



EduDiverse

Child on Child Abuse Policy



Child on Child Abuse Policy

Introduction & Purpose

This Policy applies to anyone working on behalf of EduDiverse including paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Its purpose is to protect and enhance the safety and well-being of all children and young people by actively promoting awareness, good practise and sound procedures.

This Policy has been written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education- Revised (September 2023).

Policy Principles & Values

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and procedures a child, young person, pupil or student is referred to as a 'child' or a 'pupil' and they are normally under 18 years of age.

Wherever the term 'parent' is used this includes any person with parental authority over the child concerned e.g. carers, legal guardians etc.

Child on child abuse may also be referred to as peer on peer abuse or child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment and should be taken to include child on child abuse of any description.

Introduction

Child on child abuse left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals and their families. It can be a barrier to their learning and have serious consequences for their mental health. Such abuse which takes place at school does not only affect an individual during childhood but can have a lasting effect on their lives well into adulthood.

By effectively preventing and tackling abuse, we can help to create a safe, disciplined environment where our pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential. There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as abusive, and those that are more properly dealt with as bullying, sexual experimentation etc. This is a matter of professional judgement. In the main, therefore, this document refers to child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as 'abuse'. Bullying, fighting and harassment between children are not generally seen as child protection issues and would normally be dealt with in line with EduDiverse's Behaviour Policy and Anti-bullying procedures. However, it may be appropriate to regard a young person's behaviour as 'abusive' if:

- there is a significant difference in power (e.g. age, size, ability, development etc.)
- between the young people concerned;
- the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children;
- there are concerns about the intention of the alleged young person.

If the evidence suggests that there was an intention to cause severe harm to the victim,



this should be regarded as abusive whether or not severe harm was actually caused. Addressing inappropriate behaviour (even if it appears to be relatively innocuous) can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

The DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' is our main point of reference for child protection and child welfare issues in education.

Ethos

At EduDiverse the health, safety and well-being of all our children is of paramount importance to all the adults who work or volunteer here. All our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, race, religious belief, ethnicity or sexual orientation/identity. They have a right to be safe in our provision; this is enhanced by the adoption of a robust Child Protection Policy.

All staff have been advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and we will respond appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment.

We wish to make it clear to parents, pupils and staff that we have effective prevention measures in place to tackle child on child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment and all other forms of abuse between children. Our approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment is reflected in, and is part of, our wider approach to safeguarding.

If an incident arises, we will deal with it robustly, quickly and appropriately. We will not tolerate any form of child on child abuse within our provision or by association.

Aims

Keeping Children Safe in Education states that "Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of child on child abuse and sets out how allegations will be dealt with along with clear processes as to how victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by such abuse will be supported".

Whilst it is recommended that child on child abuse is dealt with as part of the Child Protection Policy and procedures, due to the sensitive nature and specific issues involved particularly with child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, this Policy has been formulated and is designed to be read in conjunction with the overarching principles of the EduDiverse's Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

The aim of this policy is therefore to ensure that any form of child on child abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently. Consequently, when allegations are made and appropriate responses put in place, this will reduce the extent of harm to those involved and minimise the potential impact on emotional and mental health and well-being.

Entitlement

We accept and embrace our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (for example, the provisions on reasonable adjustments). Each child in our provision, regardless of their background or home circumstances could be the victim of child on child abuse. They are therefore all entitled to the same degree of protection and support.



Each child at EduDiverse will also develop the skills appropriate to their age and understanding which could enable prevention of abuse by learning about keeping safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened.

Implementation

This policy and supporting procedures applies to all who come into contact with children at EduDiverse, including: Learning Mentors, accompanying school staff, and visitors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related EduDiverse Policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Positive Touch Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Emergency Procedure Policy

Review

This Policy will be reviewed annually and more often should legislation or statutory guidance change and in order to keep up to date with safeguarding issues as they emerge and evolve, including lessons learnt.

