

# Safeguarding Appendices



# Leep

## Potential powered up

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------|-----|
| <b>Distribution</b>     | All staff                                 |                |     |
| <b>Reference Number</b> | SGP                                       | <b>Version</b> | 2.0 |
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| <b>Issue date</b>       | 01/09/2026                                |                |     |
| <b>Review date</b>      | 01/09/2027                                |                |     |

### DOCUMENT CONTROL

| Version | Name        | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Date       |
|---------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1.0     | Alison Dann | First edition (Review of current safeguarding policy and procedure conducted and incorporated both documents into one full procedure) Includes KCSIE 2025                                                                                                                                                                            | 15/09/2025 |
| 2.0     | Alison Dann | Updated for KCSIE 2026, including Part One reading expectations, immediate action and escalation, Family Help, child-on-child abuse, exploitation, mental health, serious violence, online safety and generative AI, information sharing, DSL cover and revised safer-recruitment requirements. School-only provisions are excluded. | 01/09/2026 |

## Organisation scope

For the purpose of clarity, the term “Leep” refers to the family of Leep organisations – Back to Work, Leep Trade, Leep Talent & Equality Training.

## Policy Statement

Applicability: KCSIE 2026 includes Independent Training Providers within its definition of colleges. Its statutory responsibilities relate to children under 18 who receive education or training from Leep. These appendices adapt the relevant safeguarding information for Leep learners and support Leep’s whole-provider approach, including proportionate application of adult-safeguarding law and procedures where an adult is at risk. School-only requirements are excluded unless relevant to commissioned delivery or a learner’s placement.

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**KCSIE 2026 uses the terms children and young people. Leep applies these indicators directly to learners under 18 and proportionately, alongside adult-safeguarding law and procedures, to adults at risk where relevant.**

## What all staff must do

These appendices support, but do not replace, KCSIE 2026 Part One or Leep’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. All staff including leaders and staff who work directly with children must read KCSIE 2026 .

Any concern about a child's welfare must be acted on immediately. Staff must record factual information on the current Cause for Concern (CFC) form and submit it through Leep's approved safeguarding route. Staff must not investigate, delay reporting while seeking proof, or promise confidentiality.

Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the Safeguarding Team will make an immediate referral to local authority children's social care and/or the police. If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999. If the DSL is unavailable, staff must contact a DSO or use [safeguarding@leepgroup.com](mailto:safeguarding@leepgroup.com) so that the concern is monitored and acted on without delay.

### **Provider-wide arrangements**

- All staff must understand Leep's safeguarding systems, receive appropriate induction and regular updates, and be prepared to identify children who may benefit from universal services, community-based early help or targeted Family Help.
- Leep will maintain robust DSL/DSO cover, including a confidential monitored route for concerns when the DSL is unavailable and for relevant out-of-hours activity.
- Safeguarding information will be shared lawfully, securely, promptly and proportionately on a need-to-know basis under the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Data protection is not a barrier to protecting a child.
- Staff must remain alert to additional barriers or support needs affecting young carers; learners with SEND, disabilities, medical or mental-health needs; learners who are pregnant or parents; and LGB or gender-questioning learners.
- Online safety, including generative AI, will be considered across safeguarding, teaching, remote delivery and staff training. The effectiveness of filtering and monitoring will be reviewed and recorded at least annually, supported by the DSL and IT support.
- Safer-recruitment and DBS procedures must cover staff, contractors and volunteers. The former supervision exemption for volunteers must not be relied upon. Concerns or allegations involving staff, agency workers, trainee teachers, volunteers or contractors must follow Leep's allegations and low-level-concerns procedures, including referral to the LADO where appropriate.

### **Child abduction and community safety incidents**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community-safety incidents near a Leep site, employer premises, work placement or travel route may raise concerns, for example people loitering nearby, unknown adults approaching learners, or attempts to isolate or transport a child.

As young people gain independence and travel to training, work placements or employer premises, staff should provide practical, age-appropriate advice about personal safety, trusted adults, safe travel and how to seek help.

