

# LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service Child Protection Newsletter

**2024-25: Term 2**

## Welcome

Welcome to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Child Protection Newsletter for the 2024-25 academic year. We hope that the following articles and information we share will be useful for you.

This newsletter is published by the LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service (LESAS) and issued to schools, early years providers and local authority staff.

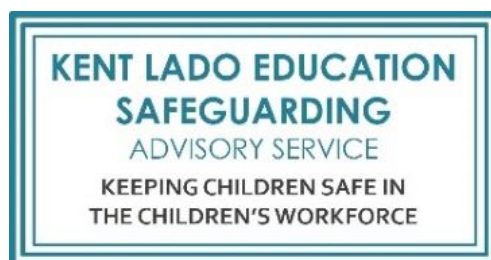
This newsletter aims to help DSLs and leaders keep up to date with key local and national education safeguarding guidance and procedures to support them in carrying out their role.

For this newsletter to be effective, please ensure that it is shared with all Designated Safeguarding Leads in your organisation and other staff as appropriate. DSLs may also wish to extract and share content with their wider staff group as part of providing safeguarding updates.

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 and events are time limited so may have expired.

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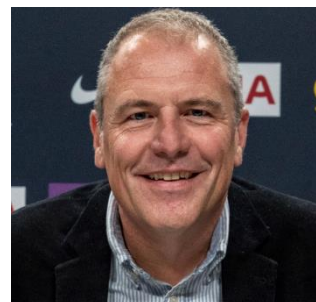
## LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service (LESAS) Updates

### New: LESAS Service Manager Introduction

LESAS are delighted to share a welcome message from Graeme Southern, our new Service Manager.

Hello everyone,

I am writing to introduce myself as the Service Manager for the LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service. I have been in post for a few weeks, and I am very excited to be leading a such an expert team who have a thorough understanding of key local and national legislation and statutory guidance related to safeguarding and education safeguarding practice. My own background is in Child Protection and have worked as Social Worker in Kent in several roles across the County since 1997.

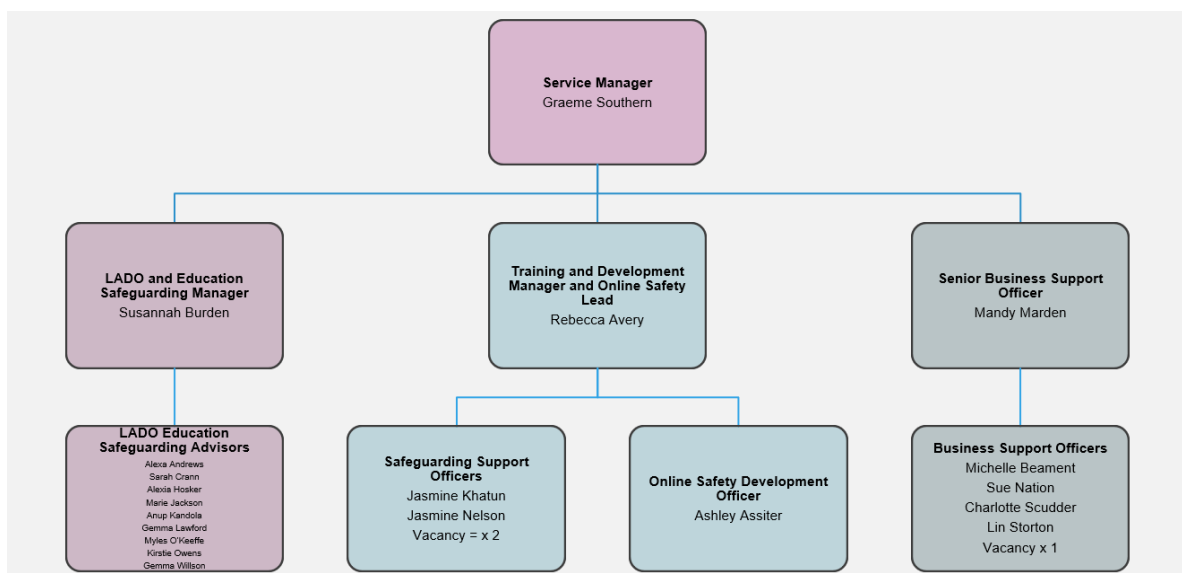


The merger of the County LADO Service and Education Safeguarding Service into LESAS aligns us with the national 'Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023' agenda and will result in increased capacity to provide both LADO and education safeguarding support to Kent education settings and the wider Children's workforce. We hope that you can make use of our comprehensive suite of resources and training which can be accessed via the [TEP website](#) or through making an enquiry via the [LESAS Enquiry Form](#), where we have can provide advice on safeguarding concerns and bespoke support.

Graeme Southern, Service Manager, LESAS

### New: LESAS Staffing Updates

Following the launch of the new LESAS service, several staffing and system changes have been implemented. Our staffing structure is currently as follows:



We would like to take this opportunity to recognise and thank previous colleagues from the Education Safeguarding Service, Claire Ray, Head of Service, Robin Brivio, Senior Safeguarding Advisor and Claire Ledger, Area Safeguarding Advisor, for their commitment and passion to supporting safeguarding practice in schools and settings over a number of years.

## New: LESAS Circulation List

LESAS will continue to evolve as our new service becomes embedded; our content on [KSCMP](#), the [Education People](#) and [Kelsi](#) websites have been updated and we will ensure information is shared as soon as possible with DSLs and leaders via our networks and communication channels, including this newsletter, our training and DSL catch up meetings.

To enhance this, we have set up a [form](#) to capture contact information from DSLs to ensure we circulate information promptly to the correct contacts. All information submitted will be used in line with [Kent County Council's Privacy Statement](#).

Information shared via our email circulation list will include important local and national safeguarding updates, LESAS newsletters, key safeguarding updates from LESAS and the local Kent safeguarding partners, and LESAS training, resources and support that you may be interested in.

We encourage all DSLs, senior leaders and managers to use the QR code to sign-up to [our circulation list](#) to receive essential safeguarding updates and information.



## Reminder: LESAS Enquiries Service

As you will be aware from previous newsletters and communication, the Education Safeguarding Service advice and support phone line is now closed but has been replaced with a new [LESAS enquiries service](#). We are aware there have been some teething issues with the form and we are working to resolve these as they occur. Please allow 3-5 days for a response and then resubmit your enquiry if you've not received a response.

