



THE  
DIOCESE OF  
SHEFFIELD  
ACADEMIES  
TRUST

# Safeguarding: Weekly Schedule for Training

Updated January 2026



*This training booklet can be used to support your annual safeguarding training, or used weekly as a 'starter' in staff meetings to maintain staff awareness and the profile of safeguarding throughout the school year. There are 40 weeks covered, allowing for flexibility.*

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## **WEEK 1 - KEY THEMES IN SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding in school centres on proactively protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm—both online and offline—through robust policies, trained staff, and multi-agency working. Key themes include online safety, mental health, child-on-child abuse, domestic abuse, exploitation (CSE/CCE), and the "5 Rs": Recognise, Respond, Report, Record, Refer.

Here is a breakdown of the key themes in safeguarding within schools:

### **1. Types of Abuse and Neglect**

- **Physical, Emotional, and Sexual Abuse:** Recognizing signs of direct harm.
- **Neglect:** Identifying persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs.
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB):** Addressing child-on-child sexual violence, harassment, and inappropriate behaviour.
- **Bullying and Cyberbullying:** Tackling peer-on-peer abuse.

### **2. Exploitation and External Risks**

- **Online Safety and Abuse:** Risks from social media, grooming, and exposure to harmful content.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Criminal Exploitation (CCE):** Including county lines and gang involvement.
- **Extremism and Radicalisation:** Fulfilling the "Prevent" duty.
- **Trafficking and Modern Slavery.**

### **3. Contextual and Welfare Themes**

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Supporting emotional issues, self-harm, and suicidal behaviour.
- **Domestic Abuse:** Recognising the impact of home environments on children.
- **Missing Children:** Dealing with absences that indicate risk.
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).**
- **Cultural Issues:** Such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

### **4. Operational Safeguarding (How Schools Operate)**

- **The 5 Rs:** Recognizing, Responding, Reporting, Recording, and Referring concerns.
- **Whole-School Approach:** Ensuring all staff and volunteers are trained and confident in raising concerns.
- **Professional Curiosity:** Asking deeper questions and challenging situations rather than accepting face-value explanations.
- **Multi-Agency Working:** Collaborating with social services, police, and health partners.

## WEEK 2 – DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE

### Dealing with a disclosure

- When children or young people talk to adults about something that is troubling them, or about the behaviour of someone they know which could be abusive, this is known as a disclosure.
- Disclosures often come in different shapes and forms, and can be shared at any time. When children choose you to talk, they have seen that you are trustworthy and reliable. The responsibility that adults have can sometimes feel difficult.
- Points to remember; actively listen, encourage children to keep talking without rushing them, use open questions that don't lead the child, and record what they say using their own language.
- Tell the child that you are pleased that they have been able to talk to you, but that in order to help them you will have to share this information with others.
- Sometimes when you tell children that you might have to tell someone about what they say, they decide not to speak anymore. Support them in their decision and give them some options. For example, '*remember you can come back at another time. I'm always here for you*'; or suggest another suitable adult; or reference a helpline, like Childline.
- Write up the conversation and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead about the concern. Do this without delay.
- Log your information on CPOMS as per your school's safeguarding protocols.



## **WEEK 3 – LET CHILDREN KNOW YOU ARE LISTENING**



There are three simple directions to remember...

**1. Show you care, help them OPEN UP**

Give them your full attention and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases like “you’ve shown such courage today” can help.

**2. Take your time, SLOW DOWN**

Respect pauses and don’t interrupt them – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what’s happened to them.

**3. Show you understand, REFLECT BACK**

Make it clear you’re interested in what they’re telling you. Reflect back what they’ve said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it’s their experience.

## **WEEK 4 - WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?**

### **WHY HAVEN'T YOU REPORTED YOUR CONCERNS?**

#### **Abuse doesn't happen here**

- Child abuse can take place anywhere, to any child, no matter what their age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status

#### **It's not my business**

- Safeguarding is everyone's business. Everyone has a role to play. You could provide the missing piece of information needed to keep a child safe

#### **I might be wrong**

- You don't have to be certain of your suspicions. If you have any concerns, speak to your designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

#### **I don't know what to look for**

- Look for changes in the child's appearance, behaviour and communication.
- Speak to your DSL if you need further support or training

#### **I might face repercussions**

- You will get support throughout. Remember that not reporting suspected abuse could have serious consequences for the child

#### **I don't know what to do**

- Speak to your DSL. If the child is in immediate danger, they can call the police and/or your local children's social care team

#### **I don't know what will happen next**

- Your concerns will be listened to, information gathered and, if referred, a social worker will assess whether any support and/or intervention is needed

#### **It could make it worse for the child**

- A child can only be helped if the right people know about their situation. Decisions will be made with their best interests in mind

**Speak out, don't delay**



## WEEK 5 – RECORDING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Where a child has made a disclosure, a written factual record, using the **child's own words**, should be made using your school's reporting procedures.

In the case of a disclosure, the record should include:

- As **full account** as possible of what the child said, and an account of **any questions** put to the child
- **Time and place** of disclosure, and **who** was present at the time of the disclosure
- The **demeanour** of the child, and **where** the discussion took place
- Any **information provided** to the child about what would happen next
- Pupils should be informed that any disclosure they make will be treated sensitively but may need to be shared with other professionals if it is considered necessary to protect the child or someone else from harm.
- Distinguish fact from opinion and record that difference clearly. Professional opinion may be expressed e.g. 'Jack appeared angry as he was kicking the table and swearing.'
- Where no disclosure has been made, but there are concerns regarding the welfare or well-being of a student, staff should make a written account of such concerns as per school's safeguarding policy. This will ensure that information from all members of staff is logged and collated so that essential information is not overlooked.
- All records should be uploaded onto CPOMS.
- All concerns must be passed to the DSL without delay. In some cases, it may be necessary to pass concerns verbally to the DSL and follow it up in writing within 24 hours.
- Concerns that appear initially to be trivial may turn out to be vital pieces of information, so it is important to give as much detail as possible.
- If a staff member has difficulty accessing CPOMS, or is unsure of how to create a report, they should consult their DSL/DDSLs for advice and support.
- Always bear in mind that someone else or another agency (e.g. the police for purposes of a criminal investigation) may need to read your report at some stage in the future. This may also include the child's parents or carers. If in doubt about the wording of your report, always seek advice.



## WEEK 6 – HOW TO HAVE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS WITH CHILDREN



Whether you're talking to a group or an individual, there are some general principles that will help you discuss sensitive subjects with children and young people:

**Help them feel comfortable** - Acknowledge that the topic isn't easy to talk about but explain why it's important to talk about it.

**Show you're listening** - Encourage children to talk openly and make it clear that you value their opinions. You could set ground rules, such as not interrupting and respecting other people's points of view.

**Give them time** – Let them set their own pace - don't push them to say more than they want to. Give time to process certain topics, and let them know they can come back to you another time if they need to.

**Stay neutral** - Avoid displaying strong emotions such as shock or embarrassment in response to something a child or young person says. This might discourage them from sharing their experiences with you.

**Be open and honest** - Encourage them to ask questions. Answer them as honestly as possible, whilst taking into consideration their age and emotional maturity.

**Get your facts straight** - If you don't know the answer to a question, say so – don't provide young people with information that's incorrect. You could look for the answer together, recommend where they can find information or research and share what you have found next time you meet.

**Use the right language** - Make sure children understand the terminology associated with the topic and that it is age- appropriate.

**Be clear about confidentiality** - It's important that children feel able to share their experiences with you. But if you have any concerns about their wellbeing, you must make a report following your child protection procedures. Never promise to keep things a secret and explain that you have a responsibility to tell people who can help.

**Put support in place** - Following your conversation, children may have further questions or want to talk more about the issue. Make sure they know who they can talk to. Think about how to let parents know what you've been talking about, so that they can provide further support at

home. Consider setting some time aside as a follow-up session to give children the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and feelings.

**Recognise the signs** - Talking about difficult or upsetting topics might make some children think about other things that are happening in their lives. Make sure you are equipped to recognise the signs that a child you are talking to may have experienced abuse and know how to respond

## WEEK 7 – COERCIVE CONTROL

**Coercive Control is when someone in a relationship is continuously controlling to the person they are in a relationship with. Threats and intimidation are used in order to increase the control over a person, isolate them from their support networks, frighten them and control their everyday behaviour.**

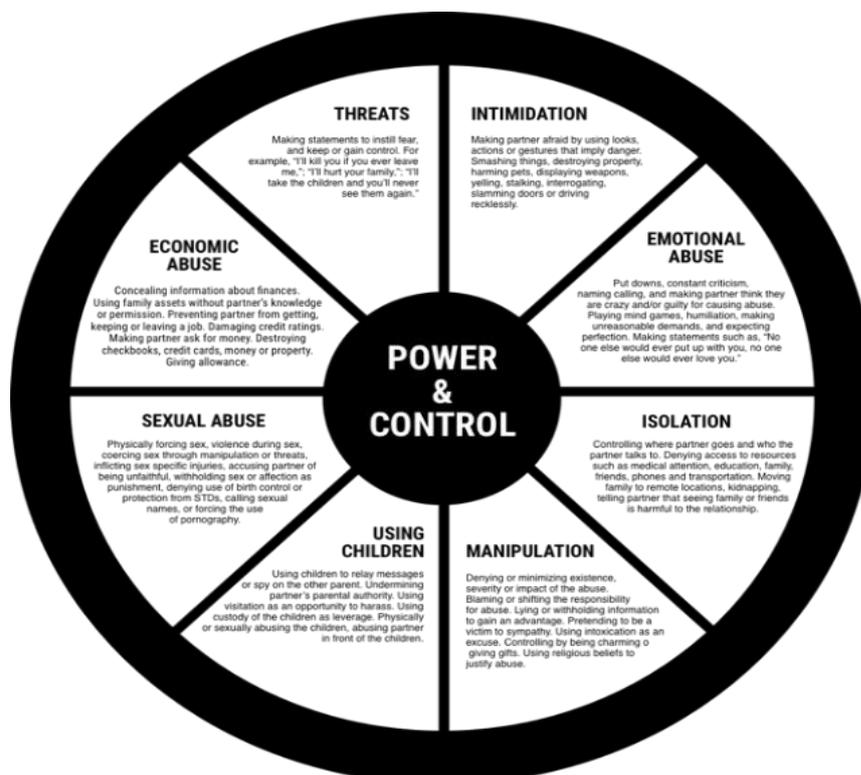
The technical term, **coercive control (CC)**, includes emotional, mental and physical abuse, harassment, financial abuse / extortion, and malicious communications.

Coercive Control is an **offence**. Under the Serious Crime Act 2015, the offence closes the gap in the law around patterns of controlling or coercive behaviours in an ongoing relationship between intimate partners or family members.

It is considered to be one of the most dangerous risk factors within domestic abuse.

Coercive control can include:

- Isolating a person from their friends and family
- Taking control over aspects of their everyday life, such as where they go, who they can see, what to wear and when they can sleep
- Enforcing rules and activity which humiliate, degrade or dehumanise
- Financial abuse including control of finances
- Threats of violence, threats to take children away or threats to hurt pets if the person does not do as their partner tell them
- Monitoring a person's activities, including their communication on the phone or internet
- Repeatedly putting a person down and making them feel worthless
- '**Gaslighting** is a tactic in which a person or entity, in order to gain more power, makes a victim question their reality.



## **WEEK 8 – DOMESTIC ABUSE**

*Schools should make children aware of all forms of abuse in an age-appropriate way through lessons and assemblies. This includes explaining what domestic abuse is and how children can get help. Teachers have the opportunity to promote healthy relationships and let young people know who they can talk to if they ever need support.*



Domestic abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional abuse. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

The COVID lockdown saw a rise in cases of domestic abuse or violence. Factors like economic strains and relationship stress have continued to exacerbate the situation.

### **Signs of witnessing domestic abuse**

- Being aggressive or bullying others, or having tantrums
- Anti-social behaviour, like vandalism
- Having anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts
- Being attention seeking
- Wetting the bed, having nightmares or insomnia
- Being constantly or regularly ill, with colds or similar minor ailments.
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Eating disorders
- Having problems in school or difficulty with their learning
- Becoming withdrawn

Intervening early helps to stop abuse getting worse and prevent children experiencing significant harm, so it's important to be alert to signs.

### **What to do**

- Speak to the DSL (or deputy) if you have any concerns. Record your concerns
- Don't promise to keep it secret if a child makes a disclosure to you
- If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if appropriate. Then tell the DSL or deputy

### **National Domestic Abuse Helpline**

(freephone, 24/7): 0808 2000 247, [nationaldahelpine.org.uk](https://nationaldahelpine.org.uk)

Our DSLs also receive alerts from **Operation Encompass**, if the police have attended a domestic abuse incident where children were present.

## **WEEK 9 - CHILD TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY**

**Child trafficking is child abuse. It is defined as recruiting, moving, receiving and harbouring children for the purpose of exploitation. Child trafficking is a form of modern slavery.** Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

### **Children may be trafficked for:**

- child sexual exploitation or criminal activity, including: *cannabis cultivation, street crime, moving drugs, benefit fraud, immigration fraud, selling pirated goods*, forced marriage, domestic servitude, forced labour, including working in *restaurants, nail bars, factories, agriculture*, illegal adoption, unreported private fostering arrangements (for any exploitative purpose).

