

Peer on Peer Abuse

Understanding what peer-on-peer abuse is:

Peer-on-peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Upskirting
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

This is explained in paragraph 29 of DfE [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

At HDS we provide appropriate and regularly updated staff training (most recent training in May 2021 for all Staff and Governors):

It's vital to know how to identify peer-on-peer abuse early to prevent it from escalating. At HDS we provide staff with regularly updated and appropriate safeguarding training that enables them to understand:

- How to identify the indicators of abuse
- What to do if they have a concern about a child
- How to respond to a report of abuse
- How to offer support to children
- Where to go if they need support

This is explained in part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance which all staff have read and signed.

At HDS we challenge inappropriate behaviours:

As reflected in our behaviour policy/anti-bullying policy and measures we have in place to address all forms of bullying. Our child protection policy also includes the procedures we have in place to minimise the risk of peer-on-peer abuse.

As part of enforcing these policies and measures, staff challenge inappropriate behaviours by, for example:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not accepted, will never be tolerated and is not an inevitable part of growing up
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as 'banter', 'part of growing up', 'just having a laugh' or 'boys being boys'

We have clear sanctions and restorative practices in place to respond effectively to incidents.

This is outlined in the DfE's guidance on [sexual violence and sexual harassment](#) (page 7).

At HDS we provide a preventative curriculum programme:

Address issues associated with peer-on-peer abuse

Our curriculum ensures that children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online. However, we also tackle issues such as:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- What respectful behaviour looks like
- Consent
- Gender roles, stereotyping and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Prejudiced behaviour
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment

These issues are addressed in an age-appropriate and inclusive way, and explored through computing, relationships and sex education (RSE), and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education provision as well as assemblies and topics at tutor time.

Resources:

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command has developed [resources](#) to help support young people with developing confident, healthy approaches to relationships and the internet. These include videos, toolkits and activities that can be used in lessons, assemblies, or shared with parents.

Childnet International has an [online safety PSHE toolkit](#) with films and lesson plans exploring issues such as:

- Cyber-bullying
- Sexting
- Peer pressure
- Self-esteem

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has a range of [safeguarding teaching resources](#) on personal safety, healthy relationships and online bullying. Useful for staff and parents.

At HDS we work with local partners

Peer-on-peer abuse incidents and/or inappropriate behaviours can be associated with factors outside of the school. We will always consider the context when preventing and dealing with such incidents.

For example, when tackling violence it's important to:

- Understand the problems that young people are facing both in school and in their local community
- Understand if this form of behaviour has come from unmet emotional needs and trauma

- Consider possible avenues of support
- Work with local partners (who may have valuable information, resources or expertise) such as the police and youth offending teams. Our safeguarding partners may also be able to provide support.

At HDS we seek specialist support when required:

It is a careful consideration to engage and seek external input, particularly when approaching sexual violence and sexual harassment as part of preventing peer-on-peer abuse. Specialist organisations may be able to support us via training, assemblies and direct support.

- [NSPCC](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Brook](#)
- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)

At HDS, when responding to reports of Peer on Peer abuse, we do and do not:

- ✓ Listen and reassure the child that they will be supported and kept safe
- ✓ Make a written record as soon as possible, stating only the facts
- ✓ Tell our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) urgently:
- ✓ Where appropriate, take action yourself:
 - If the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, make a referral to children's social care
 - If an offence has been committed, report it to the police (even if the alleged perpetrator is under 10 – the age of criminal responsibility)
 - Find out whether the victim and alleged perpetrator share classes, premises or transport, and consider how best to deal with this

- ✗ Dismiss the incident as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'having a laugh'
- ✗ Ask leading questions
- ✗ Promise total confidentiality – explain who you will need to tell and why
- ✗ View photos or videos of a sexual nature
If you do so by accident or think you might need to in order to deal with the issue effectively, talk to our DSL
- ✗ Take notes while the child is talking, if at all possible
- ✗ Tell anyone about the disclosure unless they need to know in order to progress it

Safeguarding Team:

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