



Safeguarding Matters

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

In this briefing:

- A message from the team
- 2023-24 training programme
- Template policies
- Schools safeguarding focus group
- Operation Encompass
- Whole staff training materials
- 2023 changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Consultations on Working together to safeguard children 2018 and Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners 2018
- Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse: call for evidence
- Travel to school for children of compulsory school age; Statutory guidance for local authorities
- Child Q Update Report – Why was it me?
- Safeguarding children in out of school settings
- Responding to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment – risk assessment

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 either Nicky or Steve 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, can we thank you all for the wonderful work you do supporting children, young people and their families throughout the year. Enjoy a well-deserved rest over the summer break and we will see you in the autumn term.

Best wishes

Nicky and Steve

2023-24 training programme

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

- Headteachers' Safeguarding Briefings
- Designated Safeguarding Lead refresher training
- 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

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.

Please note that due to external factors, there are some changes to the programme this year which includes a different week for the Headteachers Safeguarding Briefings, and a combination of both morning and afternoon sessions for the DSL Refresher training, which will take place in September rather than October.

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

Template policies

We are pleased to say that schools can now access the suite of safeguarding template policies for 2023-24. They are available to download from [this link](#) and you will find the updated versions of the:

- Model Child Protection policy
- Model Code of Conduct for adults
- Model Managing Allegations policy
- Model Safer recruitment policy and Recruitment and selection procedures

All policies have all been updated to reflect the expectations set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#), although please bear in mind that whilst the DfE has published the proposed version of KCSiE 2023, they may still make some minor amendments prior to the 1st September. We share these documents now to allow schools time to adapt their own policy ready for the start of the new school year.

To enable colleagues to see where changes have been made, amendments have been highlighted in green, and areas where school should further develop the template to include school specific information are highlighted in yellow. Please ensure that when drawing upon these templates you personalise them for your setting, the needs of your children, your community and your context. All policies will also be included within the Schools' Safeguarding Handbook, which will be updated and shared with colleagues in the autumn term.

Schools safeguarding focus group, for Liverpool schools

Many of you will recall the Schools safeguarding focus group. This was a group of DSL's who would meet with the Schools' Safeguarding Team and other partners from the Local Authority on a termly basis in order to discuss practice and influence local procedures. Due to capacity this group has unfortunately not met during this academic year, however we would like to re-start the group in 2023-24.

Should you wish to be part of the focus group, or remain part of the focus group for those who were previously involved, please send an email expressing your interest to safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk. The first meeting will be before Christmas.

Operation Encompass

We circulated a special Safeguarding Matters in June, dedicated to Operation Encompass. The key points to ensure you have addressed, are as follows:

Training

All schools must complete the official Operation Encompass Key Adult training, provided by the charity Operation Encompass. This training is online and is free.

[Online Key Adult Training : Operation Encompass](#)

Merseyside Police have requested that at least one member of staff from every school should undertake this online training, and that this should be completed by 8th September 2023.

The charity Operation Encompass will be sharing completion details with Merseyside Police so please ensure that this is actioned.

In addition, this half term Merseyside Police are hosting a series of CPD events for Designated Safeguarding Leads and deputies. 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 and DSL's can choose from the following remaining sessions:

Operation Encompass - PAN Merseyside DSL CPD (Session 3)

11th July 2023, 9.30 – 11am

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 350 918 142 366

Passcode: QuUzHa

Operation Encompass - PAN Merseyside DSL CPD (Session 4)

11th July 2023, 3.30 – 5pm

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 314 923 667 897

Passcode: w6FrVe

Changes to notifications

Merseyside Police have agreed to change the information contained within the notification in order to provide greater clarity to the receiving school. The information you should expect to receive moving forwards is detailed below. Changes to the existing notifications are highlighted in green.

Subject line - Operation Encompass Notification - VP26/73820 – Childs name & DOB

This is an automated notification under the Operation Encompass Scheme, and as per the guidance for the scheme we are letting you know that the below child may have witnessed a domestic abuse incident. Under the terms of the scheme we are unable to provide further detail about the incident itself.

Name: Child's Name

Other Names:

Date of Birth:

Gender:

School:

Date of Incident: 16 Jan 2023 00:00 to 12 Feb 2023 23:59

(Where this spans multiple dates, it indicates a series of incidents over a prolonged period)

Location of Incident:

Victim(s): Name & DOB

Child's relationship to victim

Perpetrator(s): Name & DOB

Childs relationship to perpetrator

Was there physical violence?

Are there unreported previous incidents (if so, how many?)

Have the incidents escalated in terms of severity and/or frequency?

Where and how did they witness the incident

Has the child been spoken to by officers?

If no selected, why not?