### **Signs and indicators:**

Children who are trafficked are intentionally hidden and isolated from the services and communities who can identify and protect them. While identification may be difficult, there will be signs that you can watch for.

Children who have **been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked** may:

- have to do excessive housework chores
- rarely leave the house and have limited freedom of movement
- not have any documents (or have falsified documents)
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children
- be unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- be cared for by adults who are not their parents or carers
- not have a good quality relationship with their adult carers
- be one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- receive unexplained or unidentified phone calls whilst in a care placement or temporary accommodation

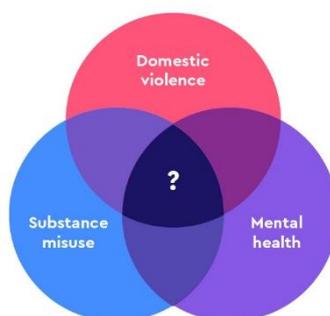
### **Risks and vulnerability factors**

Boys and girls of all ages can be victims of trafficking. Children who have been trafficked may be from the UK or another country.

Children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking if they come from an area where:

- there is poverty
- there is or has recently been a war
- education levels are low
- there is discrimination or persecution
- there is political conflict and economic uncertainty

## WEEK 10 - TOXIC TRIO (OR FAMILIES WITH MULTIPLE NEEDS)



The "toxic trio" in safeguarding refers to the co-occurrence of **domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health, and substance misuse** in a family, which increases the risk of harm to children. Safeguarding professionals use this term to identify families where these issues are present, as they often interact to create a complex and harmful environment for children, impacting their health, education, and emotional development. While the term is useful for identifying risk, some organisations suggest using the updated term "families with multiple needs" to avoid stigma.

### Key aspects of the "toxic trio" in safeguarding

- **The three issues:** The term specifically identifies the combination of domestic abuse, mental health problems, and substance misuse (drugs or alcohol).
- **Interconnectedness:** These issues are often intertwined and can exacerbate one another. For example, domestic abuse can lead to mental ill-health, and substance misuse can be a consequence of or contribute to domestic abuse or mental health problems.
- **Impact on children:** Children living in these households are at a higher risk of harm and neglect. The impact can affect their emotional well-being, academic performance, and overall development.
- **Risk indicators:** The presence of the "toxic trio" is considered a key indicator of increased risk to children, prompting professionals to intervene and provide support.
- **Safeguarding response:** Professionals are trained to recognise the signs and raise concerns to get support for these families, with early intervention seen as crucial.

### Evolution of the term

- **"Families with multiple needs":** Some safeguarding partnerships have moved away from the "toxic trio" label to "families with multiple needs" to avoid the negative connotations of the term "toxic".
- **Focus on support:** The shift in language is part of a broader effort to focus on the needs of the family as a whole, rather than just applying labels.

### What to do if you have concerns

- **Raise concerns:** If you are a professional, follow your organisation's safeguarding policy and report your concerns through the appropriate channels, such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- **Report to authorities:** If you have concerns about a child's safety, report them to your local authority or the relevant safeguarding board

## WEEK 11 - CHILD ABDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY INCIDENTS

### **Definition:**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child



The Child Abduction Act (1984) makes it a criminal offence for anyone “connected with” (e.g. parents, guardians or a person with a residence order or custody) a child under the age of 16 to “take or send” that child out of the UK without the appropriate consent.

Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe.

Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by staff as part of the PSHE curriculum or in assemblies, or may be supported by local police/PCSOs/Early Help.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about 'stranger danger'.

## **WEEK 12 - SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

### **Whole school approach**

Reducing the risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment should be seen in the context of developing a **whole school culture**.

- *The procedures to deal with sexual violence and sexual harassment should be transparent, and easy to understand for pupils, staff and parents.*
- *Staff need to understand how these safeguarding risks manifest in their school and local context.*
- *All staff must know how to raise a concern they may have about a pupil, or another adult.*
- *Schools need to develop effective programmes PSHE and SRE.*
- *Pupils should be helped to understand safeguarding issues, how to raise a concern they may have about themselves, or a friend or peer; and learn to recognise and develop healthy and respectful relationships, avoiding stereotypes and promoting equality.*
- *Pupils should be taught that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong.*
- *Schools should consider how they might use the expertise of external, specialist organisations to train staff or support groups of young people.*

### **Victim**

- the needs and wishes of victim are paramount
- minimise potential for bullying or victimisation in school
- not made to feel they are the problem
- aim for victim to carry out normal routine
- recognise that they may struggle in class and may need time out (if they wish)
- be aware that they may not disclose the whole picture immediately
- prepare for support over a long period and consider who is involved (internal and external)
- if victim moves school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) informs the new school of the need for continued support

### **Alleged Perpetrator**

- possible tension between discipline and support (these are not mutually exclusive)
- consider age/ developmental stage/any SEND
- proportionate response
- consider unmet needs (for example, harmful sexual behaviours (HBV) in younger children may be a sign of abuse or trauma)
- if (alleged) perpetrator moves school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) informs the new school of the issues and transfers the child protection file

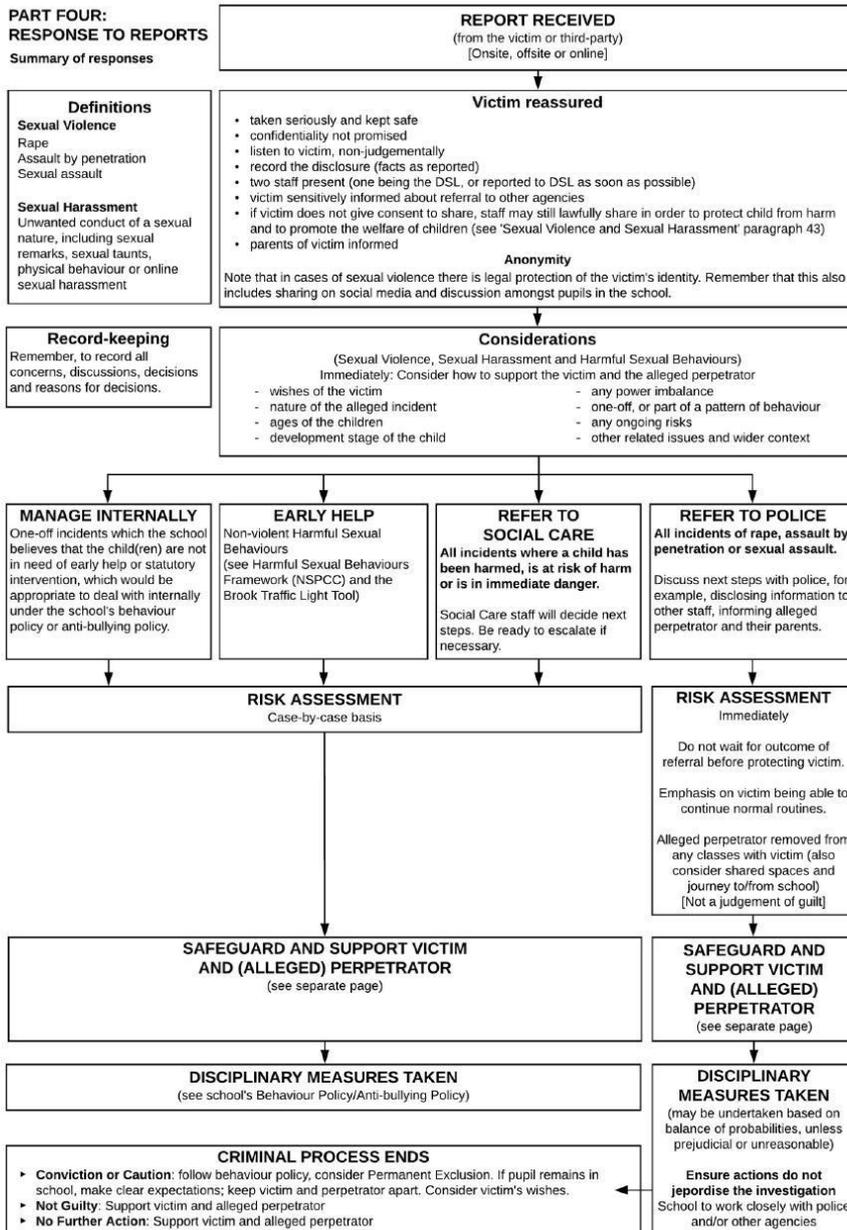
### **Other children**

- witnesses may need support (especially in cases of sexual violence)
- avoid allowing pupils to 'take sides'

### **Legal Responsibilities**

Schools have a legal responsibility to understand and minimise the risk of sexual violence and sexual harassment

**PART FOUR:  
RESPONSE TO REPORTS**  
Summary of responses



Source:  
Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2017)

SVSH Flow Chart for Schools 2017 v.1.0

## **WEEK 13 -CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE**

Child-on-child abuse refers to harmful behaviours by one child/young person towards another, which are inappropriate and abusive in nature, and can include physical, sexual or emotional abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment, all forms of bullying, coercive control, hate incidents or hazing/initiation rituals. Abuse can take place in or out of school, online or offline.

Staff should be aware of this issue, and know how to respond.

Child on child abuse is harmful to all involved, not only the victim. Witnessing the abuse of another child will cause emotional harm, and can make a child fearful for their own safety. Children or young people who harm others may themselves be victims of harm, be exposed to domestic abuse, experience disruption in their lives, be under achieving at school or exploited by others.

It is essential that all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children and young people. Downplaying certain behaviours as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, and an unsafe environment for children. Allowing a culture that normalises abuse often discourages children and young people from reporting it.

### **Spot the Signs**

- absence from education
- Physical injuries
- Mental or emotional ill health
- Becoming withdrawn
- Poor self esteem
- Tiredness
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Changes in behaviour
- Unexpected behaviour for their age/stage of development
- Rumours or 'coded talk' amongst pupils
- Enacting harmful behaviours towards others

Any child can experience child-on-child abuse, but there are additional vulnerabilities making children or young people more susceptible to abuse;

- Aged 10 and upwards
- Being female
- Having special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Having intra-familial abuse in the family history and/or living with domestic abuse
- Being a child in care
- Experiencing or having experienced bereavement
- Being, or being perceived to be, LGBTQ+
- Being from a minority ethnic group

### **What to do**

- **Keep talking** – there should be opportunities to discuss issues that could motivate child-on-child abuse. Make it clear that your setting has a zero tolerance approach, which

means that behaviours won't be passed off as 'banter', and that fair actions will be taken to ensure everyone feels and is safe and supported.

- **Create a safeguarding culture in school** – ensure children feel secure and able to express their emotions and concerns, where they know they will be listened to and can ask for the help they need.
- **Create an environment based on equality and informed choice** – success in learning within a supportive community can tackle prejudice and inequality.
- **Ensure any incident of child-on-child abuse receives a rapid response** – offer ways for students to be able to share concerns, and follow school policy and procedures.
- **Spot the signs and know what to do** – you know the children you work with. Be aware of the signs and how to recognise them. Follow safeguarding procedures and have confidence to follow your instincts.
- **Take action** – any concerns should be raised with your designated safeguarding leads. If a child is in immediate danger, dial 999.

## **WEEK 14 -CHILD ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** **SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND ALLEGED PERPETRATORS**

### **Child-on-child sexual abuse: what to do if a child makes a disclosure**

- ✓Listen and reassure the child that they will be supported and kept safe
- ✓Make a written record as soon as possible, stating only the facts
- ✓Tell your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) urgently:
- ✓Where appropriate, take action yourself:

- If the child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, make a referral to children's social care
- If an offence has been committed, report it to the police (even if the alleged perpetrator is under 10 – the age of criminal responsibility)
- Find out whether the victim and alleged perpetrator share classes, premises or transport, and consider how best to deal with this

### **NEVER**

- x Dismiss the incident as 'banter', 'part of growing up' or 'having a laugh'
- x Ask leading questions
- x Promise total confidentiality – explain who you will need to tell and why
- x Take notes while the child is talking, if at all possible
- x Tell anyone about the disclosure unless they need to know in order to progress it

Make sure you understand your child protection policy and procedures for dealing with child-on-child abuse and follow these.

### **Key definitions:**

**Child-on-child sexual abuse:** when a child (anyone under the age of 18) commits an act of sexual violence or harassment against another child

**Sexual violence:** rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault (intentional sexual touching)

**Sexual harassment:** unwanted conduct of a sexual nature – such as sexual comments, sexual jokes or taunting, physical behaviour like interfering with clothes, or online harassment such as sexting

**Upskirting:** taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm

### **Sexual activity is an offence if:**

- Person B (the victim) does not consent
- Person A (the perpetrator) does not reasonably believe that Person B consents

### **Someone consents if they:**

- Agree by choice
- Have the freedom and capacity to choose

## WEEK 15 - COUNTY-LINES



**County lines is a term for a form of criminal exploitation in which organised crime groups use dedicated mobile phone lines (or 'deal lines') to export illegal drugs from large cities and urban areas into smaller towns and rural areas. These gangs exploit children and vulnerable people by coercing them into transporting and selling the drugs and money involved. This exploitation is often associated with other serious crimes, such as violence, sexual abuse and human trafficking.**

The influence of county lines is nationwide. Young people aged 14-17 years are most likely to be targeted by criminal groups and gangs, but children of primary school age are increasingly likely to be seen as 'easy targets' because they are less likely to get caught. Younger children may start as observers keeping watch, but are soon escalated into criminal activity.

