



AUTUMN 2026

Safeguarding Matters

In this issue:

Stalking

Gender stereotyping

Recording safeguarding concerns: what makes
a good CPOMS entry?



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Editorial



I hope you all had a wonderful summer break and were able to enjoy some well-deserved rest and downtime.

As we begin the new academic year, I would like to thank those of you who have already completed the annual 157/175 safeguarding audit, as well as those currently working towards the 30 September deadline. The audit provides Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP) and the Education and Inclusion Service with valuable information about areas of strength across Hampshire schools, alongside areas where additional support or guidance may be welcomed.

Over the coming weeks, I will be contacting some schools to explore opportunities to meet with safeguarding and senior leadership teams and identify examples of effective practice. Following these visits, I will publish a report summarising the key findings.

In this edition of *Safeguarding Matters*, I have included an article outlining learning from last year's safeguarding audit good practice visits, which focused on restrictive physical intervention and, more broadly, relational practice, de-escalation, co-regulation and inclusion.

The article highlights a range of successful strategies and approaches, and I would like to thank the schools and settings that were willing to share their excellent work.

Several articles also reflect changes within *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE) and areas that have received greater emphasis this year. In response to the inclusion of stalking within KCSIE's discussion of teenage relationship abuse, one article explores what stalking is, the signs to look out for, and how schools can support both victims and perpetrators to challenge and prevent harmful behaviours.

This edition also includes an article on cybercrime, outlining what it is, the associated risks, and, most importantly, how we can educate and support children and young people to prevent their involvement in cybercrime-related activity.

During the last academic year, a number of schools contacted me seeking resources and guidance relating to misogyny, the manosphere and toxic masculinity. Misogyny is referenced more extensively in KCSIE 2026 and is identified as being linked to harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). In response, this edition includes an article on gender stereotyping and its limiting impact on both girls and boys. While not focused exclusively on misogyny, the article explores the links between gender stereotypes and the harmful attitudes and influences often associated with the manosphere.

As record-keeping remains a critical aspect of safeguarding practice and is routinely considered during Ofsted inspections and external reviews, I have also included an article on CPOMS (equally applicable to other recording platforms) entitled *What good looks like*. The article considers how we can promote consistency and high standards in safeguarding recording and reporting systems.

Finally, there are contributions from Pol-Ed, the NSPCC and Adults' Services, offering further information, resources and signposting.

HIAS curriculum update

Hopefully, you are all on the distribution list that provides you with regular updates around current safeguarding issues. If you do not receive these please contact me and I will add you to the list.

It only remains for me to wish you every success for the new term and academic year. I hope you achieve all you set out to accomplish and enjoy a rewarding and successful year ahead.

Best wishes

Cindy Pritchard

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HSCP Education Sub Group meeting notes – June 2026

Each half term, the HSCP Education Sub Group meets to discuss safeguarding matters pertaining to schools and settings from early years to colleges. The panel is chaired by Mark Kingswood (County Education Manager – Early Intervention and Vulnerable Children) and consists of representatives from education, health, HSCP, Children's Services, the Learning and Development Team, and the Education and Inclusion Team. At each meeting, a range of speakers attend to provide updates on their particular areas and various aspects are discussed. This article summarises the areas discussed in the June 2026 meeting.

Voice of the child – Early Years

Presented by Sarah Sole (Little World Nurseries) and Gail Young Evans (St Clare's Pre-School)

- This piece of work has focussed on children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) needs, complex needs, children who are non-verbal and children for whom English is an additional language.
- There has been a significant rise in children within these groups, with many currently relying heavily on parents for communication.
- Moving forward, the aim is increasingly about giving each child a voice and developing communication strategies, ensuring staff are trained to implement them, and equipping children with the skills they need to communicate independently and confidently within early years settings.
- There are a range of strategies to support with this including Makaton, visual aids and the use of visual objects of reference.
- Other strategies include providing simplified choices and options, supported by visual aids and choice boards for activities such as snacks, lunch and daily routines, enabling children to express their preferences throughout the day.
- Additionally, staff try to promote every child's voice in relation to democracy, although this can be challenging. Children are also involved in curriculum planning by offering choices about what they would like to learn, always supported with visual resources.
- To support children's voices in relation to wellbeing and emotions tools such as worry monsters and zones of regulation are used so that children can identify and communicate how they are feeling.
- Quiet sensory areas are available for children who may feel overwhelmed.
- Knowledge of the child is important, together with close partnerships with parents, and continued development of supportive communication aids to ensure every child has a voice.
- The voice of the child can also be captured in relation to their community and local area; this is done through group times and carpet sessions where children are encouraged to participate in 'show and tell' activities. These discussions allow them to talk about what they have done at the weekend and where they have been.
- Children are regularly taken on walks within the local community which provides opportunities to talk about what they can see and hear in their environment, often allowing children to choose where they would like to

go. Conversation and photographs from these experiences are shared with parents and displayed within the setting for the children to reflect on.

- Snack and mealtimes are also used as social opportunities to encourage conversation.
- Within settings, including the baby room, there are family and community boards with photos of children's families and familiar places in the local area. These support children in talking about their experiences, what they have done, and where they have been. Overall, the focus is on developing the children's understanding of the community and what it is.

Helpful links

- Resources and Research – Hampshire SCP www.hampshirescp.org.uk/professionals/toolkits/neglect-toolkit/increased-vulnerabilities/children-with-additional-needs-including-complex-needs-and-disabilities/children-with-additional-needs-including-complex-needs-and-disabilities-2/
- Practical tools – Hampshire SCP www.hampshirescp.org.uk/professionals/toolkits/neglect-toolkit/increased-vulnerabilities/children-with-additional-needs-including-complex-needs-and-disabilities/children-with-additional-needs-including-complex-needs-and-disabilities/.

Section 157/175 report

Presented by Cindy Pritchard

*Further information on good practice in schools in terms of relational practice, inclusion, co-regulation and de-escalation which came from this report are provided in a separate article.

- The annual Section 157/175 safeguarding audit is completed by all schools and education settings between June and September each year. For 2025, 585 schools submitted returns. A quality assurance process is then carried out, with visits undertaken to a small selection of settings in the county area, with a particular focus this year on the use of physical intervention, de-escalation and relational practice.
- A brief overview of the annual questions posed to schools was provided, including additional questions introduced this year. The majority of schools reported full compliance, while a smaller number indicated that certain areas were either not met or only partially met. In these instances, schools were contacted and offered support.
- An overview of the section around physical intervention noted that:
 - a 355 indicated that RPI had been used in the academic year 2024-2025. 230 said it had not
 - b a range of training providers (approx. 15) had been used to deliver training to staff with the main ones being Team Teach, PBS, HEP and Price
 - c the number of guides or escorts used by trained staff ranged from 0 (248) to 101+ (14)
 - d the number of restrictive holds used by trained staff ranged from 0 (299) to 101+ (11)
 - e the number of guides or escorts used by untrained staff ranged from 0 (428) to 55 to 100 (7).
 - f The number of restrictive holds used by untrained staff ranged from 0 (484) to 64+ (2).
 - g to the question “Are pupils encouraged and enabled to report any concerns about poor/abusive practice?” 548 schools said yes, one said no and 14 indicated ‘partly’.

- Quality assurance visits have identified good practice in relation to restrictive physical intervention (RPI) and relational practice. Key areas identified include record keeping, ensuring schools are aware of and implementing updated guidance, and strengthening risk assessments where RPI is used more frequently. There is also a continued focus on staff training. In settings with strong practice, there is a focus on inclusion and relational practice across schools, alongside curriculum adaptations to meet the needs of children who may not yet be ready to learn in a traditional way. Schools are working to ensure approaches are flexible and responsive.
- Parental engagement remains a priority, with a range of strategies in place to support and involve families, including those who are traditionally harder to reach. Additionally, schools have made significant efforts to strengthen transition processes between infant and primary, and primary and secondary phases, as well as improving access to support services.
- Even if schools and settings have indicated they are fully compliant on the audit, they still have action planning priority areas identified. The range of priority areas identified were outlined.
- Actions following the audit included offering support to settings which had indicated 'partly' or 'not met' on any of the audit questions. This led to some signposting, discussions, sharing of resources or specific visits to focus on identified areas. This also included the Early Years team making contact with some pre-school settings.
- The spring *Safeguarding Matters* publication has articles on 1) Governance oversight (2) Developing an AI approach and policy (3) Restrictive Physical Intervention (4) Site security and Martyn's Law (5) Young Carers identification and support.
- Audit tool and guidance for 2026 was updated in line with KCSIE 2025 changes and new RPI guidance.
- A question was asked about the requirement of mainstream schools to audit safeguarding records. There is no statutory requirement to audit safeguarding records, but it is considered good practice for governing bodies to maintain effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements, with input from governors and external perspectives supporting robust self-evaluation.
- Members discussion highlighted that governor competence in safeguarding can be evidenced through relevant training, clear documentation, and demonstrating challenge and scrutiny within full governing body minutes. It was also emphasised that safeguarding should be embedded across both the culture and policies of a school. Overall, responsibility for safeguarding is shared across school leadership, with headteachers accountable for ensuring that governors are appropriately trained and equipped to carry out their duties effectively.
- A question was asked about whether RPI data would be reviewed again this year (2026 audit) to assess any changes and the impact of the revised guidance. It was confirmed that RPI questions have been repeated with minor updates to reflect changes in guidance, with the expectation that data collected moving forward will be more robust.
- Contact details for Matt Gatson in the Primary Behaviour Service (PBS) were shared. Matt now has oversight of this area pbs.teamteach@hants.gov.uk and it was noted that it would be useful for Matt to attend the next meeting in September to present the updated guidance.

Thresholds Framework update

Presented by Debbie Key (HSCP)

- Work on the Threshold Framework is ongoing and is being aligned with the Working Together 2026 updates, as well as the revised Families First Partnership Programme (FFPP) guidance reissued in early April.
- These updates have required a review of previously completed work to ensure full alignment, particularly in relation to the Front Door and Family Help workstream.
- The process is being progressed through a Task and Finish (T&F) group, which is considering proposed changes across Child in Need (CIN) and Early Help. These will be subject to testing to ensure that any revisions, particularly at the 'front door', do not lead to unintended consequences.
- Safeguarding partnership approval is anticipated by September and focus groups will take place over the next two to three weeks, and colleagues are encouraged to participate where possible.

Families First Partnership Programme Update

Presented by Sam Taylor, Programme Manager, HCC

- An update was provided on the FFPP, a multi-agency programme implementing Family Help and multi-agency child protection reforms and increasing support for family networks.
- At the previous HSCP Education Sub Group meeting in March 2026, FFPP was introduced to the group to provide context, and information was provided about the current projects which include Early Help, the 'front door' into Children's Services and the Family Safeguarding Model. There was also information around the Department for Education (DfE) mandated focus on Multi-agency Child Protection Teams, which includes education partners. An overview of the government direction was provided, along with recognition of the multi-agency approach to this programme of work.
- Since the last meeting, updated guidance on the FFPP has been released (March 2026). Multi-agency partners previously worked to the 2025/26 guidance; however, the DfE has now issued more robust guidance for 2026/27. This has been broken down into key areas, setting out the minimum expectations for delivery with clear direction that Family Help, MACPT and Family Network services should be implemented by the end of March 2027.

Service area	Expectations
Family Help	- Fully operational by March 2027. - Updated thresholds by Q1 26/27. - Implement Family Help Lead Practitioner role. - Implement multi-disciplinary family help teams. - Single Family Help Assessment by March 2027. - Integrated front door model in place.
MACPT	- Fully operational by March 2027. - Appoint and train core membership of MACPT members (CPLP, Police, Health and Education). - Identify additional practitioners and agencies to respond to local need. - Implement a shared MACPT practice framework. - Establish or expand information, advice and support for parents.
Family Networks	- Offer FGDM at every key decision point. - Use Family Network Support Packages to unlock Family Network support.

- The FFPP guidance places a strong emphasis on the role of education, recognising that education and childcare settings often have the most consistent and direct relationships with children. It also highlights the importance of strong attendance allowing for a better opportunity for needs to be identified and support to be provided. Across the programme, there is a clear focus on how education can be more closely aligned with all workstreams.
- Front door: the key focus, challenges and opportunities were outlined.
- Family Help Assessment: this needs to be in place by March 2027 and Sam provided a recap in relation to how this is being developed. *"We are developing a single assessment that will be co-designed across our partnership for use across Family Help (targeted early help and CIN), this is a mandatory requirement in the FFPP Programme Guide."*
- The feedback from partners was outlined and the learning from this was as follows: (1) partners will need significant support to effectively complete assessment (2) partners are really concerned about capacity and with the impact of this assessment.
- Early Help: referrals to Early Help at Level 2 are currently appropriate where needs can be met through either a single-agency response or a targeted multi-agency approach, supported by a lead practitioner. This reflects how Early Help is being delivered at present. While Early Help can sometimes appear complex, it is important to recognise that everyone has a role to play including social care, partner agencies, and wider community services. Early Help is fundamentally a community-based system, relying on all partners working together – everyone has a shared responsibility in supporting children and families.

- An Early Help review is currently underway. Family Help was launched in 2024, incorporating Early Help, and there is now a need to place greater emphasis on strengthening the Early Help element within this approach. Early findings have begun to highlight some of the key areas for development.
- Some of the challenges around Early Help were outlined. Planned changes in response to the issues were identified and outlined.
- Upcoming engagement with education settings – HSCP Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Conference, headteachers/DSL session to discuss lead practitioner role, education representatives across all FFPP projects, insight and engagement activity will be conducted across all stakeholder groups.
- Mark Kingswood confirmed that additional sessions will be offered about the lead practitioner role and the one taking place on 3 July is to begin the conversation following a request at the last HSCP meeting. It has been designed as a session led by and for headteachers and DSLs, focusing on sharing concerns, challenges, and barriers.
- The aim is to explore how the system can better support the lead practitioner role, including considerations such as funding, capacity within district teams, and alignment with Best Start Hubs. The workshop is intended as an open discussion rather than a directive session.
- A school representative raised that within the FFPP guidance, lead practitioners are expected to be part of multi-disciplinary early help teams. There is some anxiety from education colleagues, as they are not currently part of these teams, and there is uncertainty about how this will be developed so they feel included and able to draw on wider support. ST highlighted that this is why engagement with education partners is important, to co-design what this model will look like.

