

Gender Based Violence & Violence Against Women & Girls Policy

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Helm Academy

EMPOWERING MINDS, NAVIGATING FUTURES

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Helm Academy documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

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Helm Academy

EMPOWERING MINDS, NAVIGATING FUTURES

1. Introduction

At Helm Academy we believe that all members of the Academy community have the right to study and work without experiencing any form of gender-based violence, abuse or harassment. Helm Academy will not tolerate gender-based violence in any form. As an Academy, we recognise that gender-based violence is an issue within our communities. We are committed to ensuring that our campuses and outreach centres are safe for everyone. We are committed to providing a supportive and caring environment for students. Helm Academy students, staff and visitors have the right to be in an environment free from gender-based violence. Therefore, all staff, students and visitors are expected to behave appropriately and follow Academy policies.

Helm Academy recognises that gender-based violence, violence against women and girls, misogyny, sexual violence, sexual harassment, coercive and controlling behaviour, harmful sexual behaviour and online abuse are safeguarding concerns that may place children at risk of significant harm. These harms can occur within families, peer groups, educational settings, online environments and wider community contexts. The Academy adopts a child-centred approach and will always act in the best interests of the child when responding to concerns, disclosures or allegations.

Staff are expected to maintain an attitude of professional curiosity and recognise that disclosures may not always be direct. Children and young people may present with behavioural, emotional, attendance, wellbeing or safeguarding indicators that suggest abuse, exploitation, coercion or violence. Staff must remain vigilant to these indicators and seek advice from safeguarding leads where concerns arise.

This policy is implemented through a range of activities and statements which are outlined in this document. This policy also links with other relevant Helm Academy policies, for example Safeguarding and Positive Behaviour and Anti - Bullying and Harassment policy.

2. Scope

This policy was created to:

- Ensure and enhance the wellbeing and safety of Helm Academy students
- Support students who are experiencing, have experienced or have been impacted by gender-based violence by helping them to access specialist support services

3. Definition

Gender based violence and violence against women and girls encompasses (but is not limited to):

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family (including children and young people), within the general community or in institutions, including domestic abuse, rape, and incest
- Sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation in any public or private space, including work
- Commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking
- Child sexual abuse, including familial sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and online abuse

- So called 'honour based' violence, including dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and 'honour' crimes.
- The definition includes women and girls across all protected characteristics defined by equality legislation - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and
- maternity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.
 1. It is important to recognise that abuse also occurs in same sex relationships and can be experienced by transgender people. While men are at less risk of gender-based violence, some men are abused in similar ways by other men and women. Similarly, many boys are sexually abused in childhood.
 2. Not everyone experiences the same level of risk. Factors such as age, financial dependency, poverty, disability, homelessness and insecure immigration status can heighten vulnerability to abuse or further entrap people experiencing abuse. Also, many people experience more than one form of abuse e.g. sexual violence and domestic abuse within relationships.

4. Key Principles

Helm Academy will promote the safety of all students so that they are able to live safely and free from physical, emotional, financial and sexual harm. This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that all Academy staff have a clear understanding of their legal and moral obligations in relation to gender-based violence
 1. National Police Chiefs Council - [Violence Against Women and Girls](#)
 2. House of Lords Library - [Tackling violence against women and girls in the UK - House of Lords Library](#)
 3. ITN Business Charity and Social Impact - [Violence against women and girls in the UK: A 'national emergency' - ITN Business](#)
 4. NHS Safeguarding workstreams - [NHS England » Domestic abuse and violence bill](#)
 5. Refuge Facts and Statistics - [Facts and Statistics - Refuge](#)
- Responding to all reported incidents and ensuring that the appropriate actions are taken and advice and support given to the student and any staff members involved
- Working effectively with the key partners and other agencies such as the police, Rape Crisis, Women's Aid and Helm Academy Students' Association
- Promotion, awareness raising and support of gender-based violence national and local campaigns, events and policies such as Equally Safe

The Academy will ensure that safeguarding practice reflects the understanding that gender-based violence is rarely an isolated incident and may coexist with child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, domestic abuse, mental health difficulties, online harms, peer-on-peer abuse, contextual safeguarding concerns and wider family adversity. All concerns will therefore be assessed holistically.

The Academy promotes a culture where harmful attitudes, misogyny, sexism, harassment, coercive control, discrimination and abuse are challenged consistently. Educational programmes including RSHE, PSHE, safeguarding education, online safety and British Values support prevention, awareness and respectful relationships.