As well as the storage and supply of drugs, gangs also use children for the movement of cash proceeds (money mules) and to secure the use of dwellings (cuckooing.)

Criminal gangs groom children into trafficking their drugs for them with the promise of money, friendship and status. Once drawn in, children are controlled using threats, violence and sexual/physical abuse. These children then become trapped in criminal exploitation and feel as if they have no choice but to continue doing what the gang wants.

Entry to the gang may be by violent initiation or hazing. Girlfriends can be pulled into the gang, and are often subject to a high level of sexual violence. Others close to the gang members, their families, friends, and neighbours – reluctant affiliates – are drawn into the gang's sphere of influence too, and may suffer threats of violence if the young person reneges on their deal.

Activities are carried out using disposable or 'burner' phones, which cannot be traced.

Although cannabis is occasionally linked to the county lines organisations, it is harder drugs that provide the focus: heroin, cocaine, and amphetamines. The main county line gangs originally operated from London and Liverpool, but the problem is now extending across all major cities in the UK.

### **Signs to consider**

- Often missing and/or traveling out-of-area
- Unexplained absences from school, college or work
- Unexplained money, clothes or phones
- Changes in mood; becoming withdrawn or unusually aggressive or violent
- Wearing clothes/having tattoos associated with gang culture
- Using new slang words

- Spending more time on social media/being secretive about time online/making more calls or sending more texts
- Carrying weapons
- Involvement with older people
- Unexplained injuries
- Self-harm or poor mental health.
- Signs of drug or alcohol misuse

**Children most at risk:**

- Boys (15/16 years)
- Children from deprived backgrounds
- Chaotic home life
- Pre-existing offending behaviour
- Disengaged from school/Persistent Absenteeism
- Previously neglected or abused
- 'Looked After' or previously looked after child

## WEEK 16 - THE EXTREME RIGHT WING

Extreme right-wing ideology refers to a range of far-right political positions that are distinguished from mainstream right-wing views by their **opposition to liberal democratic norms** and their emphasis on **exclusivist, often ethnically or racially defined, worldviews**. These ideologies often reject the fundamental principles of equality and diversity, advocating instead for strict social and ethnic hierarchies.

Key characteristics of extreme right-wing ideology typically include:

- **Exclusionary Nationalism:** A core belief in a homogeneous "national" or "ethnic" community, which stresses the expulsion or marginalisation of those deemed "others" (e.g., immigrants, ethnic or religious minorities, political opponents).
- **Racism and Xenophobia:** The belief in a natural hierarchy between races or cultures, leading to fear, hatred, or hostility towards foreigners and minorities. This can manifest as white supremacy, white nationalism, and cultural nationalism.
- **Anti-Democracy:** Rejection of core democratic values, procedures, and institutions such as political diversity, the rule of law, and the protection of minorities. Supporters may seek to destroy democracy or establish an authoritarian state, sometimes based on a "leader principle".
- **Traditionalism and Patriarchy:** A cry for the disappearance of traditional social hierarchies and values, often advocating for strict gender roles and "family values" while opposing gender equality and feminism.
- **Conspiracy Theories:** A tendency to embrace grand, often paranoid, conspiracy theories to explain societal decay or perceived threats, such as the "great replacement" theory, antisemitic conspiracies, or a "new world order".
- **Glorification of Violence:** For those involved in extreme right-wing terrorism, violence is often seen as a necessary tool to advance their cause, instil fear, and hasten the collapse of the current social order to bring about a race war or an ethno-state.

### **Manifestations and Groups**

Contemporary manifestations of extreme right-wing ideology are diverse and can be found in various movements:

- **Neo-Nazi Movements:** Directly inspired by historical National Socialism, these groups advocate for racial supremacy and a totalitarian state and are often linked to antisemitism and Holocaust denial.
- **Anti-Immigration and Anti-Islam Movements:** These groups focus on perceived threats from immigration and the "Islamisation" of Western culture.
- **Identitarian Movements:** While often using a "clean image" to blend into the mainstream, they promote "ethnopluralism" and the idea that different ethnic groups should live separately to preserve their unique identities.
- **Online Subcultures (e.g., Siege Culture):** Tech-savvy, often leaderless, online networks that promote accelerationism (the use of violence to accelerate societal collapse) and target perceived enemies, operating on platforms like Telegram and 4chan.

**Action:** If you think a child is being drawn into extremism, or sharing extremist views, speak to your DSL immediately.

### **Factors that may make children more vulnerable to becoming involved in extremist activity:**

- Struggling with their sense of identity

- Difficult circumstances such as family tensions, low self-esteem or experiencing a traumatic event
- Troubling external factors such as community tensions, events affecting their region of origin, or having friends or family who have joined extremist groups here or abroad
- Involvement with criminal groups, experiences of imprisonment and/or poor reintegration into society.

## Hate Symbols

A symbol is a visual image or sign representing an idea. Human cultures use symbols to express specific ideologies and social structures and to represent aspects of their culture in a compact, recognisable form. Simple symbols can be hugely significant to different cultures around the world, e.g. national flags or religious symbols.

Unfortunately, some symbols can also convey negative connotations and promote hate and anger, or instil in others fear and insecurity. Members of the XRW use symbols to intimidate individuals and communities. Symbols can be found in graffiti, tattoos, flyers and literature, banners and flags or displayed as jewellery or on clothing. They give extremists a sense of power and belonging, and a quick way of identifying with others who share their ideology.

Note that symbols carry different meanings or interpretations depending upon cultural background e.g. most view the Swastika as synonymous with Nazi party ideology. However, variations of the Swastika were used in many ancient cultures and they remain in use today.

<b>100%</b> is shorthand for "100% white" among white supremacists	<b>100%</b>
<b>14</b> is numerical shorthand for the white supremacist slogan known as the "14 Words": "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children."	<b>14</b>
<b>18</b> is a white supremacist alphanumeric code for Adolf Hitler (1=A and 8=H). It is most commonly associated with the British white supremacist group Combat 18 or C18.	<b>18</b>
<b>28</b> is the white supremacist alphanumeric code for Blood & Honour, an international racist skinhead group.	<b>28</b>
<b>311</b> is a number used by Ku Klux Klan members to refer to the Klan. The eleventh letter of the alphabet is the letter "K"; thus 3 times 11 equals "KKK," i.e., Ku Klux Klan.	<b>311</b>
<b>The 5 Words</b> refer to a phrase that some white supremacists advocate should be the only words ever spoken to the police: "I have nothing to say."	<b>5 words</b>
<b>The number 88</b> is a symbolically important number for white supremacists (who use it as a numeric code for "Heil Hitler"), so occasionally a white supremacist will use a hand sign to display or flash the number 88.	
<b>9%</b> is a numeric white supremacist symbol that refers to the percentage of the world's population that is purportedly white.	<b>9%</b>
<b>"Anudda Shoah"</b> is an anti-Semitic phrase used by white supremacists to mock Jews, whom they claim bring up the Holocaust when confronted with anything they don't like.	<b>ANUDDA SHOAH</b>
Racist skinheads prefer wearing steel-toed work boots, typically with red or white shoelaces laced a certain way.	
<b>The "echo,"</b> as it is sometimes called, is the on-line use by anti-Semites of multiple parentheses around a person's name to indicate that they are Jewish or, when used around a phrase or term to imply that the word Jewish should be added to it.	<b>(( ( )))</b>
A <b>common hand gesture</b> has been appropriated as a symbol meaning "white power." Used by many on the right—not just extremists—for the purpose of trolling liberals, the symbol eventually came to be used by actual white supremacists as well. Caution must be used in evaluating instances of this symbol's use.	
<b>The swastika</b> is an ancient symbol used in many cultures that was adopted by Adolf Hitler and turned into a symbol of hatred. Since then, the swastika has become perhaps the most notorious hate symbol in Western culture.	

You will find an extensive list of proscribed extremist/terrorist groups on the GOV.UK website

## WEEK 17 - MENTAL HEALTH PART 1 - ANXIETY

### **What signs should you look out for in pupils?**

- Trying to avoid situations that make them anxious
- Worrying a lot and not being able to stop
- Seeking reassurance
- Aggression
- Behaviour concerns
- Disengagement with learning
- Physical signs (e.g. headaches, sweating)
- Panic attacks
- Difficulty eating at lunchtime or in social situations

### **What can you do?**

- Report your concerns – follow school procedures
- Normalise the anxiety
- Praise the child for talking to you about it
- Help them test out their fears
- Encourage them to try breathing and relaxation exercises

**Remember:** we're all different, and what works for one pupil might not work for another

If a pupil is having a panic attack ...

- Move them to a quiet space, if possible
- Encourage slow, relaxed breathing
- Listen and don't judge
- Reassure – explain that it's a panic attack and will soon stop

### **What is anxiety?**

All children (and adults) feel anxious sometimes – this is normal. Anxiety becomes a problem when it gets in the way of everyday life and affects a child's thoughts and behaviour daily. A child might feel anxious about specific things, like social situations or a specific lesson in school. Or they might feel anxious about things in general, and the future.



## **WEEK 18 - MENTAL HEALTH PART 2: DEPRESSION AND LOW MOOD**

Everyone has bad days sometimes, but if it goes on for longer, it could be a low mood. If low mood goes on for more than 2 weeks and starts to get in the way of day-to-day life, it could be developing into depression.

### **Symptoms of depression in children often include:**

- *sadness, or a low mood that does not go away*
- *being irritable or grumpy all the time*
- *not being interested in things they used to enjoy*
- *feeling tired and exhausted a lot of the time*

### **They may also:**

- *have trouble sleeping or sleep more than usual*
- *not be able to concentrate*
- *interact less with friends*
- *be indecisive*
- *not have much confidence*
- *eat less than usual or overeat*
- *have big changes in weight*
- *seem unable to relax or be more lethargic than usual*
- *talk about feeling guilty or worthless*
- *feel empty or unable to feel emotions (numb)*
- *have thoughts about suicide or self-harming*
- *self-harm, e.g. cutting their skin or taking an overdose*

Some children have problems with anxiety as well as depression. Some also have physical symptoms, such as headaches and stomach aches. Problems at school can be a sign of depression in children and young people and so can problem behaviour.

### **Things that increase the risk of depression in children include:**

- *family difficulties*
- *bullying*
- *physical, emotional or sexual abuse*
- *a family history of depression or other mental health problems*

Sometimes depression is triggered by 1 difficult event, such as parents separating, a bereavement or problems with school or other children. It may be caused by a mixture of things.

### **What can you do?**

- Report your concerns
- If you have a mental health concern about a pupil that's also a safeguarding concern, take immediate action and follow our safeguarding procedures to report it.
- Talk to the child
- Ask them how they are. They might be reluctant to share their feelings at first. If this happens, ask a more general question as a distraction, or agree to talk another time
- Express concerns, but make sure the child doesn't feel judged

Help them think of things they can do to cope, for example:

- Trying to focus on the here and now if they feel overwhelmed

- Taking a break to listen to music, go for a walk or chat to family or friends
- Taking deep breaths
- Doing a random act of kindness
- Starting the day off well with a glass of water, a shower or washing their face, and having breakfast
- Exercising, like going for a run or a walk
- Writing down how they feel in a diary
- Painting or drawing
- Staying in touch with friends
- Arrange to check in again: try to have a few bite-sized conversations so pupils have more time to process what you've talked about. This'll also make it feel less intense and give them time to open up



## **WEEK 19 - MENTAL HEALTH PART 3 – SELF HARM**

**Self-harm** is when a child or young person intentionally damages or hurts their body. It can become addictive because of the natural pain-relieving endorphins that are released when people hurt themselves, which can give a temporary sense of relief.

Self-harm can also be a coping strategy for:

- dealing with difficult situations
- changing emotional pain into physical pain
- communicating distress about something in a non-verbal way
- attempting to relieve feelings of numbness, anger or aggression
- attempting to gain a sense of a control in a world where they feel out of control

**Self-harming** and risky behaviours can also be a way for a child or young person to punish themselves for feelings or behaviour that they think are their fault, or because they have a very negative self-image.

The majority of children and young people who self-harm do not have suicidal thoughts while self-harming. However, self-harm can escalate into suicidal behaviours.

### **School Staff:**

- Make it known to pupils that you are available to listen
- Remain calm and non-judgemental at all times
- Avoid dismissing a pupil's reasons for distress as invalid
- Encourage pupils to be open with you and reassure them that they can get the help they need if they are willing to talk
- Endeavour to enable pupils to feel in control by asking what they would like to happen and what help they feel they need etc

### **Risk Factors**

There are many factors that contribute to the risk of self-harm. Some of the issues most commonly identified include:

- Attempted suicide or self-harm by a family member
- Low self-esteem
- Mental health problems such as depression
- Family conflict (periods in Local Authority care, parental separation)
- On-going family relationship problems
- Family circumstances (parental criminality/poverty/step-children/single parents/ more than 5 children in the family)
- Past or present physical or sexual abuse
- Family models of self-harm
- Bullying, including cyberbullying and homophobic bullying

### **Identifying the signs;**

- *self-cutting*
- *burning*
- *scratching*
- *biting*
- *hair pulling*
- *head banging*

Physical self-harm may be indicated by a careful covering of arms and legs, or changes in behaviour around clothing – for example an avoidance of activities that involve changing clothes, like PE lessons.

