

Huntcliff School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date of Next Review: September 2024

Responsible Officer: Assistant Headteacher, Attendance & Well-being



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Introduction

Huntcliff School is part of Vision Academy Learning Trust and is dedicated to ensuring that our school environment supports the learning and the wellbeing of students and staff. Ensuring effective routines, respect and relationships are the foundations of our community and we work hard to provide a safe environment where students feel included in every aspect of School life.

At Huntcliff School everyone has the right to be treated with kindness and respect and to be properly supported if they are not. Bullying of any kind is deemed unacceptable, not tolerated, will always be taken seriously and acted upon, whether it is in the school or on off-site activities. We recognise that bullying can occur, and if bullying does occur, all students should report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively

Principles

The following principles underpin our approach to bullying

- All pupils have the right to a safe, caring, positive and protective environment in school.
- Establish an atmosphere where bullying is regarded as unacceptable and not tolerated
- Raise general awareness so the whole school actively plays its part in recognising bullying and to act when it occurs by preventing or responding appropriately to it.
- Raise awareness through the curriculum, assemblies and pastoral structure that pupils will always be supported if bullying is reported
- Responses to bullying incidents will be robust and consistent and aim to prevent rather than control.
- Disapproval of bullying should be aimed at the behaviour of the pupil not the pupil as a person.
- The school may seek the support of parents in dealing with incidents of bullying.
- There is no such thing as acceptable bullying.

The pupils and staff at Huntcliff School believe all forms of bullying are hurtful and wrong. This includes all forms of bullying as outlined throughout the policy.

[Updated] Legislation

[Updated] This policy has been written in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003



- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- [Updated] DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- [Updated] DCMS, DSIT, and UK Council for Internet Safety (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

Linked with other school policies

- Behaviour Policy
- child on child abuse Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of our school have certain responsibilities to support, develop and create a positive culture and climate that supports effective learning, respect for all and a safe environment.

The Headteacher / Head of School / SLT	<p>The headteacher / Head of School / SLT will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLT and key staff are involved in the determining the strategies and procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying; • The policy and the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and students. • Appropriate training is made available to all staff; • Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems; • Ensure robust systems to record all bullying incidents and actions taken • Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to support students that are bullied and those who have bullied; • Analyse bullying data and patterns. Review this policy in light of these • Report termly to the local governing body as part of the Head's report. • Determine the involvement of parents/carers in the solution of individual incidents.
Lead SLT	<p>Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that there are positive strategies and procedures in place to help both those being bullied and the bullies. • Keep the Head is informed of incidents. • Arrange relevant staff training. • Determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems.
PASTORAL MANAGER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary. • Providing a point of contact for pupils and parents when more serious bullying incidents occur. • Holding a restorative conversation (where deemed appropriate). • Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> log any reported incidents on CPOMS
Staff including teachers and support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the policy and procedures and ensure they are implemented fairly and consistently across the school Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity. Being observant with students to possible bullying situations, including exclusion from friendship groups. Inform the pupil's year leader of such observations. Deal with incidents according to the policy. Participate in the PSHE/Life curriculum discussion in tutor group time or in class
Parents	<p>Parents have an important part to play in managing any incidents of bullying policy. We ask parents to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard. Talk to their child about what is happening and reassure them that the school will act on the information Inform the Pastoral Manager if they feel their child may be a victim of bullying behaviour. The bullying complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow. Tell their child it is not their fault they are being bullied. Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure their child is not afraid to ask for help.
Students	<p>Students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to their Year Manager if they believe they are being subject to any form of bullying Speak with parents/carers to let them know what is happening Accept help and support that is offered by the School Speak with a Learning Manager should they witness any form of bullying in the School.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour. Bullying results in pain and distress to the affected person. It is usually repeated, often over a period of time and when it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying is “behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)

There are a number of types of bullying:

Type of bullying	Definitions
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, punching, taking another's belongings, any use of violence



Direct or indirect verbal	name-calling, insulting, sarcasm, indirect bullying through spreading stories or rumours or teasing someone, threats, making fun of someone's size, shape, appearance.
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of someone's religion
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, sexually abusive or sexist comments, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention or contact, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching. This includes homophobic bullying.
Ability based	because of learning ability or physical ability
Cyber-bullying	Cyber bullying through the use of communication technology devices, text, email, , social media, emails or websites. This can take many forms, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending abusive, intimidating or threatening text messages or emails, personally or anonymously. • Making insulting comments about someone on a website, social networking site • Making or sharing derogatory or embarrassing images of someone
Transphobic bullying	This bullying stems from a hatred or fear of people who are transgender, Transphobic bullying is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes. Boys and girls may be equally affected.