Please remember that our enquiries form should not be used for any urgent safeguarding concerns:

- If a child may be at risk of **imminent harm**, submit an **urgent request for support** via [the Kent Integrated Children's Services portal](#) or call **Kent Police on 999**
- If your concerns may be considered level 3 (intensive support) or 4 (specialist support) in line with the [Kent Support Levels Guidance](#), submit a request for support to the Front Door Service via [the Kent Integrated Children's Services portal](#)
- If you need to make a referral to the LADO regarding an allegation against a member of staff, please complete a LADO referral via [the Kent Integrated Children's Services portal](#)

## National Safeguarding Updates

### New: DfE 'Staffing and employment advice for schools' guidance

The [Department for Education](#) has released a new advice document regarding school staffing and employment. The document aims to help with managing staffing and employment issues and making decisions; it replaces the statutory guidance from 2009, 'Guidance on managing staff in schools' and should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children. Section 4 relates specifically to safeguarding, including safer recruitment, employment checks, mandatory duty to report known cases of FGM and childcare disqualification requirements.

### New: National Referral Form for Prevent

From August 2024 there is a [new national referral form for Prevent](#). Please ensure you delete any old forms from your system and only use the new form For Kent and Medway, all forms must now be submitted to [preventreferrals@kent.police.uk](mailto:preventreferrals@kent.police.uk). Where possible you will receive a response on your referral, but this is not always possible due to data-protection considerations and other sensitivities.

### New: DfE Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive

On the 18<sup>th</sup> November the [Department for Education](#) published a policy statement setting out the government's commitment to whole system reform of the children's social care system: '[Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive](#)'.

Annex A of the document sets out a summary actions but some of the key points for education settings to be aware of include:

- Rolling out a single offer of help and protection for children and families experiencing multiple and complex challenges. Lead practitioners with appropriate knowledge and skills will support families, working seamlessly with a reformed child protection system, when the fiscal situation allows. This offer will be underpinned by whole-family working, engagement of and support for family networks, evidence-based interventions and mechanisms to enable effective multi-agency leadership and practice.
- Strengthening the role of 'education' in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and providing national direction to the child protection system through reviews to the multi-agency safeguarding statutory guidance entitled 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.
- Delivery of the new government manifesto commitment to introduce a consistent single unique identifier making sure information can be shared between professionals so they can intervene before issues escalate.
- The requirement for every council to have 'multi-agency' child safeguarding teams, involving children's schools and teachers, stopping children from falling through the

cracks.

- A new duty on parents where if their child is subject to a child protection enquiry, or on a child protection plan, they will need local authority consent to home educate that child.
- Extending the duty on local authorities to promote educational outcomes to all children with a social worker through the statutory Virtual School Head role.

We encourage DSLs to access the document in full and will share updates via our newsletters, DSL catch ups and training.

## Local Safeguarding updates

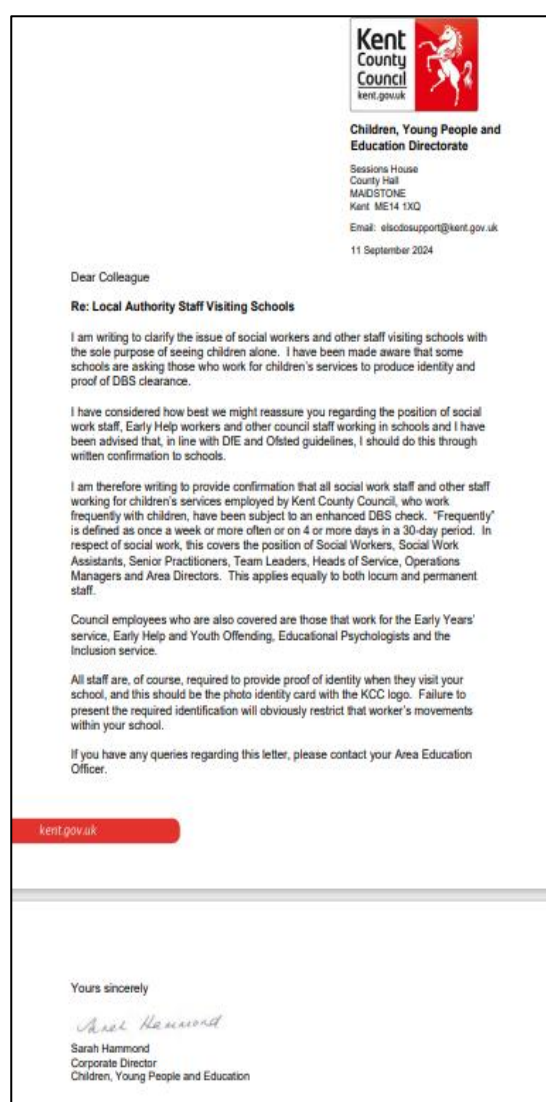
### Reminder: Local Authority Staff Visiting Schools and DBS Checks

In September 2024, [resent in November 2024](#), Sarah Hammond, Kent County Council Corporate Director, wrote to schools in line with DfE and Ofsted guidelines to clarify the issue of social workers and other council staff visiting schools who will have unsupervised contact with children. This letter provided confirmation that all social work staff and other staff working for children's services employed by KCC who work frequently with children, have been subject to an enhanced DBS check and can be attached as an appendix to Single Central Records.


This letter has been written in line with the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024 guidance, which states “308. *For visitors who are there in a professional capacity schools and colleges should check ID and be assured that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks. Schools and colleges should not ask to see the certificate in these circumstances).*”

Despite this letter and the KCSIE guidance, our service continues to be made aware that some schools are asking staff who work for KCC children's services to produce proof of DBS clearance, which in some cases is undermining multi-agency working and potentially placing children at risk.

KCC staff visiting schools/setting to work with children should provide proof of identity in the form of a photo identity card with the KCC logo; this ID along with the letter should provide assurances that they have had the appropriate DBS check by KCC.







Failure to present the required identification should restrict that worker's movements and access to children. Your safeguarding policies should set out the arrangements for individuals coming onto your premises, and this should include whether relevant checks will be required and if so, how this is achieved and recorded.

## **New: Operation Encompass Missing Notifications**

From Monday, 21 October 2024, Kent Police have implemented Operation Encompass safeguarding notification system to share information about missing episodes with schools. Kent Police uses a database called Compact to document enquiries regarding missing persons. Under this new initiative, officers will be able to use the Compact database to identify when a school-age child has been reported as missing and subsequently found. Compact will then relay this information to the Central Referral Unit (CRU) administrators, who will determine the child's school. The administrators will then forward the notifications to the appropriate school using the email addresses previously provided by schools for Operation Encompass.