- Do not make promises you can't keep regarding such things as confidentiality Discuss and promote healthy coping mechanisms and suggest ways in which pupils can be empowered to make positive changes in their lives
  - Monitor the reactions of other pupils who know about the self-harm
  - Avoid asking a pupil to show you their scars or describe their self-harm
  - Avoid telling a pupil to stop self-injuring - you may be removing the only coping mechanism they have
- Report the matter to a designated key member of staff as soon as you become aware of the problem and inform the pupil that you are doing this. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, ensure that they are taken to their GP or A&E as a matter of urgency, depending on the severity of the concern.

## **WEEK 20 - FABRICATED OR INDUCED ILLNESS**

**Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It happens when a parent or carer exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.**

The parent or carer tries to convince doctors that the child is ill, or that their condition is worse than it really is. The parent or carer does not necessarily intend to deceive doctors, but their behaviour is likely to harm the child. For example, the child may have unnecessary treatment or tests, be made to believe they're ill, or have their education disrupted. FII used to be known as "Munchausen's syndrome by proxy" (not to be confused with Munchausen's syndrome, where a person pretends to be ill or causes illness or injury to themselves).



### **Signs of fabricated or induced illness**

Fabricated or induced illness (FII) covers a wide range of symptoms and behaviours involving parents or carers seeking healthcare for a child. This ranges from exaggerating or inventing symptoms, to deliberately making the child ill.

Behaviours in FII can include a parent or carer who:

- persuades healthcare professionals that their child is ill when they're healthy
- exaggerates or lies about their child's symptoms
- manipulates test results to suggest the child is ill, for example, by putting glucose in urine samples to suggest the child has diabetes
- deliberately induces symptoms of illness, for example, by poisoning their child with unnecessary medicine or other substances

Cases where the parent or carer wrongly reports symptoms are much more common than cases where they induce illness in the child.

### **Why fabricated or induced illness happens**

The reasons why FII happens are not fully understood.

The parent or carer will have a need for their child to be treated as if they're ill, or as being more unwell than they really are. Their behaviour is intended to convince doctors that the child is ill.

This may be because the parent or carer gains something, such as attention, support or closeness to the child. Or it may be because they have anxiety or incorrect beliefs about their child's health, and they need these beliefs to be confirmed and acted upon.

The parent or carer is not always fully aware of the reasons for their own behaviour.

A large number of parents or carers involved in FII have borderline personality disorders characterised by emotional instability, impulsiveness and disturbed thinking.

Some parents or carers involved in FII have so-called "somatoform disorders", where they experience multiple, recurrent physical symptoms. A proportion of these parents or carers also have Munchausen's syndrome.

Some parents or carers have unresolved psychological and behavioural problems, such as a history of self-harming, or drug or alcohol misuse. Some have experienced the death of another child.

There have also been several reported cases where illness was fabricated or induced for financial reasons. For example, to claim disability benefits.

- symptoms only appear when the parent or carer is present
- the only person claiming to notice symptoms is the parent or carer
- the parent or carer does not let healthcare professionals see the child on their own
- the parent or carer talks for the child, or the child refers to the parent or carer rather than speaking for themselves
- the child has an inexplicably poor response to medicine or other treatment
- if 1 particular health problem is resolved, the parent or carer may then begin reporting a new set of symptoms
- the child's alleged symptoms do not seem plausible – for example, a child who has supposedly lost a lot of blood but does not become unwell
- the parent or carer has a history of frequently changing GPs or visiting different hospitals for treatment, particularly if their views about the child's treatment are challenged by medical staff
- the child's daily activities are being limited far beyond what you would usually expect for a certain condition – for example, they never go to school or have to wear leg braces even though they can walk properly
- the parent or carer does not accept reassurance or recommended treatment, and insists on continued investigations or new treatments
- the parent or carer encourages medical staff to perform often painful tests and procedures on the child (tests that most parents would only agree to if they were persuaded that it was absolutely necessary)

#### **What to do if you suspect a child is at risk**

If you suspect someone you know may be fabricating or inducing illness in their child, speak to your DSL and share your concerns. They can contact the appropriate professionals.

Do not confront parents directly. It's unlikely to make the person admit to wrongdoing, and it may give them the opportunity to dispose of any evidence of abuse.

## WEEK 21

### CYBERBULLYING

#### **What is cyberbullying?**

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone.

#### **Cyberbullying can include:**

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images (nudes or semi-nudes) or engaging in sexual conversations.

Cyberbullying can harm the online reputations of everyone involved – not just the person being bullied, but those doing the bullying or participating in it. Cyberbullying has unique concerns in that it can be:

**Persistent** – Digital devices offer an ability to immediately and continuously communicate 24 hours a day, so it can be difficult for children experiencing cyberbullying to find relief.

**Permanent** – Most information communicated electronically is permanent and public, if not reported and removed. A negative online reputation, including for those who bully, can impact college admissions, employment, and other areas of life.

**Hard to Notice** – Because parents or teachers may not overhear or see cyberbullying taking place, it is harder to recognise.

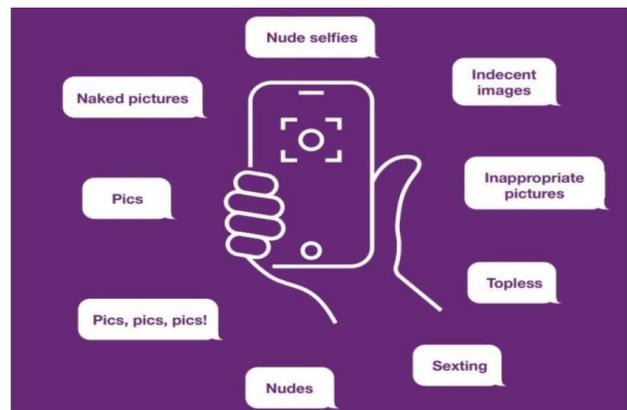
#### **Advice:**

- Think twice before posting or sharing anything online – it may stay online forever and could be used to harm you later.
- Don't give out personal details such as your address, telephone number or the name of your school.
- Learn about the privacy settings of your favourite social media apps. Here are some actions you can take on many of them:
- You can decide who can see your profile, send you direct messages or comment on your posts by adjusting your account privacy settings.
- You can report hurtful comments, messages and photos and request they be removed.
- Besides 'unfriending', you can completely block people to stop them from seeing your profile or contacting you.
- You can also choose to have comments by certain people to appear only to them without completely blocking them.
- You can delete posts on your profile or hide them from specific people.

- On most of your favourite social media, people aren't notified when you block, restrict or report them.

### **What do we mean by sharing nudes and semi-nudes, and how can we respond to this?**

The sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps or forums. It could also involve sharing between devices via services like Apple's Airdrop which works offline. Alternative terms used by children and young people may include 'dick pics' or 'pics'.



The motivations for taking and sharing nude and semi-nude images, videos and live streams are not always sexually or criminally motivated.

**This advice does not apply to adults sharing nudes or semi-nudes of under 18-year-olds. This is a form of child sexual abuse and must be referred to the police as a matter of urgency.**

### **What to do if an incident comes to your attention**

- Report it to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or equivalent immediately. Your setting's child protection policy should outline codes of practice to be followed.
- Never view, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child to share or download – this is illegal.
- If you have already viewed the imagery by accident (e.g. if a young person has showed it to you before you could ask them not to), report this to the DSL (or equivalent) and seek support.
- Do not delete the imagery or ask the young person to delete it.
- Do not ask the child/children or young person(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery. This is the responsibility of the DSL (or equivalent).
- Do not share information about the incident with other members of staff, the young person(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers.
- Do not say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved.
- Do explain to them that you need to report it and reassure them that they will receive support and help from the DSL (or equivalent).

For further information: Download the full guidance via Gov.uk website; *Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (UKCIS, Feb 202*

## WEEK 22 - ONLINE SAFETY



### **Reminder: What is online safety?**

It means protecting children from 3 main areas of risk:

- 1. Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material online (e.g. pornography, fake news, racist or offensive views, radical or extremist views, underage apps or gaming)**
- 2. Contact: being the victim of harmful interactions online, whether between children or by adults (e.g. bullying, grooming, aggressive advertising, pressure to spend money)**
- 3. Conduct: behaving in a way online that causes harm or increases the likelihood of it (e.g. bullying others, making, sending or receiving explicit images, sexually harassing others)**

Are you aware of the potential dangers of children and young people using various sites?

Whether it's:

- Chatting with people they think are new 'friends', but who could actually intend to do them harm.
- Sharing or viewing inappropriate or adult images or other content.
- Being bullied or subject to other kinds of abuse.
- Being dared into carrying out dangerous or irresponsible acts on camera – 'Nek nominating' being one of the most widely publicised.
- Revealing personal or private information about themselves, friends or family. Or arranging to meet in person someone they've met online, when that person isn't who they said they were.

### **Take every opportunity to remind pupils how to stay safe on-line, with advice such as:**

- Be careful not to give out too much info on social media or gaming profiles. Details like your full name, address or school's name could all help strangers to actually find you offline. A trusted adult can help you make your profiles private, so only your family and actual friends can contact you.
- Taking your phone or tablet to school? Turn password protection on. It keeps your private info safe and stops anyone accessing your device without permission. Passwords should be memorable to you – but difficult for anyone else to guess. Get a trusted adult to record your passwords in case they are forgotten.
- Too much screen time, especially just before bed, can affect your quality of sleep. Losing sleep, or not sleeping well enough, messes with your concentration and energy levels. Try muting notifications so you don't get pinged late at night: you'll feel fresher and more focused the next day.
- If you ever feel like you're being bullied online – by anyone, not just someone from school – talk to a trusted adult about it. Together, you can discuss possible steps, such as blocking or reporting the person who's targeting you.

- Be mindful that once you send a pic or message (even if it's private), you no longer control who else might see it. Messaging someone you've never actually met – and who might not be who they say – is definitely best avoided.
- When you're researching something online, there's always a chance of finding content that makes you feel uncomfortable or upset. If this happens, you can report it as inappropriate and (hopefully) get it taken down. Tell a trusted adult: they'll help you decide what to do next.

**The Online Safety Act** came into force in October 2023, and provides more protection for children online. The Act requires that online providers;

- Remove illegal or harmful content
- Remove images depicting animal cruelty
- Be transparent about the hazards children may face on their sites.
- Remove fraudulent/scam advertising
- Support in the conviction of those sharing intimate images without consent
- Provide opportunities for filtering and reporting unwanted content
- Enforce age limits and have robust processes for age verification

The Act also requires that schools;

- Know where to get help and report harmful activity
- Are mindful of their own online activity, filtering and monitoring
- Support pupils to be safe online, and provide appropriate guidance and support throughout the curriculum
- Provide guidance for parents, so that they can effectively safeguard and support their children online
- Remain vigilant for new developments and risks online

### **Generative AI Safety**

Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, are now commonly used by children. While these tools can boost learning and creativity, there are also inherent risks associated with them;

- Generative AI can produce false or misleading content. It is vital to teach children to critically assess all information
- AI may sometimes generate harmful or inappropriate content. Active monitoring and clear usage boundaries are so important to protect children
- Generative AI sites may ask for personal details, or track usage. Children should be taught good online hygiene, and how to set privacy controls.
- Children may become over-dependent on generative sites for completing tasks - avoid excessive use of AI, so that children maintain their critical thinking skills. Have conversations about responsible use and academic honesty.
- Many children are accessing sites and communicating with 'virtual friends' or Chat Bots, often believing them to be real people. Children should be encouraged to strike a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

## WEEK 23 – KNOW YOUR APPS

### Key Statistics & Trends

- **Ubiquitous Access:** Almost all children go online, with 90% owning a mobile phone by age 11.
- **Top Platforms (Ages 3-17):** YouTube (88%), WhatsApp (55%), TikTok (53%), Snapchat (46%), Instagram (41%), and Facebook (34%) are the most used (Ofcom 2023)
- **Age-Related Shifts:** WhatsApp, TikTok, and Snapchat usage grows significantly with age; older teens (16-17) are much more likely to use top apps compared to younger children (3-4).
- **Night-time Usage:** A substantial portion of screen time for 8-14 year-olds occurs between 9 PM and 5 AM on platforms like YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok, and WhatsApp.
- **Increased Gaming:** Online gaming, including spending money within games, is very popular, with 97% of 8–17 year-olds playing online games.
- **Early Adoption:** 38% of 5-7 year-olds used social media in 2024, up from 30% the prior year, with TikTok and WhatsApp seeing big jumps (Ofcom 2024)
- **Spending:** Over half of children spend money on apps/games, with many enjoying it but also experiencing regret or confusion about purchases (Ofcom 2025)
- **Potential Harms:** Nearly three-quarters of teens (13-17) reported encountering potential harms, including uncomfortable online content while using apps.

