



LEICESTER THERAPEUTIC SCHOOL

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS THROUGH NURTURE AND MINDSET

Child on Child Abuse Policy

Policy Owner	Leicester Therapeutic School
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Linked Policies	Safeguarding and Child Protection Safe Lone Working Positive Behaviour SEND Information Report Ofsted Independent Schools Inspection Toolkit 2026 Attendance Suspensions and Exclusions Curriculum Personal Development Staff Code of Conduct Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct Volunteer Safer Recruitment Allegations against Staff & Low-Level Concerns Online Safety Acceptable use of ICT
ISS Regulatory Requirements	Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils - 5(c) - 5(d)(iii) Part 3. Welfare, health, and safety of pupils - 7(a), 7(b), 15, 16(a), 16(b) Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors Part 6. Provision of information Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Safeguarding at Leicester Therapeutic School

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are committed to providing an environment in which students feel safe and secure to access their education. All stakeholders are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff are encouraged to maintain an "it could happen here" attitude. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. Leicester Therapeutic School are dedicated to creating a strong safeguarding culture, and that the safety and well-being of children is the central thread that embeds itself through all aspects of the school. If a person is concerned about anything they read, witness or hear with regards to the school, they should contact the school's designated safeguarding lead immediately or Headteacher. Safeguarding, and the safety and well-being of all pupils at Leicester Therapeutic School is carefully considered and a central theme through all school policies.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) at Leicester Therapeutic School

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are passionate about providing an inclusive education to children with special educational needs. We recognise and celebrate the individuality of our pupils and use personalised approaches, allowing pupils with SEND to feel supported during the school day. We strive to provide pupils with the same opportunities and experiences that pupils would have received at a mainstream school, believing passionately that in the right environment, with the right support, pupils will flourish in education. We do this by focusing on providing a SEND friendly environment, a differentiated curriculum and a strong focus on developing pupils' personal, social and emotional development. The special educational needs and disabilities of all pupils at Leicester Therapeutic School is carefully considered and a central theme in through all school policies. For more information, please read the school's SEND Information Report.

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Statement

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by a culture of openness where both children and adults feel secure, able to talk and believe that they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school, and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

Specific guidance is available to staff within the procedure documents.

Safeguarding determines the actions that we take to keep children safe and protect them from harm in all aspects of their school life. As a school we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our pupils.

The actions that we take to prevent harm; to promote wellbeing; to create safe environments; to educate on rights, respect and responsibilities; to respond to specific issues and vulnerabilities all form part of the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. As such, this overarching policy will link to other policies which will provide more information and greater detail.

1. Child on child abuse - Context and Definition

It is essential that everyone at Leicester Therapeutic School understands the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children (many of which are listed below) that are abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we encourage and maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. Child-on-child abuse can happen inside or outside school and online. Staff must act in the best interests of the child, report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL without delay, and remain alert to times and places where pupils may be at increased risk, including before and after the school day, during transitions, unstructured times, transport and online activity.

All staff should be aware that child-on-child abuse is a safeguarding issue for both the child who has been harmed and the child alleged to have caused harm. It is preventable, and timely, evidence-based support can reduce the risk of concerns escalating. Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between children; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm, including online activity that facilitates, threatens or encourages physical abuse; and serious physical assault or threats of harm involving a weapon
- harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual violence and sexual harassment, including behaviour linked to misogyny or misandry, and online sexual harassment
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including digitally altered or AI-generated images such as deepfakes or ‘deep nudes’; and upskirting
- initiation or hazing-type violence and rituals, including where there is an online element

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived or actual differences, including race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, special educational needs, appearance, family circumstances or other differences
- Result in significant, long-lasting or traumatic isolation, intimidation, humiliation, coercion, exploitation, violence or other harm to a child.