Advice and learning should build confidence, judgement and help-seeking skills rather than simply warning learners about strangers. Further information is available at:

- [action against abduction.org](https://www.actionagainstabduction.org)
- [clever never goes](https://www.clevernevergoes.org).

## **Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

Exploitation may occur on one occasion or over time, and may range from opportunistic abuse to organised exploitation. It may involve force and/or enticement and may be accompanied by violence, although violence does not have to be present. In some cases, exploitation or abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example money, gifts or affection), and/or for the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Children can be exploited by adults or other children, acting alone or through an organised network or gang. A child who appears to facilitate exploitation may also be a victim. Exploitation may constitute modern slavery, and a child cannot consent to being exploited, abused or trafficked.

Age may contribute to a power imbalance, but vulnerability can also arise from sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical or learning disability, neurodivergence, communication needs, physical strength, status, and access to money or other resources. Victims may be criminalised for actions taken under coercion and may not recognise that they are being exploited. Indicators of criminal or sexual exploitation include children who:

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late, and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.
- have relationships with significantly older people or controlling individuals
- experience sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy or other unexplained sexual-health concerns
- display sexual behaviour or knowledge beyond their expected stage of development.

Child sexual exploitation may be committed by an individual or an organised network and may include physical contact or non-contact activity, including online grooming, coercion and the creation or sharing of sexual images. Most child sexual abuse is committed by someone known to the victim. Concerns about exploitation or trafficking must be reported to the Safeguarding Team so that child-protection procedures and, where appropriate, the National Referral Mechanism can be considered.

Further information on signs of a child's involvement in sexual exploitation is available in Home Office guidance:

- [child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners](#)

## **County lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line". This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children's homes and care homes.

Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CCE and CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines. Some additional specific indicators that may be present where a child is criminally exploited through involvement in county lines are children who:

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals .

- [childrenssociety.org](https://childrenssociety.org).

## **Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. Two age-appropriate guides support children aged 5–11 and 12–17 by explaining the process, available support and special measures, courtroom layout and use of video links.

Making child arrangements via the family courts following separation can be stressful and entrench conflict in families. This can be stressful for children. The Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangements information tool with clear and concise information on the dispute resolution service. This may be useful for some parents and carers

- [Young witness booklet for 5 to 11 year olds - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674442/Young_witness_booklet_for_5_to_11_year_olds.pdf)
- [young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds](https://gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674442/young-witness-booklet-for-12-to-17-year-olds.pdf)
- [help with child arrangements .service .justice.](https://help.withchildarrangements.service.justice.gov.uk/)

## **Children who are absent from education**

Repeated or prolonged absence from education or training can be a warning sign of abuse, neglect, sexual or criminal exploitation, county lines involvement, mental-health concerns, substance misuse, travel to conflict zones, female genital mutilation, honour or faith-based abuse, or forced marriage. Leep staff must follow attendance-monitoring and safeguarding-escalation procedures so underlying risk is identified early.

## **Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 193,000 children in England and Wales have a parent in prison each year. They may experience poverty, stigma, isolation, mental ill health, substance misuse, disrupted attendance and poorer later outcomes. Leep Group should offer tailored, trauma-informed and sensitive support that promotes stability. The Prisoners' Families Helpline offers free, confidential support and advice.

[Prisoners' Families Helpline](#)

## **Cybercrime**

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as cyber-enabled crime, which can occur offline but is amplified online, or cyber-dependent crime, which can only be committed using a computer.

Cyber-dependent offending is a significant and rapidly evolving UK risk. Offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 have increased, and young people may experiment without understanding the legal or ethical consequences. The harm can extend beyond financial loss to disruption of organisations and national infrastructure.