The purpose of the Operation Encompass plus notification is to inform schools that a child has been reported missing. It does not confirm if the child is still missing at the time the school receives the notification; however, a 'found' notification should follow once the child is located. These notifications provide only brief details, and any additional information that needs to be shared with schools will be communicated through an Operation Encompass Plus notification in the usual format.

### **Notes for schools:**

- Please do not reply to the email received.
- If you have any relevant information to share, please [contact Kent Police](#)
- When schools receive any Operation Encompass notifications, please do **not** share with any parent the name of the CRU administrator that has sent the notification to the school. CRU administrators are **not** Police Officers and are **not** the Officer in the Case (OIC).
- There is no need for schools to send a referral to social services purely to advise social services of the missing or found episodes. The Compact database will also be sharing separate missing and found notifications with social services.

## **Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS)**

Previously known as PIAS, [KPAS](#) collaborates with schools and practitioners to assist in reducing persistent and severe absence, suspensions and permanent exclusions.

The importance of regular school attendance has never been greater following the Covid-19 lockdown which caused significant disruption to the education of children and young people across the country, and the impact for families continues to be felt far and wide today. The [DfE attendance guidance](#) could not have a more meaningful title as working together across our schools, local authority services and with wider partners to help overcome barriers to children's attendance is pivotal to achieving positive impact.

The [KCC school attendance handbook](#), primarily designed for schools, breaks down into greater detail the 'Kent way' of implementing the DfE guidance, and what we are all expected to do in line with existing national guidance and legislation. The handbook also includes reference to other related subjects such as exclusions, where there has also been updated [guidance published by the DfE](#). You will find an array of links to informative resources throughout the document.

Additional information and resources for schools from KPAS can be found at: [Resources for Schools - KELS](#)

## Process Change: KSCMP Rapid Reviews

Following the implementation of the LESAS service, our role in supporting schools and settings as part of the rapid review process has been reviewed.

LESAS will be notified of the death of a child, or any serious incidents involving children where a child might have come to serious/significant harm. In some cases, this may trigger a 'Serious Incident Notification' (SIN) and KSCMP will convene a 'rapid review' meeting.

A rapid review meeting typically happens within 10-15 days of the notification and requires all agencies involved with the family to complete a review of their involvement which will consider any learning and explore if there needs to be a Local Children's Safeguarding Practice Review (LSCPR).

Once a SIN has been received by LESAS, our service will contact any education settings involved to explain the process, share a copy of the form they are required complete and provide any additional support if required.

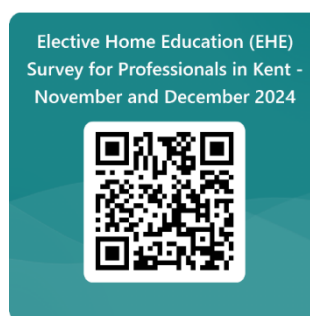
To support schools and settings in this process, the following information is available from KSCMP:

- Factsheet: [Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews](#)
- LCSPR video explainer: <https://youtu.be/UmGVOFW8Oc>
- Providing agency reports for practice reviews: <https://youtu.be/oA6NXvqwgR0>
- Rapid Review: agency roles and responsibilities <https://youtu.be/VWsP5zbqhHI>

## Elective Home Education (EHE) survey

KSCMP are currently trying to understand how much knowledge and understanding professionals have related to EHE. This [survey](#) builds on the survey carried out in 2023 and the production of the following KSCMP resources:

- [KSCMP EHE factsheet](#)
- [KSCMP EHE guidance for professionals](#)
- [KSCMP EHE webinar](#).



It is hoped that this survey will help the partnership business team understand what knowledge and understanding professionals have related to EHE and if knowledge and understanding has improved since the last time the survey was run in June and July 2023 (pre the KSCMP resources being available). Responses are anonymous. The survey will remain open until end of Monday 23 December 2024. It is a quick survey and should take no more than 5 minutes.

## Core Safeguarding Training for DSLs

All DSL/EYDSL, DSL/EYDSL refresher and Early Years Basic Awareness training courses delivered by the LESAS service for the 24-25 academic year are now available to book through The Education People website:

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

The service also has a number of '[on demand](#)' e-Learning courses available for DSLs and staff for 2024-25:

- [Safeguarding Basic Awareness for Induction \(School Staff\) 2024-25](#)
- [Kent Designated Safeguarding Lead Refresher 2024-25](#)
- [Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead Refresher 2024-25](#)
- [Safeguarding Record Keeping for Designated Safeguarding Leads](#)
- [Strategic Safeguarding for Governors 2024-25](#)
- [Safeguarding Basic Awareness for Childminders 2024-25](#)
- [Online Safeguarding for Early Years DSLs and Managers 2024-25](#)
- [Online Safeguarding for Early Years Practitioners 2024-25](#)

For any queries relating to our core or bespoke training offer, please use our [LESAS enquiry form](#).

## Early Years and Childcare

### Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024 and 2025 Safeguarding Reforms

In November 2024, the DfE published an updated EYFS. A [full list of changes to the early years foundation stage framework](#) is available. The changes are mainly regulatory and offer new flexibilities to settings and do not alter the EYFS education reforms that were introduced in September 2021 and January 2024. From 1 November 2024, changes have been made to:

- help childminders join and stay in the profession
- support the rollout of the expanded childcare entitlements
- clarify the existing policy on the qualification requirements for counting in the staff to child ratios at Level 6 (the [Check your early years qualifications finder](#) now confirms which qualifications can be included in staff to child ratios at Level 6)

In October 2024, the DfE published a summary of findings from the consultation on the proposed EYFS safeguarding requirement reforms. These findings include **new whistleblowing requirements** to make it clear when and how to escalate safeguarding concerns and **new expectations to provide references** to obtain meaningful, timely references to enhance safer recruitment practices.





The Government [provided the following responses to their other proposed changes](#) which will be implemented from **1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**:

### **Safer recruitment – References**

- The EYFS has existing requirements around criminal record checks and the suitability checks carried out by Ofsted and Childminder Agencies. However, it does not explicitly require providers to obtain references before employing a new member of staff or require providers' safeguarding policies to include information on safer recruitment procedures.
- Following the consultation, the Government will proceed with implementing all the proposals on safer recruitment to the EYFS, however, given concerns raised about collecting references prior to interviews, they will change the wording so references must be obtained before employment.

