



Safeguarding Matters

FAO Headteachers, Governors, Designated Safeguarding Leads and members of the safeguarding team

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The School Safeguarding Team

We know that school leaders are confident and exceptionally skilled in dealing with a huge range of safeguarding issues which can often present themselves on a daily basis. Occasionally situations can occur which are not straight forwards, and are certainly not black and white.

As a reminder, the safeguarding team is available to provide third party safeguarding advice and guidance if it is required. When this is necessary please email safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk and a member of the team will respond to your email as soon as possible. Please state if the matter is urgent or non-urgent. For urgent matters, please ensure you provide a mobile and landline number on which we can contact you. Clearly, there should be no delay in ringing children's services or police when this is required, or contacting the LADO if the concern relates to an adult who works with children. In addition, schools can also seek advice from their local early help team or early help hub.

Please remember that the team are also able to offer a range of additional services to schools including:

- A full and comprehensive onsite safeguarding review of key practices and statutory safeguarding requirements
- A review of the Single Central Record and safer recruitment practices
- Bespoke onsite training, for example, whole staff safeguarding training or in house DSL or Safer Recruitment training

Finally, we are pleased to inform you that following an extensive recruitment process, we have successfully appointed two new Safeguarding Children Partners to join the team. Both officers have significant safeguarding experience at both a school and Local Authority level and will be a wonderful addition to the

team. We hope that they will both be in post by the start of the summer term and we look forward to introducing them to you.

Best wishes

Nicky and Meryl

2023-24 training programme

Our training programme for 2023-24 can be found [here](#) and includes:

- Headteachers' Safeguarding Briefings
- New to the Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Safer Recruitment and Safer Recruitment refresher training
- Managing Allegations against staff and volunteers
- The role of the link governor for safeguarding

The re-scheduled Headteachers' Safeguarding Briefings will be taking place after the February half term break. If you were booked on to any of the previous sessions your place will have automatically transferred over to one of the new dates. If you have not yet booked your place, there are still some available. If a Headteacher is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead then they should attend both the Headteachers' briefings and the refresher training for Designated Safeguarding Leads.

We will also continue to deliver the popular DSL Refresher twilight sessions, which will be added to the calendar throughout the year. We are currently finalising some dates for an Enhanced Prevent Awareness for DSL's which will focus on the local threat and risk.

As always, schools should also ensure that they participate in multi-agency safeguarding training with other key agencies by viewing the offer on their local safeguarding children partnership website.

Liverpool schools only; Annual Section 175 Safeguarding Audit

The Section 175 audit is a self-evaluation tool which enables the school to demonstrate to itself and the Local Authority that it is compliant with a range of standards often linked to statutory responsibilities. Colleagues will be aware that in Liverpool we ask schools to complete their audit during the Spring term.

There has been a slight delay to the normal timescales, with the 2023-24 audit tool currently being revised. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 did not introduce many significant changes this academic year, therefore it is anticipated that there will be minimal changes to the audit. As a result we hope to be in a position to launch this year's audit tool after the February half term break. We will consult with and share further details via the Headteachers Associations in due course.

Operation Encompass training opportunities

Merseyside Police are hosting a further series of CPD events for Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governors. The founders of Operation Encompass David Carney-Haworth OBE and Elisabeth Carney-Haworth OBE will be speaking at these sessions and it will give school leaders an opportunity to hear about the force's plans for Operation Encompass moving forwards.

The training will be held online via Teams and colleagues can choose from the following sessions:

Operation Encompass CPD – Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governors

6th February 2024, 9.30 – 11am

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 382 877 704 310

Passcode: x32g5g

Operation Encompass CPD – Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governors

6th February 2024, 3.30 – 5pm

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 340 180 173 090

Passcode: bGoFLM

Operation Encompass CPD – Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governors

7th March 2024, 9.30 – 11am

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 365 842 854 900

Passcode: cJf6BD

Operation Encompass CPD – Designated Safeguarding Leads and Governors

7th March 2024, 3.30 – 5pm

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 337 904 943 714

Passcode: SJE7zU

Please also remember that Merseyside Police have created a specific mailbox for any Operation Encompass queries. Incorrect notifications or any other updates should now be sent to:

Operation.Encompass@merseyside.police.uk

If you make any changes to your school safeguarding email account, please ensure that you email both safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk and operation.encompass@merseyside.police.uk to notify of these changes.

Changes to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

The DfE published a new version of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) on 15th December 2023. It replaces all previous versions. The new document is a substantial rewrite of the previous version, and delivers the Government strategy [Stable Homes, Built on Love](#) which was published following the [national review](#) into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson. The new Working Together guidance should be read alongside the [Children's Social Care National Framework](#), which was published on the same day.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, amongst other things, strengthens and encourages recognition of the role of education settings in supporting and safeguarding children. It introduces new

principles for working with parents/carers, clarifies expectations for multi-agency working and information sharing, and introduces new multi-agency child protection standards. A summary of the key changes can be found below; however we strongly recommend that leaders and governors read the full document alongside the Children's Social Care National Framework to support their understanding.