### **Cyber-dependent crimes include:**

- unauthorised access to computers (illegal hacking), for example accessing a Leep network, another learner's account or learning records without permission
- "Denial of Service" (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources, and,
- making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skills and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low-level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs on-line and child sexual abuse and exploitation, nor other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

### **Additional advice can be found at:**

- [cyberchoices.uk](https://cyberchoices.uk)
- [NPCC: When to call the police – guidance for schools and colleges](#)
- [ncsc.gov.uk](https://ncsc.gov.uk)

## Artificial intelligence and online safeguarding

Generative AI can create, imitate or amplify safeguarding risks. These include exposure to harmful or misleading content; simulated relationships or interactions used for grooming, coercion or exploitation; AI-generated bullying or abuse; financial scams; and the creation or alteration of sexual images, audio or video.

Staff should consider the four overlapping areas of online risk:

- content – illegal, inappropriate or harmful material, including misinformation and disinformation
- contact – harmful interaction with other users or generative-AI applications that simulate users
- conduct – behaviour that creates or increases harm, including explicit images generated or altered using AI, harassment and bullying
- commerce – gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams.

Any safeguarding concern involving AI-generated content or interaction must be reported through Leep's normal safeguarding process. AI-generated nude or semi-nude images involving a child must be treated as a safeguarding concern whether the underlying image is real, altered or wholly generated. Staff must not view, copy or forward suspected illegal images unless unavoidable and authorised under the relevant procedure.

Where AI is used for learning, delivery or assessment, Leep must assess the tool and intended use, apply age restrictions, safeguarding and filtering/monitoring controls, and address ethics, data protection, confidentiality and intellectual property. Staff must use approved systems and must not enter personal, confidential or safeguarding information into public or unapproved AI tools.

## Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse. The statutory definition of domestic abuse, based on the previous cross-government definition, ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members. The definition captures a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional and economic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the 2021 Act).

Types of domestic abuse include intimate-partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child-to-parent or caregiver abuse. It may include coercive or controlling behaviour and can happen inside or outside the home. Anyone can be a victim regardless of sex, gender identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

## Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is an information-sharing scheme under which police notify specified education settings when there are reasonable grounds to believe a child may be a victim of domestic abuse. The statutory notification duty does not list Independent Training Providers, although police may share information with other settings where appropriate. If Leep Group receives a notification or disclosure, it must be handled confidentially, recorded securely and acted on through normal safeguarding procedures; it does not replace referral to children's social care or police where required. The Operation Encompass advice line for education staff is 0204 513 9990, 8:00am to 1:00pm Monday to Friday.

- [operationencompass.org](https://operationencompass.org)

## National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked. Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- NSPCC- UK domestic-abuse Signs Symptoms
- [nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/](https://nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/domestic-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/)
- Refuge what is domestic violence/effects of domestic violence on children • Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives
- [refuge.org.uk/what-is-domestic-abuse](https://refuge.org.uk/what-is-domestic-abuse)
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support (includes information for adult victims, young people facing abuse in their own relationships and parents experiencing child to parent violence/abuse)
- [domestic-abuse-get-help-for-specific-needs-or-situations/domestic-abuse-specialist-sources-of-support](https://domestic-abuse-get-help-for-specific-needs-or-situations/domestic-abuse-specialist-sources-of-support)

## Homelessness

Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of contact details and referral routes into the Local Housing Authority so they can raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property. Whilst referrals and/or discussion with the Local Housing Authority should be progressed as appropriate, and in accordance with local procedures, this does not, and should not, replace a referral into local authority children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live. The following factsheets usefully summarise the new duties: Homeless Reduction Act Factsheets. The new duties shift the focus to early intervention and encourages those at risk to seek support as soon as possible, before they are facing a homelessness crisis.

Some 16- and 17-year-old learners may be living independently because they have been excluded from the family home. Local authority children's social care is the lead agency for these children, and the DSL or DSO must ensure appropriate referrals are made according to the child's circumstances. Discussion with a housing authority does not replace a referral to children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act places a duty on local housing authorities in England to notify relevant educational institutions when a child is placed in temporary accommodation, where the required consent has been given. Where Leep receives a notification, it must be used promptly to safeguard and support the learner. The notification does not replace existing safeguarding and welfare duties or a referral to children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

- [homelessness-reduction-bill-policy-factsheets](#)

## **Mental health**

Abuse, neglect, exploitation and other traumatic experiences can have lasting effects on mental health, behaviour, attendance, engagement and progress. Mental-health problems may also develop into safeguarding concerns, including self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide, or may indicate that abuse, neglect or exploitation has occurred.

