



NPCAT Child-on-Child Abuse Statement

Child-on-child abuse is the term chosen by the DfE and, by definition, it applies to 'abuse by one child on another child – regardless of the age, or stage of development, or any age differential between them'. It is an umbrella term used to describe various forms of abuse, and it can happen both inside and outside of school or college and online. It includes (but is not limited to):

- **bullying** (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- **teenage relationship abuse** (intimate personal relationships between children).
- **physical abuse** such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- **sexual violence**, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- **sexual harassment**, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- **causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent**, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party, including artificially generated imagery.
- **consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images** and/or videos, (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery), the non-consensual sharing of indecent images (see above), especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.
- **upskirting**, which 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 cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- **initiation/hazing type violence** and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).
- **hate incidents and hate crimes** – which may also include an online element.
- **technology** - children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages,

Any form of child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and should be taken seriously. All staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are actually 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.

There should be a culture of listening to the child and support for the victim, as well as a recognition that in some cases the behaviour may also have been abusive to the perpetrator. Even if there are no reports of incidents in a school it does not mean it is not happening, and it

may be the case that it is just not being reported.

The NPCAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures must include the school's response to deal with child-on-child abuse. All staff should be clear as to the school's or college's policy and procedures with regard to child-on-child abuse and the important role they have to play in preventing it and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it.

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