

Phil Cooper and Nicola Noon

# Safeguarding Matters

FAO Headteachers, Governors, Designated Safeguarding Leads and key professionals

Liverpool Schools

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## We are here to help! How to contact us: [safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk)



Clearly there should be no delay in ringing children's services or police when this is required. In addition, schools can seek advice from their local early help team or early help hub.

However, there are times when you might need additional third-party safeguarding advice and guidance. When this is necessary please email: [safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk) and either **Phil or Nicky** 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 us with a mobile number and school number, including where possible a direct line.**

For issues related to online safety colleagues can also contact **Paul Bradshaw**:  
[paul.bradshaw@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:paul.bradshaw@si.liverpool.gov.uk)

Paul Bradshaw's online safety update can be found here:  
<https://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/online-safety> and resources here:  
<http://tinyurl.com/silonlinesafety1617>

## Seeking mental health support for ourselves or other adults

The [NHS](#) has produced guidance and helplines on a range of mental health issues.

### Samaritans Call Back Service

The council has teamed up with Samaritans to offer a 24 hour 'call back service' which is designed to help any member of staff who needs to talk to someone if they are struggling mentally. You can get in touch with Samaritans about anything that's troubling you. It doesn't matter how big or small the issue.

To access the service, all you need to do is complete their confidential [online referral form](#) giving your first name, a contact number, and the date/time (within a two hour window) you would prefer a call back, plus a short description of your concerns.

Your form is sent directly to Samaritans and at no point shared with anyone in the council. Samaritans do keep a record of calls but don't identify/keep individual's details.

**Anyone who needs URGENT support from Samaritans should not use the call back service, but instead call the national helpline on 116 123.**

## **‘Mersey Care’ Mental Health support for all adults**

The links below provide guidance to urgent mental health support and psychological support lines and other helplines for adults:

<https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/contact-us/do-you-need-help-urgently/>

<https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/about-us/news/247-phone-and-psychological-support-services-launched-by-mersey-care/>

## **National Education Support - Telephone support & counselling**

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling>

*‘No matter what you’re going through, we’re always here for you, day or night, all the time. Call us. You’ll feel better. In these unprecedented times we are here for you. No matter what you’re feeling, our free, confidential helpline is always here 24/7. Night or day, our trained counsellors are here to listen to you without judgement and help you find a way forward, whatever your worries or concerns and feel better.*



**UK-wide: 08000 562 561 day or night**

**Txt: 07909 341229 (answered within 24 hours)**

*Our helpline is free and available to all serving and retired teachers, lecturers and staff in education (primary, secondary, further or higher education) in England, Wales and Scotland 24/7, 365 days a year.'*

## **Key forthcoming safeguarding training for schools and educational settings**

All our training can be found on the School Improvement Liverpool website:

<https://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/Training>

## **Multi-agency safeguarding training**

Visit your local Safeguarding Children Partnership website for multi-agency training opportunities.

In Liverpool the training can be found here:

<https://ehd.liverpool.gov.uk/kb5/liverpool/fsd/home.page>

# Key learning from audits/practice reviews – GCP2 and Early Help Assessments

## NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment Tool (GCP2)

Recent audits and practice reviews have highlighted there are missed opportunities to draw upon the NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment Tool or to open an early help assessment.

The majority of school staff who have engaged in the GCP2 training have not gone on to undertake a NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment. For most local authorities, the GCP2 is the agreed tool for assessing and measuring concerns about the quality of care provided to children. Drawing upon the assessment tool should be mandatory, particularly when there are concerns about the quality of care. The tool should be considered right across the safeguarding continuum and particularly when a child and family are engaged in a multi-agency plan.



The advantages of the GCP2 are evident: it will provide a clearer understanding of where appropriate levels of care are being achieved by the parents/carers but importantly pinpoints where improvements are needed. This enables support, interventions, and challenge to be more effectively targeted. It helps us identify where the risks are and because the approach is outcome focussed it is less likely that professionals will be taken in by potential 'disguised compliance'. Professionals working with the family have a clear basis for escalating concerns when the outcomes are not met.

Importantly, it supports the 'Signs of Safety' and other strengths-based, solution-focussed approaches, seeking to work with the family and build resilience so that any positive outcomes are not simply short-term gains.