<p><b>MEETME</b></p>  <p>MEETME IS A DATING SOCIAL MEDIA APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY. AS THE APP'S NAME SUGGESTS, USERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO MEET EACH OTHER IN PERSON.</p>	<p><b>GRINDR</b></p>  <p>GRINDR IS A DATING APP GEARED TOWARDS GAY, BI AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE. THE APP GIVES USERS OPTIONS TO CHAT, SHARE PHOTOS AND MEET UP BASED ON A SMART PHONE'S GPS LOCATION.</p>	<p><b>SKOUT</b></p>  <p>SKOUT IS A LOCATION-BASED DATING APP AND WEBSITE. WHILE USERS UNDER 17-YEARS-OLD ARE UNABLE TO SHARE PRIVATE PHOTOS, KIDS CAN EASILY CREATE AN ACCOUNT USING A DIFFERENT AGE.</p>
<p><b>WHATSAPP</b></p>  <p>WHATSAPP IS A POPULAR MESSAGING APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO SEND TEXTS, PHOTOS, MAKE CALLS AND VIDEO CHATS WORLDWIDE. WHATSAPP USES AN INTERNET CONNECTION ON SMART PHONES AND COMPUTERS.</p>	<p><b>TIKTOK</b></p>  <p>TIKTOK IS A NEW MOBILE DEVICE APP POPULAR WITH KIDS USED FOR CREATING AND SHARING SHORT VIDEOS. WITH VERY LIMITED PRIVACY CONTROLS, USERS ARE VULNERABLE TO BULLYING AND EXPLICIT CONTENT.</p>	<p><b>BADOO</b></p>  <p>BADOO IS A DATING AND SOCIAL NETWORKING APP WHERE USERS CAN CHAT, SHARE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS AND CONNECT BASED ON LOCATION. WHILE THE APP IS INTENDED FOR ADULTS ONLY, TEENS ARE KNOWN TO CREATE PROFILES.</p>
<p><b>BUMBLE</b></p>  <p>BUMBLE IS SIMILAR TO THE POPULAR DATING APP 'TINDER' HOWEVER, IT REQUIRES WOMEN TO MAKE THE FIRST CONTACT. KIDS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO USE BUMBLE TO CREATE FAKE ACCOUNTS AND FALSIFY THEIR AGE.</p>	<p><b>SNAPCHAT</b></p>  <p>SNAPCHAT IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR APPS IN RECENT YEARS. WHILE THE APP PROMISES USERS CAN TAKE A PHOTO/VIDEO AND IT WILL DISAPPEAR, NEW FEATURES INCLUDING 'STORIES' ALLOW USERS TO VIEW CONTENT FOR UP TO 24</p>	<p><b>KIK</b></p>  <p>KIK ALLOWS ANYONE TO CONTACT AND DIRECT MESSAGE YOUR CHILD. KIDS CAN BYPASS TRADITIONAL TEXT MESSAGING FEATURES. KIK GIVES USERS UNLIMITED ACCESS TO ANYONE, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME.</p>
<p><b>LIVE.ME</b></p>  <p>LIVE.ME IS A LIVE-STREAMING VIDEO APP THAT USES GEOLOCATION TO SHARE VIDEOS SO USERS CAN FIND OUT A BROADCASTER'S EXACT LOCATION. USERS CAN EARN 'COINS' AS A WAY TO 'PAY' MINORS FOR PHOTOS.</p>	<p><b>HOLLA</b></p>  <p>HOLLA IS A SELF-PROCLAIMED 'ADDICTING' VIDEO CHAT APP THAT ALLOWS USERS TO MEET PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD IN JUST SECONDS. REVIEWERS SAY THEY HAVE BEEN CONFRONTED WITH RACIAL SLURS, EXPLICIT CONTENT AND MORE.</p>	<p><b>WHISPER</b></p>  <p>WHISPER IS AN ANONYMOUS SOCIAL NETWORK THAT PROMOTES SHARING SECRETS WITH STRANGERS. IT ALSO REVEALS A USER'S LOCATION SO PEOPLE CAN MEET UP.</p>
<p><b>ASK.FM</b></p>  <p>ASK.FM IS KNOWN FOR CYBER BULLYING. THE APP ENCOURAGES USERS TO ALLOW ANONYMOUS PEOPLE TO ASK THEM QUESTIONS.</p>	<p><b>CALCULATOR%</b></p>  <p>CALCULATOR% IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL SECRET APPS USED TO HIDE PHOTOS, VIDEOS, FILES AND BROWSER HISTORY.</p>	<p><b>HOT OR NOT</b></p>  <p>HOT OR NOT ENCOURAGES USERS TO RATE YOUR PROFILE, CHECK OUT PEOPLE IN THEIR AREA, AND CHAT WITH STRANGERS. THE GOAL OF THIS APP IS TO HOOK UP.</p>

## **WEEK 24 - UNDERSTANDING THE ONLINE WORLD.**

For children, online life is real life. Having open, regular conversations with your pupils will help you to understand their online life and help them to stay safe. However, there's a lot of jargon! The following will help you further understand the online world and some of the risks too.

**APP PERMISSIONS** When apps are downloaded the user grants certain permissions of data and information that the app is able to access. This could include access to location, camera, microphone, browsing history, contact list etc. Some are legitimate and an app will need access in order to function correctly, others less so and will be more about the acquisition of data. Users are very often unaware of the permissions that they have granted.

**AVATAR** An icon, cartoon or image representing a user online on social media, video games or other services

**BREADCRUMB TRAIL** A navigation aid in user interfaces. It allows users to keep track of their locations within programs, documents, or websites, usually appearing at the top of a webpage

**COOKIES** Data generated by a website and saved on your web browser for the purpose of storing user preferences and login details (if selected to).

**CROWD-SOURCING** The practice of obtaining information or input into a task or project by enlisting the services of a large number of people, either paid or unpaid, typically via the Internet.

**DARK WEB** The dark web forms a small part of the deep web and is only accessible by special software (see also TOR). It is heavily encrypted and masks the IP of its users meaning it frequently attracts criminal activity although there are legitimate reasons to use and access the dark web.

**DIGITAL AGE OF CONSENT** This is the minimum age that children can provide their own consent to the processing of their data. The UK has set this age as 13.

**DIGITAL PERSONALITY** Created as individuals' online activity and behaviour is monitored; collected and analysed. A person's 'digital personality' can be used by and possibly sold to unknown others in order to target tailored advertising, information and disinformation specifically intended to be attractive to the individual and to influence their beliefs and choices.

**DISINHIBITION** A term to explain why people behave differently when they are using online technologies. They are likely to feel a lack of restraint compared to when they are communicating in person.

**ECHO CHAMBER** Activity, often on social media, where people of like mind reinforce a single view point to the exclusion of alternatives. An 'echo chamber' (or 'reality bubble') can create a false impression that an opinion is more widely held in society than it actually is, and can significantly strengthen people's beliefs

**FOMO** An acronym for 'fear of missing out', describing a user's feeling of compulsion to check their phone or social media feed at regular intervals for fear of not staying up to date with conversations or events involving their friends

**GAS-LIGHTING** False information presented to someone, making them doubt their own memory, perception and quite often, their sanity.

**GEOLOCATION** The process of identifying the geographical location of a person or device by means of digital information processed via the Internet

**GIFs** A digital animation which includes still or moving images used as a form of jovial communication (see also memes)

**GUERRILLA MAIL** A temporary email service which does not require registration and which only lasts for 60 minutes

**HACKING** Gaining unauthorised access to a computer system or account. Someone who does this may be referred to as a 'hacker'. Hackers find vulnerabilities in computer systems such as poor passwords or use technical methods to 'attack' systems. Some companies employ ethical hackers to help them protect their systems

**INCOGNITO** A mode in Chrome which lets you browse without saving history, cookies or form data on your device, effectively providing private sessions that end when all Incognito windows are closed.

**INFLUENCERS** Someone who promotes lifestyle ideals, products, services or events via social media platforms. Influencers tend to have large numbers of followers which makes them more attractive to companies who want to advertise particular products.

**LOOT BOXES** An in-game purchase consisting of a virtual container that awards players with items and modifications based on chance. Loot boxes and other microtransactions are increasingly used to improve the profitability of games that are free to play or that are paid for as an initial purchase.

**MALWARE** Malware (malicious software) is any harmful software designed to disrupt, damage, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems, networks, or data for purposes like stealing information, extorting money, or disrupting operations. Common types include viruses, worms, Trojans, ransomware, and spyware, often spread through phishing, malicious downloads, or infected websites.

**MEMES** An image, video, piece of text, etc., typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by Internet users, often with slight variations (see also GIFs).

**OUTING SOMEONE** The practice of revealing private information about an individual online. This can be the sharing of private messages or information relating to their sexuality for example.

**PEER-TO-PEER TECHNOLOGY (P2P)** Allows users to access media files such as books, music, movies, and games using software which locates content by searching other devices on a peer-to-peer network

**PEGI (Pan European Game Information)** EU classification system that rates games in terms of age suitability and content. Intended to regulate the retail of games to underage purchasers

**PERSUASIVE DESIGN** Online features that are designed to change attitudes or behaviours of users through persuasion and social influence, by drawing on psychological and social theories. E.g autoplay function on YouTube, Snapchat streaks.

**PHISHING** Sending electronic communications which attempt to obtain personal details (such as usernames, passwords, bank details) by claiming to be from a legitimate source. This information may then be used fraudulently.

**PIRATE SITES** Sites which provide links to download online content such as films, music, games and software illegally without payment.

**POP-UPS** A form of online advertising usually commercial in nature, but can also be linked to malware, viruses and pornography. Content “pops up” on screen in a second window; can be managed and limited through browser settings or third party malware apps.

**RANSOMWARE** A type of malicious software designed to block access to a computer system until a sum of money is paid

**RTBF (Right to be Forgotten)** The Right to be Forgotten in the UK, also known as the [Right to Erasure](#) (Article 17 UK GDPR), lets you ask organisations to delete your personal data in specific situations, like when it's no longer needed, you withdraw consent, the data was unlawfully processed, or you object to its use for direct marketing

**SEXTING** The term 'sexting' describes the use of technology to share personal sexual content; it is most commonly used to refer to youth produced sexual imagery. The name comes from a word- mix of 'sex' and 'texting'. Young people tend not to use this term but may use other nicknames such as 'nudes', 'nude selfies' or imply these through the context of the message

**SPAM** Unsolicited messages or content sent online to a large number of users. Spam is usually sent for the purpose of advertising, phishing or spreading virus / malware

**STREAMING** Listening to music or watching video in 'real time', instead of downloading a file to your computer and watching it later

**TROJANS** A Trojan horse or Trojan is a type of malware that is often disguised as legitimate software. Trojans can be employed by hackers trying to gain access to users' systems

**TROLLING** The sending of malicious, abusive or derogatory messages by one user (a 'troll') to another user online with the intention of upsetting or harassing them, or damaging their reputation. Trolling is often anonymous.

**VLOGGERS** A person who regularly records and posts videos online via social media or video sharing sites like YouTube. Popular vlogs include ones about lifestyle and gaming.

**VIRUSES** A computer virus is a type of malicious software (“malware”) that, when executed, replicates itself by modifying other computer programs and inserting its own code. Infected computer programs can include data files, or the “boot” sector of the hard drive.

**VPN (Virtual Private Network)** A method used to add security and privacy to private and public networks, like WiFi Hotspots and the Internet. VPNs are often used by corporations to protect sensitive data

## WEEK 25 - YOUNG CARERS

By definition, a young carer is someone under the age of 18 who looks after a family member or friend who has a physical or mental health condition, or misuses drugs or alcohol. They may also look after brothers, sisters or elderly relatives too.

There are at least **one million young carers (under 18) and 600,000 young adult carers (18-25) in the UK**, with many estimates suggesting numbers could be higher, as hundreds of thousands remain 'hidden'. These young people care for loved ones with long-term illnesses or disabilities, with about 139,000 providing over 20 hours of care weekly, and 50,000 giving 50+ hours, highlighting significant educational and support needs.

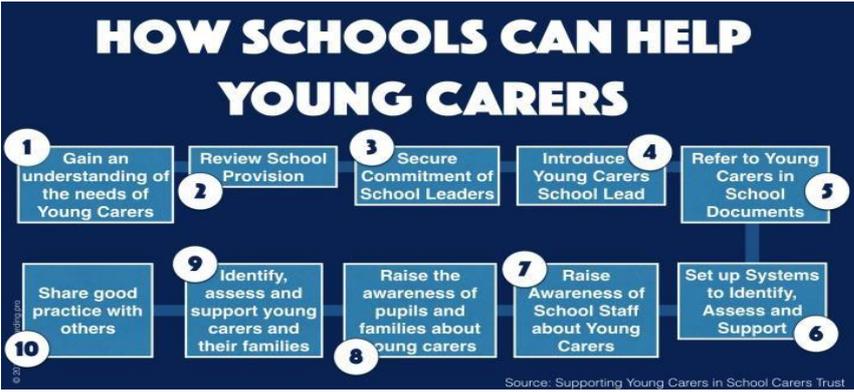
The average age of a carer is just 12 years old. 8% of secondary pupils are carers, and a third of young carers are giving 11 to 20 hours of care each week. More than 50,000 children and young adults are caring for at least 50 hours a week. That includes 3,000 aged from just five to nine years. Young carers are performing all sorts of tasks around the home, and offering their parents emotional support.