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing or suffering abuse
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is a priority, but emotional, sexual and online harm can also have a significant and lasting impact. The DSL/DDSL will consider each case individually, including the wishes and needs of the child who has been harmed, the needs and vulnerabilities of the child alleged to have caused harm, any risk to other children, and whether wider contextual concerns are present. The school will not wait for a statutory or police investigation to begin or conclude before taking proportionate action to safeguard children.

2. Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2026 states that:

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that child protection arrangements include procedures to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse; clear, well-promoted and accessible reporting systems; arrangements for recording, investigating and dealing with allegations; and clear processes for supporting children who have been harmed, children alleged to have caused harm and any other affected children. The school recognises that the absence of reports does not mean abuse is not occurring, and maintains a zero-tolerance approach to abusive behaviour.

Child on child abuse is referenced in Leicester Therapeutic Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with child-on-child abuse, necessitate separate policy guidance. At Leicester Therapeutic School, we continue to ensure that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

3. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to explore some forms of child-on-child abuse. The policy also includes a planned and supportive response to the issues. At Leicester Therapeutic School, we have the following policies in place that should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- PSHE & RHE Policy
- Acceptable use of ICT & Internet Policy

4. Framework and Legislation

This policy is informed by the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Equality Act 2010, the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. The child's welfare is

paramount. Decisions will be child-centred, informed by the child's wishes and feelings, and made in accordance with local safeguarding partnership procedures.

5. Abuse and harmful behaviour

It is necessary to consider:

- What abuse is and what it looks like
- How it can be managed
- What appropriate support and intervention can be put in place to meet the needs of the individual
- What preventative strategies may be put in place to reduce further risk of harm.

Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up' or 'boys being boys'. Staff must challenge inappropriate behaviour early, including misogynistic, misandrist, prejudiced, discriminatory, sexualised or abusive behaviour, because failing to do so can normalise harm and create an unsafe culture.

- Children are vulnerable to abuse by other children. Such abuse should be taken as seriously as abuse by adults and should be subject to the same child protection procedures.
- Children can abuse other children. This can include abuse in intimate relationships; bullying and cyberbullying; physical assault or threats involving weapons; harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence and sexual harassment; causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent; consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including AI-generated or digitally altered imagery; upskirting; initiation/hazing; and other forms of online abuse.
- Staff must not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between children or set an unnecessarily high threshold before acting. A single incident can constitute abuse and may require safeguarding action.
- Staff should be alert to the use of technology to facilitate abuse, including social media, messaging services, gaming platforms, livestreaming, image-sharing, anonymous accounts and generative AI used to create or alter sexual, humiliating or threatening content.
- Staff should be aware of the added vulnerability of children and young people who have been the victims of violent crime (for example mugging), including the risk that they may respond to this by abusing younger or weaker children.

A child who is alleged to have caused harm may also have unmet safeguarding needs and must be considered within a child protection context. Staff should use careful, non-labelling language and avoid assumptions about guilt while ensuring that immediate risks to the child who has been harmed, the alleged perpetrator and other pupils are managed. Support and intervention should address behaviour, safety, underlying need and the risk of recurrence.

6. Types of abuse

There are many forms of child-on-child abuse and harmful behaviour and this list is not exhaustive. Abuse may occur face-to-face, online, outside school or across more than one context. The age, developmental

stage, SEND, communication needs and vulnerabilities of the children involved must be considered when deciding the safeguarding response.

Physical abuse - This may include hitting, kicking, nipping/pinching, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm. It may include an online element that facilitates, threatens or encourages physical abuse. Serious physical assault, or a threat of harm involving a weapon, is a safeguarding concern and may require immediate police and children's social care involvement. Staff should distinguish genuine accidents from harmful behaviour without minimising risk.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence - Any report, sign or concern must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. HSB exists on a continuum from inappropriate or problematic sexual behaviour through to abusive or violent behaviour and must always be considered within a child protection context.

