



Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection

AS2EDUCATE

Reviewed by:	Richard Fihosy
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Review Date 02.09.24	Sections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to whole policy to reflect Keeping children safe in education 2024 update • Update of DSL Claire Ames phone number • Update of DSL’s email addresses • Contact details updated for MH Support teams
09/09/25	Full Policy review to reflect KCSiE 2025 update

AS2Educate Child Protection Policy is in line with the quality and standards expected from Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), Central Bedfordshire. Luton and Bedford Borough and will be monitored by Directors. This policy will also be reviewed annually or when new legislation requires changes, whichever is the soonest.

Signature Date Agreed:
Director and DSL

Signature Date Agreed:
Director

Signature Date Agreed:
DSL

Date of Last Review: 09/09/2025

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1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

A whole-provision, child-centred approach is fundamental to all aspects of everyday life at AS2Educate. In practice this means keeping the child at the centre of decision making in our partnership working with children and their families. As stated in Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the welfare of children is paramount and that they are best looked after within their families, with their parents playing a full part in their lives, unless compulsory intervention in family life is necessary.

We hope that parents and carers appreciate our statutory duty to offer early help support and, depending on the gravity of the situation, protect children in need and who have suffered or otherwise likely to suffer significant harm. The core objective of early help support is to prevent any child from being harmed or placed at risk of harm and therefore halt any escalation where possible.

At AS2Educate we strive to create a culture which enables children to express their wishes, feelings, and talk about anything that is of importance to them. We believe that every child deserves to receive an education within an environment that feels safe to learn and develop. We want our pupils, staff, parents and carers to have confidence and trust in our goals and know that collaborative working is fundamental to create and maintain a child-centred approach to safeguarding.

This policy outlines the commitment to our legal duties to safeguard children, the responsibilities for all of our staff and the specific roles and responsibilities for our key Designated Safeguarding Leads.

2. Important safeguarding Contacts

Provision's In-House Contacts

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Claire Ames	claire.ames@as2educate.co.uk 07359 467512
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Richard Fihosy	richard.fihosy@as2educate.co.uk 07399 732761

National Contacts

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
NSPCC Helpline	N/A	Call: 0808 800 5000 Email help@NSPCC.org.uk .
Police	N/A	Emergency 999, non-emergency 101
Channel Helpline	N/A	020 7340 7264

Non Provision Contacts - Hertfordshire

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Duty LADO	LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk lado_referral_form.docx (live.com) Strictly for professionals use only
Hertfordshire County Council Children's Social Care	Customer Service Centre	Children's Services includes SOOHS (Out of Hours Service-Children's Services) – 0300 123 4043 https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/report-child-protection-concern.aspx

Non Provision Contacts - Central Bedfordshire

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Duty LADO	Central Bedfordshire: 0300 300 8142 or via secure email: LADO@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/11/children_and_young_people/112/child_protection_-_safeguarding_children_and_young_people/2
Central Bedfordshire County Council Children's Social Care	Customer Service Centre	Call 0300 300 8585 immediately (office hours). For out of hours reports call 0300 300 8123. https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/11/children_and_young_people/112/child_protection_-_safeguarding_children_and_young_people

Non Provision Contacts - Bedford Borough

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Duty LADO	Bedford Borough: 01234 276 693 or via secure email: Lado@bedford.gov.uk https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/safeguarding-children-partnership/local-authority Strictly for professionals use only
Bedford Borough Council Children's Social Care	Customer Service Centre	Tel: 01234 718700 (office hours) Tel: 0300 300 8123 (out of hours) https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/safeguarding-children-harm-and-child-protection-0

Non Provision Contacts - Luton Borough

Organisation / Role	Name	Contact details
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Duty LADO	Luton: 01582 548 069 or via secure email: LADO@luton.gov.uk
Luton Council Children's Social Care	Customer Service Centre	Telephone: 01582 547653 Out of hours: 0300 3008123 mash@luton.gov.uk https://m.luton.gov.uk/Page/Show/Health_and_social_care/safeguarding/safeguarding_children/Pages/default.aspx

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners (see section 4 definitions).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 1 of the schedule to the [Non-Maintained Special Provisions \(England\) Regulations 2015](#), which places a duty on non-maintained special provisions to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the provision.
- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the [Serious Crime Act 2015](#), which places a statutory duty on staff to report to the police where they discover that female genital mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18
- [Statutory guidance on FGM](#), which sets out responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and supporting girls affected by FGM
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children
- [Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty](#), which explains provisions' duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 with respect to protecting people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#), which explains that being subjected to harassment, violence and/or abuse, including that of a sexual nature, may breach any or all of the rights which apply to individuals under the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) (ECHR)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people regarding particular protected characteristics (including disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and race).

This means Directors and staff must carefully consider how they are supporting their pupils with regard to these characteristics. The Act allows our provision to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting pupils (where we can show it's proportionate). This includes making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. For example, it could include taking positive action to support girls where there's evidence that they're being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment

- [The Public Sector Equality Duty \(PSED\)](#), which explains that we must have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The PSED helps us to focus on key issues of concern and how to improve pupil outcomes. Some pupils may be more at risk of harm from issues such as sexual violence; homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying; or racial discrimination
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) is guidance from the Department for Education and is designed for anyone who works with children and families. This is additional guidance that details signs of abuse and neglect to look out for and what action to take if professionals are concerned. The first point of reference for those working and volunteering in education settings must still be Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) and the setting's own Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures.

Escalation of Concerns and Professional Disagreements about Decisions, including Convening an ICPC <http://iscp.gg/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=165695&p=0>

4. Definitions: Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding as defined by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), means

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home, including online**
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- **promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children**
- **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.**

All our staff at AS2Educate are expected to be familiar with the wide range of policies and procedures we have to keep our children safe and promote their wellbeing at all times.

Child/ren: The legal definition of a child in the UK includes everyone under the age of 18.

Child in Need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in Need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 by a social worker. Agencies have a duty to cooperate with Children's Services, and parental consent is required.

Child Protection under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, places a duty on the Local Authority to make enquiries and decide whether to take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Such enquiries, supported by other organisations and agencies, as appropriate, must be initiated where there are concerns about all forms of abuse and neglect. This includes female genital mutilation (FGM) and other honour-based violence, and extra-familial threats including radicalisation and sexual or criminal exploitation. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst an assessment or enquiries are carried out. Parental consent is not required if this would place the child at further risk of harm.

Significant Harm is the threshold for a Child Protection response. If Children's Services suspect a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, then they must by law carry out child protection enquiries. Harm is defined in the Children Act 1989 as the ill-treatment of a child or the impairment of their health or development. This can include harm caused by seeing someone else being mistreated, for example by witnessing domestic abuse. The phrase 'significant harm' was introduced by the Children Act 1989. The Act does not define 'significant'. The question of whether or not harm is 'significant' relates to its impact on a child's health or development.

Children Looked After: A child is 'looked after' (in care) if they are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours. Children can be in care by agreement with parents or by order of a court. The placement providing the care can be a connected person to child or LA approved foster carer.

Abuse is all forms of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children maybe abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Neglect is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Section 8 provides the full definition.

Safeguarding Partners are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). These three partners have the strategic responsibility for setting out safeguarding procedures and arrangements for all organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children, and who are required to work together to safeguard and promote their welfare. These organisations and agencies are named in statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive

behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

The Gateway receives contacts from partner agencies and members of the public for support from Early Help and Children's Social Care. Contacts are received via the Customer Service Centre. It provides a single response to all new contacts that require an initial multi-agency approach. Where there are current safeguarding concerns that require an immediate response, contacts bypass the Gateway and are transferred directly to the relevant social care team within Children's Services.