The workshop on 3 July will be a starting point to explore this further. BB suggested it may be helpful to look at examples from Hampshire Health, such as the virtual wards model, to understand what works well and what could be adapted.

Document updates

Presented by Ellie Graham (HSCP)

- Two documents have been reviewed to ensure alignment with the updated *Working Together 2026* guidance.
- These documents will be further reviewed during the summer holidays to take account of any changes in KCSIE 2026.
- The two documents are HSCP Transfer of Records FAQ document and the Safeguarding Advice on Home Visits ('Eyes On') – Position Statement.

Partnership update (including HSCP Strategic Priorities 2026/27)

Presented by Debbie Key (HSCP)

- A recent audit had been undertaken by HSCP relating to the multi-agency safeguarding response to Early Years children. This included a focus on the role of Early Years settings. This audit included attending Early Years DSL briefing sessions, undertaking focus groups, reviewing Rapid Review (RR) data in Hampshire for this cohort, conducting a staff survey within Early Years settings, analysing 40 contact and referral forms, and completing a multi-agency panel audit looking at 10 children.

- Having practitioners attend multi-agency audit days allowing them to share their perspectives and views particularly in relation to the voice of the child is invaluable in strengthening learning from audits, and this is always incorporated wherever possible.
- Key themes identified and outlined for the child and families along with strengths from the audits and areas for development.
- It was highlighted that the 'one ask' from Early Years settings was to 'treat us as equals'.
- An overview of the recommendations was provided and progress so far towards implementing these.
- The following guidance was also signposted: www.hampshirescp.org.uk/new-practitioner-guide-on-parental-cannabis-use/.
- A key message highlighted was for statutory agencies to be reminded of the importance of Early Years settings as critical colleagues in safeguarding children. This includes colleagues in statutory services such as Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) and Family Teams involving Early Years providers appropriately in sharing information to support the assessment of a child and family's needs.
- A new toolkit was highlighted on online harm which is due to be released soon and will be presented for approval at the HSCP Executive Group later this month. This has been developed in response to safeguarding concerns relating to online harm and brings together a range of resources to support practice.
- The next Safeguarding Practice Week will be commencing on 28 September in relation to safeguarding essentials. The aim is to promote practical tools across the whole multi-agency workforce. This will also coincide with the launch of the new threshold framework during that week.
- A new addition to the HSCP training offer was highlighted: <https://hampshirescp.eventbooking.org.uk/event-detail/%3DUTM2UzM/VIRTUAL-HSCP---An-Introduction-to-the-Impact-of-Parental-Mental-Health-on-Safeguarding-Children>. This was developed in response to a rapid review undertaken and will be delivered by professionals from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. This webinar is designed to help practitioners gain increased confidence in recognising and responding to concerns of mental ill health.
- The Water Safety Toolkit was highlighted <https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/parents-and-carers/water-safety/>.
- A member asked in relation to referrals if it is possible to generate examples of what would be considered poor-quality referrals, alongside examples of good practice? It was noted that this could be helpful for schools. It was highlighted that HSCP do have e-learning available that walks practitioners through what makes a good referral. DK shared the link within the meeting chat function <https://hampshirescp.eventbooking.org.uk/elearning-detail/%3DIT0zgiM/An-Introduction-to-The-Inter-Agency-Referral-Form-IARF-eLearning>.
- A member noted that there is often a reliance on parental explanations and this raises questions about the extent to which parental accounts should be accepted, as this can be contextual – sometimes valid, but at other times potentially disguised compliance. Professional curiosity is very important in this context. Following approval of the audit report, a practice briefing will be produced, and we will look to include this point and consider whether examples can be provided to support learning.
- An Early Years member thanked HSCP on behalf of Early Years settings as settings can feel underrepresented at times.

Cindy Pritchard

Inspector/Adviser for Safeguarding, HIAS

Learning from the Safeguarding Audit

All schools and education settings have to complete the annual Safeguarding Audit (Section 157/175) each year with return date by 30 September. For the audit process of 2025 to 2026, there were additional questions in relation to physical restrictive intervention, and this formed a key focus of 'good practice' visits in the autumn and spring terms. I visited a number of schools including mainstream primary and secondary, special schools and independent mainstream and specials. While the focus was on restrictive physical intervention, the scope of this included looking at inclusion, co-regulation, de-escalation, and relational practice. Thank you to those schools who welcomed the visits and took the time to explain all the brilliant things you do to support your children and families.

As outlined above, the focus of the visits into schools and settings was the use of physical intervention. The education settings were in different parts of Hampshire, serving a range of communities, some with high levels of deprivation and disadvantage. The visits covered primary and secondary aged pupils, from Early Years to 18. The following outlines good practice in how schools use and record physical intervention, alongside use of relational practice, co-regulation, and de-escalation.

Record keeping in relation to physical intervention

- Schools are aware of the changes in the updated Restrictive Physical Intervention Guidance which became statutory in April 2026.
- Restrictive Physical Intervention forms are used and filled in with an appropriate level of detail in each section.
- Forms are numbered and kept in a bound book or scanned on to child protection online monitoring systems (CPOMs).

- Schools emphasised the importance of reflecting and evaluating incidents and patterns – ensuring there is a clear reflection and debrief process after each incident.
- Tracking of RPI both for individuals and by year group to identify any patterns or specific complexities. Review includes consideration of which days and times of day to look for potential triggers and staff members using RPI to ensure appropriate support is in place.
- Schools use a range of documents for pupils who may 'need' physical intervention including personal safety plans, behaviour pathway documents, and risk assessments. These are regularly reviewed and specifically so after any RPI.
- Debrief process prioritised. Consideration given to the need for support for other pupils who may have witnessed incidents of high level of dysregulation and RPI.
- RPI forms uploaded to CPOMs to ensure completeness of record keeping including parent debrief and discussion and details of which parent was informed.

Staff training and support

- PBS training on 'Mind your Language,' co-regulation and de-escalation, and different behaviours. This is also done as part of induction.
- PBS support for use of RPI – talking through case studies and providing a level of supervision in the use of physical intervention.
- Guidance document on RPI has been shared with staff which confirms the school's approach and process. This sets this out explicitly and forms part of the school's induction process.
- Ensuring staff feel important and supported.

- A member of senior leadership team (SLT) always on duty to support as needed.
- Staff have had nurture training and a focus on belonging.
- Trauma informed school.
- Upskilling staff with training – autism, language, bucket time, brain development, Thrive, understanding behaviour as communication, vital relational functions (VRFs), PACE.
- Working with the portage intervention team for support during transition and into Year R. Learning support assistants (LSAs) trained on structure.
- Training on structure, consistency, scripted language, reduction of language – the pupils know they will get the same response from all adults.
- Team Teach training: reduced the number of people trained and emphasis on only holding when absolutely necessary. Shifted the accountability back to everyone in the team to focus on de-escalation and co-regulation.
- Staff are trained well and are confident to challenge each other to ensure consistency of practice. They are encouraged to professionally challenge.
- May use 'parrot on the shoulder' to support adults in the classroom in planning for and preventing dysregulation. Strategy meetings held fortnightly to discuss and update plans.
- Induction training: new support staff shadow those who have good practice before they then become part of the team.
- Pupils have teams of adults working with them, not 'my adult.' The adults stay in the same role and the pupil go to that space – there are no allocated adults for individual children.
- Training to ensure that staff are highly skilled. Train staff to work across year groups and share the knowledge and skills across the staff.
- Active listening training for all staff.
- Staff trained in RPI have time to support staff, answer questions about individual support plans, observe in classrooms and give suggestions for changes in provision.

Inclusion, including co-regulation and de-escalation

- Push and pull factor analysis. Different methods used to support pupils individually.
- Each classroom has a 'thinking space' – pupils can choose to sit there if they need time to think, or they can be asked to sit there.
- Sensory or movement breaks: it is agreed what will happen and for how long. This may take place in class (eg standing at the table, doing two things at once) or, if outside, this will be a lap of the track and back in. These are scheduled and boundaried.
- Fidget toys: only used if the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) agrees, but the pupil comes to the SENCo to select the fidget and is prompted with the question, '*Which one will help you concentrate?*' (rather than play).
- Calm classrooms. White walls, removed many display boards, hessian backgrounds to ensure sensory stimulation is reduced. Visuals used. Displays are consistent in classrooms. Sensory awareness.
- There are spaces for interventions and regulation, but the aim is always to have pupils in the classroom.
- Targeted intervention spaces for each year group which are directly outside the classrooms and separated from the corridor, so are clearly attached to the classroom. This space is always staffed by an LSA who is able to support any pupil who needs to work outside the room for part of the lesson. Pupils are in for the input and then can come out for the learning activity if this supports their learning. They are clearly part of the class, and the use of this space is responsive to the needs so each part of the day may have different children accessing it.

- Home room: provides a 'soft start' to the day for those who find transition in difficult. Then used for academic focused work in the morning with 1:2 ratio – teacher retains oversight and planning responsibility. Home room then used for Thrive sessions in the afternoon.
- Sensory spaces to support regulation.
- Comfort corners which all pupils can use which have blankets, teddies, pastry brushes to stroke skin.
- Planned opportunities for 'discharge' behaviours – ripping things, stamping things – these times are on individual pupil timetables to allow for safe discharge of behaviour.
- Use of the GROW model: goal, reality, options, way forward.
- Promote conversations about mental health.
- Make time for the unexpected.
- Communication books between LSAs to share between morning and afternoon, or for change of adult.
- Using breakfast club for pupils who are late to ensure they are in school and ready for the day.
- Catching good ladders, natural consequences, active breaks that are part of provision, sensory circuits, distraction, reward time at end of day that is not 'lost,' tabletop time as a movement break rather than going outside, adapted tasks.
- Not labelling the child.
- Accessing appropriate external agency support: PBS, mental health services, Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS), SEND, Inclusion Support Services, Educational Psychologist (EP), Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), outreach.
- Weekly questionnaire via Office 365 platform in which pupils are asked one question and can choose an emotion (in the shape of a colour monster) to identify how they are feeling.

Based on the emotion selected, the platform recommends strategies or signposts for that pupil. Also enables tutor to see how their tutees are feeling and helps facilitate conversations as a class about the different aspects of school life on emotional wellbeing.

Relational practice

- Very clear emphasis on vision and ethos: 'people have to want to work here'.
- Expectation that no staff member will walk down the corridor without speaking to a pupil and making them feel important.
- Staff being on the door every day, greeting the pupils, laughing with them. There is always someone to listen to the pupils and 'hold them' emotionally.
- Having 'connection' time with the class teacher to build relationships. This happens several times a week as part of the curriculum using 'play' and regulation tools. It also happens on an individual basis for some children, especially if they have had time out of the classroom.
- Key focus on nurture and belonging.
- If a pupil is struggling to come in, integration time is organised before the start of the school day. The pupil comes in early so no learning time is missed.
- Consistency, no gimmicks, clear expectations, and boundaries.
- Natural consequences – based on values and ethos, not a 'list'.
- Reflection time is used to think about how we can do things differently. How can we solve the problem?
- Availability of senior leaders for pupils and staff.
- Expectation that lower-level behaviours are supported in the classroom with firm, fair boundaries.

- Restorative conversations and discussion about how pupils may repair – through eye contact, a card, words. Acknowledgement that this happens when they are ready – readiness to repair.
- Strong and clear systems and processes.
- At the start of any meeting discussing a pupil, the initial part is a discussion of ‘all the things you like about them’ and ‘strengths’ so that the focus is on the pupil, and not just their behaviour.
- For identified pupils, tutor calls every two weeks to feedback positives.
- Team around the Child meetings held which include all team members for the pupil.
- Thinking carefully about what ‘normal’ behaviour is for that pupil and noticing any small changes in presentation, especially for those with communication needs.
- Thinking about how the pupil communicates – verbal, play, drawing, creative ways to enable interaction and relationship building.
- Range of pupil ambassadors and leaders and different methods to gauge pupil voice including student council, environment, safeguarding leads, governors, heads of house, digital leaders, anti-bullying prefects, junior road safety officers, sports leader, equality rights advocates, pupil conferencing by SLT and governors, surveys, Prejudicial Language and Behaviour (PLAB) survey, Bee Well survey.
- Monitoring includes thinking about a ‘day in the life of’ a pupil and staff talk to the pupils about what their school day looks like – the learning time, friendships, and time with staff.
- Pupils are allowed to spend time outside.
- A deliberate choice that Year R do not have enough equipment for all to use at the same time – so they learn to problem solve, resolve issues, communicate with each other and share.
- Year R: more structure – play based but clear boundaries and routines. This is responsive to cohort need. See the children first and then ‘flex’ the provision to respond to need.
- Teachers have oversight and plan the curriculum for any pupil who is not in their class for a period of time. They retain responsibility and the pupil ‘belongs’ to that class.
- For Year R children who are not school ready – therapeutic input in the morning and then continuous provision in the afternoon with the understanding that they can come out if they are not managing. The aim is to build the time the pupils are in the classroom.
- Use of primary trained/specialists for Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Challenging ideas of what ‘learning’ looks like and meeting the pupil where they are.

Curriculum, teaching, and learning

- Year R, 1 and 2 have a play-based curriculum.
- Teachers have to teach brilliantly, and the lessons have to be great. This means pupils want to come to school and want to be in class.