### **Mental health: early identification and support**

- Staff should recognise potential warning signs such as significant changes in behaviour, persistent sleep difficulties, withdrawal, loss of interest, eating concerns, self-harm, suicidal thoughts or plans, and self-neglect. These indicators require professional curiosity but do not, by themselves, establish a diagnosis. Only appropriately trained professionals should diagnose a mental-health condition.
- A mental-health concern that is also a safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Team, who will work with appropriate mental-health and statutory services.
- If a learner is in immediate danger, call 999 or arrange urgent attendance at A&E with a parent/carer or other suitable person. For urgent mental-health support that is not an emergency, use NHS 111 and select the mental-health option.

Education staff can support four key roles: promoting good mental wellbeing and prevention; observing and identifying concerns early; ensuring early, evidence-based support; and liaising with or referring to specialist services where needed. The DSL/DSO should consider involving parents or carers where this will support the child and will not increase risk.

- Leep should consider locally available support, including Mental Health Support Teams where accessible, early-support hubs and Young Futures Hubs. Where Leep appoints a mental-health lead, that person should support a whole-provider approach and liaise with the Safeguarding Team.
- [DfE: Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)
  - [NHS Every Mind Matters](#)
  - [Hub of Hope mental-health support directory](#)

## **Modern slavery and the National Referral Mechanism**

Modern slavery includes sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, human trafficking, slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, forced criminality and organ removal. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK framework for identifying and supporting potential victims. Suspected exploitation or trafficking of a child is child abuse and must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Team so child-protection procedures and an NRM referral through an authorised first responder can be considered.

Children referred to the NRM in England and Wales may also be eligible for support from an Independent Child Trafficking Guardian.

- [modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims](#)

## Preventing radicalisation

Children and adults may be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism. Preventing radicalisation is part of Leep's wider safeguarding approach and concerns must be assessed and acted on proportionately.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of people with different faiths and beliefs or no faith.

**Radicalisation** is the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence.

**Terrorism** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to radicalisation into terrorism, there are factors that may indicate concern.

- [the-prevent-duty-safeguarding-learners-vulnerable-to-radicalisation/managing-risk-of-radicalisation-in-your-education-setting](#)

It is possible to protect people from extremist ideology and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

- [making-a-referral-to-prevent](#)

## The Prevent duty

Leep Group is subject to the Prevent duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and must have due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Prevent duty forms part of Leep's wider safeguarding responsibilities. The DSL, DSOs and senior leaders must understand the Prevent duty guidance, including its themes of leadership and partnership, capabilities and reducing permissive environments, and must know the local procedure for making a Prevent referral.

- [prevent-duty-guidance](#)

## Channel

Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme providing early support to people susceptible to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals are first assessed by police and may be considered by a multi-agency Channel panel. If new or further information arises while a referral is being assessed, it must also be passed to the police. Consent is required before Channel support is delivered. Where a learner moves provider, relevant safeguarding information, including current Channel support, should be shared lawfully and promptly with the receiving setting where appropriate.

Statutory guidance on Channel is available at:

*Private and Confidential – For Internal Use Only*

- [channel-guidance](#)
- [support-people-vulnerable-to-radicalisation.channel-or-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-course](#)

### **The Home Office has developed three e-learning modules:**

Prevent awareness e-learning offers an introduction to the Prevent duty.

- [eLearning prevent. home office.](#)

Prevent referrals e-learning supports staff to make Prevent referrals that are robust, informed and with good intention.

