

Infatuations and Crushes

Definition and Legal Status

An infatuation is different than a crush because, with a crush, you have enough data about the person to know who they are, whether this means you have personally spent time with them or you know someone who has. Infatuation occurs from a distance and is usually unhealthy.

How do you tell if it's a crush or infatuation?

In the crush stage of a relationship, romantic feelings are based on superficial qualities rather than personal interactions and a true 'knowing' of the other person. Infatuation, is "a step beyond a crush" and is typically accompanied by strong sexual attraction (Ref: Carla Marie Manly, PhD)

National VPC Statement

All leaders need to recognise that it is not uncommon for cadets to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any leader who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any signs, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or another leader, should immediately report this to the named person responsible for safeguarding or senior leader responsible for cadets. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

The named person responsible for safeguarding (or senior manager) should give careful thought to those circumstances where the leader, cadet and their parents/carers should be spoken to and should ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the cadet and leader and maintain the dignity of all. This plan should involve all parties, be robust and regularly monitored and reviewed.

This plan might involve limiting interaction between the leader and cadet, ensuring that group activities are directed appropriately and where possible a different adult leader is responsible for the young person. It would also be beneficial to remind the leaders about group rules and ratios and the importance for these measures. It may also be appropriate to document the concerns on Marshall (or similar volunteering database) record of the young person.

Find Related Guidance

Grooming

Receiving Gifts and Favouritism