

Education Safeguarding Child Protection Newsletter

January 2024

Welcome

Welcome to the 3rd Child Protection Newsletter for 2023-24. We hope that the following articles and information we share will be useful for you.

This newsletter is published by the Education Safeguarding Service and issued to schools, early years providers and local authority staff. For this newsletter to be effective, please ensure that it is shared with staff, including all Designated Safeguarding Leads.

We are aware that there is a lot of information but recommend that you try to find time to read and digest its contents as it will help you in your role as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

We include links to external websites in our articles; we try and provide useful resources but cannot be responsible for their content and advice and some information/events may have expired. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

If you have any questions regarding any of the articles, or the need for safeguarding advice, please contact the service using the details provided.

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Education Safeguarding Service (ESS) Updates

Departures and Arrivals in the Service!

It is with great sadness that we have said goodbye to a long-standing member of our service in Joanne Barnett who is embarking on a new adventure up North where she originally hails from. Joanne has been an Education Safeguarding Assistant within the service since the start of 2018 and will be greatly missed.

We have also welcomed Jasmine Khatun, Education Safeguarding Assistant to our team. Jasmine has previously worked as a DSL herself in a variety of schools and most recently in the Medway Elective Home Education service. Jasmine has already started her role and we are sure she will continue to meet many of you, for example in training or when triaging the category 3 Ofsted complaints. We are currently recruiting to Joanne's post so watch this space for updates!

Updated ESS Contact Information and Links Reminder

A reminder to please ensure your address books and documentation reflects our new KCC email addresses and phone numbers to avoid any delays or missed enquiries. Also, remember that our content has moved to a new home on the [Education People website](#). If you cannot find the information you need via the link above, please email us at edsafeguardinghq@kent.gov.uk

ESS Advice and Support Telephone Service Reminder

If you require an advice and support call from our service relating to a safeguarding or online safety matter, please call the number relevant for your area or the online safety number listed at the end of this newsletter. All calls to areas/online safety are then passed to the duty advisor/online safety advisor who will return your call as soon as possible. If advice and support calls/emails are made directly to individual advisors, you will be directed to contact your area number or the online safety number instead. By contacting the area or online safety number in the first instance, we can ensure a quicker response to your queries.

National Safeguarding Updates

Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTSC) 2023

Following the consultation, the new Working together to safeguard children guidance December 2023 edition is out now:

- [Working together to safeguard children 2023](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: summary of changes](#)

Key highlights are:

- This new guidance is central to the governments' strategy as set out in stable homes built on love consultation (2023).
- The guidance sets out changes to the roles and responsibilities relating to safeguarding partners with schools, colleges and education providers being more significantly in strategic discussions.
- The role of lead practitioner extends the role of assessment, planning and intervention to include section 17 of the children act 1989.
- It provides a set of out multi agency expectations for all practitioners with a new national multi agency child protection set of standards.
- More guidance on harm outside the home - professionals should assess whether a child who is experiencing, or is at risk of experiencing, harm outside the home is in need under section 17 or 47 of the Children Act 1989 and consider influence of groups/ individuals perpetrating the harm.
- Assessments of disabled children should focus on the specific needs of the child and family, be strengths-based and gather effective information to support the best outcome for the child and family.
- Local authorities should implement a Designated Social Care Officer (DCSO) role to improve links between the social care services and the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system.

Additional summaries of the changes can be found at

- TES: [Multi-agency safeguarding changes schools need to know](#)
- NSPCC Learning: [Working together to safeguard children 2023 | Summary of changes](#)

There is of course much work to be done with all safeguarding partners to agree how to implement these changes and move forward with local governance arrangements. We will keep you informed of any local changes as we are made aware.

DfE: Gender Questioning Children guidance

This much waited for guidance is finally with us and is in draft form out for consultation; [Gender Questioning Children - non-statutory guidance](#). It is recognised that this guidance will not be without its controversies and possible [legal challenges](#) in the future.