5. Lines Of Responsibility

- The Head of School and Director of Education have overall responsibility for this policy
- All managers have the responsibility to ensure that this policy is understood and followed by all their staff
- It is the responsibility of all Academy staff to contribute to the prevention of gender-based violence through an active awareness of the issues involved and by ensuring that their own and their colleagues standards of conduct and the content of learning and teaching materials do not cause offence or entrench harmful gender stereotypes
- All staff are advised to attend any gender-based violence training opportunities provided by Helm Academy or any external partners
- Disclosures and reports of gender-based violence will be dealt with by the Safeguarding Team under the Academy Safeguarding Policy which outlines processes in place

Designated Safeguarding Lead Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will maintain strategic oversight of all safeguarding concerns relating to gender-based violence and VAWG; ensure concerns are assessed within wider safeguarding contexts and not viewed in isolation; exercise and promote professional curiosity; ensure safeguarding information is triangulated with attendance, behaviour, wellbeing, mental health, SEND, child protection, child in need, Family Help and contextual safeguarding information; lead multi-agency safeguarding responses where concerns indicate actual or potential significant harm; ensure timely referrals to Children's Social Care, Police, Family Help, Prevent, health services and specialist agencies where appropriate; support staff managing disclosures; monitor trends; ensure safeguarding records are maintained and reviewed; contribute to risk assessments and safety planning; and ensure victims receive appropriate support and protection measures.

The DSL will ensure safeguarding concerns are regularly reviewed and that cumulative risk is considered. Repeated incidents, lower-level concerns, patterns of behaviour and emerging themes will be analysed to identify wider safeguarding risks at the earliest opportunity.

6. Examples Of Gender Based Violence

- Examples include but are not limited to -
- Domestic violence
- Rape and sexual assault
- Stalking and harassment
- Sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage
- Honour' based violence
- INCEL

7. Procedures For Recording

- Staff must make careful and clear detailed notes which will be recorded via Promonitor.

- If a student reports an incident of gender-based violence to a member of staff, it should be reported to the Safeguarding team via the Safeguarding system
- If there is an immediate threat to life, the Safeguarding Team should be alerted immediately.

All concerns, disclosures, incidents, discussions, decisions and actions will be recorded in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Records must provide a clear account of what was reported, who was involved, actions taken, professional decisions reached and outcomes achieved. Records should support effective safeguarding decision making and facilitate multi-agency working where required.

Staff should never assume that another professional will take action. If staff have concerns regarding a child's welfare, they must ensure concerns are passed promptly to the DSL and recorded appropriately. Early information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding practice.

8. Support For Students

- Students will be supported by the Safeguarding Team and other relevant Helm Academy staff such as the Wellbeing Team, Learning Development Tutors and Learning Support.
- Students will also be supported if they wish to access external support services such as Women's Aid, Rape Crisis, EHASH, NHS England - Rape & Sexual Assault Service and other relevant services.

Support arrangements will be child-centred and informed by the views, wishes and experiences of the child. Safety planning, emotional support, curriculum adaptation, wellbeing intervention, specialist therapeutic support and multi-agency intervention will be considered where appropriate. Particular consideration will be given to children with SEND, children with a social worker, looked after children, previously looked after children and children experiencing multiple vulnerabilities.

Professional Curiosity: Helm Academy expects all staff to apply professional curiosity when responding to indicators of gender-based violence or violence against women and girls. This includes exploring concerns respectfully, seeking clarification where explanations appear inconsistent, being alert to changes in attendance, behaviour, relationships or wellbeing, considering online and community influences, remaining open to the possibility that abuse may be occurring without a direct disclosure, and considering cumulative risk.

Multi-Agency Working: Helm Academy recognises that effective safeguarding responses require strong multi-agency working and information sharing. The Academy will work collaboratively with Children's Social Care, Police, Family Help Services, health professionals, CAMHS, safeguarding partnerships, Prevent teams and specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence services. The Academy will contribute to assessments, strategy discussions, child protection enquiries, child in need plans, Family Help plans and safeguarding meetings as required. Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and without unnecessary delay to safeguard children.

