestic Abuse, Recovering Together (DART)

Helping children and mothers after domestic abuse

Through Domestic Abuse, Recovering Together (DART), children and mothers can talk to each other about domestic abuse, learn to communicate and rebuild their relationship.

The service, which has been recognised by the Home Office, also provides children and mothers with an opportunity to meet others who have lived through similar experiences.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services-children-families/dart>

Delivered in partnership with Medway Council



Sexual violence & sexual harassment

In the past few weeks the UK has had its eyes opened to the urgent need to challenge the seemingly harmless attitudes towards women and girls that contribute to a culture within which gender-based violence is normalised and even accepted; a culture from which, unfortunately, schools are far from exempt.

Ofsted have published the terms of reference for a review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-review-of-sexual-abuse>

The focus is on safeguarding policies and processes, the effectiveness of inspection, implementation and impact of the RSHE curriculum, interagency communication where there are concerns, how the voice of young people who have been harmed is recognised and taken seriously, and support arrangements that are put in place when things go wrong.

They'll be visiting settings where there have previously been concerns, but given the prevalence of peer-on-peer sexual abuse and harassment we should all be looking carefully at our arrangements and considering how to see our settings and school community from the perspective of our young people.

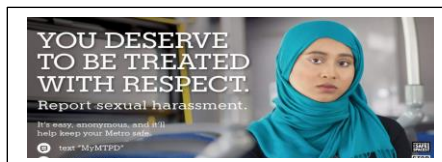
Legal Responsibilities

Schools have a legal responsibility to understand and minimise the risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Reducing the risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment should be seen in the context of developing a whole school culture of safeguarding. The procedures to deal with sexual violence and sexual harassment should be transparent, and easy to understand for pupils, staff and parents.

Staff need to understand how these safeguarding risks manifest in their school and local context. **All staff must know how to raise a concern, they may have about a pupil, or another adult.**

Schools need to develop effective programmes of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and sex and relationships education (SRE). Pupils should be helped to understand safeguarding issues, how to raise a concern they may have about themselves, or a friend or peer; and learn to recognise and develop healthy and respectful relationships, avoiding stereotypes and promoting equality. Pupils should be taught that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong.



Useful Information

NSPCC: Information and advice on sexual abuse, including Protect and Respect, two different services for children and young people aged 11 to 19 who either need support to learn about healthy relationships or who may be experiencing exploitation, Hear and Now, helping children who may have been sexually abused, and Letting the Future In, which helps children who have been sexually abused to rebuild their lives. Visit www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-abuse/

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour>

Useful reading

<https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/sexual-harassment-and-violence-what-can-schools-do-me-too-pshe-rse-bold-voices/>

Resources and Lesson Plans

Our Streets Now

Our Streets Now is a national campaign demanding an end to public sexual harassment begun by two sisters aged 15 and 21. They aim to achieve change through education and awareness, together with political and legislative change.

Their Our Schools Now campaign aims to include public sexual harassment as part of PSHE/RSE lessons in schools and offer free workshop and lesson plans on their website.

<https://www.ourstreetsnow.org/our-schools>

Project deSHAME: Resources for teachers, parents and law enforcement on addressing online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13-17, www.childnet.com/our-projects/project-des Shame