



ETC International College

Peer on Peer Abuse Policy and Procedures

February 2025

ETC International College recognizes that children are vulnerable to and capable of abusing their peers. We take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. This includes both verbal and physical abuse. Peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as 'part of growing up' or 'banter'.

We recognise that Peer on Peer abuse refers to abuse at all ages and are aware that the latest KCSIE refers to Child on Child abuse specifically referring to minors.

We are committed to a whole school approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of peer on peer abuse within ETC and beyond.

In cases where peer on peer abuse is identified, we will follow our child protection procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people affected by the situation.

We recognize that peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways, such as :

- 'Banter'
- Bullying and shaming
- Physical assault (groping)
- Shouting abuse
- Spreading rumours
- Cyber bullying and/or abuse
- Radicalisation
- Sharing of nudes (formerly sexting)
- Abuse in intimate relationships
- Upskirting
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines CCE)

Some of these behaviours are handled with reference to our Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Online Safety Policy.

This policy concentrates on peer on peer abuse in the context of sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is compliant with the statutory guidance on peer on peer abuse as set out in KCSIE 2021

and should be read in conjunction with Pan Dorset Multi Agency Safeguarding procedures.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The policy has been developed in consultation with the Principal and DSL and according to statutory guidance as set out in KCSIE 2023.

AIMS

The policy will :

- Set out our strategies for preventing, identifying and managing peer on peer abuse.
- Take a contextual approach to safeguarding all children and young people involved, acknowledging that children who have allegedly abused their peers or displayed harmful sexual behaviour are themselves vulnerable and may have been abused by peers, parents or adults in their community.

UNDERSTANDING PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex or a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or a group of children.

The impact of this behaviour can be very distressing and have an impact on academic achievement and emotional health and wellbeing.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence may also occur online.

VULNERABLE GROUPS

We recognize that all children can be at risk, however some groups are more vulnerable.

Vulnerabilities can include : experience of abuse within family; living with domestic violence; young people in care; children with additional needs (SEN and/or disabilities); children who identify as or are perceived as LGBT and/or have any other protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.

Research tells us that girls are more frequently identified as being abused by their peers and they are more likely to experience unwanted sexual touching (in school or out of school), but this is not confined to girls.

Some children who do not report intimate relationship abuse may display other behaviour, such as antisocial behaviour. We recognize that both boys and girls experience peer on peer abuse but they may do so in gendered ways.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGED INCIDENTS AND RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OR SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

When a report of sexual violence or sexual harassment is made, staff should follow the school safeguarding policy and report to the DSL. The DSL or Deputy DSL will take the lead and report to other agencies such as social services or the police, as required.

- ETC will take all reports seriously and will reassure the victim that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Staff report to DSL or DDSL
- Staff must not promise confidentiality as the concern will need to be shared further (for example with the DSL or social services), but staff will only share the report with those people who are necessary to progress it.
- A written report will be made as soon as possible after the interview, recording the facts as presented by the child. The child will not be asked to write anything down. This will be stored securely.
- Staff will not view or forward images unless unavoidable and only if another member of staff is present.
- The DSL will be informed as soon as possible.

RISK ASSESSMENT

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case by case basis. The risk and needs assessment should consider :

- The victim, especially their protection and support
- The alleged perpetrator
- All the other children (and if appropriate, adults and staff) at ETC.

Risk assessments will be stored securely.

ACTION FOLLOWING A REPORT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OR SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

We will consider :

- The wishes of the victim and how they want to proceed. This is especially important in the context of sexual violence and sexual harassment.
- The nature of the alleged incidents, including whether a crime may have been committed and consideration of harmful sexual behaviour
- The ages of the children involved

- The developmental stages of the children involved
- Any power imbalance between the children. For example, is the alleged perpetrator significantly older, mature or more confident? Does the victim have a learning difficulty or a disability?
- If the alleged incident is a one-off or a sustained pattern of abuse.
- Are there ongoing risks to the victim, other children, school staff; other related issues?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Depending on considerations above, the DSL may contact :

- **childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Tel : 01202 817600**
- **LADO** (Local Authority Designated Officer) SERVICE main contact number : 01202 817600 for Tina Cooper and Hayley Cowmeadow
- Nicky Campbell Service Manager, LADO Bournemouth, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Email : lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Children sharing a classroom/homestay/residence :

- The perpetrator to be removed from classes they share with the victim. Consider how best to keep the victim and the alleged perpetrator a reasonable distance apart on school premises, transport, homestay and residence.
- These actions are in the best interests of both children and should not be perceived to be a judgement on the guilt of the alleged perpetrator.

OPTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

1 Internally : In some cases of sexual harassment, for example one-off incidents, ETC may decide that the children concerned are not in need of early help or statutory intervention and that it would be appropriate to handle the incident internally. We may use the Anti-Bullying Policy and pastoral support. The decision to keep the incident internal will be made based on the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

All discussions around making this decision will be recorded and stored securely.

2 Early Help : It may be that the children involved do not require statutory interventions but may benefit from Early Help. This means providing help as soon as a problem emerges. Counselling might be appropriate.

3 Refer to Social Services and/or Police : Where a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, we will make a referral to :

- **childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk Tel : 01202 607800**
- **LADO** (Local Authority Designated Officer) SERVICE main contact number : 01202 617800

- Laura Baldwin, Service Manager, LADO Bournemouth, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance.
Tel: 01202 617800 Email : lado@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Further information and advice in these processes can be found in the document 'Sexual Violence and Harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE 2018).

PREVENTION

ETC International College actively seeks to raise awareness of and to prevent all forms of peer on peer abuse by educating and training the whole school community about these issues. This includes training all staff on the nature, prevalence and effect of peer on peer abuse and how to identify and respond to it. This includes :

- Contextual safeguarding
- Being able to identify and recognize specific behaviours and attitudes
- Understanding the imperative of taking all forms of peer on peer abuse seriously, no matter how low level they may seem and ensuring that no form of peer on peer abuse is ever dismissed as 'horseplay', 'teasing' or 'banter'.
- Educating children about the nature and prevalence of peer on peer abuse.
- Using a variety of means to address such issues as gender bias, respect and consent.
- Students are told what to do if they witness or experience such abuse.
- Students are aware of the [NSPCC Helpline](#) for the victims of sexual abuse in schools.
[Tel : 0800 8005000](tel:08008005000)
- Students understand the school's approach to such issues, including its zero tolerance approach to all forms of peer on peer abuse.
- Ensuring that all peer-on peer abuse incidents are fed back to the DSL so that support can be provided and trends can be seen and addressed.
- Challenging gender bias and other attitudes that may be underlying within the culture.
- Working with the school community, staff and students to promote positive values and to encourage a culture of tolerance and respect among all members of the school community.
- Maintaining a culture in which students feel able to share their concerns openly, in a non- judgmental environment and know that they will be listened to.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to cases of peer-on-peer abuse.

MULTI AGENCY WORKING

ETC actively engages with local partners in relation to peer on peer abuse and works closely with BCP social services and Dorset Police.

These relationships help us to ensure that we are able to prevent, identify early and appropriately handle cases of peer on peer abuse.

They help us to :

- Understand referral pathways and routes to early help
- Ensure our students have access to support
- Inform us of new trends and emerging risks in our local area or the country as a whole.

This document to be read in conjunction with our Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy