



Everyone's Invited – initial response from the STAR Multi-Academy Trust

Over the last few weeks we have seen numerous media reports linked to the testimonies placed by young people on the Everyone's Invited website.

What is being described is utterly horrifying and the behaviour described is not only unacceptable but in many cases will almost certainly constitute a serious sexual offence.

To date, the media reporting of these testimonies has focused on the role of schools. In fact, these testimonies involve young people, in schools and universities, in a wide variety of circumstances, often outside school premises in settings such as parties. As such, this represents a wider deep-rooted societal problem which cannot be addressed by the education sector alone. For example, parents have a responsibility to talk to their children about how they behave towards others including how they use social media and gaming consoles, the social media companies themselves have a responsibility to take more care about how their platforms are used, the criminal justice system has a responsibility to show young people that it can be trusted to prosecute and bring to justice sexual offenders. As a Trust, we will be further exploring how a collegiate approach can continue to tackle this issue on behalf of our young people. [A useful parents guide to online safety and social media is available here](#)

However, this is not to minimise the vital responsibility of schools in tackling sexual violence and sexual harassment, of instilling good values in young people and respect for one another and of being safe places for young people to seek unequivocal support and guidance.

At the STAR Multi-Academy Trust, our schools work very hard on all aspects of safeguarding, we are committed to always taking these matters extremely seriously. All of our Trust schools have evolved their Relationship and Sex Education Curriculum, including provision during periods of remote education, to ensure that it engages students in age appropriate discussion within a safe environment. In addition, robust procedures are in place to handle any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. Fundamentally, an understanding for all pupils of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment will help ensure that pupils treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults. All of our schools explicitly teach respect, honesty, kindness, tolerance and courtesy.

Parents and students can find out more about school level curriculum work by visiting school websites and contacting the appropriate School Office for further information.

As schools resume for the Summer Term, we do hope and intend to further engage with our post-16 student bodies at Sherburn High School and Tadcaster Grammar, in collaboration to ensure our systems, processes, curriculum materials and design are as good as they can possibly be while addressing our students own real-life experiences within our schools and in wider local society.

To be very clear at this stage, sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up. They have never, and will not ever be tolerated in our Trust schools and any report from our young people will always be appropriately addressed.

To our students - as always, please don't feel alone in dealing with difficult issues. We are here for you. There is also a new dedicated, confidential helpline, run by the NSPCC, available to current or past victims as well as parents, carers or professionals with concerns.

The dedicated NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663