



Managing Allegations against other Students Policy

Responsibility	Students, Parents & Community	
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Reference	051/2	

Model Policy & Procedure

Managing allegations against other students

DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) says that 'governing bodies should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children'. The guidance also states the importance of minimising the risks of peer-on- peer abuse. In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's behaviour policy. Some allegations may be of such a serious nature that they may raise safeguarding concerns. These allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is also likely that incidents dealt with under this policy will involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

At The Richmond upon Thames School (RTS) we believe that all children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment. Children should be free from harm by adults in the school and other students.

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

Prevention

As a school we will minimise the risk of allegations against other students by:-

- Providing a developmentally appropriate Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education syllabus which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe
- Having systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to, believed and valued
- Delivering targeted work on assertiveness and keeping safe to those students identified as being at risk and
- Developing robust risk assessments & providing targeted work for students identified as being a potential risk to other students.

Allegations against other students which are safeguarding issues

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 pupil, some of the following features will be found.

If the allegation:-

- Is made against an older pupil and refers to their behaviour towards a younger pupil or a more vulnerable pupil
- 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 the 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 or take part in sexting

Sexual Exploitation

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

Procedure:

- When an allegation is made by a pupil 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 (DSL) 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 DSL should contact the children's reception team (CRT) to discuss the case. The DSL will follow through the outcomes of the discussion and make a referral where appropriate.
- If the allegation indicates that a potential criminal offence has taken place, CRT will refer the case to the multi-agency safeguarding hub where the police will become involved.
- Parents, of both the student being complained about and the alleged victim, should be informed and kept updated on the progress of the referral.
- The DSL will make a record of the concern, the discussion and any outcome and keep a copy in the files of both students' files.
- It may be appropriate to exclude the pupil 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.