

Haydock High School



Managing Allegations against other Children or Young People Policy

Policy Review Guidance	
Statutory	No
Review Cycle	Every 3 years
Reviewer	Head of School
Member of Staff Responsible	Safeguarding Lead
Last reviewed	September 2019
Next Review Date	September 2022

Managing Allegations against other Children or Young People Policy

At Haydock High School we believe that all children and young people have the right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children and young people should be free from harm by adults in school and other students.

We recognise that some children and young people will negatively affect the learning and wellbeing of others and their behaviour will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

Safeguarding Allegations

Occasionally, allegations may be made against students by others in the school, which are of a safeguarding nature. Safeguarding issues raised in this way may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that to be considered a safeguarding allegation against a student, some of the following features will be found.

The allegation:

- is made against an older student and refers to their behaviour towards a younger student or a more vulnerable student
- is of a serious nature, possibly including a criminal offence
- raises risk factors for other students in the school
- indicates that other students may have been affected by this student
- indicates that young people outside the school may be affected by this student

Examples of safeguarding issues against a student could include:

Physical Abuse

- violence, particularly pre-planned
- forcing others to use drugs or alcohol

Emotional Abuse

- blackmail or extortion
- threats and intimidation

Sexual Abuse

- indecent exposure, indecent touching or serious sexual assaults
- forcing others to watch pornography
- taking part in sexting

Sexual Exploitation

- Encouraging other children or young people to engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour (For example - having an older boyfriend/girlfriend, associating with unknown adults or other sexually exploited children or young people, staying out overnight)
- encouraging other children or young to attend inappropriate gatherings
- Photographing or videoing other children or young people performing indecent acts
- photographing or videoing other children or young performing indecent acts

In areas where gangs are prevalent, older students may attempt to recruit younger/ vulnerable students using any or all of the above methods. Children and young people suffering from sexual exploitation themselves may be forced to recruit other children or young people under threat of violence.

Minimising the risk of safeguarding concerns towards students from other children and young people

On occasion, some students will present a safeguarding risk to other children or young people. The school should be informed that the child or young person raises safeguarding concerns, for example, they are coming back into school following a period in custody or they have experienced serious abuse themselves.

These students will need an individual risk management plan to ensure that other students are kept safe and they themselves are not laid open to malicious allegations. There is a need to balance the tension between privacy and safeguarding.

When an allegation is made

When an allegation is made by a student against another student, members of staff should consider whether the complaint raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Team should be informed.

A factual record should be made of the allegation, but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or another member of the Safeguarding Team should contact children's services – MASH to discuss the case. It is possible that social services are already aware of safeguarding concerns around this child or young person. The Safeguarding Team will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a social services referral where appropriate.

The Safeguarding Team will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of all relevant students' files.

If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents informed (of both the child or young person being complained about and the alleged victim).

It may be appropriate to exclude the student being complained about for a period of time according to the school's behaviour policy and procedures.

Where neither social services nor the police accept the complaint, a thorough school investigation should take place into the matter using the school's usual disciplinary procedures.

In situations where the school considers a safeguarding risk is present, a risk assessment should be prepared along with a preventative, supervision plan.

The plan should be monitored and a date set for a follow-up evaluation with everyone concerned.

Sexting

Staff and other adults who work with children and young people in Haydock High School will read this policy within the framework of the following guidance:

- Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people

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

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to the school attention:

- The incident should be referred to the safeguarding as soon as possible
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff
- There should be subsequent interviews with the child or young people involved (if appropriate)
- Parents/Carers should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents/carers would put the child or young person at risk of harm

At any point in the process if there is a concern a child or 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.