Other aspects

Parents

- Parent groups: have a parent ‘hub’ which meets twice weekly. The school has done a range of work with parents including anxiety and behaviour training, teaching them how to support their child, training on ADHD and autism, signposting to other agencies and support. Parents do not feel judged – they come in for a cuppa.
- Parent advocates (from the parent group) asked to engage with other parents who are struggling, to encourage them to attend the parent ‘hub’. The school has a phased approach to this (1) come along (2) we need to help you (3) you have to come or we will need to take further steps.

- School nurses in once a month for parents to speak to.
 - A focus on always addressing the family and emotional needs of the child before the learning.
 - Building positive relationships so parents do not feel judged and feel they can talk about anything.
 - DSLs meet as a team every week and discuss children. Different names are brought to the table, and the team decide who is the best fit to work with the parents – someone they feel comfortable with.
 - A focus on breaking the cycle and supporting families.
 - Survey parents regularly and feedback via the newsletter – you said, we did.
 - Offered lots of training for parents: PBS, Mental Health Support Team (MHST), natural consequences, working on parental recognition of need.
 - More parental events: parents in to celebrate with their children, join them when they are working (sewing, playing Quidditch, junk modelling). Annual reading event when parents read with their child (or a buddy does).
- Primary trained specialist employed to support with transition and into Year 7 with cohorts and individual pupils.

Useful links and guidance

Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6943dad6501cdd438f4cf5aa/Restrictive_interventions_including_use_of_reasonable_force_in_schools.pdf

Behaviour in schools – advice for headteachers and school staff Feb 2024

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ce3721e1bdec001a3221fe/Behaviour_in_schools_-_advice_for_headteachers_and_school_staff_Feb_2024.pdf

Further guidance and resources in supporting behaviour in school – GOV.UK

www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2/further-guidance-and-resources-for-supporting-behaviour-in-schools

Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention – GOV.UK

www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention

Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges – GOV.UK

www.gov.uk/guidance/promoting-and-supporting-mental-health-and-wellbeing-in-schools-and-colleges

Mental health and behaviour in schools – GOV.UK

www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2.UK

Transition

- Starts early with a focus on the whole child, not just learning.
- Open sharing of information between settings.
- Focus on ensuring pupils are ready for secondary school. If they have a strategy in primary that will not be appropriate, think about what that strategy enables them to do and find something that mirrors this, but is appropriate in a secondary setting.
- Sharing what works, what has been tried and does not work. Including any external agency support in the transition process.
- Working with Early Years settings on what school readiness looks like.

Mobile phones in school – GOV.UK

www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools

Mental health and behaviour in schools: Mentally Healthy Schools

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-or-college-resources/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools/

What is ARC? – ARC Framework

<https://arcframework.org/what-is-arc/>

Primary Behaviour Service – Hampshire County Council

www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/educationinclusionservice/primarybehaviourservice

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Stalking

Among the many changes in KCSIE 2026, there is now explicit reference to 'stalking' as a concern we need to be aware of and alert to. In the summer term, I attended some excellent HSCP training entitled 'An Introduction to Stalking' delivered by Summer Brown from Stop DA. If you are interested in attending this training, there are further dates this academic year. The next date is 25 November – further details at the end of this article. I have used my notes, along with information from various other sources for this article which outlines some of the statistics related to this harm, definitions, and indicators of stalking and what we can do to educate our young people about this and support victims.

The Government has committed to halving levels of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) within a decade. As part of this, there is a commitment to ensuring victims of stalking have the strongest protections so they can go about their day-to-day lives in safety. The Crime and Policing Act 2026 strengthens the response to stalking and for schools and education settings, it is worth noting that Paragraph 20 of KCSIE 2026 outlines the need to be aware of extra-familiar harm, and, new this year, references 'physical, sexual, emotional abuse and stalking' in relation to domestic abuse in teenage relationship abuse. The question for education staff and DSLs is how do we spot the risks and indicators associated with stalking and what can we do to support our young people to recognise 'red flags' and develop strong and positive relationships?

Statistics

- 20% of women will experience stalking in their lifetime.
- 1 in 11 men will experience stalking in their lifetime.
- 50% of stalkers act on threats they make.

- There are approximately 1.1 million victims of stalking annually across the UK.
- Former romantic partners make up the single largest category of stalkers, accounting for 45% of all cases. Only 10% of victims are targeted by someone with whom they have no prior relationship.
- Stalking is highly repetitive. 30% of victims contacting the National Stalking Helpline experience stalking that lasts over two years.
- On average, victims will experience 100 incidents before reporting behaviour to the police.
- Research examining 350 homicides indicated that stalking behaviours were present in 94% of these.

It is worth noting that stalking can happen to anyone. The statistics above indicate that women are more likely than men to experience stalking. However, other studies have indicated that men may under report their experiences because stalking is perceived as a crime that predominantly affects women. This may also be because men have a different perception of someone's intent to cause danger. The key thing, as with all safeguarding, is to be professionally curious and to keep an eye out for signs and indicators that cause concern and in education settings we may well be working with both the perpetrator and the victim.

Definitions

There is no single statutory definition of stalking and as an offence it is similar to harassment. They both involve repeated, unwanted behaviour towards the victim from another person. This unwanted behaviour affects the victim's life or daily activities. So, what is the difference between harassment and stalking?

Harassment

Behaviour that is unwanted and repeated. This may include:

- sending messages, images, emails, or other communications that are abusive, threatening or unwanted
- posting abusive content on social media
- ongoing abuse or damage to property
- repeated anti-social behaviour
- making unwanted or offensive phone calls.

If this happens two or more times, it can be reported to the police as a harassment offence.

Stalking

While stalking also involves unwanted and repeated behaviour, it goes further into behaviour that is fixated and obsessed. A helpful way to remember this is to use the mnemonic FOUR: fixated, obsessive, unwanted, repeated.

Stalking is when someone repeatedly targets the victim with unwanted behaviour. The behaviour is obsessive or fixated and can mean the victim has to change their life or daily activities.

If these behaviours happen two or more times, they can be reported to the police.

What are the indicators of stalking behaviour?

The following are a list of behaviours we may see if a person is stalking someone.

- Harassing someone and refusing to leave them alone – to the point where they are making the person feel uncomfortable or scared.
- Following someone.
- Turning up unexpectedly where the victim is – this may include using friends or family to access them or try to get information.

- Surveillance: watching someone continuously and repeatedly.
- Sending repeated unwanted gifts.
- Unwanted contact through phone and social media.
- Trespassing and damaging property.
- Knowing the person's routine or schedule and using this to follow them, watch them or access them. They may turn up at their home, workplace, school, or places they know the person uses (eg gym, park, clubs).
- Taking pictures of the person.
- Not taking no for an answer.
- Stealing things that belong to the person.
- Identity theft: signing up to services or buying things in someone's name.
- Writing or posting online about someone if it is unwanted or the person does not know.

Online stalking and harassment

As we know, young people spend a lot of time online and using social media. It is the case that online behaviours can make it easier for stalkers as there is a lot of personal information online. Stalking and harassment can happen online using the internet, apps or other digital platforms, or by using technology such as tracking devices and spyware. However, it is worth noting that stalking is rarely done solely online and often perpetrators want to see the reaction of the victim face to face.

Online stalking or harassment may include:

- monitoring someone's internet use, email or other online communication. This can include seeing when they were last online, seeing when comments or images were posted and where, seeing where people have checked in to events or venues or those they have marked as 'going to'

- sending unwanted sexual or intimate messages, images, videos or other explicit content, including images of genitals
- getting access to someone's email and social media accounts
- befriending friends of the same people on social media to track movements
- spamming and sending viruses – sending multiple messages via WhatsApp, texts, Snapchat, etc
- setting up false accounts and trying to link to someone or their friends. This may also involve damaging reputation or messing with friendships
- stealing someone's identity
- threatening to share private information, photographs, copies of messages, or deep fakes and AI generated imagery
- adding tracking software to someone's devices. Spyware apps are available that enable a perpetrator to view the contents of a victim's mobile phone. The use of spyware has gone up 329% since 2020
- stalkers may also use phones, vehicle trackers, fitness trackers, air tags and Fitbits to monitor a victim's location and activity. Through these means they can gather lots of information quickly. Some of these devices are also small, require little technical skill, are inexpensive and can be hidden easily
- smart devices, such as smart TVs, can be used to track or record a person without their knowledge. Other smart devices in the home can be used to monitor or harass people, eg controlling lights, heating etc.

What can we teach young people about 'red flags' in relationships and protecting themselves against stalking and controlling behaviours?

Red flags

- Someone checking who you are messaging and demanding to see the content of your phone.
- Someone getting 'mad' with you when you do not reply straight away to their messages or if you leave them on 'read'. They expect you to be always available and are cross when you are not.
- Someone logging into your accounts without asking – changing passwords and reading private messages.
- Someone wanting the password/code to your devices.
- Someone wanting to set up joint social media accounts with a shared password/profile.
- Someone constantly checking or commenting on your posts and stories – using your social media to control or keep tabs on you.
- Someone who moves too fast, too soon. Relationship milestones come too quickly... be careful of declarations of love and forever from someone who is just getting to know you.
- Someone is trying to cut you off from your friends, parents, and family. They try to convince you they know you better than anyone else. They try to create division and isolate you.
- Someone who seems charming and perfect, until they do not get their own way and then there is another side to them.

- Someone who does not trust you even though you have never given them a reason not to. They want to monitor your phone, social media, control what you do, where you go, what you wear, who you are with.
- Someone who threatens to do something drastic if the relationship ends or who implies that they may.
- Someone who blames you for their bad mood, anger or arguments.
- Someone who picks fights, so you feel the need to change your behaviour to avoid upsetting them.
- Someone who is possessive of you and your time. Their jealousy makes you nervous or uncomfortable. You find yourself smothered.
- Someone who disrespects or humiliates you in front of others and passes it off as funny.
- Someone who pressures you to go to things you do not want to go to.
- Messages disappearing can hide patterns of behaviour or frequency – be mindful of the nature and frequency of messages.
- Gaming can be used for contact so be mindful of stalkers using gaming to make contact and find out information.
- Snapchat protections: turn on Ghost Mode (or share location with select friends), remove or block anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable, change who can contact you or view your story.
- On Instagram: make your account private, restrict or mute someone (they won't know) or remove them from followers, block if needed, limit who can view your story.
- Do not share your live location, routines, birthday, phone number, school name, or tag in real time.
- Trust your instincts. If something does not feel right, then it probably is not.
- Be mindful that a lot of messages through films, TV, music, social media and online influencers portray persistent pursuit as romantic. It is important to remember that; repeated unwanted contact is not a sign of love; jealousy is not proof that someone cares; tracking a partner's location is not a normal expectation in a healthy relationship; not taking no for an answer should never be viewed as romantic persistence.

Advice for young people in how to protect themselves and things to think about

- Make sure you have two-factor authentication and strict password controls on all of your devices and accounts. Sharing may be lovely when things are going well, but if someone has access to your devices and your accounts, they can put spyware on your device, or control your account, including what is sent or not.
- Log out on shared devices.
- Things like SnapMap make tracking feel normal...be mindful when this behaviour is not ok, especially if someone is following where you are without your knowledge.
- Snap Scores and streaks create pressure to respond and can 'guilt' people into constant contact. Be aware of the impact this is having on you and if this is being used as a control mechanism.

What advice can we give young people who believe they are being stalked?

- Keep a log to build up a picture of the behaviour. Note the date, time, any witnesses, what happened and how it made the victim feel.
- Collect as much evidence as possible – screenshots, photographs, voice messages, emails, gifts, and anything material left by the stalker.

- Change routine especially if the person doing this is an ex-partner. They will know the routine the victim follows, so advise the victim to change routine to prevent contact.
- Be mindful of social media use: stalkers will use images, reflections (for example in glasses/eyes) from pictures posted to locate victims. If they are out and about, do not post images or comments immediately in live time – doing so will enable the stalker to know where they are at that moment and may enable the stalker to find them. The place may be identifiable by street signs or if the stalker knows the area well, so delay posting.
- Victims should seek advice from police or a specialist stalking service before blocking all methods of contact, as preserving evidence and managing risk may require a planned approach. Specialist support services recommend that victims do not block the stalker on every platform/method of communication and to leave one open. This indicates that the victim should block them on all other platforms but leave one avenue for communication. If they are blocked completely, this may cause them to escalate and turn up.
- Do not interact with the stalker unless it is unavoidable.
- Report to the police as early as possible.
- Tell someone they trust.
- Tell family members and friends to be careful with their social media – do not accidentally give away information or location of the victim and be mindful of any new ‘contacts’ from someone trying to befriend them.
- Tell family or friends not to confront the stalker on their own. This can escalate the situation and the risk.

What should staff do if they suspect stalking?

School and college staff should:

- treat stalking concerns as safeguarding concerns rather than simply friendship or relationship issues
- record incidents chronologically to help identify patterns over time
- share concerns promptly with the DSL
- consider whether there is evidence of coercive control, domestic abuse, online abuse or sexual harassment
- assess whether siblings, friends or family members may also be affected. It is important to remember the safeguarding responsibility also covers both the victim and the perpetrator and potentially the wider group if the impact goes further
- work with police and children’s social care where appropriate
- consider whether the young person is safe travelling to and from school or college
- review online safety risks, including location-sharing apps and device security
- as with other safeguarding risks, be mindful that young people with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to stalking, coercive control and unhealthy relationships. Some may find it harder to recognise manipulation, understand social boundaries or identify risky behaviour online. Staff should ensure that relationship education and safeguarding messages are accessible and tailored to individual need
- stalking concerns should be considered alongside other safeguarding issues including peer-on-peer abuse, sexual harassment, online abuse, coercive control, domestic abuse and child-on-child harmful behaviour

- make sure all incidents are recorded. A single incident may not appear serious in isolation. However, stalking is often identified through a pattern of behaviours that become apparent over time. Staff should therefore be professionally curious and record and share concerns, even where an individual incident appears minor.