Tasks might include cooking, shopping, getting up, giving medicine, caring for siblings, helping with communication or translation, dressing and, in the case of some older children, paying bills.

Most young carers look after their mother, while around a quarter care for siblings, 20% care for their father and a small number take care of a grandparent. Most young carers have had no statutory assessment of their needs and 64% of young carers have no support at all. Those young carers who are receiving support, get that support either at school or through young carers groups.

- Nearly a third (29%) of young carers told a recent survey that they were stressed or worried by their caring role - rising to 32% among those aged just 8-11
- A third (36%) of young carers told the survey that caring had left them feeling tired or worn out at school
- 29% say their role has meant they didn't get enough sleep
- A third say that their caring role is impacting on their mental health
- Nearly half of young carers have not shared their caring role with school





## **WEEK 26 - CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** is a form of child abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child under 18 into sexual activity for their own benefit. Safeguarding aims to prevent, identify, and respond to CSE through multi-agency collaboration, professional awareness, and victim support.

- CSE is defined as exploitation where power imbalance (age, gender, strength, resources) is used for sexual activity, even if it appears consensual. The victim may receive gifts, money, drugs, or affection in exchange, but this does not constitute valid consent.
- Perpetrators use grooming, coercion, threats, violence, and emotional manipulation to control victims. This can occur in person, online (via social media or gaming sites), or a combination of both. Online methods include sextortion (blackmail using explicit images) and the sharing of abuse images. With more children relying on their device, there is an increased chance for an abuser to access a victim through online means.
- Any child can be a victim, but some are more vulnerable, including those with a history of abuse, in care, experiencing homelessness, having disabilities, or who identify as LGBTQ+. Perpetrators target these vulnerabilities.
- CSE can have severe, long-term physical and psychological effects, including mental health problems, substance abuse, self-harm, and involvement in criminal activity.

### **Signs and Indicators**

- Becoming secretive, withdrawn, or aggressive; having unexplained periods of absence from home or school (going missing); associating with unknown, older individuals or groups.
- Unexplained injuries; sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or pregnancy; drug or alcohol misuse; lack of personal hygiene.
- Unaccounted for money, new clothes, mobile phones, or gifts they cannot explain the source of.
- Secretive or excessive use of phones/internet, or being picked up by unknown adults in cars.
- Perpetrators may make it impossible for you to engage with a child, establishing excuses and intervening in any interaction.

67% of victims of Child Sexual Abuse have been abused by a close relative. Children are often groomed to believe that they should never tell anyone about the abuse they are victim to. They may worry about getting a family member onto trouble if they disclose anything. Witnessing domestic abuse of others is also a form child abuse.



**In responding to child abuse concerns:**

- Victims may not always look 'vulnerable' - stay curious and look beyond the obvious.
- Listen and believe what the child is telling you and ensure their voice is central to your next steps.
- Reassure the child, tell them it is not their fault and that you will take what they are saying seriously.
- Explain what you will do next and that you will keep them informed.
- If you have any concerns about a child, make a safeguarding referral through your normal routes.

## Week 27 - Mechanisms for disclosure



- It is really important to look at the ways in which children are able to disclose information, talk about something that is worrying them or seek support from school staff.
- Many children like to speak to a member of staff face-to-face, but others might prefer to write a note or draw a picture to get their message across.
- Lots of schools use “worry boxes” or “things I want my teacher to know” boxes at the back of classrooms, or at strategic points in school, which still continue to be useful and valuable as a means of seeking help.
- Children may want to identify their “trusted adults” in school, to whom they can go if they are worried.
- It is important to think about barriers to disclosure and work to remove them, as far as we possibly can.

### **Pupil voice**

- As well as having an effective culture of disclosure and support, we need to hear from children to understand what their experience of their context is. When looking at provision and support for children, the biggest source of information about what will be helpful will come from the children themselves.
- Mobilising and utilising pupil voice is important in understanding the issues and creating structures to help children come forward if they have experienced abuse.
- Providing children with positive opportunities to be involved in peer support, leadership and in shaping the safety and culture of their school will lead to an environment where all children can feel safe and cared for.

**Give your pupils a voice.**

## Week 28 - Homelessness

Being homeless doesn't just mean living on the streets. It also includes:

- Living in temporary accommodation like a bed and breakfast
- Staying with family or friends temporarily
- A pupil's whole family might be homeless, or the pupil alone might be homeless and living independently from their parents/carers, for example after being excluded from the family home.

In most cases school staff will be considering homelessness in the context of children who live with their families, and intervention will be on that basis. Children's services will be the lead agency for these children and the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) should ensure appropriate referrals are made based on the child's circumstances.

There are an estimated **172,00** children living in temporary accommodation in the UK.

Being homeless:

- Might mean having to start a new school or not being able to see friends anymore
- Can make it harder for children to do homework and get a good night's sleep, meaning they do less well at school
- Can be a risk to children's health and safety, if they have to share facilities with adults with substance misuse issues or engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour

### **What should you look out for?**

If a family or pupil is homeless, the parent or child might disclose this to you. But they may not feel comfortable doing this, so you should also be alert to changes that could suggest there's a problem. For example, the pupil might:

- Mention travelling further to get to and from school
- Have irregular absences/a decline in attendance
- Seem more tired than usual
- Not do their homework as much or as well
- Regularly have dirty uniform or the wrong uniform
- Gain or lose weight, due to eating poorer-quality meals or lack of cooking facilities
- Show changes in their mental wellbeing, for example becoming more anxious, seeming sad or downbeat, losing confidence and motivation
- Withdraw from their friends or lash out more

### **What should you do?**

- If you're concerned, speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy)
- If a child has suffered significant harm, or you think they're at risk of significant harm, inform your DSL immediately and make a referral to children's social care, and the police if appropriate
- If a child or parent makes a disclosure to you, listen to them without judging. Let them know you'll tell the DSL, so your school can try to get them help.
- Be alert to any bullying they're experiencing, and deal with it as per policy
- Listen to them if they're upset
- Be aware that they might not have access to a computer when setting homework
- Support them to get involved in any after-school activities
- Depending on the situation, tell their parents about support offered to families with housing issues

## **WEEK 29 – CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

Regardless of their circumstances, the law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. This may include suitable education through regular attendance at school, alternative provision or otherwise (e.g. elective home education (EHE)). Children of compulsory school age who are not receiving suitable education either at school or otherwise than at a school are defined as Children Missing Education (CME). CME are at significant risk of underachieving, having poorer health outcomes, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

CME includes children who:

- are in the process of applying for a school place
- have been offered a school place for a future date but have not yet started
- are receiving elective home education (EHE) that has been assessed as unsuitable
- have been recorded as CME for an extended period, for example where their whereabouts is unclear or unknown

### **Who is most at risk?**

Children who:

- Are known to be at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Stop attending a school
- Come from new migrant families

### **What can you do?**

- Follow your school's attendance policy. Make sure unauthorised absence is always followed up, and address poor or irregular attendance quickly
- Encourage parents to keep contact details up to date, so we can get in touch with them easily.
- Report any concerns you have to the DSL (or deputy) and record them in writing too
- If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if appropriate, and tell the DSL or deputy

### **Being missing in education:**

- Is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect (including educational neglect)
- Leaves children more vulnerable to other safeguarding issues (like becoming a victim of harm, sexual or criminal exploitation, or radicalisation)
- Can indicate mental health problems
- Can indicate risk of substance abuse, travel to conflict zones, female genital mutilation or forced marriage

Schools must make all reasonable attempts to contact the families concerned, and work in partnership with their Local Authority CME teams to address the situation.

## **WEEK 30 - CHILDREN WITH A FAMILY MEMBER IN PRISON**

There are many reasons why this is potentially a safeguarding issue. Children with a family member in prison:

- Are at risk of poverty, stigma, bullying, isolation and poor mental health
- Might not do as well at school
- Are likely to feel the effects at home. For example, their family finances might suffer, or they might have to move or take on extra responsibilities at home

As a school, we have a duty to promote children's welfare – this includes taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes and protect their mental health.

Look out for signs that a pupil's family member might be in prison. The child or their family might not tell us due to fear of stigma. Share any concerns you have with the DSL (or deputy). Look out for signs like:

- Changes in a child's family situation, e.g. where they live or family finances
- Stigma from other children or their parents and hostility within the community, or being bullied
- Changes in a child's behaviour and emotional wellbeing
- Not concentrating as well and not doing as well at school

### **What can you do?**

- Support the child in school
- Get advice from the DSL (or deputy) on how this child is being supported. Remember, every child is different, so there won't be a one-size-fits-all approach
- Be non-judgemental – the child hasn't done anything wrong
- Be consistent, firm and sensitive in response to their needs, including aggressive behaviour
- Be particularly sensitive to their needs if they've been to visit a relative in prison, as this is likely to be an upsetting and difficult experience
- Let the child know they can talk to you about their feelings
- Deal with any bullying they experience in line with our policies and procedures
- Remember confidentiality and privacy – don't tell anyone who doesn't need to know, or put the child in a situation where they need to tell a peer about it
- Refer the child for counselling if you think they need extra support, in consultation with your mental health lead/DSL/SENCO

Children with parents in prison have been described as an 'invisible group' as there is no formal procedure for the courts or other agencies to inform schools when a parent is sentenced to a term of imprisonment unless there are safeguarding issues. For a young child, the teacher is often the most important person in their life outside home and children will often confide sensitive, personal details about their family life to the class teacher. Older pupils may be less likely to confide in a teacher spontaneously. For a teacher, 'knowing' that a child is affected by imprisonment may be a question of educated guesswork or hearsay from other staff, pupils or parents. The child themselves may not know and may instead have been told that their parent is working away, is in hospital, or is visiting extended family overseas. Children who know what has happened may be told not to tell anyone or may feel too ashamed to talk about it. In some situations, everyone in the community will know that a child's parent is in prison if the court case received a high media profile. In other cases, a pupil may confide in a teacher or drop hints and clues through school work or in conversation. In many cases, a classroom teacher may not know that they are working with the child of a prisoner at the time. 'Knowing' does not necessarily mean that the teacher needs to let the child know that they know. It may

be that the family merely wish the child's performance and behaviour to be monitored for any change.

## WEEK 31 – DISGUISED COMPLIANCE

'**Disguised compliance**' involves a parent or carer giving the appearance of co-operating with child welfare agencies to avoid raising suspicions, to allay professional concerns and ultimately to diffuse professional intervention.

**Disguised compliance** is often found as a theme in Serious Case Reviews, including those which looked into the deaths of Victoria Climbié and Peter Connolly ('Baby P').



### Examples of Disguised Compliance include:

- no effective change despite significant input by professionals
- parents who agree to changes, but put little effort into implementing them
- parents who only partially carry out any agreed plans
- the child's view is different to the parents'
- cleaning the home before a planned visit by social workers
- attending appointments more regularly than in the past
- school attendance improving markedly



## **WEEK 32 - THE PREVENT DUTY**

The **Prevent Duty** is one part of the UK Government's wider counter terrorism strategy, **CONTEST**.

The aim of Prevent;

- to stop people from becoming terrorists, or supporting terrorism.
- To disrupt terrorist narratives, and provide support for those vulnerable to radicalisation.

Its 3 key objectives are;

- To tackle ideological causes of terrorism
- To intervene early when an individual is identified as at risk
- To enable disengagement and rehabilitation

Prevent focuses on the ideologies that are linked to terrorism. Any that put people at risk of radicalisation, whether through violent or non-violent means, are of interest to Prevent.

It places a statutory duty on schools, colleges and other public places to have safeguards in place to protect individuals from radicalisation. Early intervention of vulnerable individuals is key to providing a safe environment, and schools should have systems in place to identify individuals who may be drawn into terrorism or support violent/non-violent extremist views.

NOTE: not all ideologies are harmful; most beliefs, political or otherwise, are lawful and peacefully held.

Indicators that a person may be involved in radicalisation:

- someone becoming hateful or violent towards groups they feel are unlike them
- engaging online with extremist narratives
- engaging in anti-democracy protests

If you have any concerns that a pupil is involved in extremist activity, or at risk of radicalisation, you must notify your DSLs immediately. They will take the necessary steps and inform the appropriate authorities.

## WEEK 33 – THE DARK WEB & COM NETWORKS

The internet as we know it is divided into 3 subsections:

**The Surface Web** - this is the publicly accessible part of the internet, which uses search engines such as Google to find news sites, companies, e-commercial sites like Amazon, blogs and social media. No log-in or special tools are needed.

**The Deep Web** – refers to all parts of the web not indexed by standard search engines like Google. It makes up the vast majority of online content, and includes email, online banking, paywalled content and company intranets – basically anything that's password protected or needs a login.