The DSL/DDSL will lead the school's response on a case-by-case basis and consider the following options, which may overlap:

- Manage internally, using the Behaviour Policy and appropriate pastoral or therapeutic support
- Use universal services and community-based Early Help where emerging needs can be supported without statutory intervention
- Refer to Family Help, including targeted Early Help and/or local authority children's social care where the child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or needs more targeted support
- Report to the police where appropriate. The starting point for a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is that it should be passed to the police, generally in parallel with children's social care

HSB, sexual harassment and sexual violence can occur between two or more children of any age and sex, including in primary-age settings, and can involve groups of children. It can occur online or face-to-face and is never acceptable. When assessing behaviour, the DSL will consider age, developmental stage, disability or learning difficulty, communication needs, power imbalance, coercion, exploitation, the child's experience and whether behaviour is isolated or part of a wider pattern. Children who display HSB may themselves have experienced abuse or trauma and should be offered appropriate support.

Harmful or problematic sexual behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Sexualised language, comments, jokes, taunts or role play that is inappropriate to the child's age or developmental stage
- Sexual touching, deliberately brushing against another child, interfering with clothing or other unwanted physical behaviour
- Sexual harassment, sexual assault or other sexual violence
- Causing or coercing another child to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Online sexual abuse or harassment, including unwanted sexual messages or explicit content, sexualised bullying, coercion or threats, and making or sharing nudes or semi-nudes, including AI-generated or digitally altered images

Staff should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence: it is never acceptable, will not be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up

- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence, sexual harassment or HSB as “banter”, “part of growing up”, “just having a laugh” or “boys being boys”, and challenging misogynistic or misandrist attitudes and behaviour
- Challenging behaviours that may be criminal in nature, including grabbing bottoms, breasts or genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras, lifting up skirts, non-consensual sexual touching, upskirting and coercive sexual behaviour.

Dismissing or tolerating such behaviour risks normalising it and increasing the likelihood of escalation.

Upskirting - Upskirting is a criminal offence and typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm. Any child of any sex can be affected. The DSL/DDSL must be informed immediately.

Bullying - Bullying is unwanted behaviour between children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance and is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional, prejudiced, discriminatory, sexual or online. However, staff must remember that other forms of child-on-child abuse do not need to be repeated to require safeguarding action.

- An Imbalance of power - children 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. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally or for a particular reason e.g. size, hair colour, gender, sexual orientation, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Online bullying and abuse - This is the use of technology, including social media, messaging, email, gaming, livestreaming, image-sharing services and other online platforms, to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate, exploit or abuse another child. It may occur independently or as part of a wider pattern of offline abuse.

- Emotional abuse – Online
- Sexual abuse – Online
- Abusive or threatening texts, emails, or messages
- Posting abusive comments on social media sites
- Sharing humiliating, sexual or threatening videos, photos or other content about someone else, including digitally altered or AI-generated deepfakes or ‘deep nudes’
- Stealing someone’s online identity
- Spreading rumors online
- Trolling – sending someone menacing or upsetting messages through social networks, chatrooms, or games
- Developing hate sites about another person
- Prank calls or messages
- Group bullying or exclusion online
- Anonymous messaging
- Encouraging a young person to self-harm

- Pressuring or coercing children to send sexual messages, images or videos, or to engage in sexual conversations or sexual acts online

Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes - This refers to the creation, sending or posting of nude or semi-nude visual content by children under 18, including photographs, videos and livestreams. Images may be self-generated, taken or created by another person, digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including deepfakes or 'deep nudes'. Both consensual and non-consensual incidents require a safeguarding response, although the response will be proportionate to the age, development and circumstances of the children involved and any coercion, exploitation or vulnerability.

This must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

The DSL will follow the UKCIS guidance 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people' (updated March 2024), alongside KCSIE 2026. Staff must not view, copy, print, share, store or save such imagery unless this is specifically necessary and authorised in accordance with that guidance.