### **Child absences**

- The Government will proceed with implementing all the proposals on child absences to the EYFS, which includes following up on unexplained or prolonged absences. Providers will need to consider patterns and trends in a child's absence and if a child is absent, take actions, including implementing the setting's safeguarding procedures if appropriate.
- Providers will need to have an attendance policy that they share with parents, including expectations for reporting child absences.
- The Government recognised the concerns raised about the difficulties collecting emergency contact details for some families and the new wording of 'should' phrases, 'Where possible, settings should hold more than two emergency contact numbers for each child.'

### **Change 'lead practitioner' to 'designated safeguarding lead (DSL)'**

- The Government consulted on changing the term 'lead practitioner' to DSL to prevent ambiguity by bringing the language in line with other education settings and to help prevent confusion. The Government will be implementing this change.

### **New safeguarding training annex**

- The DfE consulted on a proposal to include a new annex C in both the group and school-based provider EYFS and the childminder EYFS which sets out the minimum requirements for effective safeguarding training. The Government will implement the proposals on safeguarding training to the EYFS, with the change to the criteria for DSL training to include how to ensure internet safety, local child protection procedures and how to liaise with local statutory children's services agencies and with the local safeguarding partners to safeguard children.
- The Government will implement a training renewal period of every two years. With this shorter renewal period, childminders/providers may consider whether they and/or any staff need an annual refresher during this period to maintain basic skills and keep-up to date with any changes to safeguarding procedures or because of any safeguarding concerns that occur in the setting.
- The full criteria for safeguarding training will be provided in [Annex C](#).

## **Safeguarding training information in safeguarding policies**

- The Government consulted on a proposal to add an EYFS requirement for safeguarding policies to include detail of how safeguarding training is delivered and how practitioners are supported to put this into practice. This change will be implemented.

## **Paediatric first aid (PFA) for students and trainees**

- The Government consulted on making it explicit that for students on long term placements, volunteers and staff working as apprentices to be included in the ratios, they will need a valid PFA certificate. Government will proceed with implementing this change.
- The Government also consulted on changing the wording of a footnote in the EYFS on PFA training, to ensure greater clarity and more freedom of choice for providers when identifying and selecting a PFA training provider. The Government will proceed and implement this change.

## **Safer eating section**

- The Government consulted on adding a new 'safer eating' section to the EYFS, including new requirements around allergies and anaphylaxis, introduction of solid foods and choking prevention. The Government will proceed with implementing the new safer eating section to the EYFS, including the PFA supervision requirement

## **Toileting and privacy**

- The Government is clear that children's privacy must be balanced with safeguarding and support needs so consulted on adding a requirement regarding toileting, privacy and safeguarding need. The Government will proceed with implementing this change on toileting and privacy to the EYFS.

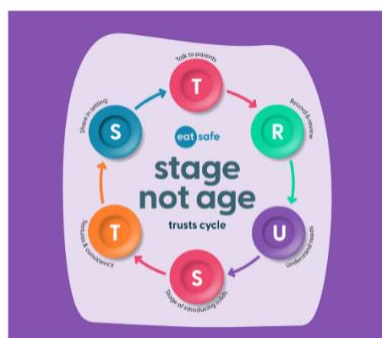
## **Updates for Childminders**

The DfE has implemented the following changes (November 2024) to the EYFS give childminders more flexibility:

- create a new category called 'childminders without domestic premises' for childminders who work solely from somewhere other than a home, such as a community or village hall
- increase the total number of people (including childminders and assistants) who can work together under a childminder's registration from 3 to 4
- give you more flexibility to operate outside of your home (or someone else's) for more of your time. This will remove the requirement that at least 50% of the childcare must be provided in a home
- mean that any childminders who want to work with 4 or more other adults (5+ in total) will need to register as 'childcare on domestic premises'

Further support and guidance on these changes can be found in [Childcare on domestic premises](#) and [Applying to work some of the time on non-domestic premises \(EYA\)](#)

## EatSafe Campaign



The KSCMP currently has a survey running to gather feedback related to the EatSafe campaign. The survey was developed back in the Summer and was launched in June 2024 and into July 2024. KSCMP have relaunched the survey to gather more feedback and we encourage you to do the survey if you are using the resources, or even if you considered using them but chose not to.

EatSafe campaign feedback survey



The survey can be accessed via this [link](#) or by using the QR code. The closing date for this survey is end of day, **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> December**. Please only do the survey if you did not do it in June or July 2024.

## Working in partnership with other professionals

Do you know your local Health Visiting Service? They work with midwives, GPs, pediatricians, local children's centers and other organisations to help provide the best care to families. There have a variety of resources and referral forms available to support families in accessing support.

- [Under-fives professional hub - Kent family](#)
- [Early Years resources for professionals](#)

Under-fives professional hub

## Contact your local health visiting team:

Ashford: 0300 123 3092 / [kentchft.ashfordHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.ashfordHV@nhs.net)

Canterbury and Coastal: 0300 7900 156 / [kentchft.canterburyHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.canterburyHV@nhs.net)

Dartford: 0300 123 2075 / [kentchft.dartfordHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.dartfordHV@nhs.net)

Dover: 0300 1233018 / [kentchft.doverHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.doverHV@nhs.net)

Gravesend: 0300 123 2076 / [kentchft.gravesendHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.gravesendHV@nhs.net)

Maidstone: 0300 555 0506 / [kentchft.maidstoneHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.maidstoneHV@nhs.net)

Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge: 0300 123 4497 / [kentchft.sevenoaksHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.sevenoaksHV@nhs.net)

Folkestone and Hythe: 0300 123 1240 / [kentchft.folkestonehv@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.folkestonehv@nhs.net)

Swale: 0300 123 4014 / [kentchft.swaleHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.swaleHV@nhs.net)

Thanet: 0300 013 4740 / [kentchft.thanetHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.thanetHV@nhs.net)

Tonbridge and Malling: 0300 1233017 / [kentchft.tonbridgemallingHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.tonbridgemallingHV@nhs.net)

Tunbridge Wells: 0300 790 0243 / [kentchft.tunbridgewellsHV@nhs.net](mailto:kentchft.tunbridgewellsHV@nhs.net)

### Updated DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards

The Department for Education (DfE) has recently updated its [Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges](#); governing bodies and proprietors should review these standards and ensure their school is compliant with their safeguarding obligations in accordance with [KCSIE](#).