5. Equality Statement, Children with Protected Characteristics

Some children are at greater risk of harm, both online and offline, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. At AS2Educate we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and ensuring that all children are provided with the same protection regardless of any additional needs, barriers or protected characteristics they may have. As stated in the Equality Act, 2010, we recognise the protected characteristics that may be applicable to our pupils:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

All staff and volunteers understand the importance of recognising that a child may benefit from Early Help intervention, and it is integral to our whole provision approach to look and listen out particularly for children:

- Who have a special educational need and/or disabilities (SEND) or health conditions
- Are a young carer
- Who could experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see Section 11)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions
- Whose parent/ carer has expressed an intention to remove them from provision to be provided with elective home education (EHE).

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We know who our pupils are with special educational needs, disabilities, or additional health needs and recognise that they may face additional barriers, that can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration
- Assumptions that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties
- Reluctance to challenge carers (professionals may over empathise with carers because of the perceived stress of caring for a disabled child)
- Disabled children often rely on a wide network of carers to meet their basic needs and therefore the potential risk of exposure to abusive behaviour can be increased
- A disabled child's understanding of abuse
- Lack of choice/ participation
- Isolation.

Children Looked After (CLA)

The most common reason for a child to become looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. We therefore ensure that the appropriate arrangements are in place to support these children and keep them safe from further harm. This includes:

- Appointment of a staff member for CLA (see Important Contacts in Part 2)
- Appropriate staff made aware of a child's looked after status
- Ensure that necessary staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding of the child's needs
- Ensure the child's record contains a clear understanding of their legal status and care arrangements, including the levels of authority delegated to their carer and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility
- Keep contact details of the child's social worker, carer(s) and name and contact details of the virtual schools head for DT to liaise with.
- In addition to the statutory VSH role for LAC, AS2Educate recognises the new non-statutory role supporting children in **kinship care**, ensuring they receive appropriate guidance, oversight, and access to educational and wellbeing resources.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff and Leadership/ Management

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers at AS2Educate and is consistent with national duties outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and the expectations of the County Councils we work with. Our Child Protection (CP) policy and procedures also apply to extended provision and off-site activities.

AS2Educate plays a crucial role in preventative education. This is in the context of a whole-provision approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain, and a culture of zero tolerance of sexism,

misogyny/ misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence/ harassment. This will be underpinned by our:

- Behaviour Policy

Role and Responsibility of all staff, volunteers, supply staff and contractors

All staff at AS2Educate who directly work with children are required to read at least Part One of the current version Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE). Staff will then be required to complete a quiz to test their knowledge.

Translated versions of Part One Keeping Children Safe in Education can be found at <https://lgfl.net/safeguarding/kcsietranslate> and is accessible for all staff, volunteers, parents and carers whose first language may not be English, should they wish to use this.

All staff will be required to:

- Read Part One and Annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2> and review this guidance at least annually.
- Sign a declaration at the beginning of each academic year to say that they have reviewed the above guidance and understand their role.
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents and carers. This includes making parents and carers aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for pupils who are LGBTQIA+ to speak out and share their concerns.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our provision's safeguarding arrangements and systems are explained to staff as part of their induction and thereafter reviewed with staff at least annually. All new staff/ volunteers are given copies of our provision's CP policy and Part One KCSiE (or Annex A, if non-teaching staff) essentially these are the key guidance provided:
- Child Protection Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy/ code of conduct
- The role and identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies
- The Behaviour Policy
- Online safety policy
- Safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- KCSiE advises provision staff who work directly with children must read Annex B, this contains important additional information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues. Staff must follow this Child Protection Policy and speak to the DSL (or a deputy)
- It is crucial that all staff look out for children who may benefit from Early Help along with children in Specific Circumstances (Annex B KCSiE 2025), the Early Help assessment process 'Families First Assessment' and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment

- The process for making referrals to the Local Authority Children’s Social Care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines) See Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf
The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of their home, at provision and online (this is referred to as extra familial harm or contextual safeguarding)
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBTQIA+) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is a member of the staff team.

- The DSL takes lead responsibility for our provision’s child protection and wider safeguarding arrangements. This includes online safety, which now extends to ensuring staff and pupils are aware of risks relating to misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories, as well as the safe and responsible use of emerging technologies such as generative AI. The DSL will also oversee our filtering and monitoring processes on provision devices and networks to keep pupils safe online, making use of the latest https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf and the DfE’s generative AI guidance for schools and colleges alongside self-assessment tools such as Plan technology for your school.
- During term time, the DSL will be available during provision hours 8am – 4:30pm for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Please contact the DSL, Claire Ames on claire.ames@as2educate.co.uk or via telephone 07359 467512.
- In the event that non-urgent matters arise out of provision hours, our DSL can be contacted, if necessary via email anytime claire.ames@as2educate.co.uk
- When the DSL is absent, please contact provision’s Deputy DSL(s) Richard Fihosy, 07399 732761, claire.ames@as2educate.co.uk richard.fihosy@as2educate.co.uk.

The DSL will be given the time, funding, training, resources and support to:

- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters
- Take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings and/or support other staff to do so
- Contribute to the assessment of children
- Refer suspected cases, as appropriate, to the students registered mainstream school, (when dual registered) to the relevant body (Local Authority Children’s Social Care, Channel Programme, Disclosure and Barring Service, and/or Police), and support staff who make such referrals directly

- Have a good understanding of harmful sexual behaviour
- Have a good understanding of the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place at our provision.

The DSL will also:

- Keep the Head of Provision informed of any issues
- Liaise with Local Authority case managers and designated officers for child protection concerns as appropriate
- Discuss the local response to sexual violence and sexual harassment with Police and Local Authority Children’s Social Care colleagues to prepare the provision’s policies
- Be confident that they know what local specialist support is available to support all children involved (including victims and alleged perpetrators) in sexual violence and sexual harassment, and be confident as to how to access this support
- Be aware that children must have an ‘appropriate adult’ to support and help them in the case of a Police investigation or search
- The full responsibilities of the DSL and deputy(s) are set out in their job description. See KCSiE, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf Annex C

The Prevent Lead:

The AS2Educate Prevent Leads are: Claire Ames and Richard Fihosy

All staff will complete bi-annually training on Prevent.

All staff are expected to be alert to indicators of extremism

AS2 Prevent Leads will liaise with the following agencies, in any circumstances believed to be relating to exploitation and extremism:

- Prevent coordinator or Prevent education officer in your local authority (if applicable)
- DfE regional Prevent coordinator
- local policing team
- local authority or safeguarding children partnership
- local authority or police Prevent partners (for access to your counter-terrorism local profile)

Role and Responsibilities of the Head of Provision

The Head of Provision is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- Communicating this policy to parents/ carers when their child joins the provision and via the provision website
- Ensuring that the DSL has appropriate time, funding, training and resources, and that there is always adequate cover if the DSL is absent

- Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer, where appropriate
- Making decisions regarding all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL on this

7. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 does not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. AS2Educate recognises that timely information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children. Staff must never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a safeguarding disclosure, as this may not be in the child's best interests.

The following principles apply to AS2Educate confidentiality agreement:

- Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding.
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.
- If staff need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Staff must never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests.
- If a victim asks the provision not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:
 - Even if a victim doesn't consent to sharing information, staff may still lawfully share it if there is another legal basis under the Data Protection Act that applies.
 - The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children.
 - The DSL must consider the following points:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risk).
 - The basic safeguarding principle is: if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral must be made to Local Authority Children's Social Care where the child resides.
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this must be referred to the Police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the Police remains.
- Regarding anonymity, all staff will:
 - Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system.

- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved.
 - Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims’ identities.
- The government’s [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 ‘golden rules’ for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information.
 - Confidentiality is also addressed in this policy with respect to record keeping in section 12, and allegations of abuse against staff in section 11.

If staff are in any doubt about sharing information, they must speak to the DSL (or deputy).

8. Recognise and Respond to Abuse and Neglect

In this section, any reference to the DSL will mean both lead and all deputy safeguarding leads.

Recognising Abuse and Neglect

All our staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect outlined below. They understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside of our provision, inside and outside of their homes, wholly online or via the use of technology offline. They are also aware that harm to a child can be caused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. We encourage our staff to be professionally curious and mindful of what to look out for as this is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect so that we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection at the earliest opportunity.

Physical Abuse

Definition:	Indicators:
<p>A form of abuse which may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hitting ● Shaking ● Throwing ● Poisoning ● Burning or scalding ● Drowning ● Suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. <p>Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (Fabricated induced illness FII)</p>	<p>Bruises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commonly on the head but also on the ear, neck or soft areas (abdomen, back and buttocks) ● Defensive wounds commonly on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet ● Clusters of bruises on the upper arm, outside of the thigh or on the body ● Bruises with dots of blood under the skin ● A bruised scalp and swollen eyes from hair being pulled violently ● Bruises in the shape of a hand or object ● Bruises on non-mobile babies. <p>Burns or scalds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can be from hot liquids, hot objects, flames, chemicals, or electricity ● These may be on the hands, back, shoulders or buttocks. Scalds in particular may be on lower limbs, both arms and/or both legs ● A clear edge to the burn or scald

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sometimes in the shape of an implement – for example, a circular cigarette burn ● Multiple burns or scalds. <p>Bite marks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Usually oval or circular in shape ● Visible wounds, indentations or bruising from individual teeth. <p>Fractures or broken bones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fractures to the ribs or the leg bones in babies ● Multiple fractures or breaks at different stages of healing ● Risks and vulnerability factors <p>Physical abuse can happen in any family, but babies and children who have a disability are at a higher risk of suffering physical abuse (Jones et al, 2012).</p>
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Emotional Abuse

Definition:	Indicators:
<p>The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person ● Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate ● Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction ● A child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another ● Serious bullying (including cyberbullying) ● Causing a child to feel frightened or in danger ● Exploitation or corruption of children. <p>Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack confidence ● Struggle to control strong emotions ● Struggle to make or maintain relationships ● Display behaviour that is inappropriate to their stage of development (for example not being able to play, developing language late or using language you may not expect of a child their age. <p>Older children may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts ● Seem isolated from their parents ● Lack social skills or have few, if any, friends ● Use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect them to know for their age ● Risk and vulnerability factors ● Children from any background can be at risk of emotional abuse. But some are more vulnerable than others.

<p>it may occur alone. It can be difficult to recognise emotional abuse and children may not always realise they are experiencing it. However, there may be indicators in the way a child behaves and reacts to certain situations.</p>	
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Sexual Abuse

Definition:	Indicators:
<p>Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:</p> <p>Physical contact - including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing</p> <p>Non-contact activities - such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse</p> <p>Online abuse - sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse</p> <p>Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.</p> <p>Child-on-child abuse - the sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff must be aware of it and of their provision policy and procedures for dealing with it.</p>	<p>Not all children will realise they are being sexually abused, particularly if they have been groomed, but there may be physical, behavioural and emotional signs that indicate a child has experienced sexual abuse.</p> <p>Physical indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bruising ● Bleeding ● Discharge ● Pain or soreness in the genital or anal area ● Sexually transmitted infections (Lindon and Webb, 2016) ● Girls who are being sexually abused may become pregnant at a young age. <p>Emotional and behavioural indicators include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being afraid of and/or avoiding a particular person (including a family member or friend) ● Having nightmares or bed-wetting ● Being withdrawn ● Alluding to 'secrets' ● Self-harming ● Running away from home ● Developing eating problems ● Displaying sexualised behaviour or having sexual knowledge that is inappropriate for their stage of development ● Misusing drugs or alcohol.

Neglect

Definition:	Indicators:
<p>The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.</p> <p>Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or 	<p>Neglect can be difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there is a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Poor appearance and hygiene, being smelly or dirty (unkempt) ● Being hungry or not given money for food

<p>abandonment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger • ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment • provide suitable education <p>It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having unwashed clothes, the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter • Health and development problems, regular illness or infections • Anaemia • Body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints • Medical or dental issues • Missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations • Not given the correct medicines • Poor language or social skills.
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Children and young people can be influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family. For example, in provision or college, in the local community, in their peer groups or online. Children and young people may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean that children and young people may encounter multiple risks. Some of these risks, along with other further specific forms of abuse are discussed in more detail in Annex B

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf These include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child abduction and community safety incidents • Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) • Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) • County Lines • Children and the Court system • Children Who Are Absent from Education • Children with family members in prison • Cybercrime • Domestic abuse • Homelessness • Mental health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism • Preventing radicalization • The Prevent Duty • Channel • Sexual violence and Sexual harassment between children in provisions • Serious Violence • So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage) • FGM and the mandatory reporting duty for staff • Forced marriage |
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Responding to Abuse and Neglect

All staff and volunteers must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding concern that meets threshold for referral to Children’s Social Care.

If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

DSLs will make referrals in the following way:

- 1) If the child is at immediate risk of significant harm or likelihood of significant harm they will call Hertfordshire Children’s Services 0300 123 4043, Central Bedfordshire Children’s Services 0300

300 8585, Bedford Borough Children’s Services 01234 718700 and / or police 999 and then complete the request for support form specifying their child protection concerns

- 2) Alternatively, if not an immediate risk but the child is considered to be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm they will complete the request for support form for the relevant borough council, specifying their child protection concerns.. **Anyone can make a referral to Police and/or Children’s Services** therefore, we expect all staff and volunteers in our provision community to act immediately and not delay if they consider a child to be in immediate danger using the pathways below.

For non-DSLs to make a referral to Children’s Social Care:

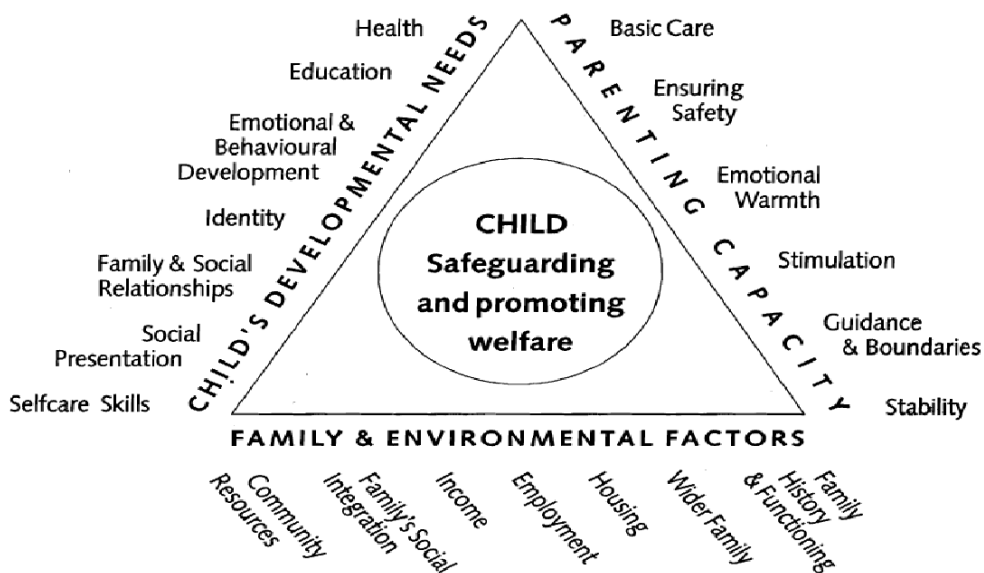
Call the relevant County Council in the table above

To contact the Police:

Call Police on 999 if urgent, if not urgent call 101.