Initiation/Hazing - Hazing is a form of initiation ceremony which is used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as a private school, sports team etc. There are several different forms, from relatively mild rituals to severe and sometimes violent ceremonies. The ceremony 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 members of the organisation, because they all experienced it as part of a rite of passage. Many rituals involve humiliation, embarrassment, abuse, and harassment.

Prejudice-based and discriminatory behaviour - This includes hurtful or abusive behaviour connected to protected or perceived characteristics or identity, including disability and SEND, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or other aspects of identity or family circumstances. The school will challenge racism, discrimination and derogatory behaviour and consider whether the incident is also a safeguarding concern.

Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children - Sometimes described as teenage relationship abuse, this can include physical, sexual, emotional or economic abuse, coercive or controlling behaviour, stalking, threats, isolation and online abuse. Staff should not assume children will recognise themselves as victims and must report concerns to the DSL/DDSL. Where relevant, the school will consider links to domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation and wider contextual harm.

All staff must be confident in recognising child-on-child abuse and must report concerns to the DSL/DDSL immediately. Staff should not delay reporting while trying to establish whether an incident is 'serious enough'. The DSL/DDSL will determine the appropriate safeguarding response, including risk assessment, support, external referral and any police involvement.

7. Recognising child on child abuse

An assessment of an incident between children should be completed considering the following areas:

- Chronological and developmental ages of everyone involved

- Differences in power or authority, including age, maturity, social status, race, sex, disability, SEND, communication needs, physical, emotional or intellectual vulnerability
- All alleged physical and verbal aspects of the behaviour and incident
- Whether the behaviour involved sexualised knowledge, harmful sexual behaviour, coercion, exploitation or a lack of consent
- Whether identity or protected characteristics, including sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or disability, are relevant to the incident or to any power imbalance
- The degree of physical aggression, intimidation, coercion, threatening behaviour, bribery or use/threat of a weapon
- The impact on the child who has been harmed, including their wishes and feelings about how they want to proceed
- Any attempts to ensure the behaviour and incident is kept a secret
- The child's motivation or explanation where known, without assuming that intent is required for behaviour to cause harm, and whether there are wider contextual concerns such as exploitation or abuse outside school

Whether this was a one-off incident or part of a sustained pattern. A single incident may still constitute abuse and require a safeguarding response. Information should be gathered promptly and sensitively, using appropriate language and taking account of each child's age, developmental stage, SEND and communication needs. Staff must avoid blame, labels or judgement and should not conduct their own investigation where this could interfere with action by children's social care or the police.

8. Action

It is essential that all children who report harm are reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. Abuse online, off-site or outside the school day must be treated with equal seriousness. Children must never be made to feel ashamed, blamed or that they are creating a problem by reporting. Staff should explain, in a reassuring and developmentally appropriate way, that the law exists to protect children and young people (KCSIE 2026).

Leicester Therapeutic team will:

- Take every report, concern, sign or disclosure seriously and report it to the DSL/DDSL without delay
- Consider immediate safety and complete or update a risk and needs assessment for the child who has been harmed, the child alleged to have caused harm and any other affected children
- Record all concerns, discussions, decisions, reasons for decisions and actions taken on the school's safeguarding system as soon as possible
- Use clear, explicit and non-avoidant language and avoid vague statements, euphemisms, blame or labels
- Listen carefully and ask only open questions necessary to clarify the report; do not interrogate, investigate or ask leading questions
- Record the child's exact words in quotation marks where possible, using the correct names for body parts while preserving the child's own vocabulary
- Record where and when the incident occurred, who may have been present, and any immediate action taken. Where nudes or semi-nudes are involved, staff must follow the UKCIS guidance and must not routinely view or copy the imagery.

9. Next Steps:

Once the outcome of the incident(s) has been established it is necessary to ensure future incidents of abuse do not occur again and the team consider the support and intervention required for those involved.

Support for a pupil who has been harmed:

What support they require depends on the individual young person.