The Inclusion Manager and Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Kath Davies, at Windsor Community Primary School, Liverpool, was recently recognised nationally by the NSPCC at their GCP2 Awards. The school have clearly seen the benefit of drawing upon the tool to achieve a more focussed approach and better outcomes for the child and family. Congratulations to Kath and the highly inclusive Windsor Community Primary School. Kath recently wrote an article for the Local Safeguarding Partnership about her experiences of using the GCP2 tool which included the following observations:

*As a Safeguarding and Inclusion Team in school, responding to the 'levels of need'; we often support families who are stuck just below or hover around Level 3. This is frustrating and can sometimes lead to a 'professional drift,' particularly if all available support has been offered, failed or declined. Using the GCP2 really helps when working with these families as the outcome of the assessment highlights the areas that families need help and support with and opens-up a discussion on why this might be. Alongside this is all the positives that come out of every assessment; there are always areas that families are doing well in and this gives a fresh perspective on what might previously have been viewed as an impossible case.*

Schools in Liverpool seeking support to undertake a GCP2 assessment should seek advice from [Kate.Bright@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.Bright@liverpool.gov.uk) who can provide bespoke training for schools and/or clusters in addition to the local offer. Schools outside of Liverpool should contact their local safeguarding partnership or ourselves.

In addition to the NSPCC GCP2 many local authorities have a '**Neglect Screening Tool**' which can be found on the local safeguarding partnership's website. Liverpool's can be found [here](#).

## Early Help Assessment Tool

Whilst schools are considerably more engaged in early help assessments, there are still missed opportunities to engage or consider an early help assessment, particularly when:

- there is chronic poor attendance
- children are excluded from school permanently or on a repeated fixed term basis
- children are referred to alternative educational provision
- children are referred to children's services for a statutory assessment yet there have been long term concerns about the quality of care
- children are identified as young carers

Often schools and agencies are engaged in effective partnership work that would be better captured under an early help assessment.

It is mandatory to consider the need for an early help assessment when a child in need plan is closed. The Social Worker should always convene a child in need meeting before a child in need plan is discontinued, ensuring that the final meeting identifies a lead professional for early help assessment when this is required.

Schools in Liverpool seeking advice about undertaking an Early Help Assessment should contact their local Early Help Hub/Team.

## Liverpool Schools' 175 Safeguarding Audit

An invite to complete the 2020-21 175 audit will be shared with all Liverpool schools the week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> February. It should be completed online by **25<sup>th</sup> March 2021**.

A welcome email will be sent directly to each school's unique school safeguarding email address.

The welcome email will also be shared with the Headteachers' Associations.

A user guide setting out how to complete the audit will be provided alongside a word document version of the audit. Any changes to the text from last year are highlighted in green.

### Key reminders:

Schools should read the guidance note sitting alongside each question as these make clear the expectations underpinning each statement.

It is critical that the governing body is assured that the 175 audit has been quality assured by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Governors and Link Safeguarding Governor. This will include testing out a range of evidence underpinning several safeguarding standards.

The 175 audit should be agreed by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Chair of Governors and Link Safeguarding Governor before it is finally completed. A copy of this audit should be signed by all parties and made available to the Local Authority, on request.

## **Frequently asked questions:**

### **Where can I access the online audit tool?**

<https://liverpoolscb.vc-enable.co.uk/Home/>

### **I have forgotten my username and password what can I do?**

Each school's unique school safeguarding email address has been registered as the username for the online 'Virtual College Account'. Step 4 of the user guide explains how to reset your password.

### **I am having technical difficulties what should I do?**

Appendix 1 of the user guide provides some guidance. However, if you remain unable to access the audit or have technical difficulties email [ednet@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:ednet@si.liverpool.gov.uk) by the **5<sup>th</sup> March 2021**.

If the issues remain unresolved, escalate your concerns to [safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk)

### **Do I need to complete the 'word version' of the audit?**

Whilst the audit must be completed online on the 'Virtual College' platform, some schools choose to complete the word document first. Some schools also find the word document a simpler format to share with governors.

### **When I view the 'pie chart' it appears that I haven't answered sections 1 and 2 or Q4.3 and Q4.4, even though I have entered data?**

Sections 1 and 2 and Q4.3 and Q4.4 are not 'scored' and therefore the segments in the pie chart do not turn green. They will instead turn blue once completed. This is because you have been required to enter a phone number or other piece of information. Only questions with an 'in place' or 'action required' responses are 'scored'.

However, rest assured, if you have entered data and clicked "save and complete", then we will be able to see it.

### **The audit has pre-populated answers to each question with my response from last year's audit. Do I need to change this response?**

A feature of the 2020-21 audit is that questions in the audit tool will be pre-populated with your response from the 2019-20 audit. You should ensure that you thoroughly read each question and appropriately amend your evidence as appropriate to ensure it still demonstrates the current policy and practice within your school. The sliders in Section 2 should be updated with the current data as requested. You should ensure that all answers in Sections 1 and 2 are updated, and that you "save and complete" each one. Please do not assume that your response from 2019-20 appropriately answers the question for 2020-21.