If this is an area you would like further information on, please have a look at attending the HSCP training 'Introduction to Stalking'. The next date for this is Wednesday 25 November from 3.30pm to 5pm. You can book this via HSCP: www.hampshirescp.org.uk/professionals/training/.

Other resources and advice:

National Stalking Helpline details and advice

www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Category/about-stalking

Poster about stalking from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=d4309103-1193-4f34-a7d4-918aa0e21e2b>

Stalking: Life isn't like the movies (stalking awareness video campaign from Gloucestershire Police)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoK61KNRbPE
Really excellent video that you can use for training or inputs with KS4 and KS5 students

#Following – A short film about stalking and harassment

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZ3878r0cko Video that can be used for training or inputs with secondary aged students

Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service

www.paladinservice.co.uk/

Stalking and harassment – Police.uk

www.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/beta-stalking-and-harassment/what-is-stalking-harassment/

Spyware in action – BBC

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVnwHMBBoqY

Help and support – Action Against Stalking

<https://actionagainststalking.org/help-support/#:~:text=engage%20with%20us.,Tips,-%26%20Advice%20for%20Victims> (Includes posters that can be downloaded about signs of stalking, what to do, and advice for those supporting victims)

Healthy relationships – NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/healthy-relationships/ (Advice for parents and carers)

Healthy and unhealthy relationships – Childline

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/friends-relationships-sex/sex-relationships/healthy-unhealthy-relationships/

Relationships – Childline

www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/friends-relationships-sex/sex-relationships/relationships/

Healthy relationships: resources for teachers – Brook

www.brook.org.uk/education/healthy-relationships-resources/

CEOP Safety Centre

www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/

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Cybercrime: how do we stop our children and young people becoming cyber-criminals?

Cybercrime is not a new addition to KCSIE this year. However, the wording makes clear that this is a risk that schools and settings need to be aware of because:

“Cyber-dependent crime continues to represent one of the most significant and rapidly evolving threats within the United Kingdom’s (UK) crime landscape. Offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (CMA) have risen substantially.”

This article outlines what cybercrime is and the types of risk associated with cyber-enabled and cyber-dependent crime. There is then a greater focus on cyber-dependent crime and how we can educate our children and young people about this and divert them from becoming involved in perpetrating cybercrime.

Common examples of cyber-enabled crime include:

- spam and scam emails
- identity and data theft: stealing personal records or credentials in bulk to facilitate impersonation or economic exploitation
- online harassment: digital stalking, targeted cyberbullying and abusive trolling carried out on social media platforms
- illegal distribution: trafficking counterfeit goods through fake online storefronts or copycat websites (for example copies of national or local government such as DVSA, passport services)
- child sexual exploitation:
 - online radicalisation
 - sharing of child sexual abuse and other illegal imagery
 - sextortion and blackmail
 - money muling: using children or young people to move, hide or launder stolen money and cryptocurrency
 - social engineering: using children to phish for data, distribute scams or harass others on social media.

What is cybercrime?

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It can be broadly categorised into two areas:

- cyber-enabled – these are crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and speed online
- cyber-dependent – these are crimes that can only be committed by using a computer.

Cyber-enabled crime

This type of cybercrime consists of traditional offences which can also happen offline such as fraud, theft, and harassment. When computers, networks and digital technology are used, these grow significantly in scale, speed and geographic reach. These are also the things we may go to more immediately when we think about online risks and the curriculum we deliver to our children and young people both in terms of them being victims and perpetrators.

Cyber-dependent crime

Cyber-dependent crimes are illegal acts that – as the name suggests – can only happen using computers, computer networks, or other digital technology. In these crimes, digital devices can act as both the tool and the target of the crime. Common examples of cyber-dependent crime include:

- hacking: this involves gaining unauthorised entry into computer systems, servers, or private user accounts

- malware: creating and spreading destructive software like viruses, trojans, spyware, and ransomware to lock or damage systems
- DDoS attacks: also known as DoS (Denial of Service) or 'booting'. These involve overloading web servers with heavy traffic to crash systems and make websites or networks unusable.

A bit more on DDoS attacks

Imagine the scene in Harry Potter where Harry's in the cupboard under the stairs and the Dursleys will not allow him to get letters from the owls – so then the house gets bombarded with owls and flying letters. DoS and DDoSing involves bombarding a system with messages or requests until it overloads and shuts down (in very simple terms!). Such attacks are frequently caused *not* by many people visiting the site at one time to reduce its efficiency or even 'crash' it, but by a botnet (network of infected robot computers) being remotely controlled to do so by cybercriminals. Any organisation with a website could be targeted although most victims are high profile organisations such as multinationals, government agencies, and banks/other financial services providers.

Risks for children and young people

Cybercrime poses a significant risk to children and young people who can become the victim of such crimes. Much of the curriculum around online safety focusses on identifying the risks posed, particularly by cyber-enabled crime, and how to avoid these.

However, education settings also have to be mindful of the risk posed by cybercrime in terms of those children and young people who may become perpetrators of such crimes. Children and young people with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cybercrime, either independently, or through the encouragement and exploitation of others.

Young people are often really skilled with technology but lack maturity and awareness of the law. They are therefore seen as highly valuable and easily manipulated 'assets' by criminal organisations, hostile states or interests, hacking networks, and online predators who will target, groom, and coerce young people into performing illegal digital activities. Counter Terrorism Policing has warned that hostile states and criminal networks may seek to exploit and recruit young people online to undertake tasks linked to surveillance, sabotage, or other unlawful activity. Police have reported investigations involving teenagers, highlighting the need for parents, schools, and professionals to remain vigilant. I appreciate this may all sound a bit far-fetched, but if you have a tech-savvy teenager at home, or you teach them, ask them if they are aware of this or have ever been approached by an online unknown to carry out 'tasks' – you may be surprised at how many of them have been.

It is also the case that many young people begin by exploring glitches, vulnerabilities, or hacking techniques out of curiosity rather than criminal intent. Curiosity itself is not problematic, but it can be exploited by others who encourage increasingly risky behaviour.

There have been some significant cases which have hit the media involving young people. In 2026, Owen Flowers and Thalha Jubair were sentenced to five and a half years in prison for hacking Transport for London in 2024. When they committed the cyber-attack, they were 17 and 18 years old, respectively. Ricky Handschumacher was 15 years old when he was convicted of stealing \$7.6m in cryptocurrency and the Information Commissioner's Office has reported that students caused 57% of insider data breaches in schools between January 2022 and August 2024. It is also worth noting that while the average age of referrals to Cyber Choices, Britain's national cybercrime intervention programme, is 15, children as young as seven have been referred.

How are children and young people recruited?

- Gaming platforms: recruiters may approach children via chat rooms, online forums, or platforms such as Roblox and Fortnite, presenting malicious tasks as 'challenges'.
- Grooming may take place via peer networks linked by shared technical skills.
- Recruiters may offer friendship and belonging, technical mentoring, access to exclusive groups, status and recognition, opportunities to demonstrate skills.
- Encrypted messaging: recruiters may use instant messaging services such as Telegram, Discord and Signal to plan operations and issue instructions.
- Financial incentives: recruiters offer quick cash, often via cryptocurrency or gift cards, to exploit economically vulnerable young people. They may also provide them with new devices and equipment to carry out the tasks that have been set.
- Phased escalation: children and young people are often initially lured in with seemingly harmless tasks, like downloading a file or gathering open-source data. They are then pressured into serious hacking or espionage – and, as with other online exploitation, they will be threatened or manipulated to continue to do this, even if they try to 'leave'.
- Obsessive interest in game exploits, cheats, or glitches.
- Spending significant time in gaming forums, Discord servers, or online groups.
- Talking about getting rare in-game items or accounts through unofficial means.
- Social isolation and seeking belonging online: hacking communities can provide acceptance, status, and validation.
- Withdrawal from family activities, few offline friendships, strong emotional attachments to online communities, seeing online contact as main friendships.
- Strong desire for recognition, status, or peer approval. Young people may feel respected and valued within online communities.
- Seeking prestige/status through technical achievements.
- Boasting about online exploits.
- Strong concern about reputation within online groups.
- Becoming secretive about online activities.
- Curiosity and fascination with how systems work – persistent interest in bypassing rules or restrictions, experimenting with software vulnerabilities, searching for hacking tutorials, talking about 'testing' systems without permission.
- Exceptional technical ability without positive outlets: advanced technical skills for their age, building tools/scripts/exploits, expressing boredom with normal computing activities, seeking more difficult technical challenges.
- Financial motivation: unexplained money, gift cards, gaming purchases, or devices, talking about making money online through secretive methods, sudden access to expensive tech or subscriptions.

Signs and indicators that someone may be vulnerable to cybercrime (and many other types of online harm)

- Heavy involvement in online gaming communities: some young people drawn into cybercrime first encounter exploit communities, cheats, modding groups or individuals promoting unlawful activity through gaming-related platforms and communities.

- Thrill-seeking and boundary-pushing behaviour: competitive behaviour online, enjoyment of rule-breaking challenges, interest in 'beating the system', taking increasing risk for excitement or recognition.

As with other safeguarding risks, we also have to be particularly mindful of the additional vulnerabilities that children and young people with SEND may have. Research around this subject suggests higher rates of autism and autistic-like traits among some cybercrime referrals. While it is extremely important to avoid stereotyping and directly linking neurodivergence to these behaviours, we do have to be mindful of characteristics that may make some children and young people more vulnerable to being exploited into cybercrime. Characteristics such as intense focus, pattern recognition, and difficulties finding belonging offline may increase vulnerability to recruitment by online communities. To emphasise the point, most autistic and neurodivergent children and young people never engage in cybercrime. The purpose of recognising potential vulnerabilities is to support safeguarding and positive pathways, not to stigmatise individuals. It is also important to acknowledge that children and young people with SEND may not recognise when they are being manipulated or exploited by others or find it harder to report their concerns.

How can we support our children and young people?

- Teach about digital literacy: including safe browsing, strong password creation, how to spot phishing and malicious links.
- Teach about legal consequences: explain computer misuse laws, especially so that tech-savvy children and young people understand when curiosity crosses into illegal cyber-dependent activity.
- Teach about online harms: the range is considerable, so the focus is also about teaching children and young people about being critical consumers of information, to be sceptical and questioning about approaches online and consider 'why me'.

- Embed online respect and discuss the impact of cyberbullying and harassment as part of teaching about healthy and positive relationships.
- Emphasise to children and young people that they should report their concerns or if something has gone wrong – at whatever point this is. Encourage them to report even if they have already done something they should not have done – they need to be provided with routes out, not just prevention.
- Provide clear pathways to report concerns and think about what this looks like for children and young people who have barriers to communication.
- Teach children and young people to save message logs and any evidence of online behaviours, rather than retaliating or deleting. This preserves evidence which may be used to report and act upon online harms.
- Engage with appropriate intervention and diversion routes if a young person is identified as being at risk of perpetrating cybercrime. Refer them to the Cyber Choices programme: www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/cyber-choices (for cyber-dependent interests/crimes).
- Staff training: ensure staff are trained to recognise risk of young people being drawn into cybercrime – and to recognise that they are still victims (in the same vein as KCSIE now identifies child perpetrators of exploitation as victims).
- Signpost to reporting methods.

Reporting methods

- Suspicious emails can be reported to: report@phishing.gov.uk and can also be reported on the provider's platform.
- Suspicious text messages can be reported. This link provides information on how to do this: www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/phishing-scams/report-scam-text-message.

- If someone is the victim of fraud this can be reported to Action Fraud:
www.actionfraud.police.uk
(www.reportfraud.police.uk/) via their website or telephone: [0300 123 2040](tel:03001232040).
- Report a cyber incident on:
<https://report.ncsc.gov.uk/>.
- Support for cybercrime can be accessed on:
https://thecyberhelpline.com/?gad_source=1.

Resources and guidance

Definitions and types of cybercrime (Safer Derbyshire)

www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what-we-do/cyber-crime/definitions-and-types-of-cybercrime/definitions-and-types-of-cybercrime.aspx

Copycat websites – Get Safe Online

www.getsafeonline.org/personal/articles/copycat-websites/

Social networking sites – Get Safe Online

www.getsafeonline.org/personal/articles/social-networking-sites/

Child sexual exploitations – NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/types-of-abuse/child-sexual-exploitation/

Cyberstalking – Get Safe Online

www.getsafeonline.org/personal/articles/cyberstalking1/

Malware

www.getsafeonline.org/business/articles/anti-malware/

Cyber crime support for education settings

www.bristol safeguarding in education.org/resources-and-guidance/topical-safeguarding-resources-bank/online-safety-and-cyber-crime/cyber-crime/

Cyber security and crimes – Crimestoppers

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/keeping-safe/online-safety/cyber-security-and-crimes>

Cyber crime – Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary

www.hampshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud/online-fraud/cyber-crime-fraud/

Sextortion warning: In 6 hours, my son was dead

www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c2llzppyx05o

Teen hackers who live streamed cyber-attack on TfL jailed

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAlfVGBrwk

Ex-teen hackers warn parents are clueless as children steal ‘millions’ – Money News, Sky News

<https://news.sky.com/story/children-as-young-as-seven-caught-hacking-as-former-cybercriminals-warn-its-mainstream-now-13479365>

Blackmailing girls and encouraging suicide: the young British men in online gangs – National Crime Agency, The Guardian

www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/mar/25/young-british-men-convicted-for-crimes-as-online-gang-members-two-case-studies

Help and advice – Childnet

www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/teachers-and-professionals

National Crime Agency: Exploring Cybercrime

<https://pshe-association.org.uk/lesson-plans/nca-exploring-cybercrime>

Cyber Choices – Educational resources – South-East Cyber Crime Unit

<https://southeastcyber.police.uk/educational-resources/>

Cybersecurity and cybercrime

<https://better-internet-for-kids.europa.eu/en/learning-corners/teachers-and-educators/cybersecurity-and-cybercrime>

Online safety – NSPCC Learning

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety>

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Gender stereotyping

Gender stereotyping is an area that has been discussed for many years, and reference is made in KCSIE to schools and settings maintaining flexibility in policies to avoid rigid rules based on gender stereotypes. KCSIE also reminds schools that safeguarding includes protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harmful influences. Gender stereotypes can contribute to harmful attitudes, peer-on-peer abuse, sexual harassment, misogyny and discriminatory behaviour. DSLs should therefore view the challenging of harmful gender stereotypes as part of wider preventative safeguarding work.