Procedures

Summary of Actions required when a disclosure is received

- Staff member records initial disclosure. *If a pupil is in immediate danger, or at risk of significant harm, a referral to the Safeguarding Hub (if the pupil is aged under 18) and/or the Police will be made immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made.*
- Staff member reports incident to DSL
- DSL informs referring school and/or Local Authority immediately – Police informed if appropriate
- EduDiverse led by the referring School/LA agree next steps in accordance with their Safeguarding Policies and EduDiverse's Safeguarding Policies.

1. What Is Child On Child Abuse

Child on child abuse (also known as peer on peer abuse) is behaviour by an individual or group of individuals which can be a one-off incident or repeated over time. Child on child abuse is behaviour that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but all child on child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

Child on child abuse can take many forms including serious bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); physical harm; abuse within intimate partner



relationships; domestic abuse; child sexual exploitation; youth and serious youth violence; financial abuse; initiation/hazing type violence and rituals; harmful sexual behaviour (sexual violence and sexual harassment - Part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education) and Sexual Violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges; upskirting; sharing nude and semi-nude images and/or gender-based violence and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups steered by a dislike for a person's:

- race;
- religion;
- gender;
- sexual orientation;
- special educational needs or disabilities;
- or where a child:
 - is adopted or in care;
 - has caring responsibilities;
 - is suffering from a health problem;
 - is frequently on the move (e.g. those from military families or the travelling community);
 - is experiencing a personal or family crisis;
 - has actual or perceived differences, (e.g. physical or cultural differences).
- These types of abuse rarely take place in isolation and often indicate wider safeguarding concerns.

Abusive behaviour can happen to pupils in schools and settings and it is necessary to consider what abuse is and looks like, how it can be managed and what support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual and what preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

There may be reports where the alleged incident is between two pupils from the same or different schools but is alleged to have taken place away from the school premises.

The safeguarding principles, and the EduDiverse's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils remain the same regardless of where the incident took place and regardless of whether the incident was online or offline.

Abuse is abuse and will never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys' which essentially downplays certain behaviours and can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and possibly a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. Equally, abuse issues can sometimes be gender specific e.g. girls being sexually touched/assaulted and boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. We will not dismiss abusive behaviour between children as 'normal' and our thresholds for investigating claims and concerns/allegations are the same as for any other type of abuse.

Preventing violence and abuse and ensuring immediate physical safety is EduDiverse 's first priority but we also acknowledge that emotional abuse can be just as damaging, if not more so, than physical abuse. We recognise that abuse often involves an imbalance of power



between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of abuse having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for the victim to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions are three times more likely to be abused or exploited than their peers. Additional barriers can sometimes exist when recognising abuse in SEND children.

These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability or health condition without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying and harassment, without outwardly showing any signs;
- and communication barriers and difficulties overcoming these barriers.

Children who are lesbian, gay, bi, or trans (LGBT) can be targeted by their peers. In some cases, a child who is perceived by their peers to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who identify as LGBT.

We also acknowledge that low level disruption such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras, lifting up skirts etc. and the use of offensive language can have a significant impact on its target. If left unchallenged or dismissed as 'banter' or 'horseplay', it can also lead to reluctance to report other behaviour.

2. Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside EduDiverse Sessions and/or can occur between children outside our sessions. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead should be considering the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur. This is known as contextual safeguarding, which simply means assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors are present in a child's life that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare.

Children's experiences of abuse and violence are rarely isolated events, and they can often be linked to other things that are happening in their lives and spaces in which they spend their time. Any response to child on child abuse therefore needs to consider the range of possible types of abuse set out above and capture the full context of children's experiences. This can be done by adopting a 'contextual safeguarding' approach and by ensuring that our response to incidents of child on child abuse takes into account any potential complexity.

This policy and procedures encapsulate a contextual safeguarding approach, which:



- is an approach to safeguarding children that recognises their experiences of significant harm in extra-familial contexts and seeks to include these contexts within prevention, identification, assessment and intervention safeguarding activities;
- recognises that as children enter adolescence they spend increasing amounts of time outside of the home in public environments (including on the internet) within which they may experience abuse; and considers interventions to change the systems or social conditions of the environments in which abuse has occurred.

Additional information on contextual safeguarding is available from the Contextual Safeguarding Network.