General changes throughout the document:

- A change in subtitle from "inter-agency working" to multi-agency working"
- A clear emphasis throughout regarding the role of education settings
- A change to the definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- A change to the definition of abuse
- A change to the definition of neglect

The new definition of safeguarding is:

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

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within the home or outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

”

The new definition of abuse is:

“ A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

”

The new definition of neglect is:

“ The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

”

Chapter 1: A shared responsibility

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 has introduced a new chapter which highlights that achieving positive outcomes for children relies upon strong multi-agency working. The new chapter highlights professionals working with a child centred approach and provides some principles for working with parents and carers. It also shares a set of expectations for multi-agency working, including specific expectations for strategic leaders, senior and middle managers and for direct practice.

Chapter 2: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Chapter 2 has been changed to strengthen how local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (local authorities, integrated care board and the police) work to safeguard and protect children locally, including with relevant agencies. The revised section emphasises the role of education settings in these safeguarding arrangements as a 'relevant agency'. The revisions also strengthen accountability by clarifying expectations for information sharing. Independent scrutiny, funding and reporting.

Specifically for schools, colleges and education providers:

- It is recommended that Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSPs) have a representative from the education sector present at strategic discussions
- It is expected that all local education and childcare providers working with children up to the age of 18 will be included in the local arrangements
- LSPs should consider including voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, childcare settings and sports clubs in their arrangements

Chapter 3: Providing Help, Support and Protection

Chapter 3 is split into three sections: Early help, Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and Child protection.

Section 1: Early Help

- Assessments should consider how the needs of different family members impact each other. This includes needs relating to education, mental and physical health, financial stability, housing, substance misuse and crime.
- Specific needs should be considered including disabilities, those whose first language isn't English, fathers or male carers and parents who identify as LGBTQ.
- Early help services may focus on improving family functioning and developing the family's capacity to establish positive routines and solve problems. Where family networks are supporting the child and parents, services may take an approach that enables family group decision making, such as family group conferences

The guidance specifies that safeguarding professionals should work closely with education and childcare settings to share information, identify and understand risks of harm and ensure children and families receive timely support.

Section 2: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Children's Social Care assessments

- Assessments should consider the parenting capacity of both resident and non-resident parents and carers, as well as any other adult living in the household that can respond to the child's needs

- Assessments should also consider the influence of the child's family network and any other adults living in the household, as well as the wider impact of the wider community and environment

Lead Practitioners.

- A lead practitioner will be allocated by the local authority and their partners once a referral has been accepted.
- The lead practitioner role can be held by a range of people, including social workers. For child protection enquiries, the lead practitioner should always be a social worker.
- The lead practitioner will have the appropriate skills, knowledge and capacity to carry out assessments, undertake direct work with families and co-ordinate services.

Please note that this is a key change. Local protocols will need to be developed to set out who can act as Lead Practitioners for section 17 Child in Need.

Supporting disabled children and their carers

- 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.

Harm outside the home

- Practitioners should consider the needs, experiences and vulnerabilities of the individuals or groups who are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, harm outside the home – including from criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation or serious violence.
- Practitioners should work with relevant partner agencies to consider the influence of groups or individuals perpetrating the harm.
- 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

Section 3: Child protection

The new guidance introduces new multi-agency practice standards for all practitioners whose work may bring them in to contact with children who may be suffering or have suffered significant harm within or outside the home.

Chapter 4: Organisational Responsibilities

The only changes are in relation to the Prison and Probation services.

Chapter 5: Learning from Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents

Changes relate to a clarification regarding the expectation for keeping in touch with care leavers over the age of 21, and the non-mandatory reporting of care leaver deaths up to the age of 25 to improve learning and outcomes for this group of young people.

Chapter 6: Child Death Reviews

Factual changes made only.

Safer Internet Day 2024

“ Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online. ”

Safer Internet Day 2024 will take place on Tuesday 6th February. Most schools will already have begun planning their activities to celebrate online safety, but below is a collection of website and resources that may support you with your preparation.



The [UK Safer Internet Centre](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk) coordinates Safer Internet Day and to help schools, they create a range of free to download education resources. These resources range from age 3 up to 18, and include activities designed for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. They include short interactive stories, worksheets, group discussion and assemblies. There are also short films which can be used as conversation starters when running Safer Internet Day activities.



[UK Safer Internet Centre Educational Resources](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/education)

[UK Safer Internet Centre SID Films](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/films)

Our friends at [LGfL](https://www.lgfl.org) have also produced some free downloadable resources which can be accessed [here](#). They include a downloadable board game for KS2/3 pupils, a student led film plan, top tips for planning your safer internet day, a template for emailing and engaging parents in SID and a video lesson/assembly.

There are also free online assemblies and lessons for KS2 and KS3 available from [Tech She Can](https://www.techshecan.org) and a free Safer Internet Day live lesson for KS2 from [BBC Teach](https://www.bbc.com/teach).

Whatever you are planning for Safer Internet Day, make sure you use the hashtag **#SaferInternetDay** and tag our 'X' account **@SILsafeguarding** in any posts you make.