The non-statutory guidance is now the subject of a 12-week consultation; we encourage all DSLs and senior leaders to review the guidance and share their views, especially in relation to the responsibilities for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and taking into account the importance for professionals to adopt a child centered approach.

Schools may find it helpful to access the following links:

- The Guardian: [What does the trans guidance for England's schools say?](#)
- TES: [Transgender guidance for schools: key information](#)
- BBC: [Transgender guidance: Schools to keep parents informed](#)
- TransLucent: [A Commentary on Department for Education Draft Guidance - TransLucent](#)

Prevent Duty Updates

The [Prevent Duty guidance](#) was updated on the 31st December 2023. Some of the key changes DSLs should be aware of include:

- Language changes throughout from “*vulnerable to*” to “*susceptible to*”.
- Education is now included in a single section, rather than specifying early years, schools, Further/Higher education etc.
 - The guidance uses ‘setting’ for all education providers who are specified authorities and ‘learners’ for all pupils/students.
 - It signposts to KCSIE, WTSC and ‘The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation’ guidance.
- The guidance specifies that *education settings ‘should make sure that relevant staff have training to help them prevent learners from being radicalised into terrorism. This training should be delivered at the earliest opportunity to ensure staff are adequately equipped for their role.’*
- The guidance also identifies that *‘it is for each setting to determine who the appropriate members of staff are and how frequently training should occur, being proportionate to the risk of terrorism and extremism in their local area and their phase of education or type of setting.’*
- The guidance clarifies that the DSL or Prevent lead in a setting should receive more in-depth training, including on extremist and terrorist ideologies, how to make referrals and how to work with Channel panels and that this training should be updated at least every two years.
- There is more emphasis on settings performing risk assessments as part of the Prevent duty to explore their specific local context.
- There is clarification that settings are not required to have a separate policy on the Prevent duty and that it should be considered as part of their wider safeguarding approaches.
- There is further information around areas where radicalisation ideology can come from, including “permissive environments”, which specifically links to online use and also the updated filtering and monitoring guidance in KCSIE.
- There is clarity that the guidance only applies to ‘*non-violent extremism*’ where it can *‘reasonably be linked to terrorism’*.
- There is more emphasis throughout around radicalisation online as well as offline.
- There are ‘stronger’ messages about sharing information without consent which links in with the recent [ICO message](#) around the importance of information sharing where there is a safeguarding concern.

We encourage education settings to access the advice and support available through the [Kent Prevent Education Officers](#). We now have a new officer in Rachel Murray for the South and east area her contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

KSCMP - New Elective Home Education (EHE) Documents

[KSCMP](#) have recently produced information for professionals about Elective Home Education (EHE) following recent Safeguarding Practice Reviews and also following survey feedback which highlighted that many multi-agency professionals had misconceptions and limited knowledge. KSCMP have worked with professionals from the KCC Elective Home Education Team, KCC Fair Access Team, KCC Education Safeguarding Service and schools to produce [an Elective Home Education Guidance for Professionals document](#) and an updated [Elective Home Education fact sheet](#).

The Elective Home Education Guidance for Professionals document is designed to provide key information about EHE guidance, as well as the role of the Local Authority and Elective Home Education Support team. There are also sections around the role of professionals, misconceptions and frequently asked questions.

Medway Education Safeguarding Team

We often get calls asking for details of our Medway counterparts in terms of education safeguarding advice. The Medway Education Safeguarding team have created the '[Education Safeguarding Information](#)' Channel; a central place for Medway DSLs and school safeguarding teams to access information, resources and support. The channel provides links to current local and national guidance, and the latest safeguarding updates and training opportunities from Medway Children's Services, LADO, MASH and Education Safeguarding & Quality Assurance.

If you are a Medway school or setting and/or would like access to the Medway Education Safeguarding Information Channel, please ask your Designated Safeguarding Lead to contact dslcontactinfo@medway.gov.uk.