The 2018 non-statutory guidance on 'Gender separation in mixed schools' challenged any practice which separated boys and girls in mixed schools – for example, in offering different sporting opportunities – and stated that schools and settings would have to have clear justification for any separation in classes, assemblies or extra-curricular activities. While this was driven more by a desire to prevent sex discrimination, (arising from the court case against a mixed school that separated boys and girls from Year 5) an additional outcome of the guidance was to challenge views that ascribed certain sports or activities to being either male or female – in other words, it helped to challenge gender stereotyping and, undoubtedly, highlighted unconscious bias. This article explores gender stereotyping in more detail and how schools and settings can help to challenge this.

Gender stereotyping is hugely present in our society – in the workplace, media and advertising, in families, schools and in subconsciously held views and assumptions which people are frequently not even aware of. These environments and assumptions shape expectations about how men and women should look, act, and work. Gender stereotypes can also contribute to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual harassment and peer-on-peer abuse by creating beliefs about entitlement, power, consent and gender roles.

From an early age, children are exposed to gender stereotypes through families, peers, media, advertising and wider social expectations – from the colours children wear, the toys they play with, the subjects they are encouraged to or feel they should study, and the jobs they see as open and available to them. Yet the impact of gender stereotypes extends far beyond these everyday assumptions. The messages children receive about what it means to be a boy, or a girl can shape their self-esteem, aspirations, relationships and sense of belonging. When rigid stereotypes go unchallenged, they can also create vulnerabilities, contributing to bullying, discrimination, harmful attitudes and barriers to seeking help.

In an increasingly complex social and digital world, young people are exposed to powerful narratives both online and offline about gender from an early age. Social media platforms, online influencers, peer groups and wider cultural expectations can reinforce narrow ideas of masculinity and femininity, often presenting them as facts rather than social constructs. For some children, these expectations may limit opportunities and confidence; for others, particularly those whose identities or experiences do not fit traditional norms, they can become a source of distress, questioning and exclusion.

Safeguarding practice requires us to look beyond immediate risks and consider the environments in which children develop. Understanding gender stereotyping is therefore not simply a matter of equality or inclusion; it is a safeguarding issue. By recognising how stereotypes influence behaviour, relationships and wellbeing, we can better identify emerging concerns, support vulnerable pupils and help create school cultures where all children feel safe, valued and able to thrive.

Some statistics and data about the impact of gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes often act as the foundational building blocks that justify and fuel sexism. As preconceived traits and roles are assigned to male or female, discriminatory attitudes, bias and unequal treatment are encouraged and normalised. The Fawcett Society published data in 2019 which indicated that 45% of people said that when they were children, they experienced gender stereotyping which expected them to behave in a certain way. This stereotyping had wide-ranging and significant negative consequences for both women and men, with more than half (51%) of people affected saying it constrained their career choices and 44% saying it harmed their personal relationships.

The prevalence of sexism and stereotyping and impact of this on girls and young women has been explored in Girlguiding's 'Girls' Attitude Survey 2024' (www.girlguiding.org.uk/about-us/press-releases/girls-attitudes-survey-24/) with the following findings:

- three in four girls aged 11-16 see or experience sexism. This increases to 95% for young women aged 17-21. They most commonly face it online (73%), in the media (70%), and in public spaces (66%). 63% said they had seen or experienced it at school and 54% when doing sports
- girls in the most deprived areas, LGBTQ+ girls and girls with a disability are more likely to see or experience sexism across all areas of their lives
- 47% of 11 to 21 year old females feel less safe as a result of sexism
- 69% of girls aged 7 to 10 feel they are expected to behave differently because they are a girl
- 60% of 11-16 year olds say they have received negative comments from other people about their appearance
- one in three girls and young women say they lack confidence in their appearance
- 59% of 13 to 21 year olds have seen or experienced sexual harassment
- just 8% of STEM apprentices are female (Fawcett Society www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/news/fawcett-research-exposure-gender-stereotypes-child-causes-harm-later-life).

When asked how they feel they are expected to behave differently because they are a girl, the responses from girls aged seven to 10 included; the way they look, the kind of sport or exercise they do, the things they like at school, the games they play, the things they say and the books they read. The impact of this is clearly significant.

In research, it was clear that this impacts on boys too – although comparable statistics are more difficult to find:

- 69% of men aged under 35 said that gender stereotyping of children has a damaging effect on perceptions of what it means to be a man or a woman (Fawcett Society www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/news/fawcett-research-exposure-gender-stereotypes-child-causes-harm-later-life)
- the permanent exclusion rate for boys is four times that for girls and more boys enter the youth offending system than girls – some boys feel that learning is not seen as 'masculine'
- 69% of boys aged 11-17 are regularly bombarded with digital content enforcing strict gender 'scripts' such as the idea that a man's worth is exclusively tied to making money, fighting or building muscle bulk (Common Sense Media www.commonsensemedia.org/press-releases/new-report-reveals-how-online-experiences-inform-adolescent-boys-development)
- 91% of adolescent boys report regularly encountering extreme body transformation content online.

This places immense physical pressure on young boys to look ‘tough’ and hyper-muscular (Common Sense Media www.commonsensemedia.org/press-releases/new-report-reveals-how-online-experiences-inform-adolescent-boys-development)

- research suggests that recommendation algorithms can expose vulnerable boys to increasingly misogynistic content (Equimundo www.equimundo.org/)
- 70% of mothers and 60% of fathers agree that gender stereotyping affects how able boys are to talk about their emotions
- 75% of suicides in 2023 were boys and young men (Papyrus www.papyrus-uk.org/press-and-media/statistics).
- 50% of young men (18–34) admit they intentionally withhold or hide their true feelings (Equimundo www.equimundo.org/)
- 26 minutes is all it takes for new social media dummy accounts simulating teenage male browsing habits to be recommended manosphere content via algorithms (TES www.tes.com/magazine/analysis/general/how-does-the-manosphere-affect-boys-in-schools).

Misogyny, the manosphere and the femosphere

The link between gender stereotyping and misogyny is a fairly obvious one, but this has been exploited in recent years by social media platforms, online influencers, online subcultures and networks to reinforce narrow ideas of masculinity and femininity, sometimes going as far as to present these views as scientific fact rather than culturally dependent and highly malleable social constructs.

So, what is the manosphere? It is a network of social media accounts and content creators that

focus on ultra-stereotypical masculine aspiration. It started on platforms such as 4Chan and Reddit but now is everywhere – on every app including the most widely used mainstream ones such as TikTok and Instagram. It is very easy for our boys and young men to get sucked into the manosphere and, in many ways, it is very hard to avoid the content online on any websites or platforms which have men as a target audience, including those related to financial and business content, body building, gym, men’s health and nutrition, and gaming. The aim of those in the manosphere is often to isolate young men and prey on their insecurities. It is also often to make money from them – it is like a pyramid scheme. Influencers train other people on what to post. They are posting to very responsive fan bases and so it is very lucrative.

The manosphere provides three layers of ‘guidance’ for followers. Firstly, advice on how to be the traditional man. This states that men have to be the breadwinner, look after their body, work out, be successful (linked to success at work and earning money) and be tall. Secondly, commentary that includes what women have to be – this is an amplification of old societal views and stereotypes. Manosphere endorses the idea that women should be in the kitchen, follow a man’s direction, embrace traditional motherhood and should be put in and kept in their place by the man. Finally, advice is given on how to be successful – how to make money and lots of it.

Often boys and young men get drawn into the manosphere through platforms that initially seem helpful, supportive and positive, but then harmful content is introduced, and algorithms work to feed more of the same which gets progressively more extreme.

The impact of this is the normalisation of these views and beliefs that encompass everyday misogyny. Young men who are positive toward manosphere figures demonstrate a significantly higher tolerance for gender-based harm and negative views toward feminists and LGBTQ+ individuals. Platforms and online communities reward these ideas and attitudes. In the past, people expressing these views would have been called out on it – now it is normalised.

These online communities also sit alongside those which are more extreme – promoting the accessing and sharing of gore vids (gore and extremism) and encouraging self-harm and suicide.

All of this emphasises the very significant role schools and settings play in challenging the gender stereotyping which is underpinning these ideas.

While there has, understandably, been a huge focus on misogyny and ideas around toxic masculinity, a recent TES article by Zofia Niemtusz has also drawn attention to the growth of the 'femosphere'. As the author identifies, the term femosphere was coined by Dr Jilly Kay, a Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication at Loughborough University. Her research has involved tracking women's anger online and she has found that many of the female-centric communities that have developed in opposition to the manosphere are, in fact, mirroring a lot of its logic.

While research into the manosphere is extensive, evidence surrounding the so-called 'femosphere' is still emerging. Education settings may nevertheless be aware of online content that reinforces rigid or transactional ideas about relationships and gender.

So, what is the femosphere and what views does it promote?

- A loose connection of online content aimed at women. It blends legitimate feminist concerns with reactionary conclusions.
- Not a unified movement, rather a set of ideas appearing on sites such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube.
- The content often starts with 'mainstream' ideas that misogyny is real, that women have experienced exploitation in relationships and that a so-called 'rape culture' exists.
- Content then becomes less mainstream when solutions are offered. The solution offered is not based on collective action or structural change.

It is based on an individualistic approach – advising women to find a 'high-value man' (usually defined by money), never let romantic feelings cloud judgement, treat dating as a game to be won and accept that men are fundamentally untrustworthy.

As the article states, "*This is the 'pink pill', a mirror image of the manosphere's 'red pill' philosophy.* Where the red pill tells men to wake up to the truth that feminism has been catastrophic for society, the pink pill tells women to wake up to the truth that feminism has been catastrophic for them, personally. The conclusions may be different, but the structure of the argument is almost identical.

Names associated with the femosphere:

- Kanika Batra, an Australian influencer and diagnosed 'sociopath'. She offers tips on emotional detachment, manipulation and strategic self-protection
- Shera Seven, based in the US, offers guidance on identifying and securing a financially secure man, rather than allowing physical attraction or love to distract from economic calculations
- The Wizard Liz, based in Dubai, whose views include uncompromising self-worth, absolute emotional detachment, and the cultivation of a 'delusional' level of confidence to achieve personal and financial independence – views that mirror early Andrew Tate content – encouraging women to manipulate and think of dating as a game to win or lose.

It is acknowledged in the article that the term 'femosphere' is not widely used and that content can be difficult to identify as it's 'slippery, contextual and often mixed with legitimate concerns'. It is probably more important to focus on the behaviour and attitudes that sit alongside this, rather than the name.

Key ideas to look out for:

- bio-essentialism: the idea that men are naturally inclined to seek multiple partners and women are suited to monogamy and domesticity and these differences are inevitable
- commodification of relationships: language around 'high-value' men, allocating value to potential partners based on financial status and seeing intimacy as a transaction to be won or lost
- anti-political fatalism: ideas that conclude that nothing can ever change, that fighting back is pointless and that a focus on individual strategy is the only rational response
- reducing relationships to what can be financially gained. An example given is social media posts on Instagram following Arsenal's Premier League win – these were full of content advising women that this was the time to “*get him to buy you the handbag, book you the holiday, get his credit card out*”
- ideas that men are fundamentally untrustworthy.

What do we need to think about in schools and settings when challenging gender stereotyping?

- Toys that children play with and types of play.
- Language used by staff.
- Curriculum content including displays.
- Enrichment opportunities including clubs.
- Role modelling.

The Fawcett Society paper 'Unlimited Potential' (2020) (www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=17fb0c11-f904-469c-a62e-173583d441c8) is really worth a read on this subject and makes some very helpful recommendations which are included below:

“Encourage children to engage with a range of activities by offering play options that actively challenge gender stereotypes and demonstrating that activities and spaces are inclusive to all. If the home corner is available for everyone to use but only the girls use it, practitioners can challenge this by actively engaging with boys and girls in that space. Or, get everyone involved with football by kicking the ball to girls.

Praise and be supportive of children when they take part in activities that run counter to gender stereotypes, such as girls engaging in risk-taking play or boys engaging in caring games. Similarly, keep a watchful eye for other children's reactions to their peers who challenge gender stereotypes, and ensure that any bullying related to non-conformity with them is addressed.

Practitioners should offer children a wide range of worldviews – include stories with diverse lead characters on the basis of gender, ethnicity and other characteristics, so that they don't just see the 'default male'. Try counting the number of male and female characters in the books and materials used in the classroom – if characters, and lead characters, are not equally present, can you find books where they are? Are female and male characters shown equally in different roles, or are, for example, male firefighters or builders, and female teachers or mothers, much more common?

Where possible, practitioners should try to use non-gendered language when talking to children, eg “Those children are good at video games.” If using gendered language is necessary, be clear you are referring to specific people, not boys and girls in general: “Those boys are good at videogames”, not “boys are good at videogames”.