Child -on- child abuse

Huntcliff School has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

To prevent child-on-child abuse and address the wider societal factors that can influence behaviour, Huntcliff School will educate pupils about abuse, its forms, and the importance of discussing any concerns and respecting others through the curriculum, assemblies and PSHE lessons.

All staff will be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers. Staff will take all instances of child -on- child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims, will never tolerate abuse as “banter” or “part of growing up”, and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as “boys being boys”, as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours. Staff will also be aware that child-on- child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, and hazing- or initiation-type violence.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled – this includes the process for reporting concerns about friends or peers. If a pupil has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral may be made to the Children’s Hub, where the DSL deems this appropriate in the circumstances.

Huntcliff School’s Child-on-child Abuse Policy outlines the school’s stance on addressing child -on- child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school’s approach



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to preventing and managing instances of child -on- child abuse can be found within this policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.



[Updated] Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading personal space and home life, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others, and may take place inside school, within the wider community, at home or when travelling. It can sometimes draw bystanders into being accessories.

Cyberbullying can include the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips
- Disclosure of private sexual photographs or videos with the intent to cause distress
- Silent or abusive phone calls
- Using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chatroom
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook

NB. The above list is not exhaustive, and cyberbullying may take other forms.

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying. The school views cyberbullying with the same severity as any other form of bullying and will follow the sanctions set out in this policy if they become aware of any incidents.

All members of staff will receive training on an annual basis on the signs of cyberbullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively. Many of the signs of cyberbullying will be similar to those found in the 'Signs of bullying' section of this policy; however, staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyberbullied:

- Avoiding use of the computer
- Being on their phone routinely
- Becoming agitated when receiving calls or text messages

Staff will also be alert to the following signs which may indicate that a pupil is cyberbullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away



Parents will receive updates on the signs and symptoms of cyberbullying through the school newsletter and HoS Weekly Bulletin, when appropriate, and will be advised to report to the pastoral manager if their child displays any of the signs outlined in this section.

[Updated] All learning at home will follow procedures outlined in the Remote Education Policy. During times when remote education is being utilised, the school will frequently be in contact with parents to make them aware of their activities online, but also to reinforce the importance of pupils staying safe online, and explaining how filtering and monitoring procedures work.

Staff will be aware that a cyberbullying incident might include features different to other forms of bullying, prompting a particular response. Significant differences may include the following:

- Possible extensive scale and scope – pupils may be bullied on multiple platforms and using multiple different methods that are made possible by virtue of the bullying taking place online
- The anytime and anywhere nature of cyberbullying – pupils may not have an escape from the torment when they are at home due to the bullying continuing through technology at all times
- The person being bullied might not know who the perpetrator is – it is easy for individuals to remain anonymous online and on social media, and pupils may be bullied by someone who is concealing their own identity
- The perpetrator might not realise that their actions are bullying – sometimes, the culture of social media, and the inability to see the impact that words are having on someone, may lead to pupils crossing boundaries without realising
- The victim of the bullying may have evidence of what has happened – pupils may have taken screenshots of bullying, or there may be a digital footprint that can identify the perpetrator

[New] Staff and pupils will be instructed not to respond or retaliate to cyberbullying incidents. Evidence of the incident should be recorded, e.g. taking screenshots. Staff will report incidents to their line manager or the headteacher for the incident to be investigated and support to be provided. Pupils will report incidents to a trusted member of staff.

[New] Where offensive content is posted online targeting a staff member or pupil, the person targeted will be encouraged to use the reporting mechanism on the website or social media platform to request its removal. Where the person who has posted it is known to the school, the headteacher will request they remove it directly.

The school will support pupils who have been victims of cyberbullying by holding formal and informal discussions with the pupil about their feelings and whether the bullying has stopped, in accordance with this policy.



In accordance with the Education Act 2011, the school has the right to examine and delete files from pupils' personal devices, e.g. mobiles phones, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. In these cases, the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy will be followed.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, Huntcliff School will:

- *Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.*
- *Provide support for the person who has been cyberbullied.*
- *Work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.*
- *Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.*
- *Take steps where possible to identify the person responsible by reviewing the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses or contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.*
- *Liaise with the online service providers and the individuals to prevent the incident from spreading. Assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:*
 - *reports to a service provider to remove content*
 - *Confiscate and search pupils' electronic devices in accordance with the law and Huntcliff School's Behaviour Policy*
 - *Ensure sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying*
 - *Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed*

Identifying signs of bullying

Changes in behaviour may have many causes. Being bullied can be one reason why behaviour changes

and there is a need to be alert to the possibility that this may be the case. Adults should be aware of these possible signs (this list is not exhaustive) and that they should investigate if a student:

- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Insists on being driven to school, changes their usual routine.
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becomes withdrawn.
- Becomes anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering, attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement or effort in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- Has possessions which are damaged or unexpectedly go missing.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).



- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen).
- Change in behaviour and attitude at home or becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying other children or siblings.
- Lack of appetite or stops eating.
- Lack of eye contact
- Is frightened to say what's wrong, gives improbable excuses for any of the above.
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone, is nervous or anxious when a cyber-message is received.

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour.

Staff will be aware of the potential factors that may indicate a pupil is likely to exhibit bullying behaviours, including, but not limited to, the following:

- They have experienced mental health problems, which have led to them becoming more easily aggravated
- They have been the victim of abuse
- Their academic performance has started to fall and they are showing signs of stress

If staff become aware of any factors that could lead to bullying behaviours, they will notify the pupil's Tutor/Pastoral Manager, who will investigate the matter and monitor the situation.

Strategies for dealing with bullying

School Ethos

Bullying can be prevented by making it explicit to staff and pupils that the Huntcliff School ethos is based on being ready, responsible and respectful and does not tolerate bullying of any kind. Staff are aware of this anti-bullying policy and understand that not taking any action against unpleasant behaviour by one person to another can show acceptance of such behaviour.

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

Pupils are explicitly taught about the definition of bullying, types of bullying, the role of the bystander and how to react to any bullying events. This is part of the PSHE curriculum in every year group and assemblies. It also has units on Tackling Racism. The PHSE curriculum also seeks to raise awareness of mental health issues and how to build resilience. Assemblies are used to deliver explicit messages linked to self-awareness, bullying and the importance of resilience.

Huntcliff School engages with a range of activities during Anti-bullying week



Parents:

Parents have an important part to play in managing any incidents of bullying policy. We ask parents to:

- Look out for unusual behaviour in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard.
- Inform the school if they feel their child may be a victim of bullying behaviour.
- The bullying report will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Refrain from advising their child to fight back or to repeat the bully's behaviour.
- Tell their child it is not their fault they are being bullied.
- Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure their child is not afraid to ask for help.

If parents suspect their child is being bullied they should contact their child's Tutor or Pastoral Manager. Parents should be prepared to talk about the signs and symptoms and any suspicions they have regarding those carrying out the bullying. Parents must leave the initial investigation to the school.

Students:

If a student thinks they are being bullied:

- Keep calm, get out of the situation and make yourself safe.
- ALWAYS tell someone – NEVER keep it a secret.
- Tell an adult in school, a friend or a parent/carer.
- If someone tells you they are being bullied, always tell an adult in the school.
- If you know about someone being bullied, always tell someone – remember, if you don't tell someone and you know it is happening, you are part of the bullying.
- Remember – if you tell an adult, you will definitely get help.

Supporting students

Huntcliff School will support students who have been subject to bullying by:

- Reassuring the pupil and provide support.
- Offer opportunity to discuss the bullying with their teacher, safeguarding lead, or a staff member of their choice.
- Being advised to i) keep a record of the bullying as evidence , ii) how to respond to concerns
- Supporting pupil to restore self-esteem and confidence.
- Providing ongoing support as appropriate
- If appropriate, engage with wider school community, specialist organisations to seek advice and guidance including Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).



Students who have perpetrated the bullying.

Huntcliff School will:

- Have a meeting to discuss what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
- Inform parents/carers to support the necessary change in attitude and behaviour of the child.
- Request that the content is removed
- Provide education and support regarding their behaviour
- Give appropriate sanctions, in line with the behaviour policy: warnings, detentions, removal of privileges, suspensions or permanent exclusions.

Wider school strategies

- Classroom management remains the duty of the class teacher. Staff should be vigilant at all times and challenge unpleasant behaviour every time. Consistent application of the school ethos and behaviour policy, effective use of seating plans and activities will minimise bullying events. If deemed necessary, students may be required to move class groups if there was evidence of persistent bullying incidents.
- Pastoral Managers have received training on the Restorative Conversation approach and this approach will be used when it is felt appropriate by wrongdoers and the harmed. The meeting sheets will be uploaded to CPOMS as a record of work undertaken to resolve issues.
- Pupils are allowed to bring their mobile phones to school but once at school they must be switched OFF and not be seen or used while on site during the school day. If a pupil breaks this rule their phone will be confiscated.
- Pastoral bulletin – this bulletin is available to staff every week and it can include a brief summary of any bullying issues between pupils and alert staff to be vigilant and report any concerns. The school will be alert to, and address, any mental health and wellbeing issues amongst pupils, as these can be a cause, or a result, of bullying behaviour.

