

REFERRALS DESK POLICY

This policy defines how CEOP will deal with all reports which come either from the public reporting mechanism or from other agencies who report through the referrals desk email box. It covers how CEOP will deal with all reports, what information falls within our remit and under what circumstances we will reply to those who make reports. Detailed guidance for the referrals desk is provided which includes specific information on reports from certain agencies. This policy will be made available to all CEOP partners with specific procedures provided to those agencies to whom the procedure refers.

CEOP Referrals Desk Remit

This statement defines the content of reports which fall within the remit of CEOP's intelligence faculty.

CEOP is responsible for reports concerning the sexual abuse or attempted sexual abuse of children in a predominately online environment recognising that by default we may also receive reports of off line abuse. This includes (but is not limited to) the offences of rape, sexual assault, sexual intercourse with children under the age of 16, grooming of a child, production, distribution or possession of child abuse images or the causing or inciting of such offences.

While it will never be possible to define exactly how sexual abuse will manifest itself some examples may be;

1. Adults encouraging children and young people to meet up with them in the 'real world' with the intention of engaging them in sexual activity.
2. Attempted or actual instances of sexual grooming by an adult of a child or young person, including adults who pretend to be their peers in order to facilitate this.
3. Concerns that a child or young person is being coerced or blackmailed into engaging with online or offline sexual activity with an adult.
4. Inappropriate sexual language or conversation between a child or young person and an adult.
5. Inappropriate sexual behaviour between a child or young person and an adult, such as performing sexual acts on a webcam.
6. Concerns that an adult is representing themselves as a child or young person in order to groom other children or young people for sexual purposes.
7. Child abuse images should in general be reported to the IWF. However, where they are suspect related e.g. someone send images or tries to share images with another individual via the internet, this should be reported to CEOP.

CEOP deals only with allegations of crime and information it provides to law enforcement agencies is for intelligence purposes, not evidence.

CEOP Referrals Desk Assessment

Where reports fall within the remit of CEOP Intelligence Faculty, they will be dealt with according to the Referrals Desk Procedures. All reports are assessed for two aspects;

- a. Child protection issues.
- b. Disclosure of crime.

Once the reports have been assessed they will be prioritised accordingly.

Where reports do not fall within the remit of CEOP's intelligence faculty, they will be passed to Harm Reduction for their action.

CEOP Responses to reports.

The CEOP public reporting mechanism has an automated response to all those who make a report. However, in specific cases CEOP will reply to individuals as follows;

- a. CEOP will reply to ALL reports from children under 18.
- b. CEOP will reply to adults who make a report on behalf of a child.
- c. CEOP will reply to adults who seek advice and guidance about a child or young person's behaviour on the internet.
- d. CEOP will not reply to any other reports from adults.

In order to be able to respond appropriately to reports CEOP will not accept anonymous reporting. This must include an address and either an email address or phone number. Where possible, CEOP will not respond to members of the public by phone and will use email as the preferred method of contact.