Have conversations about gender with children and challenge any stereotypes they try out. When children are younger, practitioners can ask them to explain why they think a

particular thing is ‘for girls’ or ‘for boys’, and using examples you know of, challenge any stereotypes they repeat. As children get older, practitioners can begin to have developmentally-appropriate conversations about historical inequality, traditions, and learned behaviours both about gender and other characteristics.

Have conversations with colleagues about gender stereotypes. We should be willing and ready to challenge colleagues who repeat gender stereotypes. This can be as overt as telling a colleague you disagree when they tell children something is a ‘boy’ or ‘girl’ activity or as subtle as suggesting a less stereotypical book if they select a traditional fairy tale to read to the children.

Explore whether anything in the environment or practice of the setting encourages unnecessary segregation – that is, separating children by sex when it is not relevant. This might include queuing up, team sports or games, storage space.

Ensure that girls and boys are given equal space and time in your settings. Research suggests that girls are given less attention in classes – think about who you call on to answer and who gets your attention.

Reflect on your own practice and unconscious biases. We are all immersed in stereotypes, and we need to think about how they impact on our work – and what we can do to challenge them.

Consider ways other aspects of children’s identity, particularly their ethnicity, may lead to them being treated differently, adversely affecting their educational experiences and outcomes. For example, be aware of the different activities that children from different ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to take part in compared to white children.”

For leaders and governors:

“Nursery and school leadership should make challenging gender stereotypes a setting priority. This could start with using an INSET

day to discuss how gender stereotypes and other stereotypes around protected characteristics operate in the setting and identifying ways they can be challenged. It could continue with a review of gender and intersecting stereotypes in setting materials and providing staff with space to reflect on stereotyping within their practice.

Senior leaders should also model best practice to their staff (by enacting the above recommendations when interacting with children) and prioritise programmes, activities and materials that challenge gender stereotypes for funding.

Settings should encourage all practitioners to reflect on how their practice could perpetuate or, instead, challenge gender stereotypes.

Senior leaders should seek reliable resources, including those in the appendices of this report, to share with practitioners to provide advice.

Governors and members of academy boards could raise this report, and the topic of gender stereotyping, at a meeting for subsequent discussion. When the setting or school’s Public Sector Equality Duty objectives and policy are due for renewal, governors and board members can ask school or setting leadership to consider introducing an objective around actively challenging stereotypes.”

Other suggestions (from various sources)

- For young people, we can think about how we use the influencers they follow to identify and highlight content which is gender stereotyping or showing signs of manosphere (or femosphere) and talk about why this logic is flawed.
- Demonstrate the lack of logic involved in treating people differently based on gender – this video gives a good example that could be replicated in an assembly:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nM8R9ooN-k.

- Do an activity where children and young people are encouraged to be 'gender detectives'. Ask pupils to spot examples of gender stereotyping in books and what is studied in the curriculum. One example of this was pupil spotting actions in a French lesson – and seeing that 'le' or 'la' were based on gender stereotypes.
- Think about displays and imagery used in assemblies or collective worship – are these representative and do they challenge stereotypes?
- Challenge ideas that equate certain characteristics with being masculine or feminine, eg 'brave', 'dramatic', 'loud'.
- Redefine what success looks like: those tackling the manosphere talk about a need to develop a more mature idea of what masculinity looks like and to challenge the idea that there is only one form of masculinity or femininity.
- Reflect on school routines and practices. Are girls assumed to be more helpful and asked to help tidy up? Are boys assumed to be stronger and asked to move furniture? Are policies on uniform, jewellery and make-up applied equally to all? Are boys and girls asked to line up separately, or do seating plans reflect unconscious assumptions regarding gender?
- Explore the prevalence of gender stereotyping and sexism as part of strategic safeguarding – this could involve asking questions such as: do pupils feel equally safe regardless of gender? Are incidents of sexist language recorded and analysed? Have staff received training on misogyny and online harms? Are pupils exposed to harmful gender narratives online? Do curriculum resources reinforce or challenge stereotypes? Are pupils confident reporting sexism or discrimination? Does safeguarding data show any gender patterns?

While schools and education settings are not responsible for gender stereotyping and cannot 'remove' this from our society, we can actively challenge this every day and teach our children how to spot it and challenge it themselves. Challenging gender stereotypes does not require schools to promote any particular view about sex or gender. Rather, it involves ensuring that children are not limited by assumptions about what boys or girls can do, enjoy, achieve or aspire to become.

Training for your school or setting

If you would like further specific training for your school or setting, the HIAS team are developing this and will be delivering from the autumn term 2026. Please contact Cindy Pritchard or Minnie Moore if you would like to discuss this.

Further resources, guidance and research

Tips for primary school teachers – UK Feminista

<https://ukfeminista.org.uk/resources/primary/>

How to challenge gender stereotypes in the classroom – Ark Curriculum Plus

www.arkcurriculumplus.org.uk/blog/how-to-challenge-gender-stereotypes-in-the-classroom/

How to challenge gender stereotypes in the classroom with Let Toys Be Toys – Ark Curriculum Plus (Webinar)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1k0J4ZJSjk&t=12s

Challenging sexism and gender stereotypes in education

<https://my.chartered.college/research-hub/challenging-sexism-and-gender-stereotypes-in-education/>

Lifting Limits – The Children’s Society

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/lifting-limits

Stereotypes stop you doing stuff – National Education Union

<https://neu.org.uk/latest/library/stereotypes-stop-you-doing-stuff>

Gender stereotypes: Primary schools urged to tackle issue

www.bbc.com/news/education-57256075

Breaking the Mould – National Education Union

<https://neu.org.uk/advice/classroom/teaching-resources/breaking-mould> (The Breaking the Mould series of resources support nursery and primary phase teachers to think about what books they are using in their classrooms)

Redraw the Balance – challenging gender stereotypes – Education and Employers

www.educationandemployers.org/17497-2/ (Brilliant – a series of very short videos on this link which emphasises how entrenched basic stereotypes about occupations are with primary aged children in the UK and around the world)

Children’s gender roles and stereotypes – The Children’s Society

www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/blogs/how-gender-roles-affect-young-people?_gl=1*p8ptez*_up*MQ..*_gs*MQ..&gclid=CjwKC_AjwyabTBhBFEiwAM3mNUOKESJYpTmWde2yaCfMx7PL2xKWbmt_b30Yst2rL5jhcG7tSTl-YxxoCDMoQAvD_BwE

Girls attitudes survey 2024

www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2024.pdf

Gender separation in mixed schools

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b32201ce5274a55cdf21b3f/Gender-separation-guidance.pdf>

How are boys being affected by the manosphere? – TES

www.tes.com/magazine/analysis/general/how-does-the-manosphere-affect-boys-in-schools

Adolescent boys and young men

www.equimundo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Adolescent-Boys-and-Young-Men-final-web.pdf

BBC Three – Men of the Manosphere

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002m7j5 (James Blake documentary that follows three young men who are in the manosphere)

Looksmaxxing: The trend pushing men to extremes – What in the World podcast, BBC World Service

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wQBs_AGCHs&t=2s

Why some men follow influencers like Andrew Tate – What in the World podcast, BBC World Service

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXNvwBV8eK8

Beyond Equality

www.beyondequality.org/

New study reveals impact of online content on young boys

www.youtube.com/watch?v=hluKU42MIZo&t=46s

The femosphere: what teachers need to know – TES

www.tes.com/magazine/teaching-learning/secondary/what-teachers-need-to-know-femosphere-pink-pill

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Recording safeguarding concerns: what makes a good CPOMS entry?

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) requires education settings to maintain clear, factual, and secure written records of all safeguarding concerns, discussions, and decisions. Our record keeping is vitally important in ensuring that children and young people receive the right help at the right time; that we address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and promote children's welfare. Research and local child safeguarding practice reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action and examples of poor practice frequently cite concerns around poor record keeping. This article looks at good practice in record keeping and the importance of revisiting this regularly with all staff to ensure that we consistently capture all the puzzle pieces to build the picture that helps us protect and support children.

This article makes reference to CPOMS, but I should start with a BBC type disclaimer that other recording platforms are available, including paper! However, regardless of the platform or method that your setting uses, the tenets of good incident recording remain the same – and it is important that we regularly revisit this as not only does this ensure complete and effective records for each child but also ensures these records can be used in the event of care proceedings or legal cases, safeguarding practice reviews, inspections and complaints investigations.

Logging concerns: what makes a good record?

- If you think a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, tell the DSL straight away verbally/face to face and then record it. The DSL may have to take action immediately and the sooner they know in the day, the better.
- Record as soon as possible after you have heard or seen something – the longer we leave something, the more we may forget details, so record as soon as practicably possible.
- Include date and time. CPOMS automatically records the date and time an entry is made. If you are recording an incident retrospectively, ensure the narrative clearly states when the incident actually occurred or amend the date stamp if you are able to do so.
- Record where the incident happened and what was happening at the time – for example, was it in the classroom or at break or lunch?
- Use full names of those involved in the first instance. This avoids confusion and ensures the DSLs are clear about who was there and their role in the incident. Safeguarding records are kept securely, so there is no problem in putting full names.
- Describe what happened chronologically/in sequence when possible to provide a clear picture of how the incident unfolded.
- Record the incident using factual, non-emotive language. Remember, the record can be used in court proceedings or safeguarding reviews – you need to ensure that your language cannot be misinterpreted and that you create as clear a picture as possible for the person reading it. Imagine you have won the lottery and jetted off to live in the Caribbean – would anyone reading your CPOMS entry have a really clear idea of what has happened? Would your account leave them with questions? If so, is the account as specific and clear as it needs to be? Further examples of factual vs non-factual language are given on the following page.

- Avoid making any assumptions about the event, giving your interpretation or your views – our record keeping is factual. It is not the place to give theories or pose questions. Nor is it a place to embark on a conversation with the DSL – this can be done separately either in person or in an email.
- Ensure sufficient detail, but do not embellish or include unnecessary information. Clear records enable DSLs to assess risk promptly and make informed decisions about safeguarding actions.
- Record the child's voice – wherever possible, use the exact words of the child or young person, or others involved, and use quotation marks to clearly distinguish their speech.
- Select relevant categories – choose at least one category for the incident or more if applicable...but not all of them (more on this below).
- Include the actions you took – a lot of concerns that are logged will not necessarily need the DSL to take action but most should have an action from the person logging them, and it is helpful to record this to 'close the circle' for the DSL so they know there is nothing further to do. For example, instead of writing, "*I will call mum*", it is better to call mum and then write down her response. This means the DSL does not have to come back to you to ask if you have done it or not and what happened. Wherever possible, avoid the future tense...not "*I will call*" but "*I have called*" and what happened.
- Link students: if there are other children involved, or siblings (where relevant) link these to the concern.
- Record any injuries on a body map if the child or young person has physical marks.
- Attach supporting files: under the 'Files' section, you can attach any relevant documents or files that support the incident – for example, a child or young person may have drawn or written

something. This can be scanned and added to the record for completeness. For anything 'original' that the child or young person has produced, the paper version should be retained in case this is needed at a later date.

- If you have used TED when speaking with the child or young person, record that you have done so. This shows that safeguarding procedures were followed and you did not ask leading questions.
- Review your record before submitting it to double-check you have included all the information and there are no errors.

Good quality record keeping

A bit more detail about factual language

It is important that any record of an incident uses factual, non-emotive language which does not make assumptions or theorise. In education settings, we may use certain language to describe behaviour, but this can then lead to subjective interpretations of what we mean. For example, we may describe behaviour as 'dysregulated' or 'distressed'. What this means to one person may be different to what it means to someone else. Equally, what one child or young person looks like when dysregulated or distressed, may be very different from the presentation of another. So, records need to be clear about what that behaviour looks like – what have we observed or heard? What specifically is the child or young person doing or saying?

The following are some examples of CPOMs entries I use when training – then we play 'factual or not'. Can you spot the factual ones?

*Note: these do not include what the staff member did as follow up or the next steps – so are not full records and are just for training purposes. Answers are provided at the end of this article.

Pupil A had a visible bruise on his left arm, approximately 3cm in diameter, with a reddish-purple discoloration.	I am worried about Pupil B having a bruise, and I think he may have been hit by mum.	Pupil C seemed scared when they told me about their dad and I could see they were telling the truth.	I observed Pupil D refusing to eat. She became tearful and stated, <i>"I am too scared to eat"</i> .
Phone call from Pupil E's mum – she will be late picking up due to a work meeting overrunning.	Pupil F stated, <i>"My Dad hit me with a belt"</i> . She pointed to the crease of her bottom on the left as she said this and was tearful.	Pupil G seemed upset when dad came to collect and it was obvious he did not want to leave.	I asked Pupil H to clear up, and he had a meltdown and trashed the classroom.
Pupil I often arrives late for no reason and smells. Should someone call parents?	Pupil J went over to JK and slapped her on her left cheek using an open hand. This left a mark on JK's cheek with clear finger marks.	Pupil K presented as angry and dysregulated. He turned over three tables and two chairs and all the books from the shelf on the floor.	Pupil L said he's been playing GTA which is too old for him. He says mum knows about this!!

A bit more detail about 'closing the circle'

It is really important for all staff to log actions taken when recording any incidents or concerns. As we always say in safeguarding training, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – the DSL and the DSL team have oversight of all of safeguarding within the setting and are responsible for reviewing individual children and young people's records and taking appropriate action.

However, this does not negate responsibility for everyone else – if a child or young person has chosen to tell you about something, it may be appropriate to use TED to ask open, non-leading questions to clarify basic facts, while avoiding detailed questioning or investigation. If you observe something about a child or young person, it is important to follow up appropriately and record the action you have taken. The DSL and safeguarding team rely on clear, timely records so they can assess concerns effectively and determine appropriate next steps. So as staff it is important to make their job as easy as possible by ensuring action is taken (at the appropriate level which will be agreed through setting procedures and policies) and recorded clearly.

