

**DDSCP Briefing Note: Government Review into Sexual Abuse in Schools**

Over the last few weeks there has been considerable publicity about the Everyone’s Invited website and sexual abuse within schools. In response, the Government have announced a [review](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-review-into-sexual-abuse-in-schools) and launch of a dedicated [helpline](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2021/april/sexual-abuse-in-education-helpline-launched).

**Helpline**

The NSPCC have developed a bespoke helpline for children and young people who've experienced abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals who need support and guidance. If you are concerned about something, you can contact the NSPCC helpline Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

**Review**

The government has asked Ofsted to undertake an immediate [review](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsteds-review-of-sexual-abuse-in-schools-and-colleges) of safeguarding policies in state and independent schools and colleges in relation to sexual abuse. The review will look at:

* whether schools and colleges have appropriate processes in place to allow pupils to report sexual abuse concerns freely, knowing these will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
* whether there is sufficient guidance for schools and colleges on how they should deal with sexual harassment and violence allegations, and whether they understand and implement guidance well.
* seek to identify whether current inspection regimes in both state and private schools are strong enough to address concerns and promote the welfare of children.

The review will conclude by the end of May 2021 and will seek to establish where safeguarding arrangements and processes are good and have worked well as well as where improvements are needed. It will look at key questions on safeguarding and the curriculum, multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the victim’s voice and reporting.

Ofsted will do this by:

* Reviewing a sample of the recently reported evidence of sexual violence and abuse involving pupils.
* Visiting a sample of schools and colleges where cases have been highlighted, with the Independent Schools Inspectorate where appropriate, to look at how well safeguarding is working and to discuss the wider issues raised by the evidence.
* Not reporting on individual schools or cases but presenting a picture of good and poor practice across the country.

You can find out more about the Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools in the [terms of reference](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-review-of-sexual-abuse/ofsted-review-into-sexual-abuse-in-schools-terms-of-reference).

**Support for children, young people and schools in Derby and Derbyshire**

Schools and colleges should take steps to ensure they minimise the risk of sexual harassment and violence occurring and know what to do when it does occur or is alleged to have occurred. The Department for Education have published [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges) which covers children of all ages in primary, secondary and colleges.

It is important that all schools and colleges ensure there is a whole school approach to safeguarding, a culture that makes it clear that sexual harassment and violence is unacceptable and there is a preventative education programme. Schools and colleges should keep their policies, processes and curriculum under constant review to ensure they have effective measures in place to prevent, address any concerns and support victims and alleged perpetrators.

**Preventative Measures**

* Catch 22 have put together some helpful tips and national resources, including principles for effective support.



* Schoolsnet and Derbyshire County Council have a harmful sexual behaviours in children and young people [webpage](https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk/keeping-children-safe-in-education/safeguarding-issues-for-schools-and-education-settings/harmful-sexual-behaviours-in-children-and-young-people.aspx) with helpful information and resources.
* Derbyshire Education Improvement Services (EIS) have developed a PSHE Matters primary resource that includes preventative education. This is also available to Derby City schools. They can also signpost to curriculum resources for secondary schools. For consultation and training on developing quality Relationships and Sex Education contact eis@derbyshire.gov.uk or search RSE on [Derbyshire Services 4 Schools](https://www.services.derbyshire.gov.uk/).

**Interventions and Specialist Support**

It is vitally important the reports are considered on a case by case basis and follow general safeguarding principals outlined in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2) and our local [multi-agency safeguarding children procedures](https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/contents.html), in particular the [Children who Present a Risk of Harm to Others](https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/p_abuse_by_ch_yp.html) procedure. Consideration should be made to the level of needs, complexity and seriousness and the most appropriate response to these.

Where appropriate the [Stop It Now Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool](https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child-or-young-persons-sexual-behaviour/how-to-tell-if-a-childs-sexual-behaviour-is-age-appropriate/) can be used to understand whether a particular sexual behaviour is normal, problematic or harmful.

The Derby City and Derbyshire [Thresholds Document](https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/docs_library.html) can support schools in their decision making about needs and appropriate interventions, including referral to children’s social care and/or the police. The National Police Chief’s Council have also developed [When to Call the police guidance for schools and colleges](https://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/Children%20and%20Young%20people/When%20to%20call%20the%20police%20guidance%20for%20schools%20and%20colleges.pdf) to support decision making about police involvement.

If you wish to talk to a Social Worker about whether thresholds for Social Care or Early Help have been met, you can ring:

* In Derbyshire - Starting Point Consultation and Advice Service for Professionals 01629 535353. The service operates Monday to Friday from 8am – 6pm.
* In Derby City - Children's Services Professional Consultation Line 07812 300329. The service operates Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm.

In all cases where there are concerns a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Children’s Social Care. See [Making a Referral to Social Care procedure](https://derbyshirescbs.proceduresonline.com/p_making_ref_soc_care.html).

**Specialist Support Services in Derby and Derbyshire**

* Safer Derbyshire sexual violence and rape [webpage](https://www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what-we-do/sexual-violence-and-rape/sexual-violence-and-rape.aspx) for information on what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of rape or sexual violence.
* [SV2](https://www.sv2.org.uk/) - supporting victims of sexual violence 24/7 advice line 01773 746 115
* Derbyshire constabulary support for victims of rape and sexual assault [webpage](https://www.derbyshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rsa/rape-and-sexual-assault/support-for-victims-of-rape-and-sexual-assault/)
* [The Keep](https://derbycsc.proceduresonline.com/files/the_keep_info_leaflet.pdf) – a Derby city service offering specialist assessment, consultation

and therapeutic intervention

* Remedi - [Got Your Back service](http://gotyourback.tv/)