Department  
for Education

Key updates to the standards include:

#### 1. Strengthening Roles and Responsibilities

- There is a greater emphasis on the strategic responsibility of governing bodies and proprietors to ensure effective filtering and monitoring systems are in place, and clearer definition around the operational roles of other staff. Close collaboration between IT service providers and safeguarding leads is highlighted to ensure that effective technical solutions align with the schools wider safeguarding approaches.

#### 2. Reviewing filtering and monitoring provisions at least annually

- Annual reviews of systems must now include a more detailed and comprehensive assessment of your school's unique risk profile, including vulnerable student groups, such as those with SEND or EAL, and the impact of new technologies, particularly generative AI (artificial intelligence) and BYO (bring your own devices). Schools must be clear about the technical limitations of their systems and the potential safeguarding impact.

#### 3. Blocking illegal, harmful and inappropriate content

- There is further reinforcement that school filtering must block illegal content, including blocklists from the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and the Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) and that these restrictions cannot be disabled within school.
- Schools are now required to use systems that can scan and block harmful content in real-time, reducing the chance of students accessing inappropriate material.
- Devices that are not school or college-managed, (e.g. BYOD) should be on a separate virtual network with the same level of filtering and monitoring applied.
- Search engines should have safe search enabled by default or use a child-friendly search engines to provide an additional level of protection for users.
- There is clearer advice for when staff should be reporting safeguarding and technical concerns, for example, if they find they can access unsuitable material, or they are teaching topics which could create unusual activity on the filtering logs.

## 4. Effectively monitoring

- The importance of effective supervision and classroom management of devices has been emphasised to strengthen any technical monitoring solutions.
- Schools should now have a “*monitoring plan*” which outlines how school-managed devices are monitored. As a minimum, this should include weekly monitoring reports and a process for recording incidents that includes what action was taken and the outcomes.
- The “*monitoring plan*” should include expectations for staff on responding to incidents, and this should be clearly communicated and reflected in your acceptable use policy (AUP).
- Users should be notified when a device they are using has a technical monitoring solution; this could be via a message each time they log in.

Schools should refer to the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) for further information about [appropriate filtering and monitoring](#); schools can check their chosen IT service provider’s [responses against the UK Safer Internet Centre’s checklist](#) and seek further advice through the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline \(POSH\)](#).

If schools require specific strategic online safety advice or resources, or would like support from our Online Safety Development Officer to review their online safety practice, including filtering and monitoring, they can contact LESAS by completing our [Enquiry Form](#).

### Latest 360 Degree Safe Report: online safety in schools across England

The latest [360 Degree Safe report](#), from [SWGfL](#), reveals a surprising slowdown in progress to meet the demands of online safety within schools. The report is based on data from the annual self-reviews of online safety practice from over 17,000 schools across England who use the [360 Degree Safe - Online Safety Self-Review Tool](#).



Whilst the report highlights strengths in policy, professional standards, and technical measures, many schools have been slow to fully align with the new [DfE filtering and monitoring standards](#) and demonstrate a concerning overreliance on technical solutions. While technical tools are vital, a comprehensive approach to online safety must also include robust education, staff training, and active engagement with staff, students, and other stakeholders.

They recommend that schools prioritise the following key areas:

- Data Security: Strengthening measures to protect data and comply with regulations.
- Staff and Governor Training: Ensuring all staff and governors receive thorough training to navigate the complex online safety landscape.
- Youth Involvement: Actively involving young people in shaping online safety policies to ensure that they are relevant and effective.

Schools wishing to review their own overall online safety practice may wish to consider commissioning an online safety review from LESAS by completing our [Enquiry Form](#) or access the free self-review tools from [SWGfL](#) or [LGfL](#).

## Project EVOLVE 2024 Report: Insights on Digital Literacy in UK Schools



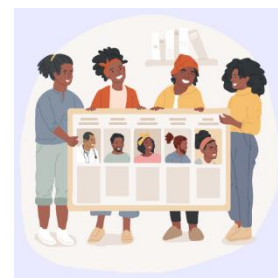
[SWGfL](#) have published an [evaluation of their Project EVOLVE database](#), to illustrate the landscape of online safety education and digital literacy in the UK. [Project EVOLVE](#) provides a comprehensive suite of 600 age-appropriate resources divided into eight key strands.

The report reveals that primary schools, especially Key Stage 2, utilise most resources, with a significant drop in digital literacy education at secondary levels. Privacy and security are identified as children's weakest areas of knowledge. There is also a gap between teacher confidence and children's actual needs; teachers often focus on familiar topics like outdated "stranger danger" messages, which doesn't address current online risks.

We recommend schools access the [DfE Teaching Online Safety in Schools guidance](#), alongside the [Education for a Connected World framework](#) and [Project EVOLVE](#) to ensure they are providing a broad and balanced online safety curriculum.

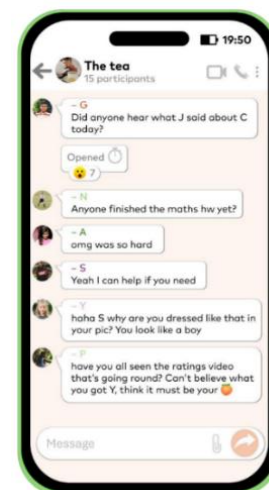
### New online safety resources from Childnet

Childnet International have shared nominations for [Black people who inspire them online](#) from their Youth Advisory Board and their Digital Champions. They've also [produced a poster](#), designed to start discussions in the classroom about the experiences of Black people online, looking at ways to celebrate Black History Month, and to inspire young people to be upstanders online. Why not encourage pupils to create their own posters or to nominate their own online influences and inspirations this Black History Month?



Childnet have also recently published a [collection of activities](#) to use with children, and a [Cheat Sheet for parents and carers](#), to explore the safe and responsible use of group chats. The activities are divided into four different topics, each one accompanied by teacher guidance with extension questions and key messages to share with pupils to support their learning:

- Starting conversations with young people about group chats, including the positives and negatives
- Digital wellbeing (how group chats may make people feel)
- Online bullying and gossip
- Inappropriate content





## New research and resources from Internet Matters: [Children's experiences of nude deepfakes](#)



### What is a deepfake?

Deepfakes are fake images, videos and audio that look and feel like real content. They usually feature the likeness of real people to make it seem like they are doing or saying something they haven't.

Deepfakes are created with the use of artificial intelligence (AI), but real people need to give the AI information to create these deepfakes. So, AI cannot create deepfakes by itself.