Concerns about a child (not considered to be suffering harm, at risk of suffering harm or in immediate danger)

As per KCSiE (2025), staff “must be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision” (support). Where staff have a concern for a child which does not indicate that they are suffering or likely to suffer immediate harm or in immediate danger they must follow the setting’s internal processes for submitting a Record of Concern. The step-by-step process of doing so is as follows:



Be alert

- Be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect.
- Identify concerns early to prevent escalation.
- Know what systems the school have in place regarding support for safeguarding e.g. induction training, staff behaviour policy / code of conduct and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) .

Question behaviours

- Talk and listen to the views of children, be nonjudgmental.
- Observe any change in behaviours and question any unexplained marks / injuries.
- To raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, refer to the Directors, if the concerns is about the Directors, report to DSL. Utilise whistleblowing procedure.

Ask for help

- Record and share information appropriately with regard to confidentiality.
- If staff members have concerns, raise these with the school's or college's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Responsibility to take appropriate action, do not delay.

Refer

DSP will make referrals to Children's Services, but in an emergency or a genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members can speak directly to Children's Services on 03001234043 Hertfordshire Council
 0300 300 8585 - Central Beds
 01234 718700 - Bedford

Upon receipt of the Record of Concern, the DSL (or deputy DSL) must consult relevant County Council's Continuum of Need or, if needed, seek further consultation to consider an appropriate level of response to take. The DSL (or deputy) must acknowledge the concern and feedback wherever appropriate. Staff must not assume that action has been taken unless they have received feedback from the DSL (or deputy DSL) who responded.

If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff or volunteer

All staff are aware they must be prepared, when possible, as children can disclose spontaneously.

We consider the term 'the child's voice' to represent not only what children say directly, but rather the many ways that children communicate with us, including both verbal and non-verbal communication. The

child's lived experience means seeing and understanding their experiences from their point of view, our staff understand that it is very important to always record exactly what a child has said rather than interpret this from an adult/ their own perspective. AS2Educate cannot and do not assume that all children and their families will have English as their first language nor may a child with SEND have speech or language ability to convey verbally any difficulties they may experience without aids and methods to facilitate their voice. Therefore, our staff give careful consideration to knowing that a child may:

- Not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Not recognise their experiences as harmful
- Feel embarrassed, humiliated, or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers.

All staff at AS2Educate must ensure that no child is ever made to feel that they are 'any trouble' if they need time and space to share their worries with staff.

AS2Educate's culture of safeguarding endorses the following principles of meaningful engagement with children to include:

Listen

- Be patient – a child may be finding it hard to find the words to express themselves. Let them tell their story in their own words
- Do not interrogate – you may 'taint' evidence by asking leading questions or suggesting what may have happened. Maintain your professional curiosity, ask open-ended prompts.

Reassure

- Reassure the child they are not in trouble and that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Do not tell the child they should have told you sooner
- Reassure the child that it is not their fault – victims can often be blamed by their abusers.
- Do not promise confidentiality – if the child asks you to keep it a secret, explain who you need to tell to keep them safe, if appropriate
- Explain to the child that you will have to share the information and explain what may happen next.

Stay Calm

- Try not to panic, be aware of your own reactions and feelings, avoid showing shock, anger, or disgust
- Do not insult the alleged abuser, however frustrated you may privately feel, children can be very protective of people they care about, even if that person is abusing them.

Report

- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Concerns will be added to daily notes, the DSL and/ or DDSL will transfer to CPOMS. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to Children's Social Care and/or the Police directly (see section 8). Prioritise this above all other work.
- Inform the DSL of your actions as soon as possible.

- Do not disclose any information to anyone aside from those within your DSL team, unless you are told to do so by a relevant agency involved in the safeguarding process.

Reporting systems for children

AS2Educate is committed to ensuring that all children feel safe and comfortable to share and report any concerns and/or allegations about their life at home, in the community, online or regarding a member of staff or other children in the provision. As outlined above, all our staff are clear on the importance of listening and supporting children when making disclosures, and the need to reassure them.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when assessing information, considering necessary actions and any subsequent implementation of advice or support.

To achieve this, we have:

- Clear systems in place for children to report abuse, knowing they will be listened to and supported
- Accessible reporting systems which are well promoted and understood by the children so they can easily report concerns via this pathway should they wish
- A clear culture and ethos in our provision that promotes taking concerns seriously and offers children opportunities to safely express their views and any worries they may have.

AS2Educate will ensure that:

- Parents/Carers and students will be given details of DSL and DDSL at their induction
- Posters are based around the provision with DSL and DDSL contact details on.
- Staff have open conversations on a regular basis with students to reinforce that staff are there to support if required with any concerns

Concerns that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has taken place or a child is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) explains that FGM includes 'all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs.'

FGM is illegal in the UK and is considered as a form of child abuse that has significantly harmful and long-lasting consequences. It can also be referred to as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Any staff member who either:

- is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her;
- or observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 (and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth)

Must immediately report this to the Police, personally on 999. This is a mandatory, statutory duty and staff will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. In addition, staff must also discuss the concerns with the DSL to report to Children's Services, as appropriate.

The duty for staff members above does not apply in cases where a pupil is at risk of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. In these circumstances, the staff member must report to the DSL and follow local safeguarding procedures to be taken.

Concerns about extremism

The Prevent duty is concerned with all forms of terrorism and extremism. It also includes some forms of nonviolent extremism (far right and extreme far right groups, religious extremist groups, environmental and animal rights extremism, unclear ideology).

Unless your concerns indicate that the child is at immediate risk of harm or danger, report your concerns to the DSL. In rare circumstances where the DSL may not be available, staff must speak with a Director and/or seek advice from Children's Services, if appropriate. Staff must inform the DSL of their actions as soon as possible.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to.

The DfE also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which all staff call to raise concerns about extremism for a pupil. In non-emergency situations DSLs can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

Concerns about mental health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Poor or deteriorating mental health can also be a safeguarding concern in its own right. Our staff know to be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

If a staff member has a concern about a child's mental health which they consider to also be a safeguarding concern, they must consider if the child is at risk of immediate harm; and if so, must follow steps in in section 8.

If you have a mental health concern about a child that is not also a safeguarding concern, speak to the DSL and Mental Health Lead to agree a course of action.

The Single Point of Access (SPA) Mental Health for Hertfordshire phonenumber is available 24/7 on 0800 6444 101 and can be used when there is an urgent or 'crisis' concern as well as for moderate and non-urgent concerns. The CAMHS (South Bedfordshire and Luton) helpline is 01525 638613, 01525 638614, this can also be used when there is an urgent or 'crisis' concern as well as for moderate and non-urgent concerns

Concerns about child-on-child abuse

At AS2Educate, we know that children can abuse other children. No abuse at AS2Educate will ever be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We are committed to upholding a culture that prevents unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for pupils. All child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

In most circumstances, incidences of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our Provision's Behaviour Policy, but this Child Protection Policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put pupils in the provision at risk
- Is violent
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes).

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- Staff must record the allegation and report to the DSL. Staff must not investigate the matter
- The DSL will assess and if consider the relevant next steps which may include, making a referral to Children's Services as well as the Police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence or the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), if appropriate
- The DSL will consider whether a risk assessment or a safety and support plan would be beneficial for all children involved (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected, with a named person they can talk to if needed. This should include consideration of all aspects and areas of the provision environment and beyond for example off-site activities and provision transport
- The DSL will be committed to engaging the child and their parents/ carers to gain their views and contributions and liaise with other agencies to assess any identified risks, unmet needs and relevant measures or support required.

