

# **Keeping Children Safe in Education Consultation 2026**

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An **extra 25 pages** of guidance!!!



# Alignment to **WT26**

All staff should be aware of the process for community-based Family Help assessments

- Targeted early help
- s17 Child in need
- Child protection
- s31 & s20 Child in care
- Disabled children
- Youth secure support
- Practice Guide to CP Process Training



HM Government

## **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**

**A guide to multi-agency working  
to help, protect and promote the welfare  
of children**

**???** 2026

# Alignment to **WT26**

## **Family help:**

- Community based early help
- Targeted early help

## **Qualified lead practitioners**

## **Information sharing**



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## **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**

A guide to multi-agency working  
to help, protect and promote the welfare  
of children

**???** 2026

# Definitions

- Children **require support** where...
  - They are pregnant or a parent themselves
  - They exhibit early signs of abusive, violent or harmful behaviours
- **Teenage relationship abuse** - physical, sexual, emotional abuse and stalking
- **Young carers** – early identification and effective work
- **SEND/health issues** – may not understand what is happening, may receive intimate care. DSL should consider safeguarding in event of a clinical incident – more information on our training

# Child on child abuse

- Now includes
  - harassment & violence
  - serious physical assault and harm
  - threat of harm with a weapon
  - is a risk to both victim and alleged perpetrator
  - gendered nature – more likely (but not always) boys to girls
- Staff responsibility to report to DSL whether on or off site
- Focus in on times of “highest risk”
- Strong link to misogyny and culture
- Preventable, with timely, evidence based support



## Nudes or semi-nudes **redefined...**



Self-generated intimate images and/or videos including those generated using AI e.g. deepfakes



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# Definitions

- **emotional abuse** indicators now include verbal abuse such as persistent criticism, belittling or name calling
- **sexual abuse** - correction around the indicators of assault by penetration, removing oral sex and adding penetration by an object
- Recognition of impact of **family imprisonment** on absence, exclusion, mental ill health, substance misuse and ETE
- So-called honour-based abuse has been renamed in the guidance to **Honour or faith-based abuse**

# Alternative provision

- New voluntary standards last August
- LAs may use to build a register of suitable AP
- Students remain responsibility of the school where they are on roll
- Necessary actions, due diligence & checks to ensure meeting need
- Quality Assurance of Alternative Provision course



## Non-school alternative provision

Voluntary national standards

August 2025

## Section 49a of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a legal requirement on police forces to share Operation Encompass Notifications with schools and other educational establishments.

In the House of Lords Earl Howe stated: *"By enshrining the scheme in law, we can ensure that it is consistently applied across all forces. This will help improve early intervention and enable the most vulnerable children to be safeguarded from the harms of domestic abuse."*

[OPERATION ENCOMPASS STATUTORY GUIDANCE](#)

## FREE NATIONAL KEY ADULT OPERATION ENCOMPASS TRAINING

This training is CPD accredited and should be completed by all professionals receiving Operation Encompass notifications. All those working with children including school governors can also undertake this training.

[MORE](#)

Join the  
**53,648**  
Operation Encompass  
graduates

# allegations

- Duty on head teacher to “consider whether to make a referral to the LADO”
- Expanded guidance to cover trainee teachers in wake of some serious allegations – follow same route as supply teachers

# preventative education

Will now also cover

- Racism
- Derogatory behaviour
- Other forms of physical violence and conflict

# mobile phones

- Schools mobile phone-free environments by default
- implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day
- headteachers to decide how best to achieve this within their own unique contexts
- links to case studies



### Contents

#### About this guidance

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### About this guidance

This publication provides guidance to individual schools and trusts on how to implement a policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

This non-statutory guidance should be considered alongside the [behaviour in schools guidance](#) which supports schools in establishing calm, safe and supportive environments conducive to teaching, and keeping children safe in education. This guidance should not be taken as a complete or definitive statement of the law nor as a substitute for the relevant legislation. Legal advice should be sought as appropriate.

Where the text uses the word parent it should be read as inclusive of carers and any person with parental responsibility.

When taking this guidance into consideration, references to mobile phones should also be taken to refer to other communications and smart technology which the school has decided to include in their policy.

### Prohibiting the use of mobile phones in school

All schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default; anything other than this should be by exception only.

All schools must have a [behaviour policy](#) which is aligned with the school's legal duties and standards relating to the welfare of children. This is essential in establishing and maintaining high standards of behaviour ensuring that the school is a calm and safe environment for all pupils and staff. As part of this policy, schools should develop a mobile phone policy that prohibits the use of mobile phones and other smart technology with similar functionality to mobile phones (for example the ability to send and/or receive notifications or messages via mobile phone networks or the ability to record audio and/or video) throughout the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

Where schools have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme to facilitate the use of laptops or tablets for learning, such devices should be used in accordance with the school's BYOD policy and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

# restrictive interventions

- Duties on recording & reporting use of force and seclusion
- Clarifies use of reasonable force
- Provides advice on seclusion and on minimising the use of restrictive intervention
- Provides extra advice for students with SEND
- Places responsibilities on school staff, governing bodies and proprietors
- In force from April – **free webinar**



## Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools

Guidance for schools in England

April 2026

# online safety

- **New policies coming**, including through EYFS & WT26
- **age and stage appropriate teaching** should be offered around “understanding online harms such as sharing images, the prevalence of deepfakes, pornography and misogynistic influencers and when and where to seek help”
- Cybercrime, extreme sexual or physical violence, simulated harmful online AI interactions and making, sending or receiving self-generated intimate images using AI **added to areas of concern** – a general focus throughout on AI
- Governors to review filtering & monitoring at least once a year, with log kept of all devices in all relevant locations