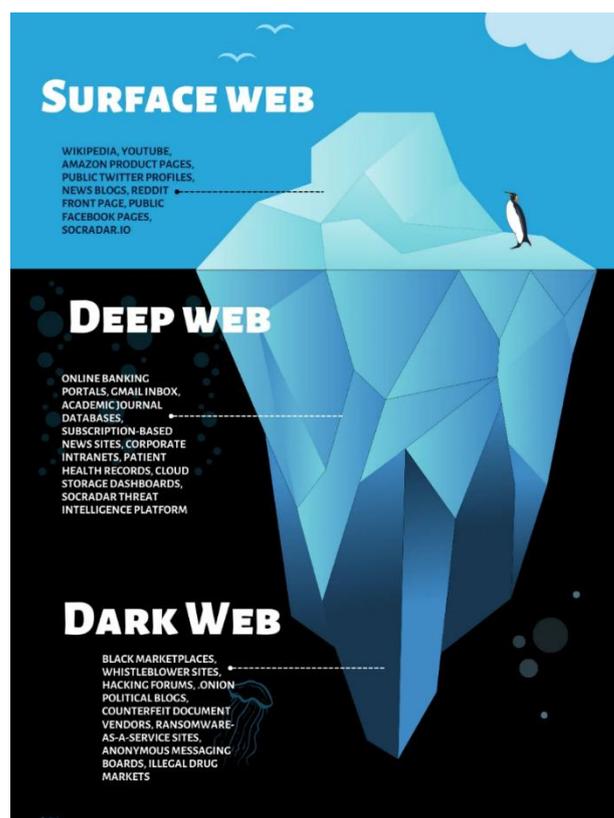
**The Dark Web** - a hidden part of the internet, accessible only with special software, that uses encryption and anonymous routing to mask user identities. This makes it a haven for both illegal activities (drug/data markets and illicit activities) and legitimate uses (whistleblowing, privacy for expose journalism.)

It's a small subset of the deep web, and requires specific links, unlike the surface web found by search engines.

While visiting the dark web isn't illegal, engaging in illicit activities (like buying stolen data, sharing explicit images or purchasing drugs/weapons) carries serious legal consequences.

The dark web uses specialist software and multi-layer (onion) routing, with unique, complex and non-memorable addresses. This makes it extremely difficult to trace the user's IP address.

The risks of operating on the dark web include exposure to criminal activity, high risk of malware, ransomware, phishing or scams, and legal enforcement.



## Com Networks

The UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) has raised concerns about so-called Com - short for community - networks, describing them as one of the country's biggest current criminal threats.

More than 100 investigations in the UK have been opened into a 'twisted' online network of teenage boys, who are making a game of coercing victims as young as nine into self-harm.

Cases in the UK have increased fivefold since 2023, driven by members across the English-speaking world.

The Com has been described by experts as a "cluster of networks that emphasise and encourage extremely harmful, high risk and antisocial behaviour that targets young and vulnerable people". The worldwide groups often recruit members into their chats from social media sites and gaming platforms and use a high volume of gory and sexualised material to desensitise children. They glorify criminal acts and encourage members to commit their own, in order to move up the ranks, earn clout and gain notoriety among their peers.

These groups are involved in the sharing of child sexual abuse material, cyber-crime, the sharing of extreme right-wing terrorism material, coercing individuals into self-harm, animal cruelty and in some extreme circumstances persuading girls to commit suicide.

They operate on popular platforms like Discord and Telegram, using social media (like X, TikTok or Roblox) for recruitment. Activity is often "gamified", with members seeking status or "kudos" by committing increasingly severe acts.

The National Crime Agency (NCA), National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), and Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) are working alongside local police forces to disrupt these networks. Safeguarding partnerships encourage reporting all concerns regarding a child's safety online.



### **What to do if you have concerns:**

- If you think they may be at immediate risk of harm or abuse, or an offence is being committed, call 999.
- Report to your DSL

### **Why is it a safeguarding concern?**

- **The anonymity aspect:** This could present safeguarding concerns. There are a wide range of "forums" within the dark web that a young person could be accessing anonymously. These include suicide "advice" pages, pages that promote self-harm, pro-bulimia, and pro-anorexia forums. In addition, the level of anonymity that the dark web offers means that perpetrators of child abuse have their identity hidden. This means that policing and investigating these spaces is inherently problematic.

- **The “hidden services” aspect:** The access to hidden services poses a risk to young people as it exposes them to a wide variety of items and content that would not be permissible on the open web. This can include illegal drugs, weapons, explicit imagery or indecent images of children.
- **The “illegal activity” aspect:** is a clear safeguarding concern. Being able to access and buy illicit materials puts a young person's safety and physical health at risk. It also connects young people to criminals or people circulating extremist views, who may seek to exploit them.

10 minute video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zH2-u1N6ALs>

## WEEK 34 – AI AND AI CHATBOTS

### What are AI chatbots?

Artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots are computer programs that aim to mimic human interaction by responding to questions and simulating conversation. AI chatbots have many uses and are already common in everyday life, e.g. businesses often use them for online customer support.

Chatbot interactions and responses are typically by text but can also involve generating images and voice or video functions.

Around two-thirds of children aged 9 to 17 are using AI chatbots. The most popular AI chatbots include:

- General-purpose chatbots – perform a variety of tasks, such as helping with homework, e.g. ChatGPT and Google Gemini
- Companion-style chatbots – designed to act like friends or even romantic partners, e.g. Replika and character.ai
- Chatbots integrated within social media – e.g. Snapchat's 'My AI'

When AI chatbots are used safely and with robust, effective safeguards in place, they can be helpful tools for children, e.g. for education or entertainment. However, it's important to be aware of the risks associated with AI chatbots.

### Why do AI chatbots present safeguarding risks?

A child using an AI chatbot can be a sign of a wider problem, such as loneliness or not having a trusted adult to speak to. It can also impact other safeguarding issues:

- **Emotional dependency** – chatbots are easy to access and available 24/7, which means that children can form intense attachments and become overly reliant on them for support and friendship. They may withdraw from real-life relationships and struggle to seek help from trusted adults. Vulnerable children are especially likely to engage with companion-style chatbots
- **Reinforcing harmful ideas** – chatbots are designed to be friendly and avoid disagreement, which means they can validate dangerous thoughts and behaviours on topics like suicide and eating disorders
- **Promoting stereotypes** – because chatbots source their information from all over the internet, their responses can reproduce existing prejudices, such as gender, racial and ableist stereotypes. This means extremist views can go unchallenged and potentially influence children's views and attitudes
- **Explicit content** – chatbots can engage in sexual conversations with children and some can even generate explicit images, including child abuse material. Children can also be exposed to misogynistic content
- **Privacy and data issues** – pupils can unknowingly share personal and sensitive information, which could be stored or misused. Not all chatbot providers are transparent about what data they collect or how they use it
- **Limiting development** – long-term effects of children using AI chatbots are not yet known, but there is some evidence that it can negatively affect cognitive and critical-thinking abilities, and harm social and emotional development

### Signs to look out for

If a pupil is facing a safeguarding issue involving AI chatbots, they might:

- Spend more time online unsupervised. This might be reported by their parents/carers
- Become more withdrawn and distant from real-life relationships, e.g. not engaging with peers and staff as they normally would
- Complain about being tired because they were online all night
- Have stronger emotional responses or outbursts when they are online

- Be secretive about their use of the internet or a device – they may refuse to hand in their phone if you have a 'no phones' policy, or refuse to tell you what they get up to online

### **What you can do**

To minimise the risks of misuse of AI chatbots, make sure you:

- Familiarise yourself with our school's **policy on the use of AI and teaching online safety**. As individuals we may have different opinions on AI, but it's important that pupils receive consistent advice on how to keep themselves safe online and manage risks
- Educate pupils on the risks of AI chatbots, that they should question any advice they receive from an AI chatbot, and how they can access support services such as Childline. If a pupil feels upset or worried, encourage them to speak to a trusted adult
- Report any issues with our filtering and monitoring systems to your DSL – some AI chatbots might avoid detection and can generate inappropriate content that should otherwise be filtered
- Build trusted relationships with pupils so that they feel comfortable talking to you and can disclose any issues they may be facing
- Where you have any concerns about a pupil, report these as soon as possible to your designated safeguarding lead

## **WEEK 35 - CHILD ABUSE LINKED TO FAITH OR BELIEF**

### **What to do if you suspect a child is at risk of abuse linked to faith or belief**

If you are worried about a child, you should follow your normal safeguarding procedures, ensuring you mention you are concerned the child may be a victim of abuse linked to faith and abuse and the reasons why you are concerned.



Child abuse linked to a faith or belief occurs across the country. In such cases a parent or carer has come to view a child as 'different'. They have attributed this difference to the child being possessed and as such will attempt to exorcise the child. Abuse may happen anywhere but is most commonly within the child's home.

### ***The National Action Plan includes the following when referring to Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief (CALFB).***

Belief in concepts of:

- witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs)
- the evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context)
- ritual or muti murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies
- use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation. This is not an exhaustive list and there will be other examples where children have been harmed when adults think that their actions have brought bad fortune, such as telephoning a wrong number which is believed by some to allow malevolent spirits to enter the home. Reasons for the child being identified as 'different' may be a disobedient or independent nature, bed wetting, nightmares or illness. Attempts to exorcise the child may include:
  - Beating
  - Burning
  - Starvation
  - cutting or stabbing
  - isolation within the household.

Children with a disability may also be viewed as different, and various degrees of disability have previously been interpreted as 'possession', from a stammer to epilepsy, autism or a life limiting illness

### **Signs that a child could be at risk of abuse linked to faith or belief**

- *Children who are seen as "naughty" or have challenging behaviour*
- *Children with disabilities including autism, epilepsy, down's syndrome, dyslexia.*

- *Albinos, precocious children and left-handed children*
- *Children whose parents have been branded as witches*
- *Children living away from home in private fostering situations or in domestic servitude situations*
- *Children who are living within complex family structures e.g. a polygamous setting or a reconstituted family*

**Signs that a child is undergoing abuse linked to faith or belief**

*Most of the indicators may appear similar to other types of maltreatment and include when a child:*

- *Reports that they are or have been accused of being evil, and / or that they are having the devil beaten out of them.*
- *Is made to wear some form of paraphernalia that could be of a religious nature.*
- *Personal care deteriorates or has body marks, such as bruises or burns*
- *Is seen as the scapegoat for a change in family circumstances for the worse*
- *In a group of children is relatively powerless vis-a-vis the parents/carers, maybe a child with no essential role in the family*
- *Attendance at school becomes irregular, or is taken out of school altogether without another school place having been organised*

## **WEEK 36 – OFSTED AND THE INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING**

Ofsted conduct safeguarding inspections to ensure that schools fulfil their legal obligation to keep children safe from harm, abuse and neglect. These inspections also assess whether schools have effective policies and procedures in place and provide parents with clear information about their child's welfare.

Ofsted safeguarding inspections are important because they highlight good practice, identify weak areas and drive improvements where needed.

### **What do Ofsted Inspectors Look For?**

When completing a safeguarding inspection, an Ofsted inspector will gather information on how well a school's safeguarding processes work in practice. They will review the school's safeguarding policies and records and check that all staff understand their responsibilities and know how to identify and report concerns.

Ofsted inspectors will also speak to the students and gather information on whether they feel safe, as well as explore how the school addresses various risks such as online safety and bullying.

For example, a school may have a clear reporting process in its policy but an inspector might find through speaking to students, children are unsure who to speak to if they feel unsafe. This shows how important it is for inspectors to look beyond documents to ensure safeguarding is genuinely effective.

Additionally, Ofsted inspectors examine how school leaders and governors oversee safeguarding efforts and ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

### **The Inspection Process**

Before a safeguarding inspection, Ofsted will reach out to the school to inform them about the documents and information they will need to review during the visit. They will also speak with the Headteacher to plan the inspection.

Upon arrival, the inspectors will meet with senior leaders and the Designated Safeguarding Leads to discuss the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and training. The inspectors will review important documents including the single central record, child protection policies, risk assessments and records of safeguarding concerns to ensure they are effective and current.

Inspectors will then speak with staff, students and occasionally parents to assess how well safeguarding practices are understood and implemented in everyday school life. They may ask whether staff know how to raise a concern, how confident pupils are in approaching trusted adults and if governors can explain their safeguarding oversight. They may also observe lessons and breaktimes to see how students are supervised.

Following the inspection, Ofsted will provide feedback and report on the overall effectiveness of the school's safeguarding measures in a stand-alone category, i.e. standards are either 'met' or 'not met'.

But remember, strong safeguarding practices should be a priority at all times, not just during inspections.

## WEEK 37 - ACEs

Our relationships and experiences—even those in childhood—can affect our health and well-being. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events occurring before the age of 18, ACEs have been found to be associated with a range of poorer health and social outcomes in adulthood. These risks increase as the number of ACEs increases, and can have a lasting effect on health and wellbeing across the course of life. It can have profound adverse effects on learning, behaviours, emotional well-being, physical health and life opportunities.

ACEs are generally categorised into abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction.

### **Abuse (Personal)**

- **Physical abuse:** Hitting, shaking, or throwing things at the child.
- **Sexual abuse:** Touching, fondling, or sexual acts forced upon a child.
- **Emotional/Verbal abuse:** Swearing at, insulting, or humiliating a child.

### **Neglect**

- **Physical neglect:** Failure to provide basic needs like food, clothing, or safety.
- **Emotional neglect:** Failure to make a child feel loved, cared for, or important.