### **How will I know when I have completed the audit?**

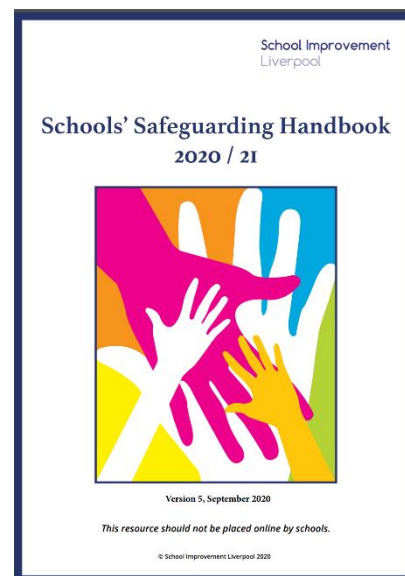
Once you have answered all questions (and provided any evidence) up to and including Q6.15 you have completed the audit. You do not receive a notification that it is finished, nor do you need to notify anyone.

## Transferring safeguarding records and sharing information

It is vital schools continue to ensure safeguarding information is shared **ahead of a child starting in a new setting**. Even if the child is to remain on the roll of one school but he/she is to spend time at another setting they need to be aware of any safeguarding concerns. Information that should be shared ahead of a child starting at a new setting includes:

- Current level of need (LAC, CP, CIN, Early Help, Level 1)
- Summary of the child's needs, current concerns and relevant context/historical concerns
- Name and contact details of key professionals
- Dates of forthcoming professionals' meetings

Once a school has confirmed the child has started their new placement, and **moved off roll**, the actual **safeguarding records should be transferred securely within five days**.



The following protocol outlines the procedures:

[Transfer of Child Protection \(Safeguarding\) Information and File](#)

In addition, the Schools' Safeguarding Handbook contains further guidance and can be found [here](#).

## Monitoring the attendance and well-being of vulnerable children

We know that a child missing from school or home can be an indicator of harm. Repeated missing episodes can be an indicator of exploitation. In addition, we know that chronic poor attendance can be an indicator of neglect.

One of the most important factors in assessing whether a child is safe and well is the opportunity to **see them, speak to them, listen to them and observe them**.

It is important to listen to the child and gain an understanding of their lived experiences, demonstrating 'professional curiosity' when something doesn't feel right.

We are aware of the amazing efforts many schools and agencies are undertaking to support families currently and specifically monitor the well-being of children.

Guidance to support for monitoring the attendance and well-being of vulnerable children can be found [Monitoring the attendance and well-being of vulnerable children](#)

Schools should ensure their attendance policies highlight the link with safeguarding, particularly how school staff should escalate their concerns. Keeping Children Safe in Education sets out that schools should ensure all staff know the school's 'safeguarding response to children who go missing from education' and recognise the potential for neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm and abuse.



# Ofsted

Ofsted's current approach to monitoring visits can be found [here](#). This provides the following summary:

*[Remote inspections of schools and further education providers](#) will begin from 25 January, with a particular focus on how well children and learners are being educated remotely. We will inspect schools rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' as planned, but we will also follow up on complaints raised by parents across all grades of school in order to resolve issues. As these inspections will not involve an on-site visit, they will be unable to cover the full scope of a monitoring inspection. We will continue to undertake on-site inspections if we have immediate concerns – for example about safeguarding, the leadership of a school or a failure to provide education to children.*

Further guidance can be found [here](#). Clearly the effectiveness of safeguarding will be always be considered during any Ofsted monitoring visit. Ofsted state:

*All schools should have a good culture of safeguarding. This means that they should have effective arrangements to:*

- always act in the best interests of pupils to protect them online and offline*
- identify pupils who may need early help and those who are at risk of harm or have been harmed. This harm can include, but is not limited to neglect, abuse (including by their peers, in school or outside school), grooming or exploitation*
- secure the help that pupils need and, if required, refer pupils in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help*
- manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to children, pupils, students and vulnerable adults.*

## Questions we anticipate Ofsted may well ask:

- How has the school's child protection policy been adapted to take account of the current context?
- What proportion of vulnerable students are accessing on-site learning?
- How is the school ensuring children who are not attending engage in remote learning and are safe and well?
- How effectively is partnership working with other agencies, particularly when child welfare concerns arise?
- How has the school ensured that safer recruitment practices have remained robust during the pandemic?