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the Police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator.

Please see Appendix 3 of this policy and Part Five of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Creating a supportive environment in provision and minimising the risk of child-on-child abuse

We recognise the importance of taking proactive action to minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse, and of creating a supportive environment where victims feel confident in reporting incidents.

To achieve this, we expect all staff to:

- Challenge any form of derogatory or sexualised language or inappropriate behaviour between peers, including requesting or sending sexual images
- Be vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders, for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensure our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensure pupils are able to easily and confidently report abuse using our reporting systems

- Ensure staff reassure victims that they are being taken seriously
- Be alert to reports of sexual violence and/or harassment that may point to environmental or systemic problems that could be addressed by updating policies, processes and the curriculum, or could reflect wider issues in the local area that must be shared with safeguarding partners
- Support children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape or assault by penetration. We will do all we can to make sure the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and any witnesses are not bullied or harassed
- Consider intra-familial harms and any necessary support for siblings following a report of sexual violence and/or harassment.
- Ensure staff are trained to understand:
 - How to recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse, and know how to identify it and respond to reports
 - That even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in provision, it does not mean it is not happening – staff must maintain an attitude of “it could happen here”
 - That if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare, they must act on them immediately rather than wait to be told, and that victims may not always make a direct report. For example:
 - Children can show signs or act in ways they hope adults will notice and react to
 - A child’s friend may report this directly to a staff member or make comments (if they do, staff must be professionally curious)
 - A member of staff may overhear a conversation
 - A child’s behaviour might indicate that something is wrong
 - That certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone because of their vulnerability, disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. That a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy. The important role they have to play in preventing child-on-child abuse and responding where they believe a child may be at risk from it. That they must speak to the DSL if they have any concerns. That social media is likely to play a role in the fall-out from any incident or alleged incident, including the potential contact between the victim, alleged perpetrator(s) and friends from either side.

The DSL will take the lead role in managing any proposed risk by the alleged perpetrator(s) and will provide support at the same time, it is not our intention to villainise children, but it is everyone’s responsibility to uphold the Behaviour Policy and standards within the provision to maintain a safe environment. Such assessments or plans will be robust but sensitive to the individual needs of the children to ensure any identified risk is managed as effectively as possible whilst also supporting them to continue accessing a satisfactory level of education.

Risk management strategies can be put in place while other investigations are going on, e.g. by the Police. Although another agency such as the Police or Children’s Services is or has investigated an incident, it is our duty here at AS2Educate to ensure we identify and implement our own assessment and management of the concerns, informed by the needs of our provision and the children we care for and the advice and outcomes of those agency’s actions. This is to ensure that all children and staff are supported and always protected. We will consider these matters on a case-by-case basis, considering whether:

- Taking action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution – we will liaise with the Police and/or Children’s Services to determine this

- There are circumstances that make it unreasonable or inappropriate for us to reach our own view about what happened while an independent investigation is ongoing.

9. Online Safety and Filtering

We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. This now includes risks linked to misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories, as well as the challenges and opportunities presented by emerging technologies such as generative AI. To address this, our provision aims to:

- Have robust processes (including filtering and monitoring systems) in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff and volunteers, making use of the Department for Education’s Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 guidance, the DfE’s generative AI guidance for schools and colleges, and self-assessment tools such as Plan technology for your school.
- Protect and educate the whole provision community in its safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’)
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for the whole provision community
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns, where appropriate.

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following 4 categories of risk as identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism

Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as pressure from another child(ren), commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes

Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and

Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams. If you feel your pupils, students or staff are at risk, please report it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group ([APWG | Unifying The Global Response To Cybercrime](#)).

To meet our aims and address the risks above, we will educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:

- The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
- Keeping personal information private
- How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
- How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they’re a witness rather than a victim

We will also:

- Train staff, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying, the risks of online radicalisation, and the expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring. All staff members will receive refresher training as required at least once each academic year
- Educate parents/ carers about online safety via our website, communications sent directly to them and during parents' evenings. We will also share clear procedures with them so they know how to raise concerns about online safety
- Make sure staff are aware of any restrictions placed on them with regards to the use of their mobile phone and cameras, for example that:
 - Staff are allowed to bring their personal phones to provision for their own use, but will limit such use to non-contact time when pupils are not present
 - With written permission from Parents/ Carers Staff will only take pictures of students for educational purposes, subject to the evidence required for their qualifications. Pictures will be uploaded to AS2Educate's drive at the end of each day and deleted from staff phones.
- Make all pupils, parents/ carers, staff and volunteers aware that they are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the internet in provision, use of the provision's ICT systems and use of their mobile and smart technology
- Explain the sanctions we will use if a pupil is in breach of our policies on the acceptable use of the internet and mobile phones
- Make sure all staff, pupils and parents/ carers are aware that staff have the power to search pupils' phones, as set out in the DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- Put in place robust filtering and monitoring systems to limit children's exposure to the 4 key categories of risk (content, contact, conduct and commerce) from the provision's IT systems. This will also cover emerging risks such as misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories, and ensure safe use of generative AI technologies. Our approach will be informed by the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf, the DfE's generative AI guidance for schools and colleges, and self-assessment tools such as Plan technology for your school.
- Carry out an annual review of our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our provision community
- Provide regular safeguarding and children protection updates including online safety to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively
- Review the child protection and safeguarding policy, including online safety, annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Signposts to Shore, an online support platform from the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, alongside other safeguarding resources (NSPCC, Childline, CEOP). Shore offers confidential advice, reliable information, practical tools for safe and healthy choices, and specialist signposting to additional services. Staff should be aware of Shore as a recommended safeguarding resource under KCSiE 2025 and consider appropriate referrals or signposting in the child or young person's best interests.

10. Working with Parents and Carers

At AS2Educate where appropriate, we will discuss concerns about a child with their parents or carers. We know parents and carers know their child best and we will always value that often, when concerns emerge, these can easily be resolved with the support of provision and parents/ carers working together.

Although we will always want to be open and transparent with our parents and carers, there may be circumstances where the safety of a child overrides their liberty and rights for this to happen immediately as consent may not be appropriate/ required. For a small number of children, seeking parental consent would not be appropriate if:

- The child would be placed at increased risk of significant harm through the action of gaining this consent
- There would be an impact on a criminal investigation
- A delay in making the referral would impact on the immediate safety of the child.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care team to seek advice when it would be the right time to share information, so that we do not interrupt planned inquiries by Children's Services or the Police.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will normally notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about other children involved, and when. We will work with the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

The DSL will, along with other agencies if there is third party involvement (this will be decided on a case-by-case basis):

- Meet with the victim's parents or carers, with the victim, to discuss what is being put in place to safeguard them, and understand their wishes in terms of what support they may need and how the report will be progressed
- Meet with the alleged perpetrator's parents or carers to discuss support for them, and what is being put in place that will impact them, e.g. moving them out of classes with the victim, and the reason(s) for any decision(s).

11. Managing Allegations About Staff, Provision's Safeguarding Policies & Practice

Concerns that DO meet the harm threshold and require a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

AS2Educate are required to comply with the procedures set out in Hertfordshire, Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough Safeguarding Partnership procedures.