### **Household Dysfunction**

- **Parental separation or divorce**
- **Domestic violence:** Witnessing a mother or other household member being abused.
- **Substance misuse:** Living with someone who has alcohol or drug problems.
- **Mental illness:** Living with someone who is depressed, suicidal, or mentally ill.
- **Incarcerated relative:** A household member serving time in jail or prison.

### **Other Potential Adverse Experiences**

Beyond the 10 core, other adversities include bullying, community violence, poverty, racism, and natural disasters. Within the household environment, factors may include:

- Young person with caring responsibilities
- Poverty
- Online Harm
- Displacement
- Criminal Activity
- Long-term Unemployment
- Family Conflict and Violence
- Bereavement

Additionally, there may be wider environmental factors:

- Lack of Opportunity for Growth
- Discrimination
- Fear of Unsafe Neighbourhood
- Inequality of Resources
- Low School Attendance
- Divisive Political and Media Commentary
- Isolation
- Online, social, workplace, community, family
- Socio-political events
- Lack of Trust in Authority

In England, almost half of adults have experienced at least one ACE, and 10% have experienced four or more. But remember that ACEs don't define the person!

## **WEEK 38 - FGM**

**Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there is no medical reason for this to be done.**

It's also known as female circumcision or cutting, and by other terms, such as Sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahir, megrez and khitan, among others.

FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

FGM is carried out for various cultural, religious and social reasons within families and communities in the mistaken belief that it will benefit the girl in some way (for example, as a preparation for marriage or to preserve her virginity).

But there are no acceptable reasons that justify FGM. It's a harmful practice that has no health benefits.

FGM usually happens to girls whose mothers, grandmothers or extended female family members have had FGM themselves, or if their father comes from a community where it's carried out.

It's illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse. It's an offence to:

- perform FGM (including taking a child abroad for FGM)
- help a girl perform FGM on herself in or outside the UK
- help anyone perform FGM in the UK
- help anyone perform FGM outside the UK on a UK national or resident
- fail to protect a girl for whom you're responsible from FGM

Anyone who performs FGM can face up to 14 years in prison.

Anyone found guilty of failing to protect a girl from FGM can face up to 7 years in prison.

Any member of staff who suspects that a child has undergone, or is at risk of, FGM should speak to their DSLs without delay. The DSLs will support with the mandatory reporting procedure.

## WEEK 39 – HONOUR BASED ABUSE AND FORCED MARRIAGE



**Honour-based abuse (HBA)** has no statutory definition, but refers to harmful actions carried out against an individual to protect or defend a family or community's perceived honour. It is a form of abuse that is often linked to cultural or traditional beliefs about how a family or community should behave. It can occur in any culture/faith group or community.

HBA can manifest in various forms, including physical violence, psychological abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), and even homicide. The underlying idea is that the victim's actions, often a woman, are seen as bringing shame or dishonour to the family or community, and violence is used to restore that honour.

In the UK, so called honour-based abuse is a serious and often hidden issue, affecting individuals, primarily women and girls, from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. It is important to note that HBA is not tied to any specific religion or culture, but it is sometimes linked to specific cultural practices or traditional beliefs/patriarchy in certain communities.

It is also worth noting that men can also be affected by honour-based violence, perhaps linked to relationships formed outside of their community or entering same sex relationships.

**Forced Marriage** is the situation where a person, usually a young girl/woman, is forced into marrying someone chosen by others. It is highly likely that they will never have met this person beforehand. Even if they don't give consent, families will use coercion and possibly the threat of violence if the marriage does not go ahead.

Forced marriage is considered a breach of human rights, and under current legislation anyone complicit in arranging a forced marriage can be sentenced to up to 7 years in prison.

Note: This is not to be confused with **arranged marriage**, where there is usually a long-term betrothal and both parties have consented to the union.

### **Forms of Honour-Based Abuse:**

- **Physical violence and abuse:** Beating, burning, disfigurement, rape or other forms of assault to punish perceived dishonour.
- **Psychological abuse:** Coercive control, threats, isolation, and humiliation to break the victim's spirit.
- **Enslavement or false imprisonment:** being kept in isolation and away from supportive others.
- **Forced marriages:** Being coerced or threatened into marrying someone against their will.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** A cultural practice involving the mutilation of female genitalia, seen as a way to preserve "honour" and control sexual behaviour.
- **Homicide:** In extreme cases, a victim may be murdered (often referred to as an "honour killing") for actions that are deemed to bring dishonour to the family.

**Risk Factors:**

- **Gender:** Women and girls are the primary victims of HBA, as their perceived behaviour is often more closely scrutinised in communities where honour is paramount. However, males can also be at risk.
- **Age:** Younger women, particularly teens, are at higher risk, especially in forced marriage situations.
- **Cultural factors:** Families from some ethnic communities, such as South Asian, Middle Eastern, African heritage or Irish Traveller may experience cultural pressures related to honour.
- **Immigration status:** Immigrants or first-generation individuals may face heightened pressures to conform to traditional values, especially in the UK, where Western norms around gender equality and autonomy may conflict with those of the family or community.

**Challenges in Reporting and Tackling Honour-Based Abuse:**

- **Shame and stigma:** Victims may feel ashamed or fear retribution from their families or communities if they report abuse.
- **Lack of support:** Survivors may have limited access to support services due to cultural, language, or immigration barriers.
- **Fear of retaliation:** In cases of forced marriage or when the family is involved in the violence, victims may fear severe punishment or death if they try to escape or speak out.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Service providers and law enforcement may struggle to deal with these issues due to a lack of cultural understanding or fear of stigmatising certain communities.

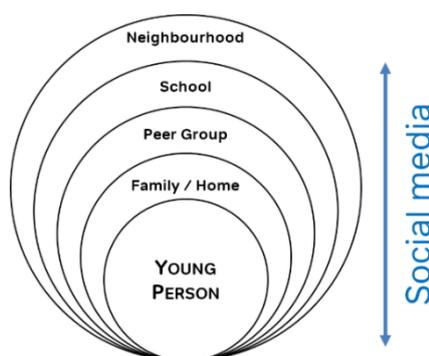
## WEEK 40 – CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

### What is Contextual Safeguarding?

Contextual Safeguarding recognises that as young people grow and develop, they are influenced by a whole range of environments and people outside of their family. For example, in school or college, in the local community, in their peer groups or online.

Children and young people may encounter risk in any of these environments. Sometimes the different contexts are inter-related and can mean that children and young people may encounter multiple risks. Contextual safeguarding looks at how we can best understand these risks, engage with children and young people and help to keep them safe.

Every school must include a section about contextual safeguarding in their Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and show an awareness of the risks that their pupils may face out of their immediate family environment.



### Possible Social Contexts

- Living in an area of poverty & deprivation/high unemployment
- Prevalence of domestic abuse
- Areas of poor-quality housing
- Knife crime
- Gang culture
- County Lines
- Risk of child sexual exploitation
- Risk of child criminal exploitation
- Extremist beliefs within the community
- Negative attitudes to education and/or persistent absence
- Drug and substance abuse
- Grooming – in person and online
- Online activity and Com networks

### Possible Physical Contexts

- Parks and play areas/neighbourhood 'hot spots' where young people gather
- Water safety - rivers, canals, reservoirs
- Railway lines
- Accessible pylons & electricity substations
- Proximity to busy roads and traffic
- Housing development & access to building sites
- Derelict or empty properties

This is not an exhaustive list – there may be further contextual risks in your area. Can you think of any?

## **WEEK 41 – META (SMART) GLASSES AND OTHER RECORDING DEVICES**



The world of digital media is constantly evolving, with new technology being introduced every day. While there has been a wide range of digital technology capable of recording available for some time, relative newcomers are Meta (or Smart) Glasses, which have been readily available on the tech market since 2023.

By February 2025 a leading manufacturer had sold more than 2 million pairs of Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses since launching them in September 2023, and is on track to raise production capacity to 10 million units a year by the end of 2026. Starting at the relatively affordable price of around £300, they could well be bought for children for use alongside their smart phones.

Smart glasses enable the wearer to access information and apps similar to those on a smart phone including using maps, listening to music, and recording video. Whilst they have such undeniable positive benefits and uses, Meta glasses also pose significant safeguarding risks through covert recording, non-consensual surveillance, and automated data collection used for AI training. Key dangers include eroding privacy, bypassing consent with discreet cameras, potential for facial recognition abuse, business surveillance, and security vulnerabilities like hacking, all exacerbated by default cloud storage settings.

It is also worth noting that many other smart devices may also be brought into school and used for covert recording. Air-pods with the latest iOS updates can be used as microphones, along with smart watches and specifically designed items such as Plaud recorders. Schools need to consider how their policies reflect the risks posed by such devices.

### **Use of Personal Audio Devices (e.g., AirPods, Earbuds, Headphones)**

The use of personal audio devices with microphone or recording capability (including AirPods, earbuds, and similar Bluetooth headsets) presents potential safeguarding and privacy risks. These devices may be capable of recording audio when connected to a phone or other device, and their discreet design means recording may not be obvious to others.

To protect children, young people, staff, and visitors:

- Audio recording of any individual without their knowledge and appropriate consent is not permitted within the setting.
- Personal audio devices must not be used to record conversations, meetings, or activities involving children or vulnerable individuals.
- Staff should remain aware that wearing such devices may cause concern or misunderstandings about covert recording and should remove them during direct work with children, confidential discussions, or safeguarding situations unless there is a clear and authorised purpose.
- Any concerns about misuse of recording functions should be reported in line with the organisation's safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures.

Failure to follow this guidance may be treated as a safeguarding or data protection matter and addressed under disciplinary procedures.

Here is a breakdown of the safeguarding risks associated with Meta/smart glasses and small recording devices/personal audio devices, and possible responses:

### **1. Privacy and Consent Violations**

- **Covert Recording:** The cameras on smart glasses are small and easily missed, allowing users to film in private or semi-private spaces without others knowing. There have been several recent cases in the news where people have been secretly filmed, and their interactions then posted on social media.
- **Lack of Informed Consent:** Bystanders cannot easily refuse to be recorded, removing the fundamental aspect of consent.
- **Data Misuse:** Captured footage, faces, and voices can be used for AI training, shared with third parties, or indexed by AI tools, even if the original clip is deleted.
- **Erosion of Contextual Privacy:** Private moments can be retrieved and then shared online, leading to harassment or public humiliation.

## 2. Security and Data Risks

- **AI Training Default:** Recent updates mean voice recordings and media may be stored by default to train Meta's AI, with limited opt-out options.
- **Voice Data Harvesting:** Conversations, including any background noise, are recorded when triggered, posing risks of capturing sensitive information.
- **Business Espionage:** Recording devices represent a major threat to confidentiality, allowing for easy, hidden recording of meetings or proprietary data.
- **Hacking Potential:** As connected devices, they are vulnerable to breaches.

## 3. Ethical and Physical Safety Concerns

- **Facial Recognition Link:** While not actually enabled by Meta, the data recorded by glasses can be paired with third-party tools to instantly identify individuals in real-time.
- **Surveillance Culture:** Persistent use of devices creates a "chilling effect" where people may self-censor in public.
- **Bypassing Safeguards:** The recording LED indicator on smart glasses can be tampered with or covered, removing the only visual warning for bystanders. Other devices may be used covertly in class, e.g. in pockets or pencil cases
- **Safety Hazards:** Operating smart glasses while completing tasks can cause dangerous distractions.

## 4. Key Concerns & Risks for Schools

- **Covert Recording & Privacy:** Smart glasses have small, easily missed or by-passable LED lights indicating recording, making it hard for teachers and peers to know they are being filmed. Smaller recording devices can be used covertly. Not just a concern in the classroom, this may be in conflict with the school policy on the recording of performances etc.
- **Data Protection:** Recordings may breach GDPR and data protection laws.
- **Cheating:** Because they function like a "phone on your face," students can use smart glasses to access AI, or get real-time help without detection.
- **Bullying & Harassment:** The ability to live stream or secretly record interactions can be misused for bullying/cyberbullying, harassment or abuse.
- **Distraction:** Any tech device, if used improperly, can disrupt the learning environment.
- **Staff interaction with Parents:** meetings and interaction with parents may be covertly recorded

## 5. Common Policy Approaches

Schools may adopt measures to address these devices:

- **Total Ban on Site:** Many schools have declared that smart glasses and devices with recording capability are not permitted on school premises for students, staff and visitors.
- **Device Confiscation/Storage:** If a device is brought to school, they must be removed, stored securely, or taken to the front office until the end of the day. Staff must ensure any of their own devices are stored safely away throughout the school day.
- **Extension of "No Phone" Policies:** Existing bans on mobile phones, cameras, and recording devices may be updated to explicitly include "smart glasses" and wearable recording tech.
- **Prescription Exemption Denial:** Policies often clarify that even if smart glasses have prescription lenses, they are still prohibited due to the camera/recording hardware.
- **Signage around school** – no recording permitted/no wireless devices

## 6. Key Policy Areas Affected

- **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies:** Preventing unauthorised filming/recording of children.

- **Staff Handbooks:** Restricting personal device usage around students.
- **Anti-Bullying Policies:** Addressing harassment via hidden devices/posting of material online
- **Acceptable Use Policies:** Updating to cover AI eyewear and other devices with recording capabilities.