Kent Resilience Hub Mailing List

The Kent Resilience Hub want to invite DSLs in schools to sign up to the [Wellbeing for Schools mailing list](#). You will receive

- monthly bulletins
- invites to network meetings with expert speakers on mental health and wellbeing
- updates on local services
- and other relevant information and resources to help support your school community with mental health and wellbeing



**Kent
Resilience
Hub**

Complete [the form now](#) and share the link with your DSL colleagues so they don't miss out!

New NSPCC Co-ordinator



Caroline Nicholson is the new Schools Coordinator in charge of West Kent and Medway, delivering the 'Talk PANTS', 'Speak Out. Stay Safe.' and 'Talk Relationships' programmes across schools in Kent and Medway. Caroline is the first port of call for all school enquiries, safeguarding reporting from their deliveries and anything NSPCC related in this area. She is keen to get in touch to see if there is anything she can do to assist you and your wider network. You can contact Caroline to explore the resources the NSPCC has to offer, useful such as their SEND provision, as well as programmes targeted to younger age groups like 'Pantasaurus'. Please contact Caroline.Nicholson@nspcc.org.uk and note her working days are Monday to Thursday 9am-6pm and alternate Fridays.

The Children's Society's Online Exploitation Awareness Toolkit and our collaboration with Kent and Medway VRU

The Children's Society's Exploitation Awareness Toolkit contains resources to support pupils to develop their knowledge of exploitation topics, including related content such as consent, safety and healthy relationships.



The [toolkit](#) can be accessed for free by schools and partners and contains:

- Lesson plans, editable PowerPoints, activities and worksheets for delivering sessions in primary schools, aimed at years 5 and 6
- Lesson plans and editable PowerPoints for mainstream secondary schools
- SEND Curriculum on County Lines, including a graphic novel, lesson plans and editable slides aimed at those of secondary school age
- Training videos for staff development about exploitation, unconscious biases, trauma informed practice, co-regulation, and transitions
- additional links to other useful resources, with a 'support services' section which includes details of the local offer for Kent and Medway areas: [Kent and Medway VRU local offer](#)

You'll be asked to complete a short form when you first visit the site and then be able to access all of the above and bookmark for future access. Resources are downloadable and editable, within our terms and conditions, and have been developed and piloted in consultation with practitioners and young people. Also available is a [video introduction](#) of the resource, together with a [short survey](#) to capture users feedback. Any queries can be directed to: infoDEX@childrenssociety.org.uk.

Do you support young migrants in Kent?

[Health Innovation Kent Surrey and Sussex](#) has been working with Nafsiyat, Intercultural Therapy Centre and Kent County Council to develop an online Intercultural Awareness Workshop, specifically designed for professionals who work with young asylum seekers and refugees.

It explores the nuances of racial, cultural, and intersectional identities in this context and mental health. Participants will be involved in discussions aimed at enhancing their abilities to understand and interact effectively in situations involving cultural, racial diversity and mental health. The workshop incorporates real-world scenarios and hands-on activities, providing practical insights into the challenges and dynamics of working in an intercultural environment. It is open for anyone working with young migrants in Kent, Surrey and Sussex including housing providers, police, mental health care trusts, charities and schools/colleges.

They are offering a free full-day CPD Certified Awareness online Workshop delivered by [Nafsiyat Intercultural Therapy Centre](#) that covers:

- Understanding racism and discrimination
- Racial and cultural identity
- Culture and mental health

Workshop dates - please choose one date only:

- Friday 2nd February 10:00-16:00
- Monday 19th February 10:00 - 16:00
- Monday 26th February 10:00 - 16:00
- Monday 25th March 10:00 - 16:00

Numbers are restricted and there has already been interest so please [book early](#).

Core Safeguarding Training for DSLs

Our training courses between now and the end of the academic year are now published on the new training platform hosted on [The Education People website](#).

- [Early years training](#)
- [Schools and colleges training](#)

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel a few courses this academic year due to low numbers, despite many DSLs contacting us to say they have been unable to find our courses or that they were fully booked. There is an option to filter courses by job title, including 'designated safeguarding lead' which may make finding our content easier, however, if you are experiencing difficulty with finding a date or booking a course via the new training platform, please contact us or speak with the [Education People Training Helpdesk](#).