3. Types Of Abuse

There are many forms of abuse that can occur between children and the following list is not exhaustive:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may include hitting, kicking, nipping, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm to another person. There may be many reasons why a child harms another and it is important to understand why a young person has engaged in such behaviour, including accidentally before considering the action to take or

sanctions to introduce.

Bullying - physical, name calling, homophobic etc.

Bullying in whatever form is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Young people who bully and those who are bullied can have long-term problems.

To be considered as bullying, the behaviour must be aggressive and include:

- an imbalance of power: young people who bully use their power, such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- repetition: bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Cyberbullying

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a medium for cyberbullying, which can occur in or outside education settings. Cyberbullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience. Cyberbullying involves the use of mobile devices, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc. to harass, threaten or intimidate someone for the same reasons as outlined above.

Cyberbullying can fall into criminal behaviour under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 (Section 1) which states that a person who sends electronic communications which are “indecent or grossly offensive, convey a threat or false information or demonstrate that there



is an intention to cause distress or anxiety to the victim” would be deemed to have committed an offence. The Communications Act 2003 (Section 127) further supports this and states that a person is guilty of an offence if he/she sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character or if for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another he/she sends a message by means of a public electronic communications network knowing that the message is false.

If the behaviour involves the taking or distributing indecent images of young people under the age of 18 then this is also a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Outside of the immediate support young people may require in these instances, EduDiverse will have no option but to involve the Police to investigate these allegations.

All incidents of safeguarding are reported the referrers school or the Local Authority directly where appropriate. This includes Bullying which occurs outside of EduDiverse Sessions.

Sharing nude and semi-nude images (formerly known as sexting)

Sharing of nude or semi-nude images is when someone sends or receives a sexually explicit text, image or video via the internet or mobile device. This includes sending ‘nude/semi-nude pics’ or ‘rude pics’ or ‘nude/semi-nude selfies’. Pressuring someone into sending a nude picture can happen in any relationship and to anyone, whatever their age, gender or sexual preference.

Once the image is taken and sent, the sender has lost control of the image and the image could end up anywhere. By having in their possession or distributing to others indecent images of a person under 18, many young people are not aware that they could be committing a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Any direct disclosure by a pupil (male or female) will be taken very seriously. A child who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure on session is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves. When an incident involving the inappropriate sharing of images via the internet or mobile device comes to EduDiverse’s attention the Provision will follow the guidance as set out in the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) publication outlined below. The key consideration here is for staff not to view or forward illegal images of a child. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to confiscate any devices to preserve any evidence and hand them to the Police for inspection. See DfE advice on searching, screening and confiscation.

When considering appropriate action regarding the sharing of inappropriate images, the DSL will take the age of the child involved and the context into account. Children under 13 are given extra protection from sexual abuse. The law makes it clear that sexual activity with a child under 13 is never acceptable and that children of this age can never legally give consent to engage in sexual activity. Any situations involving pupils at EduDiverse sharing nude and semi-nude images will be taken seriously as potentially being indicative of a wider child protection concern or as being problematic sexual behaviour.

Further and more specific advice is contained within the UKCIS document ‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes - Advice for education settings working with children and young people’



which also includes advice on responding to incidents and safeguarding children and young people.

The UKCIS advice outlines how to respond to an incident of nudes and semi-nudes being shared including:

- risk assessing situations;
- safeguarding and supporting children and young people;
- handling devices and images;
- recording incidents, including the role of other agencies.
- informing parents and carers

The types of incidents which this advice covers are:

- a person under the age of 18 creates and shares nudes and semi-nudes of themselves with a child under the age of 18;
- a person under the age of 18 shares nudes and semi-nudes created by another person under the age of 18 with a child under the age of 18;
- a person under the age of 18 is in possession of nudes and semi-nudes created by another person under the age of 18.

Initiation/Hazing

Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a school or sports team etc. Hazing can also be used as initiation into a street or other 'gang'. There are several different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies.

The idea behind this practice is that it welcomes newcomers by subjecting them to a series of trials which promote a bond between them. After the hazing is over, the newcomers also have something in common with older or established members of the organisation or 'gang', because they have all experienced this as part of a 'rite of passage'. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse and harassment.

Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying/behaviour

The term prejudiced-based or discriminatory bullying refers to a range of hurtful behaviour, physical or emotional or both, which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless, excluded or marginalised, and which is connected with prejudices around belonging, identity and equality in wider society – in particular, prejudices related to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender, home life, (for example in relation to issues of care, parental occupation, poverty and social class) and sexual identity (homosexual, bisexual, transsexual).

Teenage relationship abuse

Teenage relationship abuse is defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse perpetrated by an adolescent (between the ages of 13 and 18) against a current or former partner. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social



sabotage, sexual harassment, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. Abuse can occur online and offline and is never acceptable.

Upskirting

'Upskirting' typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is now a criminal offence.

Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. Children's sexual behaviours exist on a wide continuum, from normal and developmentally expected to highly abnormal and abusive. We recognise the importance of distinguishing between problematic and abusive sexual behaviour.

A model continuum to demonstrate the range of sexual behaviours presented by children can be used when seeking to understand a pupil's sexual behaviour and deciding how to respond to it. This model is replicated at Appendix A. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

Staff at EduDiverse will follow the Child Protection Policy and procedures and speak to the DSL.

In relation to any reports or disclosures of sexual violence and sexual harassment between children we will:

- make it clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable,
- will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up;
- challenge behaviours (which are potentially criminal in nature), such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and other private areas of the body.

Ultimately any decisions on how to proceed with an allegation of sexual violence and sexual harassment will be made on a case by case basis with the DSL in communication with the referring school and or children's social care and the Police as required.

We have a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. It is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

We will ensure that pupils are aware of the NSPCC dedicated helpline (report abuse in education – 0800 136 663) for children and young people who have experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance.

Decisions about what action to take will consider:



- the wishes of the victim in terms of how they want to proceed;
- the nature of the incident – might a crime have been committed? the ages of the children involved;
- any power imbalance between the children for example, if one child is much older, more mature or more confident. Does the victim have a disability, learning difficulty or other health related issues;
- whether it was a one-off incident or a pattern of behaviour by the alleged perpetrator;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment can take place within intimate personal relationships between children; and other related issues and wider context, including any links to child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation.

Some situations, however, are statutorily clear:

- a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity; the age of consent is 16;
- sexual intercourse without consent is rape;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law;
- creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s is illegal. This includes children making and sharing sexual images and videos of themselves.

4. Managing The Disclosure/Report

Our initial response to a disclosure or report of an incident from a child is that the disclosure will be taken seriously. All our staff know to report incidents immediately to the DSL. Staff will also be trained to manage a disclosure/report.

- The member of staff to whom the disclosure is made will reassure the child and any other victims that they will be supported throughout and kept safe.
- A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Staff will never assume that someone else is dealing with the alleged incident. If in doubt, they will speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Details of the disclosure will be passed to the DSL immediately or as soon as practically possible in the form of a written record. Only the facts as the child presents them will be recorded and staff will be made aware that notes of such reports could become part of a statutory assessment by Children's Social Care and/or part of a criminal investigation.

The DSL contact the referring school or Local Authority and provide details of the incident. The DSL will manage the concern/allegation from the member of staff, child or parent. While the facts are being investigated, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any EduDiverse Session shared with the other child. This is in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

Both the immediate and future needs of the victim, the alleged perpetrator and any other children involved/affected (particularly if they are closely related to the victim or the alleged



perpetrator) will be assessed and, where necessary appropriate plans and strategies put in place in communication with the referring school or Local Authority.

It may be appropriate to temporarily stop EduDiverse sessions until the incident is investigated. This decision will be made in communication with the referring school or Local Authority.

Gathering the facts

It is important to gather a broad view of the facts at an early stage. Wherever possible, manage the disclosure and subsequent interviews of those involved with two members of staff present (preferably one being the DSL).

All those involved in the alleged incident should be spoken to individually and separately.

Gain a statement of facts from those involved using consistent language and open questions for each account. The easiest way to do this is not to have a line of questioning but to ask the children to tell you in their own words what happened.

Only interrupt the child to gain clarity with open questions – where, when, why, who. (What happened? Who observed the incident? What was seen? What was heard? Did anyone intervene? etc.)

