



Debbie Innes

Newsletter

SAFEGUARDING *September 2026*

For those of you who are starting a new academic year - welcome back. For those of you who have continued to work with children and young people over the hottest summer on record, well done! And yes, I know that those who work in schools have also contributed to a summer of making sure children and young people continue to be safe.



Removal of the supervision exemption

The biggest change over the summer apart from Keeping Children Safe in Education, which I will come to later, is the change in who is exempt from a DBS check. The removal of the supervision exemption means that volunteers under certain conditions are now eligible for an enhanced DBS with barred list check.

This has created a vast number of questions and queries about what this means and how to manage it. Helpfully the Disclosure and Barring Service has produced a guide which you can access [here](#).

You will need to assess whether an individual is now carrying out a role that requires a DBS and then apply for one. Do read the guide and the original change to regulated activity document ([here](#)) which came into force on 1st September 2026. If you are not sure about anything please do get in touch contact@debbieinnesssafeguarding.co.uk



Complexity in Safeguarding

As I work with organisations who are supporting, teaching and caring for children and young people I have been struck with the increasing complexity of the safeguarding concerns about them. I have been thinking about this over the summer...I wonder if this increasing complexity is because of increasing awareness of issues, lack of resources in social care or the increasing exposure to risk. Whatever the cause it means that decisions are often being made at pace and there is rarely the opportunity to stand back and take a more measured approach.

Daniel Kahneman describes both these types of thinking in his book 'Thinking Fast and Slow'. As safeguarding professionals, we often have to rely on experience and prior knowledge to make what he refers to as system 1 decisions. This often leads to the use of heuristics which do not always serve us well when making decisions about complex situations that our children and young people might be experiencing. System 2 decisions are effortful and require more prolonged attention – these are likely to result in that more measured approach to the concerns that have

arisen. This is particularly the case when concerns arise over time or come all at once.

Making more system 2 decisions when we need to do 'safeguarding NOW' can be a challenge! Ensuring that you regularly reflect with other safeguarding colleagues is vital. Best practice is for designated safeguarding leads and deputies to have regular 'professional supervision'. This allows for reflection about decision making as well as problem solving for those children and young people for whom change is stalling. . Chronologies of events in a child or young person's life are useful to help get a wider understanding of what is going on. Child or young person voice is often the area that gets missed in decision making about complex safeguarding issues but provides the clearest picture of what it is like to live the concerns that are being seen.

Ultimately there are going to be times when you have to think fast but you should always find time to reflect more slowly to see if anything was missed and if you should either conduct some remedying actions or delve deeper into a case review.

We will be considering 'Managing Increasing Complexity' in our FREE webinar on Tuesday 6th October from 5.30pm-6.30pm - you can register [here](#).



What do you need to know about Keeping Children Safe in Education

Keeping Children Safe in Education is a good guide for anyone who works with children and young people, although it is still missing some key areas! I have recorded a short video with the changes in the summer. You can see this [here](#).

The document was further updated on 1st September...unhelpfully, especially for those of you had prepared your INSET on the just changes published in July there were quite a lot of adjustments:

- Changes to the definition of sexual abuse, including clarity about age of consent, with under 13s never being able to legally consent.
- Added paragraphs about discriminatory abuse and, finally, how racism and discrimination are damaging and that staff should recognise this and act in line with safeguarding policies.
- The two flowcharts in section 1 have been updated.
- More clarity about how staff can support with children and young people's mental health but cannot diagnose.
- More detail about sharing of nudes and semi-nudes...where it might not always be abusive between similar age children but it is still illegal.

The introduction of new information means that paragraphs have been renumbered...only a problem if you have referred to these in your updated policy.

Please do ask if you need support with any of this - a template policy is available for free on my [website](#)...alongside some other free resources.



I have made a commitment to sending out these newsletters every half term so please look out for them. If there's anything you would like to see either in the newsletter or as a free webinar please do let us know contact@debbieinnessafeguarding.co.uk

You can also contact us if you would like: a safeguarding culture review in your organisation, support with action planning, a professional view about a concern with a child or young person, professional supervision or safeguarding training

contact@debbieinnessafeguarding.co.uk