The procedures apply whenever there are suspicions or allegations that a person who works with children in a paid or unpaid capacity (including but not limited to permanent, temporary or agency staff member, contract worker, consultant, volunteer) has in any activity connected with their role:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child; (Harm Threshold)
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against / related to a child; (Criminal Threshold)

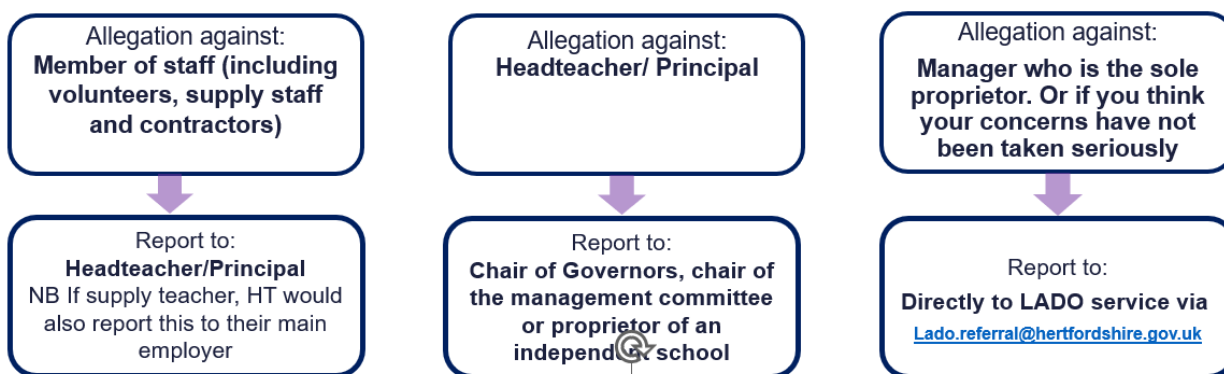
- Behaved toward a child in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm; (Suitability Threshold) *
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (Transferable Risk Threshold)*

Or

- It is discovered that an individual known to have been involved previously in child abuse, is or has been working with children.

* These categories can include behaviour that may have happened outside of an organisation that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children.

All staff and volunteers at AS2Educate know that if they have concerns about a colleague/ member of staff, (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, they must report it urgently as below. This includes individuals or organisations who have used provision premises for running an activity for children, whether or not those children attend our setting.



Upon receipt of the information, the Directors will review whether the allegation/concern meets the LADO threshold giving consideration to our staff code of conduct, managing allegations policy. If necessary, they will complete a LADO referral within one working day.

If after reviewing the guidance and procedures, the Head of Provision considers that the matter does not meet the LADO threshold they may consider that it can be dealt with in line with the provision’s complaints or Low Level Concerns policy.

Concerns that DO NOT meet the harm threshold - Low-Level Concerns (LLC)

As outlined in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education the term ‘low-level’ concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the provision may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the LADO threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a LADO referral.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking inappropriate photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils.

At AS2Educate we have clear codes of conduct and processes in place to deal with any concerns or allegations which do not meet the LADO threshold. Such concerns may arise from suspicion, complaint, safeguarding concerns or allegation from another member of staff, disclosure made by a child, parent or another outside of the provision or pre-employment vetting checks.

Keeping children safe during community activities, after-provision clubs and tuition

As a provider AS2Educate have a legal duty of care to try to ensure our environment is safe for children who visit in addition to those who already attend our setting:

We may receive an allegation or concern relating to an incident that happened when an individual or organisation were using our provision premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). As with any safeguarding allegation, AS2Educate will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures, including informing the LADO where appropriate.

Whistleblowing

At AS2Educate we strive to create a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share any concerns they have about poor or unsafe practice, concerns or allegations against staff or the provision's safeguarding practice and arrangements so they can be addressed appropriately.

Whistleblowing directly to the relevant Borough Council and/or the Police 999 or to the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline 0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk

12. Record Keeping

AS2Educate will hold records confidentially, safely, securely and in line with our records retention schedule.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached, and the outcome.

Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child (either paper recorded or electronically).

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to know/ access them.

Safeguarding records relating to an individual child will be retained for the student until they reach their 25th birthday or 31st birthday if there is an EHCP in place (Information Records Management Society 2022). [IRMS Provisions Toolkit - Information and Records Management Society](#)

Safeguarding records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse were being retained for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA). This has now concluded and the Home Office sent a letter to provisions advising that files no longer needed to be kept indefinitely. However, the recommendations from the inquiry have stated:

Recommendation 17: Access to records The UK government should direct the Information Commissioner's Office to introduce a code of practice on keeping and accessing records which relate to child sexual abuse. The code should require records about child sexual abuse and allegations of child sexual abuse to be kept for 75 years, with appropriate review periods.

The provision will follow the recommendation 17.

Receiving and transferring pupil records to other education provision

If a child for whom the provision has, or has had, safeguarding concerns moves to another provision, the DSL will ensure that their safeguarding information file is forwarded as soon as possible, securely, and separately from the main pupil file.

To allow the new provision/ college to have support in place when the child arrives, this should be within:

- **5 days** for an in-year transfer, or
- **the first 5 days** of the start of a new term.

In addition, if the concerns are significant or complex, and/or social services are involved, the DSL will speak to the DSL of the receiving provision and provide information to enable them to have time to make any necessary preparations to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the child.

Retention, archiving and destruction of records

For records that are not transferred to another provision, for example the child leaves the country or is going to be home educated, we have:

- A clear retention policy
- Secure and appropriate system to archive with restricted access
- We have a written assurance from our providers of our electronic recording systems that all records are maintained securely which includes any archived records.

Storage, retention, and destruction of our child protection files is also made clear in our data management policy.

13. Safeguarding Training and Development

To fulfil our aim of continuous improvement in order to safeguard our pupils, we ensure that learning and development starts at induction. All staff, supply contractors, leadership and management, and governing body/ trustee board, undertake the minimum safeguarding training. We want reassurance for our children and families that all staff are aware of systems within our provision, and have the skills and knowledge to follow our provisions procedures.

Induction

- Child Protection Policy - which must amongst other things include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse
- Behaviour Policy - which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
- Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called a code of conduct) - which must amongst other things include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
- Safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods and
- Role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)
- Copies of/ given links to Part One KCSiE 2025 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf (What provision and college staff must know and do) or Annex A (condensed version for volunteers and non-teaching staff if appropriate).

Safeguarding children training for all staff and senior leadership

This training will be regularly updated and will:

- Be integrated, aligned and considered as part of the whole-provision safeguarding approach and wider staff training, and curriculum planning
- Be in line with the quality and standards expected from the Councils we work with
- Include online safety, ensuring staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring, as well as emerging risks such as misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. Training will also cover the safe and responsible use of generative AI in education, guided by the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and DfE's generative AI guidance for schools and colleges.
- Have regard to the Staff' Standards (and TA regulations) and code of conduct to support the expectation that all staff and those that work with children in regulated activity can confidently:
 - Manage our pupils' behaviour effectively to ensure a positive and safe environment
 - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, especially pupils with protected characters and those that are on any type of plan to support their needs.

In addition, all staff will have training that raises awareness of children susceptible to extra familial harm such as radicalisation which our provision adopts the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, and Prevent duty to enable us to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

Our provision's current safeguarding training schedule is as follows:

All staff, including DSL/ deputy(s) and whole provision staff must attend safeguarding children training every 3 years

- Our provision's DSL will also provide an annual update to all staff, which includes online safety
- Throughout a given academic year, our provision's DSL provides for all staff relevant **updates** as changes occur to keep abreast of our whole provision approach and thus supporting staff to fulfil their role as set out in Part One of KCSiE
- We value our provision's **volunteer's** cohort; they play a very important part in our provision to work alongside staff to support and protect our pupils. We anticipate that all volunteers share our whole provision approach and are willing to receive appropriate training and support from our staff.
- All staff will undertake Prevent and FGM training

DSL and Deputy(s)

- The DSL and (deputy) will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years
- In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually (for example, through e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments)
- It is desired that our DSL and (deputy) when capacity permits, undertakes multi-agency training, this provides opportunities to develop further their knowledge and skills to work with a wide range of safeguarding themes that our children and families can be affected by locally.