As a reminder, whilst the service is now part of KCC, we are currently following the Education People [terms and conditions](#) in relation to booking/cancellation of our training courses and other products. We will inform schools and settings of any changes to this, however, in the meantime please ensure that you and your staff are aware of the terms and conditions prior to booking a place on our training or making an order, including being aware of the cancellation policy and any costs that may be incurred.

For any queries relating to our core or bespoke training offer, please contact your Area Safeguarding Advisor or our [Training and Development Manager](#).

Changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework: 2024

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework is mandatory for all early years settings. It sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well, and are kept healthy and safe. There will now be two versions of the EYFS framework:

- one for childminders
- one for group and school-based providers

Both versions of the framework come into force in January 2024, replacing the previous single version. The changes are mainly regulatory and offer new flexibilities to settings. These changes do not alter the EYFS education reforms that were introduced in 2021.

Whatever your role and type of setting you work in, you'll need to be working to the appropriate new framework.

- [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)
- [Summary of changes for childminders](#)
- [Summary of changes for group and school-based providers](#)

We encourage childminders and early years providers to review the changes in the meantime and implement changes as necessary.

Data Protection Tips for Early Years Settings

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has put [together five practical data protection top tips](#) for nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and other early years settings, including:

- What 'personal data' is
- how to deal with a request for personal information
- what to do with your CCTV footage
- sharing information when needed
- keeping information secure



New ESS Product Available: Making Informed Decisions about Filtering and Monitoring in Schools Recorded Webinar and Guidance

A recent change to the [Cantium Business Solutions](#) broadband service offer may have cyber security and safeguarding implications for Kent schools.

Cantium Business Solutions will no longer be offering its Schools Broadband Service after March 31, 2024 with a possible extension to end of May. Some 275 schools are affected by this change and have been notified. If you are unaware of your position, please check. To support effective transitions to new broadband providers, Cantium and KPSN (Kent Public Service Network) are working with Medway Council to be able to offer a continued KPSN connection for schools. This will simplify switching between providers and will reduce disruption and cost to your school. Retaining the KPSN connection means no need for new circuit installs or uncertain delivery dates.

We are aware that some schools may not be receiving like for like quotations for alternative provision and are subsequently needing to purchase additional solutions to fulfil the statutory safeguarding requirements. If you are affected by this change, we strongly encourage you to ensure that any quotes for broadband services received are comparable (for example they include filtering and/or monitoring approaches which are appropriate for your school community) and are considered from both a financial and safeguarding perspective. To find out more, please speak with your new supplier and keep an eye on the news section on the [KPSN website](#).

If you are affected by this change, we recommend DSLs and school leaders access the national guidance available below and/or contact [ESS](#) to explore what your school needs to consider from a safeguarding perspective when commissioning a new provider.

- [DfE - Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges](#)
- [DfE - Cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#)
- [DfE - Broadband internet standards for schools and colleges](#)
- [Schools' buying strategy](#), and specific advice on [procurement](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre: Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring](#)
- [SWGfL: Appropriate Filtering and Monitoring Webinars, Checklist and FAQs](#)

ESS have also produced an optional [pre-recorded webinar and guidance document](#) to help support headteachers and DSLs make informed decisions in relation to their filtering and monitoring approaches. The pre-recorded webinar and supporting guidance document have also been added to our [Safeguarding Support Package for Schools 23/24](#) and are available now for new and existing subscribers.

DfE Updates - 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'

The DfE have updated the ['Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'](#) guidance with two new sections added: ['Digital Leadership and governance standards'](#) and ['Laptop, desktop and tablet standards'](#).

Whilst we encourage DSLs and school leadership teams to review these standards in full, key points for DSLs include:

- Schools should assign a member of the SLT to be responsible for digital technology who in addition to specific roles and responsibilities, can act as link between the DSL and other relevant members of staff when considering the schools digital strategy, including any disaster recovery plans.
- The importance of all school provided laptops, desktops and tablets being used safely and securely and including ensuring compliance with the information security and access management standards and filtering and monitoring standards.