As seen from the [latest report from the IWF](#), the rise of generative AI tools has significantly increased the ease of producing realistic, nude and sexual 'deepfake' images. 98% of all deepfakes in circulation are sexual, and almost always non-consensual. [This new research from Internet Matters](#) explores children and families' views and experiences of this emerging technology.

Some of the key findings include:

- 13% of children have had an experience with a nude deepfake; that's around half a million teens in the UK who have: sent or received an AI generated nude image; encountered deepfake nudes online; used a 'nudifying' app themselves or know someone who has.
- Teenage boys (18%) are twice as likely as teenage girls (9%) to engage with a nude deepfake, whilst 99% of nude deepfakes feature women and girls. There is a suggestion that online misogyny and pornography may be shaping harmful image sharing norms amongst young people.
- Nudifying tools can be used to sexually abuse children. Deepfakes can harm children in a number of ways, including: child-on-child sexual [abuse and sexual harrassment](#); adult-perpetrated [child sexual abuse material \(CSAM\)](#); and [sextortion](#).
- Teenagers are deeply concerned about nude deepfakes, and the majority (55%) believe that it would be worse to have AI generated nudes created and shared than 'real' sexual abuse images.

Internet Matters have produced the following resources to share with children and families:

- [What is a deepfake? | Parent guide](#)
- [Real or deepfake? Guide for young people](#)

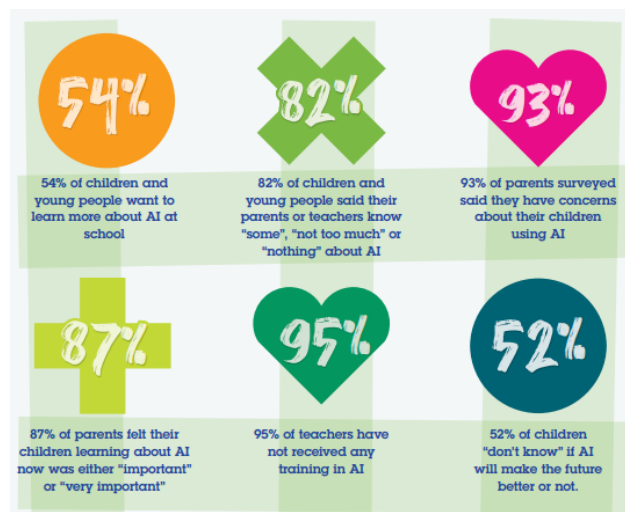
DSLs handling incidents of nude image sharing involving AI-generated material, should follow [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes guidance](#) and treat any images and videos the same way they would if they were real, including submitting a 'Request for Support' to the Front Door if a child is at risk of harm.

## New research from Barnardo's: Exploring AI (Artificial Intelligence) with Children and Young People

[Barnardo's Online Safety Programme](#) has released an in depth report, [Exploring AI \(Artificial Intelligence\) with Children and Young People](#); shedding light on children's knowledge and experience of AI. According to the report:

Children and young people see AI as a part of their everyday lives, but there is still a lot of uncertainty; they are excited about new opportunities for creativity but concerned about privacy and security risks, as well as the potential for misuse and deception.

Most children learn about AI and emerging technologies through TikTok and YouTube. Children require more discussion, guidance, and engagement on AI from the adults in their lives to deepen their understanding of AI uses and risks, and ensure they are receiving accurate, balanced, reliable information, beyond what they are exposed to on social media. The report however suggests that many adults do not know enough about AI technologies themselves, and require more information, guidance and training to better support children and young people.



Resources to start teaching about this topic in school includes this [Fact Checking AI lesson plan](#) from Internet Matters or the [Reliability Online](#) resource from Childnet. Google's latest [Be Internet Legends assembly](#) also provides an excellent introduction to understanding AI, which is available to watch on [YouTube](#).

## Safer Internet Day 2025!!

[Safer Internet Day 2025](#) will take place on **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2025**, with online safety celebrations based around the theme: **'Too good to be true? Keeping yourself and others safe from scams online'**.

Access the [new education resources](#) and [register as a supporter](#) with the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) to celebrate and explore topics such as:

- How is changing technology like generative AI going to impact the approach of scammers?
- What role can the government and internet industry take to tackle this threat?
- What changes would young people like to see to help protect themselves moving forward?



## National Research, Events and Resources

### CSA Centre: Data Insights Hub

The Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre) has launched a [new Data Insights Hub](#)—an online dashboard providing instant access to local and national data on child sexual abuse in England and Wales. Inconsistent, low-quality data can hinder efforts to support victims and survivors effectively. However, local official data can help improve responses and support.



The CSA Centre's Data Insights Hub uses interactive maps and charts to display data from local authorities and police forces across England and Wales. It also offers up-to-date estimates on the scale of child sexual abuse and information on support services. DSLs may find this tool useful for understanding their specific local context.

### New DfE Prevent Training for DSLs in Development

To sign up to the DfE SE coordinator newsletter please use the link below.

The Department for Education are developing a Prevent training offer specifically for DSLs which is anticipated to be published and live this academic year. The Prevent team are encouraging all DSLs to sign up to newsletter updates from the DfE Regional Prevent Coordinator for South East, Helene Morris, by using the QR code to ensure they get the latest information.



### NSPCC: The impact of financial pressures on young people

Financial pressures are caused by any situation where there is difficulty or uncertainty in meeting financial commitments due to a shortage of money. This could be difficulty keeping up with living expenses or being able to save for the future.


In some cases, financial pressures can lead to poverty and destitution. Without sufficient protective factors, living with financial pressures can impact a young person's development and wellbeing, and put them at increased risk of abuse or exploitation.



[The impact of financial pressures on young people: Helplines insight briefing](#) uses insights from Childline counselling sessions and NSPCC Helpline contacts to share children and young people's voices and experiences of financial pressures.

Key themes included material hardship, housing instability, impacts on family dynamics, barriers to independence, barriers to accessing support, feeling pressure to solve financial problems and hopes and worries for the future.

### NSPCC: Resources for schools and settings reminder



Since 2013, Pantosaurus has helped over six million parents to [‘Talk PANTS’](#), and help keep children safe from sexual abuse. Developed with children, parents, carers and teachers, Talk PANTS is a simple conversation to help children understand that their body belongs to them, and they should tell a safe adult they trust if anything makes them feel upset or worried.

[‘Speak Out. Stay Safe’](#) is a safeguarding programme for children aged 5- to 11-years-old. It is available to all primary schools in Kent and Medway and is FREE to use. It helps children understand abuse in all its forms, that abuse is never a child’s fault and where to get help if they need it.

[‘Talk Relationships’](#) supports all UK secondary schools to confidently deliver inclusive sex and relationships education by helping young people to understand healthy behaviours in relationships and recognise their right to be safe, heard and respected.

To find out more, please contact [Caroline Nicholson](#) Schools Coordinator, NSPCC Schools Service for Kent | Medway Direct line: **01634 564684**

## A Longer Read: Ofsted Category 3 Complaints Process FAQs

A key part of the LESAS function is to support the local authority in recording and responding to safeguarding complaints made to Ofsted in relation to schools.

We appreciate this can be a concerning process for headteachers and DSLs to be involved in, so have put together some frequently asked questions to support you in understanding the process, our involvement and the expectations.

### **Who can complain to Ofsted about a school?**

Anyone can submit a complaint to Ofsted about a school, however Ofsted do expect complainants to follow the school’s own complaints process in the first instance and requests that complaints should be about things that affect the whole school, not individuals.

### **Will an Ofsted complaint automatically trigger an inspection?**


No. In most cases a complaint to Ofsted will not result in an inspection, however inspectors may wish to discuss the complaint with the school leadership during future visits or inspections.

### **What do Ofsted do with complaints?**

When a complaint is made to Ofsted it processed by the Complaints About Schools (CAS) Team. If the complaint raises immediate safeguarding concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, Ofsted must refer it to the police or social services.

Ofsted does not have the power to investigate complaints that relates to the welfare of individual children/a child. Instead, Ofsted will ensure that child safety concerns are appropriately shared with to the relevant local authority's children's services so they can consider what action might be appropriate. To do this, the CAS team will review and categorise each complaint as either a category 1, 2, or 3 complaint and share them accordingly.

### **What is a category 1 Ofsted complaint?**



A category 1 complaint is when Ofsted believe that the concerns raised have identified there is a potential risk of harm to a child or children presented by a family member or person not in a formal position of trust. It can also include child-on-child sexual abuse.

Category 1 complaints result in a '*referral to children's social care team in the local authority*'. They are processed in Kent by the Front Door Service who will determine what action should be taken based on the nature of the complaint. In some cases, the Front Door may ask LESAS to contact the school to discuss the complaint.

### **What is a category 2 Ofsted complaint?**

A category 2 complaint is when Ofsted believe that the concerns raised may identify allegations of harm or possible harm caused by a person in a position of trust.

Category 2 complaints result in a '*referral to the Designated Officer*' and are reviewed by the LADO, who determines if the allegation/s made meets the harm threshold and if so, will advise on next steps. This may include LESAS contacting the school to discuss the complaint.

### **What is a category 3 Ofsted complaint?**

Category 3 complaints are when Ofsted believe that the concerns raised have identified that a child or children may be suffering or at risk of harm, but the concerns do not fit into either of the other categories. Examples of this can include child on child bullying or concerns a school is not following their safeguarding policies. This category also includes general safeguarding information that the local authority may wish to be aware of but that might not warrant an assessment.

Category 3 complaints result in '*Information passed to the office of the DCS (Director of Childrens Services)*' and are processed by LESAS.

### **Can LESAS provide schools with a copy of the complaint?**

When an individual contacts Ofsted under UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), consent from complainants is required to share their complaint/information with others.


When reviewing a category 3 complaint, LESAS are sometimes provided with complainants contact details; in these cases, we will always try to seek their consent to share the full details of the complaint with the school, however, if their consent cannot be obtained or is denied, only general themes and information can be shared. If a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the local Kent child protection processes will be followed, even when consent from the complainant is not provided/achieved.

### **What are the possible outcomes when LESAS receive a category 3 complaint?**

Once a category 3 complaint has been received by LESAS, we will undertake a fact-finding exercise to consider the complaint further. If following this, LESAS do not identify any safeguarding issues or other concerns, no further action will be taken.

If issues or concerns are identified regarding the leadership and management of the school or SEND provision, LESAS will notify the relevant Assistant Director of Education (ADE) who may raise those concerns with the school. LESAS will not take any further action.





If potential safeguarding concerns are identified, LESAS will contact the school to discuss the complaint further. LESAS will record outcomes of these conversations, as well as inviting the school to provide a summary of their involvement with the complaint, including any actions taken if this wish to. The outcome of these conversations will be shared with Ofsted by LESAS.

### **How quickly will Ofsted/LESAS process a category 3 complaint?**

LESAS cannot control how fast Ofsted shares category 3 complaints. Usually, LESAS decides outcomes within 10-15 working days of receiving them. This timeframe may vary based on the complaint's nature, consent for information sharing, and school staff availability during holidays.

If there are concerns about criminal offences or significant harm to a child, local Kent referral processes are followed immediately.

### **How will LESAS contact the schools to discuss a complaint?**

In the first instance LESAS will make initial contact with the Headteacher to discuss the complaint. This will be via telephone where possible, or alternately our service will email the headteacher to identify a mutually convenient time to speak. The headteacher may decide that other members of staff, such as the DSL, also need to be involved.

### **What is the LESAS role in relation to category 3 complaints?**

The role of LESAS is not to investigate if a complaint is true or false but to seek assurances about the schools safeguarding approaches and/or to ensure appropriate statutory safeguarding policies and processes have been followed.

Our staff will be as transparent as possible whilst following information sharing principles. We will explore the extent to which the school has followed their own safeguarding policies and procedures and if appropriate, if they followed national and/or local guidance. This will include exploring any rationales for decision making and action taken. If the complaint can be shared in full, we will explore if the complainant has already followed the school's complaint process.

### **Do complainants get notified of the outcomes?**

Ofsted aim to provide a response to complainants within 30 days of them submitting the complaint. LESAS will share outcomes with Ofsted but will not share the outcomes of complaints or provide an update of how the complaint is being managed to the complainant.

### **Is there any support available for headteacher/DSLs after receiving a complaint?**

We appreciate the Ofsted complaints process can generate high levels of anxiety and may involve discussions about sensitive and contentious issues. We also understand that the process can be especially frustrating for all involved when the service is unable to share specific information about the complaint due to not having consent.