Incident management and reporting

Huntcliff School will keep accurate records of bullying including categories: discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, sexist, disability and LGBTQ+ bullying, use of derogatory language, racist incidents and incidents relating to sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Incidents dealt with by Pastoral Managers and SLT will be recorded on CPOMS and there are different categories of bullying that can be recorded.



Pupils are able to report bullying using the Safespace reporting which is on the school website. The link provides the pupil with a form they can complete and it sends the report directly to SLT who then can allocate the report to the appropriate member of staff.

Guidelines for effectively challenging racism.

This has been adapted from No place for Hate (Show Racism the Red Card)

Challenge the attitude and behaviour, rather than the person: Ignoring the issue will not make it go away and silence sends the message that we are in agreement with such attitudes and behaviours.

Be aware of your own attitudes, stereotypes and expectations: Be honest about your own prejudices and biases. It is important not to be defensive when discriminatory attitudes or behaviours are brought to your attention.

Actively listen to and learn from others' experiences: do not trivialise, minimise or deny other people's concerns and feelings

Use language and behaviour that is inclusive and non-biased: Modelling is an inclusive way of being is important when educating young people. The words we choose to use, even in a light-hearted manner, gives loud messages to what we feel is acceptable or otherwise

Provide accurate information to challenge stereotypes and biases: Take responsibility for educating yourself about issues surrounding racism. Try www.theredcard.org

Acknowledge diversity and avoid stereotypical thinking: Don't ignore or pretend not to see our rich differences. Acknowledging the difference is not the problem, but placing value judgements on those differences is.

Project a feeling of understanding, respect and support: When confronting individuals, firmly address the behaviours or attitudes whilst supporting the dignity of that person



Appendix 1: Useful links and supporting organisations

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- The BIG Award: www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/index.php
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net
- The Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-schools

Cyberbullying

- ChildNet International: www.childnet.com
- Digizen: www.digizen.org
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council forchild-internet-safety-ukccis

LGBT

- Barnardo's LGBT Hub: www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/lgbtq.htm
- Metro Charity: www.metrocentreonline.org
- EACH: www.eachaction.org.uk
- Proud Trust: www.theproudtrust.org
- Schools Out: www.schools-out.org.uk
- Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk

Race, religion and nationality

- Anne Frank Trust: www.annefrank.org.uk
- Kick it Out: www.kickitout.org
- Report it: www.report-it.org.uk
- Stop Hate: www.stophateuk.org
- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Show Racism the Red Card: www.srtrc.org/educational



SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.cafamily.org.uk/media/750755/cyberbullying_and_send_-_module_final.pdf
- DfE: SEND code of practice: www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Sexual harassment and sexual bullying

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAW) www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk
- A Guide for Schools: www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/resources/71/EVAWCoalition-Schools-Guide.pdf
- Disrespect No Body: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disrespect-nobody-campaign-posters
- Anti-bullying Alliance: anti-bullying advice and practice in relation to sexual bullying: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-aboutbullying/sexual-and-gender-related



Appendix 2 Handling Incidents of Youth Produced Sexual Imagery (Taken from UKCCIS)

1. Initial response

Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance sets out that all schools should have an effective child protection policy. Youth produced sexual imagery and a school's approach to it should be reflected in the policy.

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to a school or college's attention:

- The incident should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible.
- The DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff.
- There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate).
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

2. Disclosure

Disclosures about youth produced sexual imagery can happen in a variety of ways. The young person affected may inform a class teacher, the DSL in school, or any member of the school or college staff.

They may report through an existing reporting structure, or a friend or parent may inform someone in school or college, or inform the police directly.

All members of staff (including non-teaching staff) should be made aware of how to recognise and refer any disclosures of incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery. This should be covered within staff training and within the school or college's child protection policy.

Any direct disclosure by a young person should be taken very seriously. A young person who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in school is a last resort and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves. Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people



3. Initial review meeting

The initial review meeting should consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

- Whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people
- If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care
- If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person – in most cases, imagery should not be viewed
- What further information is required to decide on the best response?
- Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms.
- Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services
- Any relevant facts about the young people involved which would influence risk assessment
- If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting or individual
- Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved - in most cases parents should be involved

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care¹ should be made if at this initial stage:

- The incident involves an adult
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)
- What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
- The imagery involves sexual acts and any pupil in the imagery is under 13
- You have reason to believe a young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

If none of the above apply then a school may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care (a school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light)



Appendix 3 Anti-bullying interventions and sanctions