The following 2 questions relate to children generally and may not refer to the specific child subject of the notification.

Were children present at the address when incident occurred? (If so, where?)

The following questions relate to the specific child subject of the notification.

The Voice of the Child - Did the child see or hear the incident?

If yes – Where and how did they witness the incident

If no selected – Where was the child?

Has the child been seen or spoken to by officers? Yes/No

If yes – Was an adult present when you spoke with the child? Demeanour of the child? What has the child disclosed?

If no – why not?

Officer's observations (Include the environment and impact of this incident on the child)

Merseyside Police have also 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

Safeguarding email account

All schools without a safeguarding email account should have created a team email address and notified Merseyside Police by 30th June 2023.

Schools should not use an individual person's email address for Operation Encompass notifications. It is expected that all settings will create a generic safeguarding email and share this with Merseyside Police. All members of the safeguarding team should be given access to this email account. It should follow the format of safeguarding@schoolomainname.co.uk, etc. Any remaining schools without a safeguarding email account must create one as a matter of urgency and notify both Operation.Encompass@merseyside.police.uk and safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk of the email address details.

Informing stakeholders

Schools should ensure that they have shared information about Operation Encompass with parents/carers (letter template shared in the June newsletter), via their Child Protection policy and via their website.

Reminder of key actions

1. Ensure that at least one member of the safeguarding team has completed the online Operation Encompass training by **8th September 2023**
2. If the setting does not already have one, create a safeguarding email account accessible by the whole safeguarding team and notify Merseyside Police and School Improvement Liverpool asap
3. Consider attending the additional CPD events being hosted by Merseyside Police in July
4. Ensure that members of the safeguarding team are familiarised with the proposed new Operation Encompass notifications
5. Ensure that the setting's Child Protection policy contains reference to Operation Encompass
6. Ensure that your website contains a statement about your involvement in Operation Encompass and signposts to further support
7. Share the Operation Encompass letter with all parents and carers, and ensure that this is also provided to all new starters at the point of admission to the school

Whole staff training materials

As with previous years, we have a range of resources colleagues can draw upon in order to delivering safeguarding training to their staff and volunteers. The resources and supporting documentation can be accessed [here](#).

Leaders can draw upon several different training resources including a half day 'basic awareness' inset, or some shorter presentations which may suit a twilight training session.

A new resource for this year is a presentation covering some of the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, focussing on filtering and monitoring, and forced marriage.



2023 changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education

A summary of the key changes / additions to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 can be found below, along with some key areas for leaders and governors to consider:

Part one – Safeguarding information for all staff (and Annex A)

Part one now sets out that through training, staff should be aware of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to the filtering and monitoring systems in school. This should be set out at induction, and through ongoing safeguarding training. It has also updated the link to the DfE [Behaviour in schools](#) guidance.

Part two – The management of safeguarding

Within part two, there is a further increased emphasis on governors ensuring that filtering and monitoring systems are effective and in line with the DfE's [Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges](#). Alongside this is the expectation that DSL's have responsibility to understand the school's filtering and monitoring systems. Schools should also give consideration to implementing the DfE's [Cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#). Schools should also ensure that staff training should include understanding roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

Part two reminds us that we should make reasonable adjustments for children with disabilities in order to respond to those dealing with particular disadvantages, such as bullying or child on child abuse. There is also additional signposting to specialist SEND services.

Links have been updated to reflect [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [Children Missing Education](#). The distinction between children missing education and children who are absent is clarified.

As mentioned later in this e-briefing, [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#) is also linked in the new guidance.

Part three – Safer recruitment

Minor changes include that it is best practice to ensure shortlisted candidates are informed that online searches will be completed as part of the safer recruitment process. The [School Improvement Liverpool](#) 'Invite to interview' letter was updated earlier this year to inform candidates of this check and to also give them the opportunity to inform the school of anything they are aware of prior to the search being completed.

The section about the retention of documents has been made clearer and some paragraphs have been re-ordered to flow better (276-277).

There is also an emphasis about the ongoing culture of vigilance schools create and that this extends beyond the recruitment process itself. The guidance asks schools to ensure that staff are comfortable to discuss matters they are worried about, including things they may have seen or heard online. Schools should consider how they empower staff to share such information, and how well embedded their systems are.

Part four – Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors

Part four has been updated to reflect that schools should follow their own managing allegations/safeguarding policies (including informing the LADO as appropriate) when they receive an allegation about an individual

or the organisation concerning incidents that happen when the school or college's premises are being used by external providers.

Part five – Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

This section (and the whole document) has been reworded to reflect and align with the changes in the DfE's [Behaviour in schools](#) guidance.

Annex B: Further information

Annex B has been updated to reflect the difference between children absent from education and children missing education.

