

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident

An overview for all staff working in education settings in England

This document provides a brief overview for frontline staff of how to respond to incidents where nudes and semi-nudes have been shared.

All such incidents should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent and managed in line with your setting's child protection policies.

The appropriate safeguarding lead person should be familiar with the full 2020 guidance from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS), ***Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*** and should **not** refer to this document instead of the full guidance.

What do we mean by sharing nudes and semi-nudes?

In the latest advice for schools and colleges (UKCIS, 2020), this is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's AirDrop which works offline. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.

The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated.

This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency.

What to do if an incident comes to your attention

Report it to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent immediately. Your setting's child protection policy should outline codes of practice to be followed.

- **Never** view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – **this is illegal**.¹
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- **Do not** delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- **Do not** ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).
- **Do not** share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- **Do not** say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- **Do** explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

For further information

Download the full guidance, *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people* (UKCIS, 2020) at www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people.

¹ In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for the DSL (or equivalent) only to view the image in order to safeguard the child or young person. That decision should be based on the professional judgement of the DSL (or equivalent).