



Safeguarding Partnership Board Report

*LEARNING ON HOW WE TACKLE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL
ABUSE IN JERSEY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES*

Guests today

PC Jo
Carter

Jade
Higham

Yes Project
rep

In 2020, the website *Everyone's Invited* was established to enable survivors of rape to share their story anonymously

The murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021 raised considerable feelings and disquiet about the safety of women in society

Background – 2020-21

On 12th March 2021, a senior student at Jersey College for Girls (JCG) contacted the Principal expressing her concern over the issue of safety and citing the experiences of girls at JCG

Allegations of misogyny, sexism and sexual abuse were raised by girls at JCG in anonymised testimonies, citing actions in a range of contexts, and particularly involving the boys at Victoria College Jersey (VCJ)

Initially the allegations were presented to the Principal of JCG, and then subsequently, the Headmaster of VCJ, then to States of Jersey Police (SOJP) and the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department (CYPES)

There were concerns that the allegations may not have been managed within policy and procedures to enable a safe and appropriate outcome for the young people concerned

Background – March 2021

The Review

The Safeguarding Partnership Board (SPB) agreed to commission a review of the way in which these allegations were handled and to inform work on prevention and management of peer-on-peer abuse going forward

Two independent reviewers were appointed as follows:

John Harris has a background in education, is a former Director of Children's Services and a Children's Improvement Adviser in England

Dr Susan Tranter is Chief Executive Officer of Edmonton Academy Trust and is a member of the National Child Safeguarding Practice Panel for England

The reviewers held virtual fieldwork discussions with staff and students involved from Jersey College for Girls and Victoria College

Interviews were also held with States of Jersey Police, and the Department of Children, Education, Young People and Skills

Each relevant agency was asked to submit a “significant events” analysis document and provide supporting documentation to inform the review

Methodology

The Allegations

The sixth formers at JCG recorded 68 testimonials detailing misogyny, sexism and sexual abuse anonymously through two separate survey websites that were set up by two sixth form students, Student A (survey with Year 12) and Student B (survey with Year 13)

States of Jersey Police analysis found 55 potential crimes - from low level verbal sexist abuse to an allegation of rape.

The testimonies recorded many instances of:

- sexual harassment including verbal abuse
- sexual jokes and taunts
- intimidating physical behaviour towards them
- on-line harassment

The Allegations

A small number of students' testimonies also included instances of unwanted sexual advances and potentially sexual assault

There were a few anonymous posts from male students that mentioned experiences of homophobic taunts and bullying

The Year 13 survey continues to be held by JCG and has not been subject to any consideration outside the school.

To date no individual disclosures of sexual harassment or abuse have been made directly to the schools following the testimonies

Findings

Students at JCG displayed great courage and maturity in seeking to bring to light their experiences of sexual harassment and abuse

The Principal and senior leadership team at JCG responded proactively and took seriously the concerning issues highlighted in the girls' testimonies

The Headmaster and senior leadership team at VCJ responded positively to the issues highlighted in the girls' testimonies

JCG and VCJ ensured that there was coordinated communication and a consistent message to parents about the issues and the work that the schools were doing together

Findings

At the point when the process to gather anonymous testimonies was accepted, there does not appear to have been sufficient consideration of the way in which the school would need to respond to any testimonies that indicated significant harm, including sexual assault and violence

Anonymous testimonies limited the scope for the school and other agencies to identify individual students, follow up potential incidents of harm or abuse, or make referrals for further support

There was a significant delay in involving States of Jersey Police and subsequently CYPES. Both agencies were left having to put in place support from partner agencies for students at JCG and young people more generally at short notice immediately prior to a school and public holiday period

Key Learning

Like other jurisdictions, sexual harassment is a prevalent issue in schools in Jersey

There need to be safe options in schools for students to make disclosures

The importance of Safeguarding Guidance about Peer on Peer Abuse

Schools need to access timely advice including liaison with MASH

CYPES need robust systems for gathering intelligence about safeguarding issues in a school or group of schools

CYPES should work in partnership with schools and other agencies through the SPB to develop a shared understanding of the prevalence of sexual harassment and abuse in Jersey schools, promote effective whole-school responses, and coordinate timely access to appropriate support for victims and perpetrators

The SPB should develop and publish multi-agency safeguarding guidance and procedures for Peer on Peer Abuse

The SPB should commission multi-agency training about Peer on Peer abuse, to include Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools

CYPES should review its systems for gathering intelligence about safeguarding issues in schools in Jersey, as part of the wider review of its arrangements for improving and assuring the effectiveness of safeguarding in education

Recommendations

In Overview

As a College we have worked hard on changing the culture of VCJ

Kindness, respect, inclusion and diversity

The Report recognises positive and proactive responses from VCJ

This is not an 'anti-man' agenda

To do all we can to ensure that the women and girls our lives (mothers, sisters, partners, friends, teachers, members of public) to feel safe and be supported

Our College is at the forefront of this change in society

Help support our change in culture

Zero tolerance.

Next Steps

Practitioner briefing event - 18th October 2021

Publication of the report - 19th October 2021

In line with work on addressing harmful sexual behaviours, the SPB will work with CYPES and other agencies to develop a framework for a “whole school approach” to identifying and managing peer on peer abuse

Guests today staying in College after assembly and after school to support students

Counsellor available tomorrow from midday to support students

Date	Action	Who	Notes
Monday 11 October	Actions update assembly for Years 7-9	Gareth Hughes	Staff sent assembly notes via email
Tuesday 12 October	Actions update assembly for Years 10, 12, 13	Gareth Hughes	Staff sent assembly notes via email
Friday 15 October	Joint school letter (VCJ, JCG, VCP, JCP) released at 1400 to all parents on updates and actions on issue	Gareth Hughes Carl Howarth Richard Sugden Dan Pateman	Copied to all staff at 1400
Monday 18 October	Island 'Learning Event' on outcomes	Safeguarding Protection Board with CYPES and school leaders 0900-1200 (Gareth Hughes and Carl Howarth in attendance)	
Monday 18 October	Media Briefings	Various media outlets being briefed by GoJ from 1400 Gareth Hughes and Carl Howarth media interviews during afternoon	Media release will be Tuesday 19 October on various channels
Monday 18 October	Staff Briefing via Teams to all VCJ staff	All Staff, led by Gareth Hughes	In Great Hall - in person, please.
Monday 18 October	Years 9, (10*), 12, 13 Assembly on findings of SPB report	Gareth Hughes	In Great Hall at 1430 following the assembly to (10*), 12, 13 from JAAR
Monday 18 October	Overview presentation sent to staff in morning to update on broad findings of SPB report	Gareth Hughes	Please keep confidential, ahead of broader release of SPB report the following day
Tuesday 19 October	SPB report released - 0700	CYPES	
Tuesday 19 October	Staff Briefing on Teams - 0810	Gareth Hughes	On All Staff Channel - everyone to dial in, please
Tuesday 19 October	Student Briefings via Teams (separate for Years 7-8, 9-13) to be played in Tutor Time.	Gareth Hughes Leadership Group Tutors	Extended Tutor Time into P1(P1 starts at 0850) to allow for some initial discussion. Support provided by Leadership Group in person if requested and briefing notes provided.