The section on the 'Prevent Duty' clarifies issues of consent for referrals to Channel and signposts to the DfE guidance [The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation](#).

The section on Forced Marriage has also been updated to reflect changes in the law from February 2023 including the fact that the legal age of marriage has been raised to 18, which therefore makes it a crime *"...to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday..."*. A link to the new [Forced marriage resource pack](#) has been added to the 'Additional advice and support' section.

The DfE has also included a link to the [Multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm](#) which are designed to support effective partnership working when responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm within this section.

Key areas to consider: Filtering and monitoring

You will note that one of the main changes in KCSiE 2023 is an increased emphasis regarding the role of the DSL (and governors) in relation to the school's arrangements for filtering and monitoring. In order to understand this responsibility, we would recommend DSLs attending specific training on "Web filtering for DSLs and SLT" delivered by [London Grid for Learning](#). Details of this free training, along with other useful resources, can be found here:

<https://national.lgfl.net/digisafe/kcsie/webfiltering>



This term the [UK Safer Internet Centre](https://saferinternet.org.uk) is also delivering a series of online webinars for schools in relation to these expectations. Details can be found here:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/filteringandmonitoringevents>

We also recommend, as per Part one, ensuring that whole staff safeguarding training and induction covers the filtering and monitoring arrangements in your school, along with the responsibilities of every member of staff. We have added some resources into the whole staff training mentioned later in this e-briefing.

Key areas to consider: Safer recruitment

Ensure that your invite to interview letter informs candidates of the online search you will be conducting prior to interview.

In terms of the emphasis about the ongoing culture of vigilance in Part three, leaders and governors should consider how they empower staff to discuss matters they are worried about, including things they may have seen or heard online, and how well embedded their systems are.

Consultations on DfE guidance Working together to safeguard children 2018 and Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners 2018

The DfE has launched consultations on two key pieces of safeguarding guidance. Both consultations will be open until 11.59pm on 6th September 2023.

Working together to safeguard children 2018

The consultation webpage can be found here: <https://consult.education.gov.uk/child-protection-safeguarding-division/working-together-to-safeguard-children-changes-to/>

The consultation does not place any new responsibilities or requirements specifically on schools, there are several areas relating to multi-agency working and good practice to consider. The five key areas the DfE are seeking views on are:

- Expectations around multi-agency working, including good practice principles for working with parents and carers. They are also proposing a new name for the first section of the guidance “A shared endeavour”.
- Changes to the existing Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) framework, including clarifying roles and responsibilities, creating a partnership chair from the delegated safeguarding partner group and emphasising the role of education within the safeguarding arrangements.
- Stronger expectations on Early Help and family networks. Clarifying permissions on working with children under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Disabled children being appropriately referenced and included to ensure clarity, and ensure that sections are also relevant to disabled children. The proposals also aim to clarify the role of children’s services in relation to disabled children and their families.
- An introduction of new national multi-agency child protection standards (found in paragraphs 203 – 205 and standards table of the draft Working Together document). These standards aim to set out the actions, considerations and behaviours that should lead to improved child protection practice and in turn, better outcomes for children.
- Amendments in relation to learning from serious child safeguarding incidents including extending the reporting of deaths or serious incidents to include the death of care leavers.

Along with further stressing the importance of effective early help, the real emphasis throughout the document is adopting a true family safeguarding approach whereby to identify and meet the needs of the child(ren), we have to understand and work with the family network.

They are also proposing to review the whole document on an annual basis, as they do with KCSiE.

For information, the proposed 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, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the child(ren)
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

”

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners 2018

The consultation webpage can be found here: <https://consult.education.gov.uk/childrens-social-care-data-and-digital-division/information-sharing-advice-safeguarding-practition/>

The DfE are seeking views on the revised Information Sharing Advice to ensure that it provides more clarity, is easily understood, and instils confidence to share information appropriately amongst practitioners. This is because recent national reviews (such as the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's review 'Child Protection in England') have evidenced confusion, anxieties and poor practices of practitioners sharing information to protect children and recommended improved training and guidance for practitioners. In February 2023, the Government published a consultation [Stable Homes, Built on Love](#), which responded to the recommendations, and has committed to revising and consulting on the Information Sharing Advice to address practitioners' perceptions that there are legal impediments to sharing information.

Versions of the proposed Working Together and Information Sharing documents with highlighted changes are available to download from [this link](#) should colleagues want to see the proposed amendments.

Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse: call for evidence

Alongside the two consultations listed above, the Home Office has also launched a call for evidence regarding the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse and how a legal duty to report would affect children, organisations, workplaces and volunteers.