9. Specific Policies/Related Documents

- Helm Academy Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Helm Academy Safeguarding Policy
- Helm Academy Hate Crime and Misogyny Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults procedures and guidance
- Safeguarding Emergency Procedures
- Disciplinary Policy (staff)
- GDPR 2018 policy and guidance
- Code of Practice for DBS Disclosure Information (students)
- Recruitment of Ex Offenders Guidance
- Whistle-Blowing Policy
- Praise and Complaints Policy
- Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Student Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Health, Safety and Welfare Policy
- Visitor Policy

10. Directly Related Legislation

This policy has links to the following policies and procedures which can be found on the Portal:

- The Education Act 2011
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) updated annually**
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Working Together to Keep Children Safe
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- DfE Statutory Guidance (2014)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) – Part 5 Safeguarding vulnerable groups, criminal records etc.
- Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- The Care Act 2014

11. INCEL

Safeguarding and incel ideology

There are four areas where the groundwork in relation to responding to incel ideology can be addressed:

- **Prevent training** – the [prevent strategy](#) has the stated aim of preventing people being drawn into terrorism. Given the views presented above, incel ideologies would fall within this strategy, which has always not only covered Islamist and far right groups, but also areas such as animal rights extremism and, in our case, incel groups.
- **Domestic abuse** – a number of the views that are inherent in the incel ideology that we have been discussing can arguably be seen in incidents of domestic violence, for example association with male privilege and viewing females as property or lesser beings.

- [Peer-on-peer abuse](#) – in looking at the typology set out above, arguably both victims and perpetrators of peer-on-peer abuse could be demonstrating potential to identify with the incel ideology later in life, either through the isolation and ostracisation that could come with being a victim of peer-on-peer abuse, or through the ideology having associations with current views that perpetrators may have.
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment](#) – As we have seen, those who are following the incel ideology set out above have every set and misogynistic views in relation to women and their role in society. For some this may therefore play out in inappropriate sexual behaviour which must be consistently responded to.

Within this there is therefore a need for a multi-faceted approach to managing the response in your setting, but one that ensures that the learning for all is blended into existing processes. As we have highlighted, the risk associated with separating incel ideology out is that it then becomes a point of focus and there is the potential for there to be a “kick-back” on young people perceived to be celibate (whether voluntarily or involuntarily), or those who are considered by their peers to be exhibiting signs of being an incel. The key areas therefore include:

- Giving **regular safeguarding updates to staff** with a view to developing their understanding of where addressing incel ideology sits within the safeguarding arena. As with peer-on-peer abuse, this is not just a secondary school issue, or just an issue for further education. Children in younger settings may have older siblings who are either looking into the incel ideology or in contact with someone who is, and therefore it may come out in conversation or through actions and behaviour. Staff who are delivering PSHE/RSHE sessions will want to be more familiar with this territory and understanding of the themes, language and terminology in this article to have greater awareness.
- **The PSHE curriculum** provides lots of opportunity to explore the issues around incel culture, without approaching this in a way that creates a focus on individuals or any sense that this is a life choice. **Promotion of British Values** which include the role of democracy, the rule of law, the right to individual liberty along with respect and tolerance of those around you who may have different views and beliefs creates debate around rights and attitudes – the same [Hope not Hate report](#) referred to earlier identified that half of young men surveyed held the view that feminism had gone too far, and that their views can be justification for violence if there is a need to defend those beliefs. As learners get older there will be more scope for discussing viewpoints, however the promotion of these values begins at a very early age. The [Disrespect NoBody](#) materials produced by the Home Office are useful tools although do not address incel ideology directly. The DSL will be engaged with staff delivering this curriculum and where concerns arise for an individual should take a lead in exploring these further.
- **Understanding the culture, groups and cliques that exist within your setting.** What is it that brings young people together, where are the 'echo chambers' where discriminatory views are more safely shared and reinforced, how inclusive is your community? There is no substitute for knowing your learners. As with all safeguarding encourage staff to share their lower-level concerns at an early stage to improve the effectiveness of your interventions.

- Continuing **understanding of what learners are accessing online** – young people transition easily between offline and online groups. Whilst the forums and Reddit channels that those adopting the incel ideology utilise may not be easily accessible to all, the structure of the internet means that there are a number of websites and forums that form the “manosphere” and are often more easily accessible, whether deliberately or by accident. We are never likely to be in a position where we can monitor everything that the children and young people in our setting do, however promoting safe use and a culture of openness will allow for a far greater insight into what is being accessed.
- Ensuring that **children with additional needs are supported**. As we saw earlier in this insight, many of those following the incel ideology report having additional needs when younger which appear to have been unsupported, but which had a significant impact on their emotional development and perceived place in society. This has then developed into feelings of ostracisation and rejection by others, which further compounds their worldview.