- [prevent. prevent referrals](#)

Channel awareness e-learning is aimed at staff who may be asked to contribute to or sit on a multi-agency Channel panel

- [eLearning. Prevent. channel](#)

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

- [educate against hate](#)

For advice specific to further education, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) hosts the Prevent for FE and Training. This hosts a range of free, sector specific resources to support further education settings to comply with the Prevent duty. This includes the Prevent Awareness e-learning, which offers an introduction to the duty, and the Prevent Referral e-learning, which is designed to support staff to make robust, informed and proportionate referrals.

- [prevent for fe and training](#)

The Safeguarding and Prevent - The Education and Training Foundation ([et-foundation.co.uk](http://et-foundation.co.uk)) provides online training modules for practitioners, leaders and managers, to support staff and governors/Board members in outlining their roles and responsibilities under the duty.

- [safeguarding-prevent](#)

London Grid for Learning has also produced useful resources on Prevent (Online Safety Resource Centre - London Grid for Learning ([lgfl.net](http://lgfl.net))).

- [prevent.lgfl.net/](#)

### **Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence) in Leep provision**

Child-on-child abuse can happen inside or outside Leep provision, at work or placement settings, during travel and online. The absence of reports does not mean it is not happening. It is preventable and is a safeguarding issue for both the victim and the alleged perpetrator. All concerns must be reported to the DSL/DSO.

Child-on-child abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying
- abuse in intimate personal relationships, including coercive control and stalking
- physical abuse, serious assault, threats of harm or threats involving a weapon
- sexual violence, sexual harassment or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent
- consensual or non-consensual making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, including AI-generated or altered images
- upskirting
- initiation or hazing-type violence, harassment, abuse or humiliation
- online abuse, including abusive, harassing, misogynistic or misandrist messages and unwanted explicit content.

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB), sexual harassment and sexual violence can occur between children of any age or sex, between a group and an individual or another group, online or face to face, and inside or outside Leep provision. All staff must maintain an attitude that 'it could happen here'.

HSB exists on a continuum and may escalate into sexual harassment or sexual violence. Inappropriate or abusive behaviour must be challenged and must never be dismissed as banter, joking, 'boys being boys' or part of growing up. Leep has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including misogynistic and misandrist behaviour.

Victims must be taken seriously, supported and kept safe, and must never be blamed or made to feel ashamed for reporting. Immediate steps must also consider the safety and support needs of the alleged perpetrator and any other affected children, without prejudging the outcome.

### **Online harm and sharing nudes or semi-nudes**

- Online harm includes sexual harassment, coercion, image-based abuse, abusive, misogynistic or misandrist content, and the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes including the use of AI.
- Nude or semi-nude images may be self-generated, taken by another person, digitally altered or wholly created with artificial intelligence, including deepfakes or deep nudes.
- Every incident involving the sharing of a nude or semi-nude image requires a safeguarding response, whether consensual or non-consensual. The response must be proportionate to age, development, circumstances, coercion, exploitation and vulnerability.
- Following a report of sexual violence, the DSL or DSO must complete and record an immediate risk and needs assessment. For sexual harassment, the need for an assessment is considered case by case. Assessments must address the victim, alleged perpetrator, other potential victims, wider learners and staff, location and timing, and must be reviewed as circumstances change.

### **Serious violence**

Serious violence may involve assault, carrying, threatening with or using weapons, peer conflict, bullying or criminal exploitation. Any concern that a learner is carrying or may use a weapon must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Team for risk assessment and safety/support planning.

### **These may include:**

- increased or unexplained absence from education or training
- a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups
- a significant decline in engagement or educational performance
- signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries

- unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

**The likelihood of involvement in serious violence may be increased by factors such as:**

- being male
- having been suspended, spent time in Alternative Provision or permanently excluded from school, college or another education setting
- having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.
- having used drugs or alcohol in early adolescence
- having previously been a victim or perpetrator of violence.

Risk may increase around the start or end of training and during travel. Leep should listen to learners, understand where and when they feel unsafe, work with local partners and provide early evidence-based support such as trusted adults, mentoring, social and emotional support or specialist intervention.