The call for evidence can be found here and is open until 14th August 2023:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/mandatory-reporting-of-child-sexual-abuse>

This call for evidence is a direct response to a recommendation from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA), detailed below:

Recommendation 13: Mandatory reporting

The Inquiry recommends that the UK government and Welsh Government introduce legislation which places certain individuals – ‘mandated reporters’ – under a statutory duty to report child sexual abuse where they:

- receive a disclosure of child sexual abuse from a child or perpetrator; or
- witness a child being sexually abused; or
- observe recognised indicators of child sexual abuse.

The following persons should be designated ‘mandated reporters’:

- any person working in **regulated activity** in relation to children (under the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended);
- any person working in a **position of trust** (as defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003, as amended); and
- police officers.

For the purposes of mandatory reporting, ‘child sexual abuse’ should be interpreted as any act that would be an offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 where the alleged victim is a child under the age of 18.

Where the child is aged between 13 and under 16 years old, a report need not be made where the mandated reporter reasonably believes that:

- the relationship between the parties is consensual and not intimidatory, exploitative or coercive; and
- the child has not been harmed and is not at risk of being harmed; and
- there is no material difference in capacity or maturity between the parties engaged in the sexual activity concerned, and there is a difference in age of no more than three years.

These exceptions should not, however, apply where the alleged perpetrator is in a position of trust within the meaning of the 2003 Act.

Where the child is under the age of 13, a report must always be made.

Reports should be made to either local authority children’s social care or the police as soon as is practicable.

It should be a criminal offence for mandated reporters to fail to report child sexual abuse where they:

- are in receipt of a disclosure of child sexual abuse from a child or perpetrator; or
- witness a child being sexually abused.

Travel to school for children of compulsory school age; Statutory guidance for local authorities

In June 2023, the DfE updated its statutory guidance to help local authorities perform their functions in relation to home to school travel for children of compulsory school age. It can be viewed [here](#). There is a lot of new information as the length of the document has gone from 37 pages in 2014 to 64 pages in the 2023 updated version.

Whilst the guidance is aimed at Local Authorities, schools who commission and provide their own school transport (for example buses or minibuses) may want to review the guidance in order to reflect on what is considered to be good practice. We would particularly draw leaders and governors attention to Part 3, paying particular reference to the advice on ‘Safeguarding’ and ‘Training’.

Child Q Update Report – Why was it me?



Colleagues will be familiar with the Child Q Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review. Following the report which was published by City of Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) in March 2022, CHSCP have now published an update report looking at the local response since that date.

The Child Q Update Report can be found [here](#). Whilst it focuses on the situation in Hackney, it is worth considering in order to reflect on how schools can improve their own practice and strengthen the safeguarding of children from black and ethnic minorities. There are some key points made by young people within the report (page 13 onwards) which all schools can learn from.

Safeguarding children in out-of-school settings

The summer holidays are rapidly approaching and families will be looking for out of school activities for their children. The DfE provide some helpful guidance for parents about what questions to ask when choosing a setting or activity for their child. The guidance can be found [here](#).

The document is intended to help parents and carers choose a safer out-of-school setting for their child/ren and covers:

- community activities
- after-school clubs
- supplementary schools
- tuition
- music lessons
- sports training
- other activities for children that take place without their parents' or carers' supervision, that are not a:
 - school
 - college
 - 16 to 19 college
 - provider caring for children under 8 years old registered with Ofsted or a childminder agency



We would recommend colleagues share this with families to enable them to be appropriately informed when choosing settings or activities for their children.

Responding to Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment – risk assessment

A number of schools this year have unfortunately had to respond to incidents of sexual harm between pupils.

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) makes it clear that schools should undertake a risk assessment when there has been a report of sexual violence, and that this risk assessment will help to inform any decision making. In addition, the Ofsted guidance [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings](#) states that inspectors should seek evidence that staff are confident about what to do if a child

reports that they have been sexually abused by another child and the school's safeguarding and child protection policy has clear pathways for responding to children and young people exhibiting sexual behaviours.

Last academic year, many Liverpool schools took advantage of [The AIM Project](#) "Understanding and Managing Sexual Behaviours in Education Settings" training. This training aimed to provide schools with an evidence based toolkit including checklists and risk assessments to support understanding and analysis of harmful sexual behaviours. The feedback received from colleagues who attended this training was outstanding.



The AIM Project

Schools are free to choose the type of toolkit and risk assessment they wish to use and should specify details of this in their child protection policy, however if your school was unable to attend any of the AIM sessions commissioned by School Improvement Liverpool last year and you still wish to attend, you can book directly with them via [their website](#).

In addition, whilst they are not as comprehensive as those available from The AIM Project, or other such providers, there are also resources available in Section Two of the Schools Safeguarding Handbook which schools can utilise when responding to an incident.