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# exploitation

- Awareness raising for all staff around linkages between financial exploitation, modern slavery, organised networks, CCE, CSE and County Lines
- Suspicions children have been moved for the purpose of exploitation may constitute modern slavery, so should lead to both modern slavery (NRM) and child protection referrals
- Where young people have been exploited they should be treated as victims (the reference to them potentially being offenders has been removed)
- Reference to Independent Child Trafficking Guardians for young people who have been trafficked



## **National Audit on Group-Based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

**Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB  
June 2025**

# serious **violence**

- Staff should report suspicions someone is carrying a weapon to DSL
- DSL must assess risk and take appropriate action
- Disrupted education, exclusion, time in alternative provision, and offending history all contribute to this risk
- Schools have a role in intervening early using “teachable moments” following emergent issues
- Schools should listen to students and staff and understand when and where serious violence may occur. Multi-agency, collective response



# HSB, sexual harassment and/or violence

- Substantially rewritten and a recurring focus throughout
- Very much approached through lens of continuum
- Acknowledges escalatory nature of misogyny
- expands on the links to training, supporting preventative education, the policy framework and whole school approach
- **Safeguarding Network** have training and elearning on this area for schools and colleges

# mental health

- links between mental health and self-harm, eating disorder, suicidal ideation and children making plans to end their life are made explicit
- First time suicide mentioned in KCSiE – staff well placed to note signs
- Specific expectation is placed on staff to call 999, 111 or take the young person to A&E if they feel a child is in danger
- Staff have a role in:
  - Promoting good mental wellbeing and preventing the onset of mental illness.
  - Observing pupils and identifying early those who may be experiencing mental health problems or being at risk of developing one.
  - Ensuring early targeted support is provided, and
  - Liaison with/referral to specialist services where needed.

# children who are questioning their **gender**

- Guidance was expected to be standalone but added to KCSiE
- Lots of detail around the range of factors young people may be experiencing
- Advises schools to avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes, maintain flexibility and consider whether they should set out steps in how to respond.
- Schools should not initiate any action around social transition until decision has been made in consultation with parents/carers
- Be sensitive and patient in discussions with children, but challenge bullying and respect religion and beliefs

# children who are questioning their **gender**

Use following principles:

- Schools and colleges have statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.
- Parents and carers should be actively involved and their views treated with importance.
- Accommodating social transition is an active intervention so schools and colleges should take a very careful approach.
- Schools and colleges should comply with obligations under the Equality Act
- and Human Rights Act when considering requests for support with social transition.

# children who are questioning their **gender**

Guidance states:

- Use names rather than pronouns
- Staff should be aware of biological sex
- Not biological sex accurately wherever recorded
- Children may not use toilets designated for the opposite biological sex,
- Separate toilet facilities for boys and girls over eight years old
- Self-contained toilets must open onto communal areas with rationale recorded
- Consider providing alternative toilet facility
- Children in Y7+ not to undress in front of one another
- If a young person does not want to use changing areas for biological sex, consider alternatives
- Guidance on sport
- Guidance on boarding and residential
- If young person 'living in stealth' involve the DSL

# safer recruitment

- Flow chart before paragraph 320 on criminal record checks has been improved
- Reminder that applicants can join DBS updates service from point of application until 30 days from issue date
- Types of visitors to schools clarified in para 369
- Shift from 'online search' at shortlisting to 'search (via an online search engine)'. Concerns raised by some that this is ineffective
- Single central record template

|  | <b>Check completed?</b> | <b>Date checked</b> | <b>Additional details</b> |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Identity check</b>  | Yes                     | 12/12/2025          | Joe Bloggs, caretaker     |
| <b>Standalone children's barred list</b>                       | Yes                     | 12/12/2025          | Not applicable            |
| <b>Enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list)</b>        | Yes                     | 12/12/2025          | 1531467                   |
| <b>Professional qualifications</b>                             | No                      | -                   | -                         |
| <b>Right to work in the UK</b>                                 | Yes                     | 12/12/2025          | Not applicable            |
| <b>Overseas checks on people who have lived outside the UK</b> | No                      | -                   | -                         |
| <b>Prohibition from teaching</b>                               | Yes                     | 12/12/2025          | Not applicable            |
| <b>Section 128 direction</b>                                   | Yes                     | 12/12/2025          | Not applicable            |

# role of **DSL**

- Contact arrangements must survive the DSL being on leave
- Robust cover arrangements should be in place
- Confidential, shared safeguarding inbox
- DSLs must have “appropriate skills & experience”
- Reinforces that training for DDSLs at same level as DSL
- **Transitions:** It is “good practice for a conversation to take place” between the DSLs where there are concerns, and where something may impact on safety of pupil or others information should be shared in advance.

**Role of DSLs...** add your comments in the chat beginning with the word in capitals...

- REWARD: What is the most rewarding part of your role?
- BETTER: What would make your role even better?
- IMPROVE: If you could change one thing to improve support for DSL/DDSLs, what would it be?



# Additional feedback

DfE are seeking more information on a few areas they are considering enhancing in the guidance



**Please add your comments about KCSiE** – begin your sentence with the word in capitals

HELPFUL: What aspects of KCSiE do you find most helpful in supporting safeguarding practice?

LEAST: What aspects of KCSiE do you find least helpful or most challenging?

MISSING: Is there anything missing from KCSiE that would help you safeguard children more effectively?



# And **finally...**

- If you're already a member, what do we do already that helps the most?
- What else can Safeguarding Network do to help?