- [serious-violence-strategy](#)

The Home Office county-lines guidance and Youth Endowment Fund resources provide practical evidence for education and training providers working to prevent serious violence and criminal exploitation.

- [criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines](#)
- [youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit](https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit)

Home Office funded Violence Reduction Units (VRU) operate in the 20 police force areas across England and Wales that have the highest volumes of serious violence, as measured by hospital admissions for injury with a sharp object. A list of these locations can be found here (where?). As the strategic co-ordinators for local violence prevention, each VRU is mandated to include at least one local education representative within their Core Membership group, which is responsible for setting the direction for VRU activity. Schools and educational partners within these areas are encouraged to reach out to their local VRU, either directly or via their education Core Member, to better ingrain partnership working to tackle serious violence across local areas and ensure a joined up approach to young people across the risk spectrum.

- [-to-support-young-people-at-risk-of-involvement-in-serious-violence](#)

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced a new duty on a range of specified authorities, such as the police, local government, youth offending teams, health and probation services, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. Educational authorities and prisons/youth custody authorities are under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders when asked, and there will be a requirement for the partnership to consult with all such institutions in their area.

The Duty is not intended to replace or duplicate existing safeguarding duties. Local partners may choose to meet the requirements of the Duty through existing multi-agency structures, such as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, providing the correct set of partners are involved.

- [police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill](#)

## **Honour or faith-based abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage)**

Honour or faith-based abuse includes incidents or crimes committed to protect or defend perceived family or community honour, including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and breast ironing. It can involve a wider network of family or community pressure and multiple perpetrators. All forms are abuse and must be recognised, reported and escalated through safeguarding procedures.

### **Actions**

If staff suspect honour or faith-based abuse, they must speak to the DSL or DSO without delay. The Safeguarding Team will follow local procedures and liaise with police and children's social care as appropriate. A separate personal reporting duty applies to staff who meet the statutory definition of a teacher and discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

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

### **FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers**

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

- [mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information](#)

A staff member who meets the statutory definition of a teacher must personally report to police when, through a disclosure or visual evidence arising in the course of their work, they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. They should also inform the DSL or DSO unless there is a good reason not to. The personal duty does not cover suspected or at-risk cases, or women aged 18 or over; all such concerns must still follow Leep safeguarding procedures. Staff must never examine a learner to look for evidence.

- [FGM mandatory reporting Fact sheet Web.](#)
- [multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation](#)
- [female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack](#)

### **Forced marriage**

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, including where a person cannot consent, and may involve physical, emotional or psychological coercion. Leep staff can play an important role in identifying and safeguarding learners at risk.

The Forced Marriage Unit provides multi-agency practice guidelines and statutory guidance on handling forced-marriage cases. Leep staff may contact the unit for advice or information on 020 7008 0151 or at [fmufcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fmufcdo.gov.uk).

In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.

- [The right to choose: government guidance on forced marriage](#)

### **Additional advice and support**

The following non-exhaustive resources may support Leep staff and learners.

#### **Abuse**

- [Supporting practice in tackling child sexual abuse CSA Centre](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#)
- [Domestic Abuse](#)
- [Faith Based Abuse Action Plan](#)
- [Forced Marriage](#)
- [Disrespect Nobody Campaign](#)
- [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse](#)
- [stop abuse together. campaign](#)

#### **Bullying**

- [preventing-and-tackling-bullying](#)

#### **Children missing from education, home or care**

- [Children-missing-education](#)
- [Children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care](#)
- [Missing-children-and-adults-strategy](#)

#### **Children with family members in prison**

- [Prisoners' Families Helpline](#)

#### **Child Exploitation**

- [Safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance](#)
- [Care-of-unaccompanied-and-trafficked-children](#)
- [Child-exploitation-disruption-toolkit](#)
- [County Lines Toolkit](#)
- [Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation](#)

