



NCS Safeguarding Newsletter

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Safeguarding Team

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Welcome to our Parent Safeguarding Newsletter

In each Newsletter we intend to focus on one safeguarding 'Hot Topic' issue and will share some advice and tips about keeping your child safe. We will also signpost some supportive organisations and external agencies.

We are committed to working with all our parents and students, to actively promote the safeguarding and welfare of our young people.

If you have any concerns about your child then please do not hesitate to contact one the Safeguarding Team.

Hot Topic: Harmful Sexual Behaviours

Context

Nationally, over the past 18 months, there has been an acknowledgement through Department of Education (DfE), Ofsted and the 'Everyone's Invited website that sexual violence and harassment occurs between young people more often than was previously realised.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." - Durant





These behaviours exist on a continuum¹ and can include:

- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment,
- 'upskirting', which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing
- sending explicit photographs or videos

As government guidance and Ofsted have clearly stated, it is important for all educational institutions to acknowledge that they could have students who are victims and students who are perpetrators of harmful sexual behaviours.

How we safeguard our students

Ethos and Policies

At the NCS we are clear that any sort of sexual violence or harassment is unacceptable and will never be tolerated.

This position is supported by the expectations and procedures which are laid out in our policies including the:

- Safeguarding policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Behaviour policy
- E-safety policy

Curriculum

Through the pastoral programme we educate our students so that they

- can recognise what healthy and respectful relationships look like
- understand consent and the legal age of consent
- understand that sexual violence and harassment is always wrong
- have some strategies for how to deal with unwanted advances from someone
- are informed about the dangers of posting personal images and details online.

The pastoral programme is delivered through tutor time, ignite and in drop down days.

¹ Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2021



Multiple channels to ask for help:

Students at the NCS are always encouraged to speak to any member of staff about any concerns that they have.

They can contact staff

- face to face
- via email
- by using our online platform, Tootoot

Through Tootoot students can send messages to the safeguarding team to share concerns or request support or guidance. These reports are anonymous. However, if we deem it is in the best interests of the student concerned, then they can be unmasked by the safeguarding team.

How we respond to disclosures and allegations

We always have the student's best interests at the centre of all decisions we make and actions we take.

- Staff at the NCS recognise that the initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important.
- **All** victims will be reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- When receiving a report from a child, staff
 - will listen carefully, be patient and empathetic
 - will not ask leading questions
 - will not promise confidentiality at this stage
 - will make a written record of facts
- The report will be shared with the safeguarding team who will decide the next steps, often with guidance from specialists such as social services and the police.
- If the alleged perpetrator is another student at the NCS then actions will include how to support this student as well as a risk assessment to safeguard all members of the NCS Community.
- Students involved will be offered therapeutic support within college (from our counsellor) and may also be referred to specialist external organisations.

How parents / carers can support their child

The NSPCC acknowledges that children's sexual development is shaped by their environment, experiences and what they see. Every young person is different and develops at a different rate. It is natural for teenagers to become interested in sex and relationships. This is not a problem as long as these interests and behaviours are not harmful to themselves or others.

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However, young people now have exposure to more sexual imagery and videos than older generations have had. This means their views can become skewed and the information which they access might not be helpful.

Therefore, it is even more important for young people to be able to speak to trusted adults about these topics, without embarrassment or shame. This will allow them to ask questions so that they are able to get a more accurate understanding.

Supportive Organisations

The NSPCC is an excellent source of information and advice on such topics and we recommend reading these pages in particular:

Sexual behaviour in children:

This page explains how to recognise and respond to inappropriate sexual behaviour in a young person and how to support a child who has been a victim of abuse.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/sexual-behaviour-children/>

Sharing nude photos:

This page explains why young people might send nude photos, how to talk to your child about this topic and how to support your child if they have sent an image.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/>

Pornography:

This page explains why some young people watch pornography and how to talk to your child about this topic.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/inappropriate-explicit-content/online-porn/>

Parents' Guide to talking to their child about online sexual harassment

This document has been produced by the Children's Commissioner. Her team work with a group of 16–21 year-olds and asked them what they think parents should know, and what they should say to their children when talking about sexualised bullying and the pressures of growing up online. The guidance produced is based on the voices of young people giving adults their tips on how to tackle this subject.

https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/cco_talking_to_your_child_about_online_sexual_harassment_a_guide_for_parents_dec_2021.pdf

Harmful Sexual Behaviour: A Parent's Guide

https://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Harmful%20Sexual%20Behaviour%20-%20Parent_s%20guide.pdf

Thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin.

We would be most grateful if you could spend 1min completing the short questionnaire which can be found here: <https://forms.gle/Ggp7ReAi8D6dnav8>

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Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre (The NCS)

326 Barking Road, East Ham, London, E6 2BB | 0203 011 4114 | enquiries@sixthform.london | sixthform.london

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