LESAS will provide well-being support for headteachers, DSLs and other staff involved. Additionally, support is available via your ADE, professional unions and/or other organisations, such as KALE:

- [Connection, Collaboration, Community. - KALE \(kale-connect.org.uk\)](https://kale-connect.org.uk)
- [Home \(naht.org.uk\)](https://naht.org.uk)
- [Education Support, supporting teachers and education staff](#)



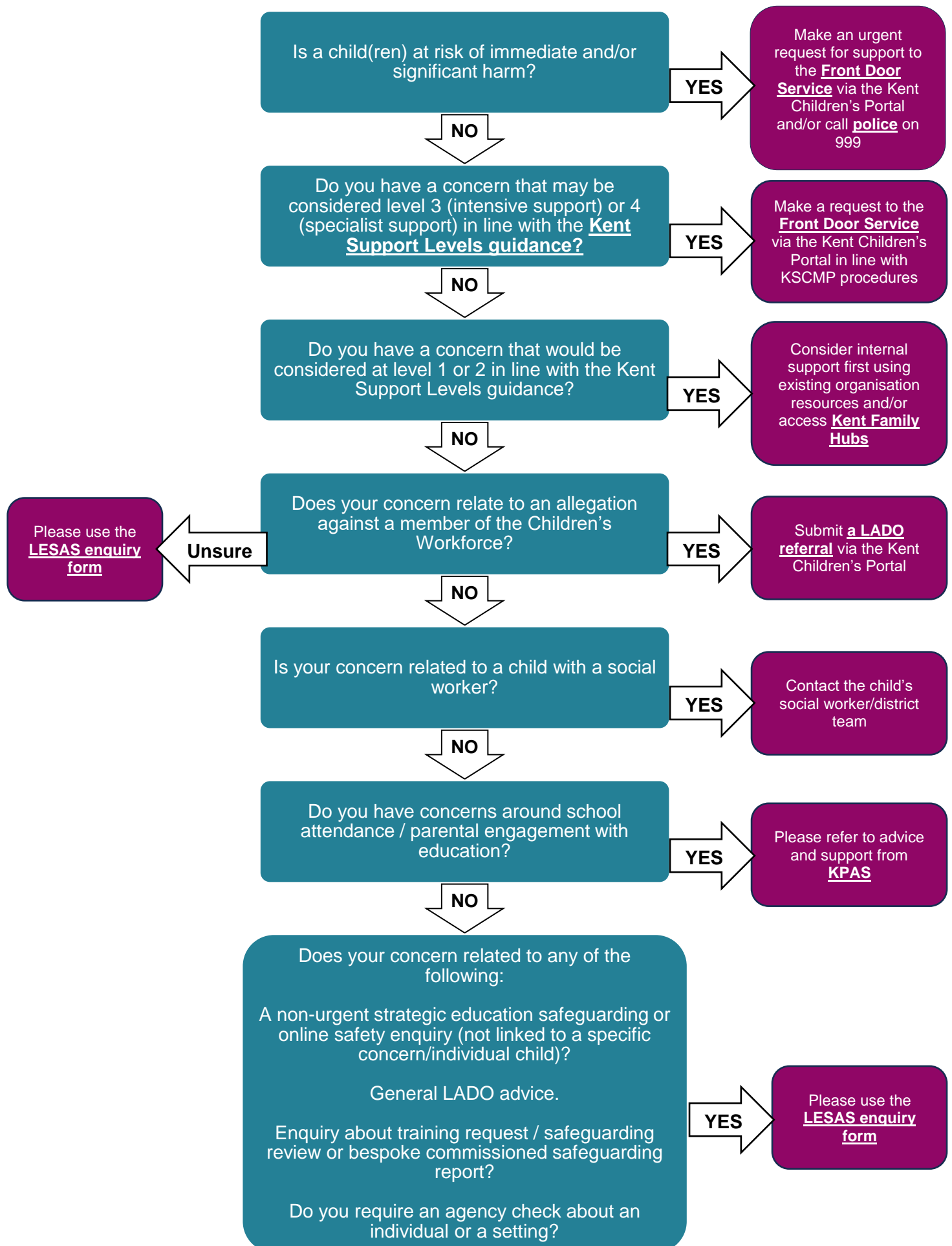


## **Is there anything schools can do to minimise complaints to Ofsted?**

Following our involvement with category 3 complaints and recurring themes, the following suggestions may help school leaders reduce the likelihood of complaints:

- Ensure your complaint procedure is readily available and accessible for your school community, and details the process for submitting complaints, including any timeframes.
- Consider explaining the process using a flowchart to help parents/carers or pupils identify the steps to follow when raising concerns, both formally and informally.
- Encourage complainants to share their desired outcomes with you so their expectations can be managed effectively.
- Clarify Ofsted's role within the complaints process, emphasising the need to follow your complaints process first.
- Educate your school community on what constitutes bullying, your behaviour and/or anti-bullying policies, and the support and sanctions implemented/offered.
- Ensure there is a range of methods that pupils can use to report bullying, child-on-child abuse and other safeguarding concerns.
- Provide regular whole staff safeguarding training to ensure everyone knows how to recognise and respond to concerns, including bullying, emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Regularly share information with parents through various channels to help them understand issues facing their children and your role in multi-agency working.
- Establish connections with local services to direct parents/carers and pupils to available support and services.
- Regularly highlight the good practices within your school related to safeguarding and emotional wellbeing support for children and their families.

# Local Support and Contacts



## Urgent Concerns and Making a Request for Support

If a child may be at risk of **imminent harm**, submit an **urgent request for support** via [the Kent Integrated Children's Services portal](#) or call **Kent Police on 999**

If your concerns may be considered level 3 (intensive support) or 4 (specialist support) in line with the [Kent Support Levels Guidance](#), submit a request for support to the Front Door Service via [the Kent Integrated Children's Services portal](#)

To request a consultation with a social worker from the Front Door Service, call 03000 411 111

If you need to make contact out of working hours, please call the Out of Hours Services via 03000 41 91 91

**Early Help Unit Contacts** can be found at [Early Help and Preventative Services](#)

**Kent Family Hubs Information** can be found at [Kent Family Hubs](#)

## LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service

If you need to make a referral to the LADO regarding an allegation against a member of staff, please complete a LADO referral via [the Kent Integrated Children's Services portal](#)

**LADO or Strategic Education Safeguarding/Online Safety Enquiries**

[LESAS enquiry form](#)

## 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](mailto:sally.green2@kent.gov.uk) 03000 413 439

**South/East** - Rachel Murray [Rachel.murray@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.murray@kent.gov.uk) 03000 412 431