Support will be tailored to the individual child and their wishes. The priority is to keep the child safe and, wherever possible, enable them to continue their normal school routines. Support may include a trusted adult, therapeutic or pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, changes to supervision or movement around school, support with attendance, referral to specialist services, and work with parents/carers. Decisions and support will be reviewed regularly, particularly where there are signs of trauma or a risk of further harm.

Support and actions in respect of a pupil who has displayed harmful behaviour:

The child alleged to have caused harm must also be safeguarded and supported. Staff will seek to understand the behaviour and any underlying needs without minimising its impact. Appropriate support may include therapeutic or pastoral work, Family Help, children's social care or specialist services. Any consequence or disciplinary response will be proportionate and consistent with the Behaviour Policy, while avoiding actions that could jeopardise a police or statutory investigation. Restorative work will only be considered where it is appropriate, safe and wanted by the child who has been harmed.

Where a crime may have been committed, the DSL/DDSL will consider referral to the police and local authority children's social care in accordance with KCSIE 2026 and local procedures. The school will not wait for the outcome or start of a police or social care investigation before taking immediate steps to protect children. Where necessary, risk management may include additional supervision, changes to classes, activities, transport or movement around the school, or alternative education arrangements. Any separation or restriction is a safeguarding measure and is not a judgement of guilt.

After care – Considerations:

It is important that following the incident, the pupils involved continue to feel supported and receive help even if they have stated that they are managing the incident. Sometimes the feelings of remorse, regret or unhappiness may occur at a much later stage than the incident. It is important to ensure that the pupils do not engage in any further harmful behaviour either towards someone else or to themselves as a way of coping (e.g. self-harm). For this reason, regular reviews with the pupils following the incident(s) are imperative.

10. Preventative Strategies:

Leicester Therapeutic School recognises that child-on-child abuse can occur in any setting and that prevention requires a whole-school safeguarding culture. The school will maintain clear, well-promoted and

accessible systems for children to report concerns, including through trusted adults and communication approaches appropriate to SEND. The PSHE/Relationships Education curriculum will be aligned with the statutory guidance in force from September 2026 and will teach healthy relationships, boundaries, consent and permission in an age-appropriate way, respect, online safety, recognising harmful behaviour and how to seek help. Staff will challenge sexism, misogyny, misandry, racism, discrimination and sexualised behaviour early. Patterns in safeguarding and behaviour records will be reviewed to identify locations, times, groups or cultural issues requiring changes to supervision, curriculum, staff training or policy.

11. Guidance and support:

DfE: Statutory guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

DfE: Statutory guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

DfE: Preventing and Tackling Bullying, 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventingand-tackling-bullying>

DfE: Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

DfE: Teaching online safety in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools>

DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education - statutory guidance for introduction from 1 September 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

DfE: Behaviour in schools - advice for headteachers and school staff

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>

DfE: Mental health and behaviour in schools, 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

DfE: Children Missing Education - statutory guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

UKCIS: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (updated March 2024) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online. 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-race-and-faith-targeted-bullying-face-to-faceand-online-a-guide-for-schools>

Brook Traffic Light Tool

<https://www.brook.org.uk/training/wider-professional-training/sexualbehaviours-traffic-light-Gov.uk:> tool/

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act2010-advice-for-schools>

Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse: resources on harmful sexual behaviour

<https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-resources/key-messages/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>

NPCC: When to call the police - guidance for schools and colleges

<https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/2020/when-to-call-the-police--guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf>

12. Monitoring:

Leicester Therapeutic School will monitor and evaluate this policy and its implementation regularly. Safeguarding and behaviour information will be reviewed for patterns and trends, including the nature of incidents, locations, times, pupil groups, online factors, repeat concerns and the effectiveness of support and risk management. Learning from incidents will be used to strengthen staff training, supervision, curriculum and school culture.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Headteacher/DSL and approved by the Board of Governors, and sooner where there is a significant safeguarding incident, a change in statutory guidance or evidence that procedures need to be amended.