Here are a couple of examples of records that are used in training – if you read the first of each example, what questions would you be left with? What else would the DSL need to know? The examples are in pairs – a less effective one, and a more effective one. I also appreciate that some settings record behaviour separately – but let us assume in the case of Max (below) that this is part of a wider picture of safeguarding concerns, so sits comfortably on CPOMs recording.

"I was on duty when I saw Max, unprovoked, run up to Jake and scream in his face. He then attacked him. I think Jake was shocked. I told Max to stop it, and he shouted and was very rude. I am shocked at how aggressive he was."

What questions would the DSL have?

- When were you on duty and where – is this break or lunch?
- What did Max shout at Jake? How near to Jake was he?
- What does 'attacked' look like? What did Max specifically do?
- Why do you think Jake was shocked?

- How do you know this was unprovoked? This is a judgement, so this word does not need to be included.
- What did Max do that was rude and aggressive to you?
- What did you do afterwards? What actions have you taken to follow up?

A better version of this may look like this:

*"I was on duty at lunchtime outside C block. Jake was walking down the stairs. I saw Max run up to Jake and shout at Jake. I could not fully hear what he was saying but did hear the word 'Freya' (who is Max's girlfriend). Max was physically very close to Jake, and his face was almost nose to nose with him. Max then hit Jake approximately 4 times in the face with a clenched fist while holding Jake around the back of his collar. Jake fell over backwards on to the steps. He did not say anything and looked shocked. I ran over and told Max to stop. I stood between the boys. Max was very angry – he had a red face and was still shouting. I told him to move away, and he told me to 'f** off'. At this point, Mr Jones approached and supported Max to move away. I took Jake to first aid to be checked and reported what had happened to Miss Rees (Head of Year)."*

We may then expect that Miss Rees and Mr Jones may add additional detail about their next steps and follow up.

Another example:

"I am worried about Lacey – due to neglect. She arrived at school today and she was not appropriately dressed for the weather and she was definitely cold. She smelt a bit and said she was hungry. Mum had clearly not given her breakfast. I will call mum."

What questions would the DSL have?

- What does 'not appropriately dressed mean'?

- What was the weather like today? How will we know that in six months' time?
- How did you know she was definitely cold?
- What did she smell of? Dirt? Urine? Cannabis?
- How do you know that mum had not given her breakfast?
- Did you call mum or not? What was mum's response?

"Lacey came in today and was not appropriately dressed. It was raining outside and cold. Lacey was dressed in a summer school uniform dress – I noted it was the same one from yesterday as it had a yoghurt stain down the front. She had no tights and did not have a cardigan on. She did have a coat on, but this was a thin summer jacket, and she had flimsy 'ballet' style shoes on. Lacey was shivering and her face was pale. Lacey's uniform smelt of damp/dirt and her hair was not brushed. Lacey said she was hungry. I asked if she had had breakfast and she said, 'No, there is no food in the house. Mummy was asleep'. Mrs P got Lacey some cereal and she ate two bowls with milk."

I called mum at end of day, and she said she had offered Lacey breakfast, but Lacey was being, 'a fussy madam' and had refused anything mum offered. Mum said, 'I told her to put her cardigan on and her trousers and blouse, but she didn't bother'. Mum also said Lacey refused to have her hair brushed."

This is a better response as it records specific details, does not involve assumptions or 'judgemental' language and shows what the staff member did to follow up. The DSL can now make a judgement on follow up steps but is not chasing the details of the immediate actions taken.

Recording actions at a class teacher or tutor level is really helpful to ensure complete and effective record keeping and in supporting the DSL and

DSL team to be able to focus on the higher-level concerns that require action at this level.

Considerations for DSLs and DSL team

KCSIE states that the DSL is responsible for ensuring child protection files are kept up to date and that safeguarding records are clear and factual. It also states that records should include details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome, including the rationale for decision making.

There are a range of activities that DSLs can also do in relation to record keeping to ensure that this remains consistent and complete.

- Ensure that all concerns logged have identified actions (occasionally a concern won't need one, but most do).
- Discuss concerns at DSL meetings to 'sense check' decision making and ensure rationale for decision making is clear and recorded.
- Sometimes settings have DSL meeting minutes – but if the discussion is only recorded on the minutes, it's missing from the child or young person's record. Record keeping for each individual needs to be complete including showing actions and rationale for decision making. So, if individual children or young people are discussed, have CPOMS open and type in 'Discussed at DSL meeting' and the outcome of any discussion – this ensures complete record keeping and that information does not get lost in separate minutes.
- If your setting records behaviour and safeguarding separately, consider how you ensure interconnectedness of these two aspects. When does behaviour become safeguarding? What is your setting's procedure and process around this? Do all staff understand this and know when to record what and where?
- Does your setting have a clear 'hierarchy' of response? We know that parents and carers can be alarmed if there is a concern and they are immediately contacted by the DSL, deputy head, assistant head or headteacher, particularly for a lower level of concern. So, if there are those lower level concerns (for example, issues with behaviour, a child having a bullying/relationship issue with another pupil, a change of attitude, welfare concerns in terms of presentation, PE kit, lunch, emotional wellbeing) – the types of things we pick up every day as teachers – does this sit with the class teacher or form tutor to make that call or speak to parents? Are the procedures and expectations clear in your setting about what sits at different levels in terms of communicating with parents and taking action? Has this been discussed so it is clear who is doing what? It is probably fair to say that DSLs can not do it all – so have the levels of response been discussed and agreed? If they have been, is that expectation clear and upheld?
- CPOMS categories: it may be appropriate for the DSL team to discuss and rationalise CPOMS categories to remove those ones which are unhelpful or too generic (an example may be 'cause for concern' – unless this is defined, what does it mean?). A useful exercise to do is to discuss categories in your DSL team and wider staff team – does everyone have a consistent and shared understanding of what the categories mean? If not, how do you develop that? A glossary can be helpful so that staff have an aide memoir to help them – and this can also then be used for new staff. Just remember, if you add any new categories, to ensure they are ticked for transfer if that is the intention, as this does not automatically happen.
- Staff training: have staff had training on what good and effective record keeping looks like? Use of examples – such as those referenced above – can be really helpful in a continuous process of improving and tightening our record keeping.

- Ensure records have review over time. Good record keeping captures individual incidents, but DSLs should also look for emerging patterns. A single late concern logged may not be significant; repeated concerns may indicate a wider picture. Accurate records help build this picture over time.
- When reviewing records, consider what the information tells us about the child's lived experience. What is day-to-day life like for this child? Are there indications of cumulative harm?
- Quality assurance: as part of your strategic oversight, do you or your safeguarding governor, routinely quality assure your CPOMS entries to ensure the recording reflects the setting expectations? Are records clear, factual, sufficiently detailed, include the child voice and have identified actions and rationale for decision making. What is your follow up if not?

The activities and quality assurance processes, systems and procedures will be specific to each setting and environment – but the important thing is to have these conversations and agree the approach so that there is consistency and effective record keeping.

Answers to fact or not:

A – Factual	B – Not	C – Not	D – Factual
E – Factual	F – Factual	G – Not	H – Not
I – Not	J – Factual	K – Factual	L – Not

Cindy Pritchard

Inspector/Adviser for Safeguarding, HIAS

Police education and safeguarding support for schools

Education Partnership Team, School link officers and Pol-Ed

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary Education Partnership Team (EPT)



The Education Partnership Team (EPT) works alongside schools, colleges, local policing teams and safeguarding partners to support children and young people across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, helping to keep them safe through education, early intervention and prevention activity.

The team's focus is on safeguarding, prevention and education, supporting schools to address issues such as knife crime, serious violence, exploitation, online safety, anti-social behaviour, hate crime, healthy relationships and other vulnerabilities affecting children and young people.

EPT delivers proactive engagement and crime prevention activity across educational settings, helping to build resilience, improve understanding of risk and strengthen partnerships between education and policing.

Your local school link officer (SLO)

Each school should have a designated SLO from the local Neighbourhood Policing Team who acts as a key point of contact between the school and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary.

As illustrated in the School Link Officer Framework, every school is allocated a dedicated police contact (PC or PCSO) who works collaboratively with school leaders and safeguarding staff to support safeguarding, prevention and community safety.

If your school is unsure who your designated school link officer is, please email schoolyouthengagement@hampshire.police.uk.

School Link Officer Framework



School Link Officer Framework Working Together to Keep Children Safe and Supported

This framework help to support effective collaboration between education providers and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary to enhance safeguarding, prevention, and community engagement.

Safeguarding & Community Support Advice and support on safeguarding, vulnerability, local concerns and emerging trends.	Dedicated Police Contact Every school/college allocated a School Link Officer (SLO) This will be either a PC or PCSO. Not a replacement for crime reporting or safeguarding referrals	Clear Communication Channels Schools identify a named contact and safeguarding lead. School Link Officer acts as the primary police liaison.	Prevention & Early Intervention Police support engagement, education and prevention activity. Support in relation to National Campaigns, local policing priorities and Weeks of Action.
Education Partnership Team Support Access to specialist advice, resources and educational inputs. Joint delivery of school engagement activities where required.	Pol-Ed – Our Approved Education Platform Access to specialist advice, resources and educational inputs.	Positive Relationships Builds trust and confidence between young people, schools and the police. Supports safer schools and stronger communities.	Information Sharing Encourages Community Partnership Information (CPI) submissions. Supports safeguarding, early intervention and community safety.



Please contact
schoolyouthengagement@hampshire.police.uk
With any queries.



CPI QR CODE

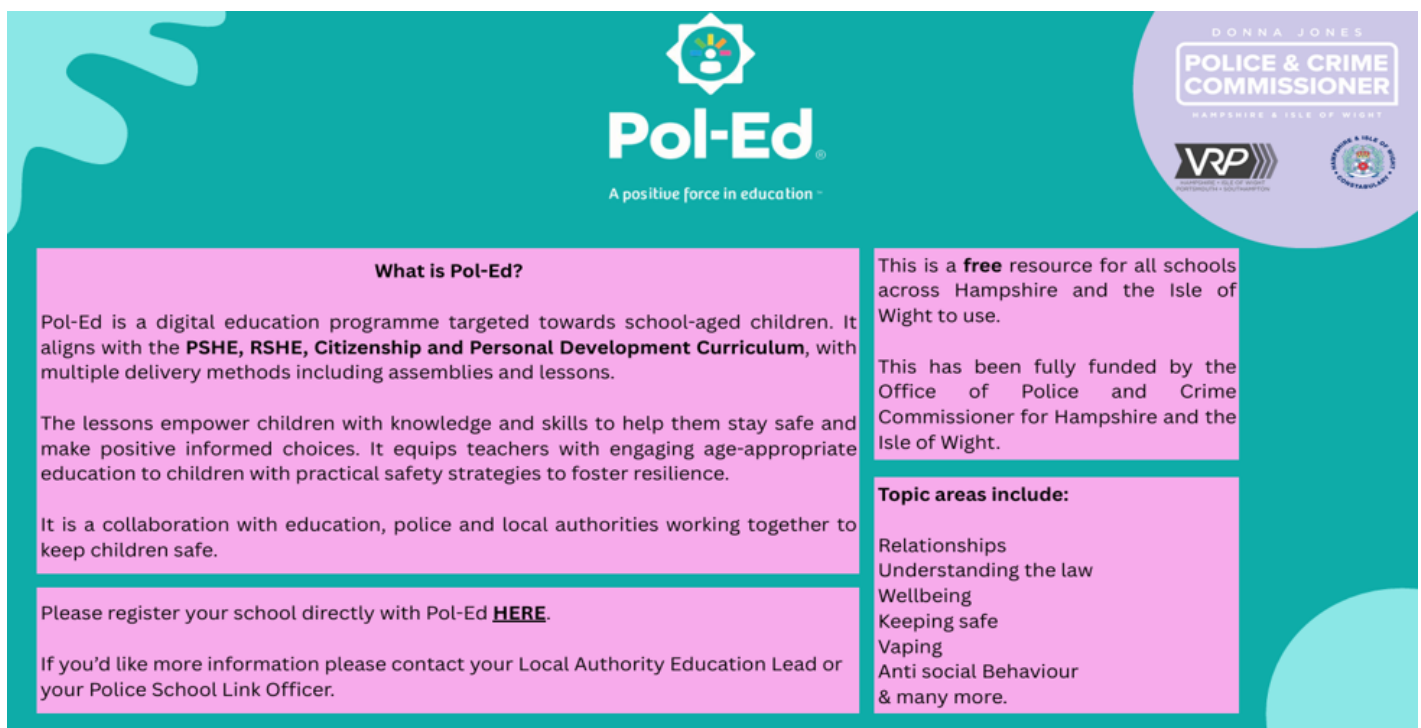
Pol-Ed: free online educational resources

Pol-Ed is a free online educational platform available to all schools across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton.

Developed by PSHE specialist teachers and quality assured by West Yorkshire Police for legal accuracy, Pol-Ed provides a comprehensive range of PSHE lessons, assemblies, and Pol-Ed Passport resources, all delivered directly through the Pol-Ed website on areas such as:

- knife crime and serious violence
- online safety and digital resilience
- child criminal and sexual exploitation
- healthy relationships
- anti-social behaviour
- hate crime and discrimination
- personal safety and risk awareness
- community responsibility and citizenship
- wellbeing and resilience
- understanding the law.

Register your school



The banner features the Pol-Ed logo at the top center, which includes a stylized head icon with a gear and the text 'Pol-Ed' and 'A positive force in education'. To the right, it identifies Donna Jones as the Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire & Isle of Wight, with logos for VRP and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Police.

What is Pol-Ed?