## Confidentiality

- [Gillick competency Fraser guidelines](#)

## Drugs

- [From-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives](#)
- [Talk to frank](#)
- [Drug and Alcohol Guidance](#)

## Honour or faith-based abuse, including FGM and forced marriage

- [Female Genital Mutilation Home Office Guidance](#)
- [DFE Statutory guidance on female genital mutilation](#)
- [Forced Marriage resources](#)
- [Forced Marriage Government Guidelines](#)
- [FGM Resource Pack](#)

## Health and Wellbeing

- [Wellbeing and Resilience Resources](#)
- [Medical Conditions support for schools](#)
- [NHS: Fabricated or induced illness](#)

## Homelessness

- [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#)

## Online Safety Advice

- [Keeping children safe in education 2026 – Part One](#)
- [DfE: Generative artificial intelligence in education](#)
- [DfE: Generative AI product safety expectations](#)
- [DfE: Filtering and monitoring standards](#)
- [Educate against hate](#)
- [London Grid for Learning](#)
- [NSPCC E-safety For Schools](#)
- [Safer Recruitment](#)
- [Searching Screening and Confiscation](#)
- [Southwest Grid for Learning](#)
- [The Use-of Social Media for Online Radicalisation](#)
- [ukcis online safety audit tool](#)
- [Online Safety Guidance if you own-or manage an online platform](#)
- [A -business-guide-for-protecting-children-on-your-online-platform](#)
- [saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers](#)

## Online safety relating to remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming

- [get-help-with-remote-education](#)
- [remote safe LGFL](#)
- [video-conferencing-services-security-guidance-organisations](#)

## Online safety- parental support

- [childnet.com/parents-and-carers/parent-and-carer-toolkit](#)
- [common sense media.](#)
- [-keeping-children-safe-online-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online](#)
- [internet matters](#)
- [CEOP Education - parents and carers](#)
- [talking-to-your-child-about-online-sexual-harassment-a-guide-for-parents/](#)

## Radicalisation

- [prevent-duty-guidance](#)
- [protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty](#)
- [educate against hate](#)
- [prevent for fe and training](#)
- <https://prevent.lgfl.net/>
- [/the-prevent-duty-safeguarding-learners-vulnerable-to-radicalisation/managing-risk-of-radicalisation-in-your-education-setting](#)

## Sexual violence and sexual harassment

### Specialist organisations

- [Barnardo's](#)
- [Lucy Faithfull](#)
- [Marie Collins foundation](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [rape crisis](#)
- [safer internet](#)

## Harmful Sexual Behaviour

- [.nice.org.uk/guidance](#)
- [stopitnow.org.concerned-about-a-child-or-young-persons-sexual-behaviour/preventing-harmful-sexual-behaviour](#)
- <https://shorespace.org.uk/>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour>
- <https://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/resources/toolkit-overview/beyond-referrals-harmful-sexual-behaviour/>

## Support for Victims

- [anti-bullying alliance](#)
- [the survivors trust](#)
- [victim support](#)
- [Childline](#)

## Toolkits

- [safeguarding-self-assessment-tool](#)
- Online Self-assessment tool to ensure organisations are doing everything they can to safeguard children.

- [let-children-know-you-re-listening](#)
- Resources which help adults respond to children disclosing abuse.

- [harmful-sexual-behaviour-framework](#)
- NSPCC also provide free and independent advice about HSB

- [PEER-ON-PEER-ABUSE-TOOLKIT](#)
- Self-assessment toolkit for schools to assess their own response to HSB and levers for addressing HSB in schools.

- <https://www.childnet.com/resources/star-send-toolkit>

Equips, enables and empowers educators with the knowledge to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## Sharing nudes and semi nudes

- [sexting](#)
- [sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people](#)

## Support for parents / carers

- [ceop education. Parents](#)
- [thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/ask-the-awkward](#)

If you need any further information, advice or guidance ensure you contact [safeguarding@leepgroup.com](mailto:safeguarding@leepgroup.com)