Appendix 1 - Investigating an alleged case of child on child abuse

Gathering the facts:

Where appropriate, listen to the children involved separately to establish the immediate safeguarding facts. Use calm, consistent language and open questions. This is not a school investigation: staff should gather only the information needed to safeguard children and inform the DSL/DDSL. If police or children's social care may be involved, the DSL will consider whether further questioning should stop pending agency advice.

Ask the child to explain what happened in their own words. Use open prompts such as 'Tell me what happened' and, only where needed, clarify who, where and when. Do not interrogate, ask leading questions or repeatedly ask the child to recount the incident.

What happened?

Who observed the incident?

What was seen?

What was heard?

Did anyone intervene?

(Do not interrogate or ask leading questions)

Consider the Intent:

Has this been a deliberate or contrived situation for a pupil to be able to harm another pupil?

Decide on your next course of action:

If you believe any child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The DSL/DDSL will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and local threshold procedures, including referral to Family Help and/or local authority children's social care and the police as required. Immediate safeguarding action must not be delayed while awaiting an external response.

Where local authority children's social care or the police intend to take further action, the school will follow their advice about interviews, evidence, communication with the children and information-sharing. The school will continue to safeguard all children and update its own risk and needs assessment throughout.

Informing parents and carers:

Parents and carers will generally be informed as soon as reasonably practicable. However, where a referral is being made to children's social care or the police, the DSL/DDSL will consider agency advice about the timing and content of communication. Parents or carers will not be informed where there is a compelling reason not to, for example where doing so may place a child at additional risk. Communication will be sensitive to the needs of both the child who has been harmed and the child alleged to have caused harm. Children should be supported to involve a safe parent or carer where appropriate, but staff must not place responsibility on the child to disclose the incident at home. The DSL/DDSL will consider whether parental involvement could increase risk and will seek advice from children's social care where necessary.

Points to consider:**What is the age of the children involved?**

Is there an age difference between those involved?

Where did the incident or incidents take place?

Was the incident in an open, visible place to others? If so, was it observed? If not, is more, supervision required within this particular area?

What was the explanation given by all children involved?

Consider whether the behaviour is repeated or part of a wider pattern, but remember that many forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual violence, sexual harassment and serious physical assault, may require safeguarding action after a single incident.

What is each of the children's own understanding of what occurred?

What is each child's understanding of what occurred? Consider age, developmental stage, SEND, communication needs, knowledge of body parts and privacy, consent and boundaries, and whether the behaviour was developmentally expected, inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. Consider what may have prompted the behaviour and whether the child understands its impact.

Repetition:

Has the behaviour been repeated to an individual on more than one occasion? Has the behaviour persisted to an individual after the issue has already been discussed or dealt with and appropriately resolved?

Appendix 2 - Child on child abuse Risk Assessment

Referrers Name and Role:	
Referrer's contact details and email:	
Name of child – victim:	
Name of child – alleged perpetrator:	
Did the incident happen at school?	Yes No (If not, where did the incident occur?)

School where children involved attend:				
Considerations	Risk (consider victim, child alleged to have caused harm, other pupils, staff)	Risk level (high, medium, low)	Actions to reduce risk	Revised risk level (high, medium, low)
- What is the incident? - Who was involved? - Where did it happen?				
Does this incident constitute a crime? Assault, sexual assault, rape, sharing of indecent images of children, etc. As such, has this been referred to the police?				
Is it necessary to limit contact between the children involved? Refer to KCSiE and DFE guidance on sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools.				
Is there an actual or perceived threat from the child alleged to have caused harm to the victim and/or others?				
Is either the victim or the child alleged to have caused harm at risk of physical harm as a result of this incident (for example, bullying or 'retribution' by peers)?				
Do they share classes?				
- Do they share break times? - Do they share peer/friendship groups?				
Do they share transport to/from school?				
Are they likely to encounter each other (or anyone else involved in/with knowledge of the incident) outside of school?				
How can such contact be limited?				
Is there a risk of harm from social media and gossip?				