Safer Internet Day 2024

Safer Internet Day is just around the corner, on Tuesday 6th February. This annual event, coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre, is the UK's biggest celebration of online safety. This year, Safer Internet Day will be focusing on change online, including:

- Young people's perspective on new and emerging technology
- Using the internet to make change for the better
- The changes young people want to see online
- The things that can influence and change the way young people think, feel and act online and offline



You can [register](#) your school as a supporter and download the [free educational resources](#), including: a range of quick activities, short interactive stories, worksheets, group discussions and assemblies, all based around campaign theme of 'change online'.

There are tailored resources for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Additional Learning Needs (ALN). There is also a [range of short films](#) crafted specially for Safer Internet Day 2024, for use with children and young people aged 3 to 18 years old.

UK Safer Internet Centre Accreditation for Filtering Providers

The UK Safer Internet Centre has announced that they are releasing a new accreditation process for filtering providers. Their aim is to offer a credible, robust, and transparent benchmark against which to validate the performance of providers systems to help schools to audit their current provision, make informed decisions, and review market solutions.



The UK Safer Internet Centre already have a [checklist](#) for filtering and monitoring providers against which they can self-certify that their systems meet the required standard for use in schools. School leaders and governing bodies can check their [providers responses](#).

Pornography Regulation, Legislation and Enforcement: Call for Evidence

Following the introduction of new legislation under the [Online Safety Act 2023](#), the government are conducting an Independent Pornography Review [and they are asking for your input](#).



The aim of the review is to understand the prevalence and harmful impact of illegal pornography online, and to set out what more can be done to provide those who need it with guidance on the potential harmful impact of pornography. This Call for Evidence will help assess the potential links between pornography and violence against women and girls, and the potential impact of pornography on attitudes towards sex and relationships, particularly amongst young men and women, as well as secondary school-age children.

Updated Facebook Checklist for 2024

SWGfL have updated their [Facebook Privacy and Safety Checklist!](#) This free downloadable booklet provides useful information about the online multiplayer game which may be helpful for schools to share with parents/carers and pupils, to learn more about how the platform works. According to [Ofcom's Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2023](#), Facebook is still the 6th most popular platform amongst children aged 3-17. Key Questions addressed include: managing your friends list, privacy settings and adverts, controlling who sees your content, reporting abuse and how to deactivate your account.



Other [checklists available from SWGfL](#) include Snapchat, Instagram, Netflix, TikTok, Yubo, Roblox, and Twitter.

National Research, Events and Resources

Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway

In December, the CSA Centre launched the [Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway](#). The new, interactive online resource provides guidance for those working with children to support their response to concerns regarding child sexual abuse from initial concerns and early help through to child protection and criminal justice responses. The step-by-step resource focuses on children's needs and how to support them and their families.



Is it 'banter' or bullying?



The Anti-Bullying Alliance has published [research](#) into banter and bullying in schools in the UK. Working with Nottingham Trent University, a survey of nearly 900 teachers found 26% think 'banter' is a serious problem within their schools, yet 84% didn't receive any training to help them deal with it. Without training, teachers argue it's difficult to know when banter crosses the line into bullying.

A Longer Read: Difficult conversations

As an advisory service, not a week goes by where we do not get a call about having a difficult conversation with parents about a related safeguarding concern. Quite often it is issues that do not meet the threshold for a referral or may not be directly related to the care of a child but perhaps deal with decisions made by parents.

The most common of these is the strong smell of cannabis on a child or on a parent, or the smell of alcohol on a parent when picking up a child. Other common concerns include overhearing a parent threatening to smack the child or swearing at or around their child. Occasionally, we do hear of education settings being reluctant to challenge a parent or carer for fear of it effecting their working relationship and instead they make a referral without speaking to the parent. This is becoming rarer as DSLs are more and more confident in being able to put the child at the center of their decision making even if it risks upsetting the adults charged with looking after the young person.