Staff will not promise confidentiality at the initial stage and will inform those involved who the report will be passed on to.

Where the report includes an online element, staff will be aware of the DfE advice on searching, screening and confiscation for schools and guidance issued by UKCIS.

Considering confidentiality and anonymity

Staff will never promise confidentiality as it is likely that it will be in the best interests of the victim to seek advice and guidance from others to provide support and engage appropriate agencies.

We will only engage staff and other agencies who are required to support the children involved or will be involved in any investigation.

If the victim asks the provision not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment, staff may still lawfully share it, if it can be justified to be in the public interest, for example, to protect children from harm and to promote the welfare of children. Staff should only share the report with those people who are necessary in order to progress it. It is important that the victim understands what the next steps will be and who the report will be passed to. In this event, the DSL will consider the following:

- parents should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk);
- the basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed a referral should be made to children's social care via the Safeguarding Hub;
- rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. The starting point is that reports should be passed to the Police.
- All reports should be shared with the referring school or Local Authority.



Ultimately, it is for the DSL (or deputy) to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children. If the decision is taken to go ahead and report the incident, the reasons should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialist support offered.

Additional information on confidentiality and information sharing is available from DfE advice 'Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers'.

We will do all we reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment and will carefully consider which staff should know about the report and any support that will be in place for the children involved.

Full consideration will also be given to the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities and the support which may be required by the victim and his/her family should this situation arise.

5. Response To The Disclosure/Report

EduDiverse's initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important. How the provision responds to a report can encourage or undermine the confidence of future victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment to report or come forward.

It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken for them to come forward and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the provision will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. All concerns/allegations of child on child abuse will be handled sensitively, appropriately and promptly.

Any response will:

- include a thorough investigation of the concerns/allegations and the wider context in which they may have occurred (as appropriate and in conjunction with the referring school or Local Authority);
- treat all children involved as being at potential risk – whilst the child allegedly responsible for the abuse may pose a significant risk of harm to other children, s/he may also have considerable unmet needs and at risk of harm themselves.
- We will ensure that a safeguarding response is in place for both the child who has allegedly experienced the abuse and the child who has allegedly been responsible for it.

We will take into account:

- that the abuse may indicate wider safeguarding concerns for any of the children involved, and consider and address any wider contexts such as the child/children's peer group; family; or wider education context; environment; the experiences of crime and victimisation in the local community; and the child/children's online presence;



- the changes that may need to be made to the above contexts to address the child/children's needs and to mitigate risk; the views of the child/children affected. Unless it is considered unsafe to do so, the DSL should discuss the proposed action with all those involved and their parents and obtain consent to any referral before it is made, unless informing the parent will put the child at risk of harm. Any decision not to inform the parents will generally be made in conjunction with other services such as children's social care and/or the Police, who would take the lead in deciding when the parents should be informed.
- the child/children's expectations about information sharing, and keep them and their parents informed of developments, where appropriate and safe to do so.

If a pupil is in immediate danger, or at risk of significant harm, a referral to the Safeguarding Hub (if the pupil is aged under 18) and/or the Police will be made immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made.

If a member of staff believes for whatever reason that child may be at risk of or experiencing abuse by another child or children, or that a child may be at risk of abusing or may be abusing another child or children, they should discuss their concern with the DSL without delay so that a course of action can be agreed.

Reporting to the Police

If the concern/allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place e.g. rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, sexual violence or sexual harassment (regardless of the age of the alleged perpetrator(s)), the Police must be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the pupil being complained about and the alleged victim).

Any report to the Police will generally be in parallel with a referral to the Safeguarding Hub and in communication with the referring school or Local Authority. It is important that the DSL is clear about the local process and arrangements for referrals.

Further guidance on this issue is provided in the NPCC guidance for schools document 'When to call the Police'.

6. Individual Risk And Needs Assessment

Where there is an incident of child on child abuse, including sexual violence and sexual harassment, EduDiverse will require the referring school or Local Authority to undertake a robust risk and needs assessment in respect of each child affected by the abuse including the alleged perpetrator.



This policy was last reviewed on:

Date: 30/08/2025

Signed: James Ranson (DSL)