Headstaff, Principals and Proprietors

The Head of Provision is ultimately responsible for safeguarding children from adults who work or volunteer with children and are either unsuitable or pose a risk to children, therefore it is highly recommended that **Managing Concerns and Allegations** training is undertaken in order to maintain an ongoing vigilance of safe practice and culture within the provision.

Safe Recruitment – interview panels

At least one person conducting any interview for a post at the provision will have undertaken safer recruitment training. This training will cover, as a minimum, the contents of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and will be in line with local safeguarding procedures. It will also reflect the latest statutory guidance, including the updated Information Commissioner's Employment Practices Code. More information can be found in our Safer Recruitment Policy, which incorporates these updates.

14. Quality Assurance, Improvement and Practice

AS2Educate endeavours at all times to provide an education and learning where children feel safe and are kept safe by all staff. One way we review and monitor our practice is through auditing: it is important that we are aware of the level of our provision's compliance to key guidance such as KSCiE. We want to be open, transparent and reassure all our stakeholders, including regulators, what we are proud of and

what we need to strengthen to meet our own ambitions for standards. It is therefore standard practice that we factor in on-going auditing schedule objectivity and scrutiny by AS2Educate Leadership Team and all staff, children, students and their parents and carers.

15. Additional Associated Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

- Anti-bullying policy
- Anti Racism Policy
- Pupil Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Grievance Policy
- Health and Safety
- Accessibility plan/statements
- Recruitment
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity & Equalities Statement incorporated.
- Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff
- First Aid Policy
- Policy for meeting basic needs of clients
- Acceptable use policy for IT
- Social networking policy for all adults
- Photographic and marketing policy / permissions
- GDPR and Data Protection
- Policy regarding off-site visits
- Disciplinary
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy
- E-Safety Policy

Appendix 1: Declaration for whole provision staff

Declaration for whole provision staff to verify they have read and understood the provision’s Child Protection Policy and other key guidance

Provision/ College name: AS2Educate

Academic Year: September 2025/2026

Return declaration to: Claire Ames and Richard Fihosy by: Date Friday 4th October 24

Please take the time to read the following Child Protection Policy and associated parts of statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE 2025. Please thereafter verify that you have understand your role and responsibilities in relation to these.

Statutory Guidance and Provision’s Child Protection Policy	Date and Verification When Completed
1. The provision’s Child Protection Policy (Arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in your provision)	
2. Part One of KCSiE 2025 (or Annex A is a condensed version of Part One and for non-teaching staff) Safeguarding information for all staff, what you must know and do to safeguard children	
3. Annex B (Specific Safeguarding issues) KCSiE 2025	
4. Having read the above guidance, I understand my role and responsibilities to comply with these	I agree or I do not agree and require further support from DSL
5. I am aware of who my provision’s DSL and Deputy(s) for safeguarding are	
6. If I need support or I am worried about the wellbeing and safety of a child(ren) or suspect they are being harmed, I have the means to report this and/or discuss any concerns with the DSL/ DDSL team in my provision	I agree or I do not agree and require further support from DSL
7. I know that further guidance, together with copies of the policies mentioned above, are available at:	In the staff handbook folder in the main office and accessible on the shared staff drive.

Declaration:

I have read my provision’s Child Protection Policy and the associated guidance as above and agree that I understand my role and responsibilities.

Date:

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Issues and Specific Forms of Abuse

Children occupy all types of places and spaces when socialising, either directly with others or online. Some of these contextual environments away from their home can present additional risks of harm and exploitation that could impact on their welfare and wellbeing. Preventative safeguarding is about having arrangements in place so that whole provision staff are made aware of these and know the signs that a child is susceptible or already being impacted on. The aim of your provision safeguarding arrangements is to identify those children so that early help support for the child and, where applicable, their family can be offered early help support.

All staff play an important part in your whole provision approach to report any concern to your provision’s DSL or deputies without delay.

Safeguarding Issues, Child-on-child abuse	Safeguarding descriptor, links for further learning
Bullying	<p>Including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.</p> <p>Cyber Aware - NCSC.GOV.UK Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying NSPCC Cyberbullying Guidance Childnet</p>
Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children	<p>Sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’.</p> <p>Teenage Relationship Abuse The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk) 2008 Expect Respect LeafletEDITED-2.pdf (womensaid.org.uk) Controlling-Behaviour-in-Relationships-talking-to-young-people-about-healthy-relationships.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)</p>
Physical abuse	<p>Such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).</p> <p>No place for bullying.doc (live.com) How to talk to your children about bullying UNICEF</p>
Sexual violence	<p>Such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence) sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse causing someone to engage in sexual activity without</p>

	<p>consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.</p> <p>Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse NSPCC Learning harmful-sexual-behaviour-pathway-2021.docx (live.com) brooks traffic light tool - Search (bing.com) harmful-sexual-behaviour-strategy-2021-23.docx (live.com) Review of sexual abuse in provisions and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Overview Harmful sexual behaviour among children and young people Guidance NICE</p>
Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos	<p>Also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery.</p> <p>Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Upskirting	<p>This typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.</p> <p>Upskirting: know your rights https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-know-your-rights#:~:text=It's%20important%20to%20know%20your,addresses%20or%20photos.</p>
Initiation/ hazing type violence and rituals	<p>This could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element.</p> <p>Who, what, why: Why is hazing so common? - BBC News</p>
	<p>Please note: CSE, CCE, domestic violence, mental FGM, forced marriage, serious violence are set out below.</p>

Specific Forms of Abuse in Annex B of KCSiE, 2025	Safeguarding descriptor and links for further learning
Child Abduction and community safety incidents	<p>Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.</p> <p>Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.</p> <p>As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.</p>

	<p>It is important that lessons focus on building children’s confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: https://www.actionagainstabduction.org/ and Home - Clever Never Goes</p>
<p>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)</p>	<p>We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.</p> <p>Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim.</p> <p>Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.</p> <p>Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions • associate with other children involved in exploitation • suffer from changes in emotional well-being • misuse alcohol and other drugs • go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and • regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education. <p>Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.</p> <p>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and • suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant. <p>Further information on signs of a child’s involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners</p>
<p>County Lines</p>	<p>County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are</p>

	<p>exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.</p> <p>Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes.</p> <p>Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.</p> <p>A number of the indicators for CCE and CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from • their home • have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime) • are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, • handing over and collecting money for drugs • are exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection • are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a ‘trap • house or cuckooing’ or hotel room where there is drug activity • owe a ‘debt bond’ to their exploiters • have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing. <p>Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals. https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/county-lines-toolkit</p>
<p>Children and the Court System</p>	<p>Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. There are two age appropriate guides to support children 5-11-year olds and 12-17 year olds.</p> <p>The guides explain each step of the process, support and special measures that are available. There are diagrams illustrating the courtroom structure and the use of video links is explained.</p>

	<p>Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online <i>child arrangements information tool</i> https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/negotiating-between-parents with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-5-to-11-year-olds</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds</p> <p>https://helpwithchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/</p>
Children who are absent from education	<p>All staff must be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and Children Who Are Absent from Education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school or college's unauthorised absence procedures and Children Who Are Absent from Education education procedures.</p>
Children missing from home	<p>Use provision's CP procedures to escalate to Children's Services/ Police</p>
Children with family members in prison	<p>Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children.</p> <p>https://www.nicco.org.uk/</p>
Cybercrime	<p>Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer). Cyber-dependent crimes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded • 'Denial of Service' (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and, • making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