12 Working Together to Safeguard Children – Assurance Update

- **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Responsibilities**
The organisation recognises its duties under *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and works proactively with safeguarding partners, including children’s social care, health services and the police. Safeguarding concerns relating to gender-based violence are addressed through coordinated multi-agency responses.
- **Early Help and Prevention**
In line with statutory guidance, the organisation promotes early identification of risk factors associated with gender-based violence and vulnerability. Early help processes are used where appropriate to support pupils and families before concerns escalate.
- **Child-Centred Approach**
Safeguarding practice is child-centred. The views, wishes and experiences of pupils are taken into account, particularly where gender-based violence, coercion, exploitation or abuse is suspected or disclosed.
- **Information Sharing and Escalation**
The organisation recognises that effective safeguarding relies on timely information sharing. Concerns regarding gender-based violence or risk of harm are shared appropriately and without delay in accordance with safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance.

Staff and leaders recognise that safeguarding concerns involving gender-based violence may escalate rapidly. Concerns will be shared without delay and escalated where risks increase, circumstances deteriorate or where a child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Professional challenge and escalation procedures will be used where concerns remain unresolved.

- **Contextual Safeguarding**
Safeguarding practice includes consideration of risks beyond the home environment, including peer-on-peer abuse, online harm, and wider community influences. This includes recognition of ideological risks such as misogyny, harmful online communities and extremist belief systems.
- **Leadership, Accountability and Continuous Review**
Leaders ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain effective through ongoing monitoring,

review and evaluation. Governance oversight provides assurance that statutory responsibilities under *Working Together to Safeguard Children* are fully met and embedded across practice.

The DSL and senior leaders will periodically review safeguarding data, patterns, disclosures, incidents and outcomes relating to gender-based violence, misogyny, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and VAWG. Findings will inform curriculum development, staff training, safeguarding priorities and continuous improvement planning.

INCEL Terminology

As mentioned throughout this insight, there are slang words which are associated with incel ideology. Some more common ones are below (adapted from Incels: A Guide to Symbols and Terminology, 2020):

- **Ascend** – leave the bounds of incelhood and have sex with a woman (without payment being given)
- **AWALT** – Acronym for “All Women Are Like That”.
- **Black pill** – Dating success is driven by physical attractiveness and determined at birth. Those who are inferior will therefore not be able to access sexual and romantic relationships.
- **Blue pill** – Those who have not taken the red pill and live on unaware of the real state of affairs.
- **Chad** – an attractive, successful man desired by all women (also known as alpha male)
- **Cuck** – an average man who has not yet taken the red pill and is inferior to the alpha male but happy to continue living in a society that oppresses them.
- **Femoid/foid** – short for ‘female humanoid’, mostly used by incels as a way of dehumanising women.
- **Gymmaxxing** – going to the gym to improve appearance to be able to access sex.
- **Landwhale** – overweight woman.
- **MMASYB** – Acronym for "Make me a sandwich you b***h".
- **Normie** – a person who is not part of the incel community.
- **Red pill** – Learning about and understanding the truth about male oppression
- **Roastie** – sexually attractive woman.

Useful Links

[Predicting harm among incels \(involuntary celibates\) - GOV.UK](#)

[Incels: A Guide for Those Teaching Year 10 and Above](#)

[Responding to the incel ideology - safeguarding.network](#)

[Leeds Prevent](#)

[ASCL - Incel guide](#)

[Virtual The Manosphere and Incel Movement Training](#)

Safeguarding and Ofsted Toolkit Assurance Statements

Purpose:

These statements provide safeguarding and inspection assurance aligned with Ofsted expectations, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Statutory Safeguarding Alignment:

Gender-based violence provision operates within statutory safeguarding frameworks ensuring all individuals are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Risk and Vulnerability:

Leaders recognise that experiences of gender-based violence significantly increase vulnerability. Pupils at risk are identified early and supported through safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding Response:

All disclosures and concerns are managed in line with safeguarding policy, ensuring timely reporting, accurate recording and appropriate multi-agency involvement.

Inclusion and Equity:

The policy ensures protection for all individuals regardless of protected characteristics, recognising discrimination and harassment as safeguarding risks.

Staff Practice and Conduct:

Staff maintain professional boundaries and respond to disclosures sensitively, ensuring appropriate safeguarding escalation at all times.

Leadership and Governance:

Leaders and governors monitor safeguarding trends, incidents and outcomes to ensure compliance with statutory duties and continuous improvement.

Review and Continuous Assurance:

Provision is reviewed regularly to ensure safeguarding effectiveness, responsiveness and alignment with national guidance.