



Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Preventing and responding to abuse between children and young people

Version 1.0 · 03/07/2026

1. Purpose

Child-on-child abuse (previously 'peer-on-peer' abuse) is any abuse of one child or young person by another. It is never acceptable, must never be dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up', and is harmful both to the child experiencing it and, often, to the child causing it. This policy sets out how Swale Tutoring Service prevents, recognises and responds to it.

2. Scope and delivery context

This policy applies to all staff. Most Swale delivery is one-to-one, so the opportunity for child-on-child abuse within our sessions is limited. However, our pupils have peer relationships, siblings and online lives, and small-group provision is planned. Tutors may therefore become aware of child-on-child abuse occurring elsewhere, and must respond to it as a safeguarding concern.

3. Forms it can take

- Bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking or otherwise causing physical harm
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment
- Sharing of nude or semi-nude images ('sexting') and 'up-skirting'
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- Initiation/hazing, and 'county lines' or other forms of criminal exploitation involving peers

Staff should be aware that abuse can be harder to identify where a child has SEND or communication needs, and must never assume a concern is less serious for that reason.

4. Prevention

- Tutors model respectful relationships and reinforce clear expectations of behaviour (see Behaviour Policy).
- Online safety is addressed in every online session (see Online Safety and Online Tuition Conduct policies).
- Any planned small-group provision will be risk-assessed specifically for child-on-child abuse before it begins.

5. Responding to a report

- Take every report seriously and never dismiss it. Reassure the child that they were right to tell you.
- Do not promise confidentiality. Explain that you must pass the concern to the DSL.
- Record factually using the child's own words, as soon as possible, and report to the DSL the same day.
- Consider the needs and safety of all children involved, including the child who is alleged to have caused harm.

- Where a crime may have been committed (for example sexual violence), the DSL will involve the police and children's social care.

6. Referral routes

- KCC Front Door (Integrated Children's Services): 03000 41 11 11 (office hours) · 03000 41 91 91 (out of hours) · frontdoor@kent.gov.uk
- KCC LADO (allegations against staff): 03000 410 888 · kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
- Police: 999 (emergency) · 101 (non-emergency)
- Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP): www.kscmp.org.uk

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are managed in line with KCSiE 2025 Part 5, including risk assessment and, where appropriate, referral to specialist services.

7. Records and review

Records are kept securely and reviewed by the DSL to identify any patterns. This policy is read alongside the Safeguarding & Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour and Online Safety policies.

Approved by Shelley Wilson, Director & Designated Safeguarding Lead.
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