



Child on Child Abuse Policy 2025-26

1. Purpose

This policy outlines New Pastures' commitment to preventing, identifying, responding to, and recording all forms of child-on-child abuse. It ensures compliance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

The policy aims to:

- Protect all learners from harm
- Promote a culture of respect, consent, and safety
- Ensure consistent, trauma-informed practice
- Provide clear procedures for staff, learners, and parents/carers

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All learners aged 16+ enrolled at New Pastures
- All staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors
- All learning environments, including:
 - Practical areas (animal care, equine, workshops,)
 - Classrooms
 - Breakrooms
 - Off-site visits, placements, and transport
 - Digital and online spaces

3. Definition of Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse occurs when one learner harms another. It may be:

- **Physical abuse:** hitting, kicking, pushing, restraint misuse
- **Sexual violence:** rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault
- **Sexual harassment:** unwanted sexual comments, jokes, gestures
- **Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB):** developmentally inappropriate or abusive sexual behaviour
- **Online abuse:** cyberbullying, image-based abuse, coercion, threats
- **Bullying:** verbal, physical, relational, or discriminatory
- **Coercive control:** intimidation, manipulation, threats
- **Initiation/hazing:** rituals, humiliation, or forced activities
- **Upskirting:** taking images under clothing without consent

Abuse may be:

- A single incident
- A pattern of behaviour
- Peer-to-peer or group-to-individual
- In-person or online

4. Principles

New Pastures operates under the following principles:

- **Zero tolerance** of all forms of abuse
- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
- **Early identification** prevents escalation
- **Trauma-informed practice** underpins all responses
- **Learners are believed, supported, and protected**
- **No learner is ever blamed for abuse experienced**
- **Behaviour is understood in context**, including SEND, trauma, or unmet needs

- **Information is shared appropriately** to protect learners
- **Interventions are proportionate, fair, and reviewed regularly**

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Katie Wootton

- Leads all child-on-child abuse cases
- Conducts safeguarding triage and risk assessments
- Liaises with external agencies (MASH, police, health, social care)
- Ensures accurate, timely, secure record-keeping
- Oversees safety plans and supervision strategies
- Ensures staff training is current and relevant

Deputy DSLs – Stuart Wootton and Sophia Baillie

- Support the DSL and act in their absence
- Maintain safeguarding oversight across curriculum areas

All Staff

- Recognise indicators of abuse
- Respond appropriately to disclosures
- Record concerns immediately and factually
- Report to the DSL without delay
- Maintain professional curiosity

Senior Leadership Team

- Ensures policy implementation
- Allocates resources for safeguarding
- Oversees safer recruitment and staff conduct

Learners

- Are encouraged to report concerns
- Are taught about consent, respect, and boundaries

6. Prevention

The provision promotes a safe culture through:

Curriculum

- Tutorial and enrichment sessions covering:
 - Consent and healthy relationships
 - Online safety and digital citizenship
 - Sexual harassment and HSB
 - Equality, diversity, and inclusion
 - Power dynamics and coercion

Environment

- Staff presence at all times,
- Clear behaviour expectations and sanctions
- Safe supervision in practical areas
- Monitoring of online systems and college devices

Training

All staff receive safeguarding training including:

- Recognising child-on-child abuse
- Responding to disclosures
- Trauma-informed practice
- HSB identification and response
- Online safety and digital safeguarding

7. Recognising Indicators

Staff should be alert to:

- Unexplained injuries or frequent minor injuries
- Anxiety, withdrawal, or sudden behaviour changes
- Avoidance of certain peers, areas, or activities
- Sexualised language or behaviour beyond developmental norms
- Repeated conflict, intimidation, or controlling behaviour
- Distress linked to online interactions
- Learners appearing fearful of attending certain sessions
- Changes in attendance, engagement, or academic performance

8. Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

Immediate Response

Staff must:

- Stay calm and listen
- Reassure the learner they are being taken seriously
- Avoid expressing shock or disbelief
- Avoid leading questions
- Not promise confidentiality
- Explain next steps clearly

Reporting

- Report to the DSL **immediately**
- If a learner is at immediate risk, call emergency services

Recording

- Use safeguarding Green Form
- Record factual information only

- Use the learner's own words
- Include date, time, location, and people involved
- Record actions taken and who was informed

9. DSL Decision-Making and Investigation

The DSL will consider:

- Nature, severity, and context of the incident
- Power imbalances (age, size, gender, SEND, social status)
- Whether the behaviour constitutes HSB
- Whether the behaviour is a one-off or part of a pattern
- Impact on all learners involved
- Whether external agencies should be involved

Possible Outcomes

- Internal management with support and monitoring
- Referral to Children's Services
- Referral to the police
- Multi-agency strategy meeting
- Implementation of safety plans
- Disciplinary action in line with behaviour policy

10. Support for Learners

For the Learner Who Has Experienced Harm

- Pastoral support and regular check-ins
- Safety planning and supervision adjustments
- Counselling or wellbeing support
- Curriculum adjustments or timetable changes
- Support during police or social care processes

For the Learner Who Has Caused Harm

- Behaviour intervention and education
- Pastoral support and mentoring
- Risk assessment and supervision plan
- Referral to external services (e.g., CAMHS, youth services)
- Restorative approaches where appropriate and safe

Support is reviewed regularly and adapted as needed.

11. Risk Assessment

A written risk assessment will be completed following any incident. It will include:

- Identification of risks to all learners involved
- Environmental, social, and contextual factors
- Protective measures and supervision strategies
- Staff responsibilities and monitoring arrangements
- Review dates and escalation procedures

Risk assessments may include:

- Increased staff presence
- Adjusted timetables
- Separate teaching spaces
- Restrictions on access to certain areas
- Online safety controls

12. Safety Planning

Safety plans will:

- Be individualised
- Be shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis
- Include clear expectations for behaviour
- Outline consequences for breaches

- Be reviewed regularly

13. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will be shared:

- On a **need-to-know basis**
- In line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation
- With relevant agencies to protect learners from harm

Learners are informed about:

- What will be shared
- Who it will be shared with
- Why sharing is necessary

14. Record Keeping

New Pastures will maintain:

- Secure, confidential safeguarding records
- Chronologies of concerns
- Copies of referrals and agency communications
- Risk assessments and safety plans
- Minutes of multi-agency meetings

Records are retained in line with statutory requirements.

15. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following legislative changes
- After any significant safeguarding incident
- In response to feedback from learners, staff, or external agencies