

Sexual Abuse, Schools, Safety and Support

GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION STAFF

How can schools better support young people impacted by sexual abuse and assault?

Check out our online guidance from children and parents with lived experience of sexual harm, with input from education professionals.

(Page numbers below refer to online guidance)

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guidance



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School Environment

- ✓ Model respect & consent in all relationships
- ✓ Cultivate space for difference & acceptance
- ✓ Actively invite discussion & education about consent in sex & relationships
- ✓ Whole school approaches to sexism, misogyny & harassment

Disclosure and 'Exposure'

A child disclosing to you is a sign that you've earned their trust. Disclosure can feel like exposure – a very difficult moment. Try not to rush the conversation, show care and empathy and let them know what will happen next. *p16-18*. You may have concerns without a disclosure - *See p18*.

Next steps for immediate safety

Follow your setting's safeguarding procedures. Best practice guidance for next steps is on the **child sexual abuse pathway** website: csapathway.uk. Help children understand what the next steps might be when reporting.

Next steps for support in school

Identify a **key named adult** responsible for building a relationship and **creating a support plan with the child and family**. **Be pro-active in following up**. Involve the child in sharing information with the wider school team *p20-23*

Plan, do & review

Things keep changing. Remember it's a long journey. Acknowledge and celebrate the small wins. Pro-actively meet again, check in on how things are going and what more you can try. *p27*

Peer relationships, including child-child harm

Consider the impact on friendships, potential bullying and care around child-on-child harm. Offer support in navigating these. *p28-29*

Support strategies in class

What coping methods do they have? What challenges might there be to accessing support and learning? **Where can they go if they are struggling?** What adjustments can be made in the classroom and the timetable to support the student? *p24-27*

Key Themes:

offer Support

Build trust & take it seriously

Give choice, voice and control

Use a trauma lens