There is no quick guide to give you all the answers for the best approach to having a difficult conversation, as each scenario will be different, as too will be the reaction you may be met with, however we hope that whatever the issue, the advice and resources below will help you.

A concern about the use of cannabis by parents is a common call we receive from early years providers and primary schools. Cannabis use in itself will not necessarily be a reason to make a request for support, but it is likely that it will need to be discussed. Crucially, what should be established is whether what parents are doing in terms of their drug use/activity is impacting significantly on their child. If you are confident that the impact is significant, you need to think about having that difficult conversation with them. As with all conversations, confidentiality and discretion should be foremost in your mind. Be open and honest about why you wish to talk to them and get to the point of this issue as quickly as you can. In terms of cannabis use, whilst it is illegal, we should be careful not to offer a personal view about how wrong we may feel them using it is. Going into a conversation in a disapproving tone may make them more defensive. This could be the same for swearing in front of the child or threats to smack.

In terms of cannabis use, they may not be aware there is a strong odour coming from them and that in some circumstances their children are also coming into the setting with the same smell. In the majority of these situations' parents will not realise it exists, may be embarrassed, or even devastated that it has been picked up. We may not be able change their habits or force them to stop, however we can offer advice about not smoking where the children are, or where their clothes may be stored. In some circumstances, you may need to convey how it could be impacting on their child and possible friendships.

If a parent comes to collect their child smelling of alcohol it will be a decision for you to make when to intervene; it could be an isolated incident but if it has happened more than once, then a similar approach is needed. If they are obviously impaired by alcohol, they should be spoken to immediately as they are in charge of a child and in some situations may be driving a vehicle. Key to this intervention is to do it at the time that alcohol can be smelt, not days later. All staff

should be encouraged to challenge a parent there and then if they are concerned and/or if this is becoming a regular issue.

The following resources may also be helpful in assisting you in thinking and planning for difficult conversations.

- [Difficult Conversations \(wiganlscb.com\)](https://www.wiganlscb.com)
- [How to have difficult conversations with children | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Parents' leaflets | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [10 More Tips for Handling Difficult Parent Conversations at Your Preschool \(mybrightwheel.com\)](#)
- [10 ways for SLTs to tackle difficult conversations with parents - Teachwire](#)
- [What should I say...? Advice for Starting Difficult Conversations - Ann Craft Trust](#)
- [BLOG: Having difficult conversations with parents | PACEY](#)

As with all safeguarding issues if you have concerns and want to talk these scenarios through, please call our advice and support line.

Education Safeguarding Service Contacts

Head Office: Room 2.30 Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ	
Claire Ray Head of Service	03000 423 169
Rebecca Avery Training and Development Manager	03000 423 168
Robin Brivio Senior Safeguarding Advisor	03000 423 169
Online Safety	03000 423 164
<p>For advice on safeguarding issues please call your area office on the numbers listed below.</p> <p>If a child may be at risk of imminent harm, you should call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411 111 or the Police on 999</p>	
Ashford	03000 423154
Canterbury	03000 423157
Dartford	03000 423149
Dover	03000 423154
Folkestone & Hythe	03000 423154
Gravesham	03000 423149
Maidstone	03000 423158
Sevenoaks	03000 423149
Swale	03000 423157
Thanet	03000 423157
Tonbridge & Malling	03000 423158
Tunbridge Wells	03000 423158

Other Kent County Council Contacts

Integrated Front Door: 03000 411 111 (outside office hours **03000 419 191**)

Early Help Contacts (district teams) can be found on www.kelsi.org.uk

If your call is urgent i.e., a child is in **immediate danger** and you cannot be connected to the team, call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411 111

LADO Team contact number: 03000 410 888

Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk

Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU

Assistant Director of Education

South Kent – David Adams 03000 412 309

East Kent – Rob Veale 03000 418 794

West Kent – Nick Abrahams 03000 410 058

North Kent – Ian Watts 03000 414 302

Prevent Education Officers

North/West/ Medway - Sally Green sally.green2@kent.gov.uk 03000 413 439

South/East - Rachel Murray Rachel.murray@kent.gov.uk 03000 412431