Any other risks?				
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Further action taken by Leicester Therapeutic school: (Complete for each child involved)

Action:	Yes/No	Date action taken:
Police informed		
Referral to MASH		
Referral to external support services		
Referral to internal support services		
Referral to CAMHS		
Referral to Family Help / Early Help		
Other		

13. Appendix 3

Definitions:	Sexual violence: Rape Assault by penetration Sexual assault Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent Sexual Harassment: Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual remarks, sexual taunts, unwanted physical behaviour or online sexual harassment. Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB): Sexual behaviour by children that is inappropriate, problematic, abusive or violent. HSB can occur online, face-to-face, or both and must be considered within a child protection context. Making or sharing nudes and semi-nudes: Includes photographs, videos or livestreams involving children under 18, including content that has been digitally altered or generated using AI, such as deepfakes or 'deep nudes'. All incidents require a safeguarding response.
Record-keeping:	Remember to record all concerns, discussions, decisions, reasons for decisions and actions.

REPORT RECEIVED
(From child or third party, onsite, offsite, or online)

Victim reassured:

- Taken seriously and kept safe.
- Confidentiality not promised.
- Listen to victim, non-judgmentally.
- Record the disclosure (verbatim, facts as reported).
- Two staff present (including DSL or DDSL).
- Victim sensitively informed about referral to outside agencies.
- If victim does not consent to share, staff may still lawfully share to protect child from harm.
- Parents/carers informed unless this may increase risk or agencies advise otherwise.

Anonymity:

Note – In some cases of sexual violence there is legal protection of the victim's identity. Remember that this also includes other pupil's discussions, including online interactions.

Considerations:

(Sexual violence, Sexual harassment, and harmful sexual behaviours)
Consider how to support the victim and the alleged perpetrator immediately.

Wishes of the victim

Any power imbalance

Nature of the alleged incident.

One off, or part of a pattern of behaviour.

Ages of the children involved.

Ongoing risks.

Developmental stage and needs of the children.

Other related issues and wider context

Manage internally:

For some one-off HSB or sexual harassment, use the Behaviour Policy and pastoral support. Record decisions and rationale.

Universal / Early Help:

Use universal services and community-based Early Help for emerging needs. This may sit alongside an internal response.

Family Help / Social Care:

Refer where a child has been harmed or is at risk. Use Family Help / children's social care as appropriate. Follow local procedures and update the risk assessment.

Refer to Police:

For rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault, the starting point is a police referral, usually alongside children's social care. Agree next steps with police. Do not delay immediate safeguarding action.

Risk Assessment:
(Case by case basis)

Safeguarding:

Support for the victim and alleged perpetrator

Disciplinary action taken:

In line with Leicester Therapeutic School behaviour policy and statutory guidance.

Criminal process ends:

- **Conviction or caution** - Follow behaviour policy, consider permanent exclusion if pupil remains a risk. If pupil remain in school, make clear expectations. Keep victim and perpetrator apart as far as possible. Consider victims wishes.
- **Not guilty** – Support victim and alleged perpetrator and consider their wishes.
- **No further action** – Monitor and support victim and perpetrator accordingly.

**Risk Assessment
(Immediate action)**

Do not wait for the outcome of a referral or investigation before protecting children.

Wherever possible, support the child who has been harmed to continue normal routines.

For rape or assault by penetration, remove the alleged perpetrator from shared classes. For other reports, consider proportionate separation and shared spaces.

Safeguarding measures are not a judgement of guilt and must protect all children involved.

Safeguarding

Support the victim and alleged perpetrator.

Disciplinary action taken:

Disciplinary action may be taken in line with the Behaviour Policy, while keeping safeguarding and any external investigation under review.

Ensure school actions do not jeopardise a police or statutory investigation.

Leicester Therapeutic School should work closely with the police and outside agencies.

