

Keeping children safe in education

Changes for 2024

The guidance should be read alongside:

- Statutory guidance **“Working Together to Safeguard Children”**.
- Departmental advice **“What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners”**.

Additional Updates to Key Terminology

Victims and alleged perpetrator(s)

The term **“victim”** is used for clarity, though not everyone subjected to abuse may identify with this term. Schools and colleges should respect the preferences of the individual involved. Similarly, the terms **“alleged perpetrator(s)”** and **“perpetrator(s)”** are used for clarity but should be used thoughtfully. Schools and colleges should choose appropriate terminology based on each specific case.

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to:

- negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
- undermine, overturn or replace the UK’s system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

Additional areas terminology update:

- Abuse and neglect, includes **exploitation**.
- Safeguarding issues must be considered and include: **unexplainable and or/persistent absences from education**.

Part One - Safeguarding Information

A reminder to all staff that **“Children” includes everyone under the age of 18”**.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. ‘Children’ includes everyone under the age of 18. (para 2).

Definition of ‘safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’. (p4)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework.

Early help (p18):

All school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for children.

The increased emphasis on students who have **“experienced multiple suspensions, are at risk of being permanently excluded from schools, colleges, and in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit”** highlights national concerns about rising suspension rates and the importance of considering behaviour within a safeguarding context as outlined in the Behaviour in Schools guidance.

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Indicators of Abuse and neglect – text added “including where they see, hear, or experience its effects” when referring to domestic violence. Abuse is a form of maltreatment where a child is harmed or not protected from harm. Abuse can occur in person, entirely online or be facilitated by technology. Both adults and other children can be perpetrators of abuse. (para 24)

Prevent and Legal Changes

Annexe B - Further information

Updated indicators of CCE and CSE for both perpetrators and alleged perpetrators, including (page 115):

- Going missing and being found far from home.
- Being involved in serious violence, either as victim, perpetrator, or alleged perpetrator.
- Receiving drug requests via phone, moving drugs, and handling drug money.
- Being exposed to drug concealment techniques like ‘plugging’.
- Being found in unfamiliar accommodations linked to drug activity.
- Owing a debt to exploiters.
- Having bank accounts used for drug dealing.

Children and the court system - Children may need to provide evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. To support them, there are two age-appropriate guides available: one for 5 to 11 year-olds and another for 12-17-year-olds. (page 148).

Preventing radicalisation -

All schools and colleges have a duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, known as the Prevent duty, to prevent individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This duty aligns with wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders should acquaint themselves with the revised Prevent duty guidance. (page 156).