	<p>Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime.</p> <p>If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), must consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.</p> <p>Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover ‘cyber-enabled’ crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.</p> <p>Additional advice can be found at: Cyber Choices, ‘NPCC- When to call the Police’ and National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK. https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/cyber-choices https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse (DA)</p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be “personally connected” (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).</p> <p>Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children.</p> <p>All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.</p> <p>Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as</p>

‘teenage relationship abuse’. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of ‘domestic abuse’ (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures must be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators must be offered support.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy)) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child’s circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child’s needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools must make a referral to local authority children’s social care if they are concerned about a child’s welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the

Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8:00 to 13:00, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how

they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms Effects <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children <https://refuge.org.uk/what-is-domestic-abuse/>
- Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives <https://safelives.org.uk/research-policy-library/safe-young-lives-report/>
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-get->

	<p>help-for-specific-needs-or-situations/domestic-abuse-specialist-sources-of-support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home : Operation Encompass (includes information for schools on the impact of domestic abuse on children) https://www.operationencompass.org/
<p>Homelessness</p>	<p>Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child’s welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) must be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority must be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and must not, replace a referral into local authority children’s social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.</p> <p>The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.</p> <p>In most cases school and college staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. However, it should also be recognised in some cases 16- and 17-year-olds could be living independently from their parents or guardians, for example through their exclusion from the family home, and will require a different level of intervention and support. Local authority children’s social care will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) must ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child’s circumstances. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-bill-policy-factsheets.</p>
<p>Mental Health</p>	<p>Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children’s experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, attendance and progress at school.</p>

	<p>More information can be found in the Mental health and behaviour in schools guidance, colleges may also wish to follow this guidance as best practice. Public Health England. has produced a range of resources to support secondary school teachers to promote positive health, wellbeing and resilience among children. See Every Mind Matters for links to all materials and lesson plans.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2 https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/school-zone/</p>
<p>Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism</p>	<p>Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs.</p> <p>Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims</p>
<p>The Prevent duty/ Preventing Radicalisation and Channel</p>	<p>Note: This preventing radicalisation section remains under review, following the publication of a new definition of extremism on the 14 March 2025.</p> <p>Children may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk must be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.</p> <p>Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.</p> <p>Radicalisation is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.</p> <p>Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate</p> <p>149Public Health England: has now been replaced by the UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), which is part of the Department of Health and Social Care, and by the UK Health Security Agency. However, the branding remains unchanged.</p> <p>150 As defined in the Government’s Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.</p> <p>151 As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents</p>

	<p>the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.</p> <p>Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.</p> <p>It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff must be alert to changes in children’s behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff must use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-referral-to-prevent</p>
<p>The Prevent duty</p>	<p>All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.</p> <p>The Prevent duty must be seen as part of schools’ and colleges’ wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in education settings must familiarise themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales, especially paragraphs 141-210, which are specifically concerned with education (and also covers childcare). The guidance is set out in terms of three general themes: leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments.</p> <p>The school or college’s designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) must be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance</p>
<p>Channel</p>	<p>Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are assessed and may be passed to a multiagency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether</p> <p>152 Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (legislation.gov.uk) 153 “Terrorism” for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).</p> <p>they are at risk of being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from the school or college may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual will be required to provide their consent before any support delivered through the programme is provided.</p> <p>The designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) must consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new</p>

school or college to continue supporting victims of abuse or those who are currently receiving support through the 'Channel' programme and have that support in place for when the child arrives.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at: Channel guidance and Channel training from the Home Office.

Additional support

The Department has published further advice for those working in education settings with

safeguarding responsibilities on the Prevent duty.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance> The advice is intended to complement the Prevent guidance and signposts to other sources of advice and support.

The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:

- Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty. <https://www.support-people-susceptible-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/portal#channel-or-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-course>
- Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-prevent-duty-safeguarding-learners-vulnerable-to-radicalisation>
- Channel awareness e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel. <https://www.support-people-susceptible-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/>

Educate Against Hate, is a government website designed to support school and college teachers and leaders to help them safeguard their students from radicalisation and extremism. The platform provides free information and resources to help staff identify and address the risks, as well as build resilience to radicalisation. <https://www.educateagainsthate.com/>

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF)

hosts the Prevent for FE and Training. This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings to comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals. <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/professional-development/safeguarding-prevent/legislation-guidance-resources/>

The Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation (etfoundation.co.uk) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and

	<p>responsibilities under the duty. https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/professional-development/safeguarding-prevent/</p> <p>London Grid for Learning has also produced useful resources on Prevent (Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning (lgfl.net). https://lgfl.net/Safeguarding/TypesOfHarm/Prevent?s=13</p>
<p>Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in provisions and colleges</p>	<p>Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex from primary to secondary stage and into colleges. It can also occur online. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment and will be exacerbated if the alleged perpetrator(s) attends the same school or college. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.</p> <p>It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. Detailed advice is available in Part five of this guidance. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf</p>
<p>Serious Violence</p>	<p>There are a number of indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased absence from school • a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups • a significant decline in performance • signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries • unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation. <p>The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being male • having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school • having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. <p>A fuller list of risk factors can be found in the Home Office’s Serious Violence Strategy. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf</p>

	<p>Professionals must also be aware that violence can often peak in the hours just before or just after school, when pupils are travelling to and from school. These times can be particularly risky for young people involved in serious violence.</p> <p>Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office’s Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit sets out the evidence for what works in preventing young people from becoming involved in violence. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit/</p> <p>Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found here. As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined up approach to young people across the risk spectrum. https://www.gov.uk/government/news/355m-to-support-young-people-at-risk-of-involvement-in-serious-violence</p> <p>Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill</p> <p>The Duty is not intended to replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties. Local partners may choose to meet the requirements of the Duty through existing multi-agency structures, such as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, providing the correct set of partners are involved.</p>
<p>Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) So-called ‘honour’ based abuse (includes both Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)</p>	<p>So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving ‘honour’ often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and must be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all</p>

agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child who might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they must speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). As appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with the police and local authority children’s social care. Where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers¹⁵⁴ that requires a different approach (see below).

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases may face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at: [Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information](#).

¹⁵⁴ Under Section 5B(11)(a) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, “teacher” means, in relation to England, a person within section 141A(1) of the Education Act 2002 (persons employed or engaged to carry out teaching work at schools and other institutions in England).

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.¹⁵⁵ Unless the teacher has good reason not to, they must still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college’s designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) and involve local authority children’s social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers must follow local safeguarding procedures. The following is a useful summary of the FGM mandatory reporting duty: FGM Fact Sheet.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf

	<p>Further information can be found in the Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation and the FGM resource pack particularly section 13. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack</p>
<p>Forced Marriage</p>	<p>Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.</p> <p>The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has created: Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage (chapter 8 provides guidance on the role of schools and colleges) and, Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage, which can both be found at The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) School and college staff can contact the Forced Marriage Unit if they need advice or information: Contact: 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fndo.gov.uk.</p> <p>In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial ‘marriages’ as well as legal marriages.</p>

Next Steps: Implementation of KCSiE 2025 Updates

1. Audit all safeguarding-related documents and policies (DSL handbooks, online safety policy, RSHE curriculum, staff training materials, website safeguarding content) to ensure consistency.
2. Update staff training: generative AI risks, misinformation/disinformation, Shore Space awareness.
3. Strengthen Alternative Provision due diligence processes.
4. Update RSHE planning for statutory changes from September 2026.
5. Communicate safeguarding changes to staff, governors, parents, and carers.
6. Update safer recruitment procedures per revised terminology.
7. Review and evidence annual filtering and monitoring effectiveness.