Pol-Ed is a digital education programme targeted towards school-aged children. It aligns with the **PSHE, RSHE, Citizenship and Personal Development Curriculum**, with multiple delivery methods including assemblies and lessons.

The lessons empower children with knowledge and skills to help them stay safe and make positive informed choices. It equips teachers with engaging age-appropriate education to children with practical safety strategies to foster resilience.

It is a collaboration with education, police and local authorities working together to keep children safe.

Please register your school directly with Pol-Ed [HERE](#).

If you'd like more information please contact your Local Authority Education Lead or your Police School Link Officer.

This is a **free** resource for all schools across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to use.

This has been fully funded by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Topic areas include:

- Relationships
- Understanding the law
- Wellbeing
- Keeping safe
- Vaping
- Anti social Behaviour
- & many more.

Not yet registered? Schools in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight can access Pol-Ed **free of charge** through funding from the **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and Isle of Wight** and supported by the **Hampshire Violence Reduction Unit**.

Register here: www.pol-ed.co.uk/hampshire/schools/new.

For any enquiries regarding Pol-Ed, support with registration, access to resources, educational content or wider support from the Education Partnership Team, please contact pol-ed@hampshire.police.uk.

Prevention through partnership

Working together, schools, school link officers, the Education Partnership Team and Pol-Ed help educate, safeguard and empower children and young people, reducing vulnerability, preventing harm and supporting safer communities.

NSPCC

Autumn 2026

1 in 5 children in the UK have suffered abuse. Children need our help to stay safe at school and at home.

Child abuse is preventable – not inevitable. That is why we're here, fighting for every childhood.

How we're supporting children

- On average a child contacts Childline every 45 seconds.
- Mental and emotional health and wellbeing remains the top concern for children and young people contacting Childline
- 29% of contacts answered by our Helpline resulted in a referral.

NSPCC Schools Service

Part of the work we do through our school service is to keep children safe using interactive, age-appropriate ways to help them:

- understand what abuse is and how to spot the signs
- know what to do if they are ever made to feel scared or worried by something
- learn about healthy relationships and their right to be safe and respected
- build their confidence and overcome any loneliness they may feel.

Gladiators star Fury our latest NSPCC Campaigner for Childhood

TV personality and former rugby union player, Jodie Ounsley, has become our newest Campaigner for Childhood. As part of her role, Jodie is encouraging children to access our **Speak out Stay safe resources**, designed to help keep children safe from harm.



Jodie Ounsley said: “I’m immensely proud to become a campaigner for this wonderful and vital charity. The NSPCC offers incredible support to children at their most vulnerable and is dedicated to being there for young people.

I’m a passionate supporter of the work the charity has done for children, in particular the online safety resources for the d/Deaf community, which warmed my heart. I’m confident we are on the right track to ensuring every child has somewhere to turn when they need support.”

Celebrating 40 years of Childline



Childline celebrates its 40th anniversary this October. To mark the occasion, we’ve created an activity pack for schools and settings to join in on the celebrations. We’re asking you, and the children and young people you work with, to help us celebrate an incredible milestone: 40 years of Childline.

Children and young people aged 5 – 16 years can get creative this Autumn and help us decorate our Childline bases with bunting, take the Childline challenge on our website or design their own Childline mascot poster to keep. Plus, they’ll learn more about this vital service and how to get support if they need it. -[Childline 40 | Activity Pack | NSPCC Learning](#) . We will also be launching a poetry competition in October.

Childline is here for children, whatever they need

A lot has changed in 40 years, but one thing has remained constant: Childline is here for children and young people, whatever they need us for.

Anyone aged under 19 can contact Childline for support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

They can contact a counsellor by 1-2-1 chat, email or call free on

0800 1111. Young people can also find information and advice on [Childline’s website](#).

NSPCC Schools Service



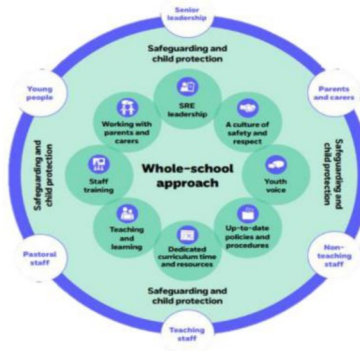
The Hampshire Schools Service is here to help you as an educator, be it at school, home or in the community, to talk to children and young people about things that really matter — like their rights, how to stay safe, and what to do if something doesn't feel right.

Our range of services are designed with educators and children in mind and made for every age — whether children are in nursery, primary, secondary school or being educated in the community or at home.

We continue to develop and expand our programmes to support your safeguarding and PSHE work. **NEW for this year-** parent and carer films to reassure and support confidence in covering these topics and to support your whole-school community.

NSPCC

Whole School Approach



Our resources provide :

- ✓ **Support for your whole school community**
- ✓ **Are curriculum-aligned and link to the new statutory RSHE guidance 2026**
- ✓ **Engaging and Inclusive resources** for all learners
- ✓ **Specialist toolkits** for children with SEND which allow for further adaption
- ✓ **Supportive resources for parents and carers** to have meaningful conversations and strengthen support networks
- ✓ **Evidence-based resources**, with proven impact in helping children understand how to seek help

Take a look below to see how we can support you and the children you educate.

Speak out Stay safe



Our Speak out Stay safe programme helps children to understand that they always have a right to feel safe, and that they can speak to a safe adult or Childline if they ever need help or support. With the help of our mascot Buddy, our Speak out Stay safe programme also visits **Hampshire primary schools** to cover topics like bullying, forms of hurt and abuse — without using any scary words or adult language. We also provide inclusive learning tools including a range of **differentiated resources** and **Widgit support**.

For **SEND schools and specialist provision** we also have our SEND/ASN/ALN, circle time programme. This resource allows children to access the messages across six sessions, using stories and characters to support understanding and build on learning. nspcc.org.uk/speakout

Practitioner Toolkit



We also have a toolkit for practitioners working in **regulated alternative provision settings**. It is a flexible resource containing engaging and interactive resources for children who would benefit from a different approach.

[Speak out Stay safe alternative provisions form | NSPCC Learning](#)

Talk PANTS

Developed with children, parents, carers and teachers, **Talk PANTS** is here to help children understand that they have a right to say no and if they need to speak out about something, someone will listen.



With the help of our friendly dinosaur Pantosaurus, **Talk PANTS** is a simple conversation to help keep children safe from sexual abuse. It helps children understand that their body belongs to them, and they should tell a safe adult they trust if anything makes them feel upset or worried.

Our videos, lesson plans, classroom activities and supporting resources help you to deliver age-appropriate sessions with children aged 3- to 11-years-old. We also provide **Talk PANTS SEND/ASN/ALN** and **Talk PANTS Makaton** for children who have additional needs.

[NSPCC Learning/ Talk PANTS](#)

Talk Relationships

We help schools through providing training and lesson plans that help deliver age - appropriate sex and relationships education to secondary school children.

There's a lot we need to talk about. To make it easier, we created **Talk Relationships**.



NSPCC
Learning





Talk Relationships supports all UK secondary schools to deliver inclusive sex and relationships education. Its goal is to help young people understand **healthy behaviours in relationships**, recognise their right to be **safe, heard, and respected**, and know how to seek help from a trusted adult if needed. The program adopts a **whole-school approach**, ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and students contribute to a respectful and safe school culture.

nspcc.org.uk/talk-relationships

Free training – to strengthen early years safeguarding skills



We have just launched free training to strengthen early years safeguarding skills. The Department for Education collaborated with us to develop training for nurseries, childminders and other early years settings.

- New Department for Education (DfE) online training, developed in collaboration with us, aims to strengthen safeguarding culture for nurseries, childminders and other early years settings in England.

- Participants will learn how to keep children safe from abuse through animations, real-life safeguarding scenarios and practical activities.

The course, developed by NSPCC experts, expands our safeguarding training and resources for the early years, with more available through our NSPCC Learning site.

The training is available through [the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#) and is aimed at those working with babies and young children in nurseries, pre-schools and childminding settings in England.

[Register for the training](#)

Professional learning

- **Free newsletters and email alerts**
Our emails keep you up to date with the latest safeguarding news.
- **Briefings and practical guidance**
Up to date summaries of key safeguarding legislation and practice guidance.
- **Research findings**
All the latest NSPCC insights about children, young people and their families.
- **Self-assessment tool**
Audit your organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies with our free online checklist.
- **Online and in-person training courses**
We offer a range of courses for schools, voluntary and community groups, and anyone working or volunteering with children.

NSPCC
Learning



[NSPCC Learning | Safeguarding and child protection](https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools)

Find out more about what the Schools
Service has to offer:



<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools>

If you have any questions about what we can offer your school or provision.
Please contact us:

Emma Aked – Hampshire Schools Coordinator

Specialist Schools and Inclusion Lead

Emma.aked2@nspcc.org.uk

Jan McDonald – Hampshire Schools Coordinator

Janine.mcdonald@nspcc.org.uk

Michelle Barry – Hampshire, Southampton & Portsmouth Coordinator

Talk Relationships and Talk PANTS Lead

Michelle.Barry@nspcc.org.uk

Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board



The Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) will be working with education partners over the coming months to strengthen understanding of adult safeguarding.

Please take a few minutes to watch the Adult Safeguarding Animation www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUUUlnGExnQ&t=5s.

Further information and guidance on identifying safeguarding concerns relating to adults, and how to report a concern, can be found on the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) website <https://hampshiresab.org.uk/>.

HSAB also offers a comprehensive programme of free lunchtime learning sessions (<https://hampshiresab.org.uk/professionals/hsab-learning-zone/browse-book-courses>). These one-hour training events cover a range of safeguarding topics and are available to all professionals.

We encourage colleagues to make use of these valuable resources to develop their knowledge and confidence in recognising and responding to adult safeguarding concerns.

Courses

Details of our upcoming safeguarding courses and networks are provided below. Visit our [safeguarding courses Moodle page](#) or scan the QR code for our full catalogue of safeguarding professional learning opportunities.

How to book

All training can be booked via the Learning Zone. To search for a specific course, type the keywords provided in the *Find Learning* box, then click *See Classes* for details of available dates and times.

Learning Zone guidance

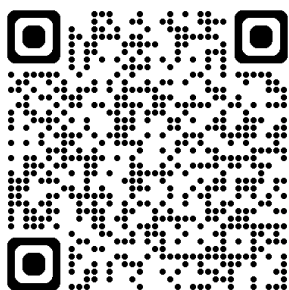
Visit our Learning Zone Moodle information page for Guidance on accessing the Learning Zone and managing bookings.

<https://hias-moodle.mylearningapp.com/mod/page/view.php?id=481>.

Need help?

To speak to a member of the Learning and Development team, please contact:

Email: cs.learninganddevelopment@hants.gov.uk



Primary

Primary Safeguarding Networks 2026-27

This network focuses on the practical leadership and oversight of safeguarding and child protection in schools.

The district network is facilitated by the local LLPR with some input from Cindy Pritchard (HIAS Lead Safeguarding Adviser).

These sessions are aimed at senior leaders and are designed to enable effective oversight of safeguarding. Each session focuses on a different aspect of the leadership of safeguarding. There will also be opportunities for participants to discuss local contextual safeguarding issues, problem solve and share best practice.

Please note, this network is the continuation of existing networks that have been running in Fareham and Gosport and Havant and East Hants but is now offered across the county at a district level. Sessions run concurrently across other districts, meaning attendees can attend alternative group sessions should dates clash.

Important: This network does not replace statutory DSL training and is separate to any existing DSL networks.

The course price entitles a school to two places.

-  **Fareham and Gosport:** 18 September, 13 November 2026, 14 January, 4 March, 23 April and 17 June 2027
- Havant and East Hants:** 16 September, 18 November 2026, 20 January, 3 March, 28 April and 16 June 2027
- Hart and Rushmoor:** 24 September, 19 November 2026, 28 January, 18 March, 29 April and 24 June 2027

Continued on next page

HIAS curriculum update

Basingstoke and Deane: 29 September, 17 November 2026, 19 January, 9 March, 27 April and 22 June 2027

Winchester and Eastleigh: 24 September, 19 November 2026, 14 January, 18 March, 29 April and 24 June 2027

Test Valley: 24 September, 19 November 2026, 21 January, 4 March, 29 April and 17 June 2027

New Forest: 24 September, 19 November 2026, 21 January, 4 March, 29 April and 17 June 2027

Safeguarding Network

£ Part 1: Sub £250 / SLA £220 / Full £300

Part 2: Sub £125 / SLA £105 / Full £150

Total: Sub £375 / SLA £325 / Full £450

*split over two financial years

Cross phase

Preventing Radicalisation in the Context of Safeguarding

This course is designed for designated safeguarding leads to provide the required more in-depth training on Prevent, including extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels. KCSIE recommends this training is updated at least every two years, enabling the lead to support other staff on Prevent matters and update them on relevant issues.

 15 October 2026

Preventing Radicalisation

£ Sub £120 / SLA £65 / Full £140

Contact details

Cindy Pritchard, Inspector/Adviser for Safeguarding, HIAS

Tel: 07703 944343

Email: cindy.pritchard@hants.gov.uk

Website: www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hias

Also from HIAS!

Publications: If you enjoyed reading this curriculum update why not take a look to see what other publications are produced by the Hampshire Improvement and Advisory Service. You will find a list of publications on our website at:

<https://hampshireservicesforschools.hants.gov.uk/Page/43633>.

Moodles: Have you visited the HIAS Moodles? The Moodle sites include top-quality resources, training and course materials – see: <https://hias-moodle.mylearningapp.com/>. Do not forget to sign up to our site news pages so we can keep you up to date with the latest news and training opportunities from the HIAS subject teams.

Moodle+ offers access to a wide range of high-quality resources for subject leads and teachers for all key stages in primary and secondary and is available by subscription. For more information email HIAS Publications: hias.publications@hants.gov.uk.