Our model child protection policy addendums can be found here:

[Model CP Policy COVID19 appendix v1 January 2021](#)

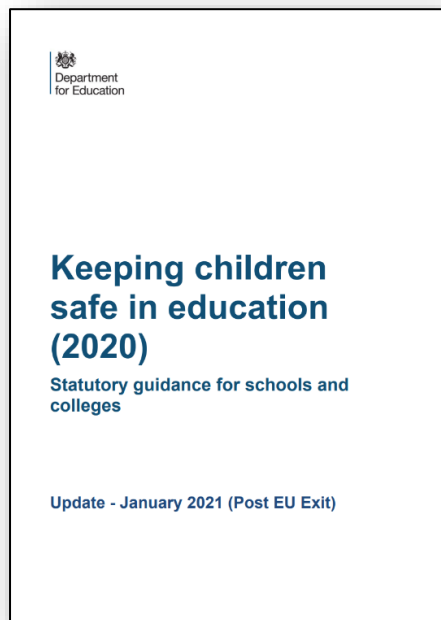
[Model CP Policy COVID19 appendix v1 January 2021 OOB schools](#) (Outside Liverpool version)



## Remote Learning Update

Schools are now required to publish their remote learning provision on their school website. The DfE provide a [template](#) to assist schools.

## Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 – Updated January 2021



Some small amendments to KCSiE were made to the version published in September 2020 to capture Post EU Exit.

From 01 January 2021 the TRA Teacher Services system will no longer maintain a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states. Advice about how information about a teacher's past conduct may be obtained can be found at paragraph 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2021).

Paragraph 172 of has been updated to reflect the changes to checks made on 'individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK' post-Brexit, including obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked.

## Implications for schools' safer recruitment procedures and practices following updated legislation: Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020)

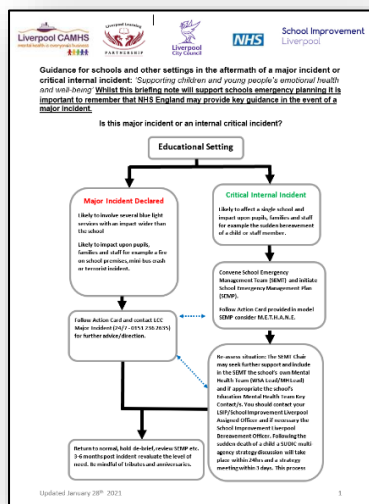
In our December/January safeguarding e-briefing we highlighted some of the changes required as a result of the updated legislation: Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020). We would like to revisit the implications for schools' safer recruitment procedures and practices:

- When advertising the role and providing information to prospective candidates a school should:
  - State the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and the need for an Enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check in adverts
  - Include statements about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post in the job description and person specification
  - Send information about the organisation's safeguarding policy and practices to candidates
  - Provide clear information about the need to disclose relevant criminal history
- Applicants should not be asked to disclose criminal history at application stage hence application forms should not request candidates to disclose any criminal history nor should they include a blanket 'yes / no' box. Candidates should merely be advised that a disclosure will be required at a later stage if they are shortlisted and should be signposted to the relevant MOJ website for further information regarding any future disclosures.
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- If candidates are unsure whether they need to disclose criminal information, they can seek legal advice or may wish to contact [Nacro](#) or [Unlock](#) for impartial advice.

[illegible]

In all situations where there is a bereavement within the school community and school leaders are seeking support and advice then schools should contact the **School Improvement Liverpool Bereavement Officer - Sonia Cross** - 0151 233 3901 or 07702668900 [sonia.cross@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:sonia.cross@si.liverpool.gov.uk) via [safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk) or [ednet@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:ednet@si.liverpool.gov.uk) or [Judith.boyce@liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:Judith.boyce@liverpool.gov.uk)



In addition to this, and particularly when schools believe they are likely to need significant additional support on site, they can contact the **Education Mental Health Teams** (Contact YPAS clinical admin 0151 707 1025, or you can contact your MHST Lead/EMHP (primary schools)/Wellbeing clinic practitioner (secondary schools) directly. For out of hours incidents schools can email [incidentsupport@ypas.org.uk](mailto:incidentsupport@ypas.org.uk) (YPAS's out of hours contact procedure can be found in appendix 4 of the Briefing Note).

Further Schools' Emergency Planning guidance and templates can be found [here](#).

The two key resources referenced above can be found here:

[Briefing Note Following a Major Incident](#)

[School Internal Critical Incident Management Flowchart \(Action Card\) and Key Contact List](#)

In addition, *after* February half term a revised version of 'A Whole School Approach to Supporting Loss, Separation and Bereavement' will be available to download from the School Improvement Liverpool website [here](#).

## In the News

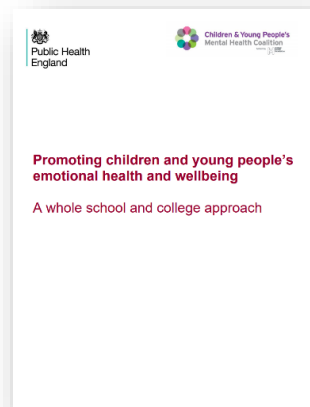
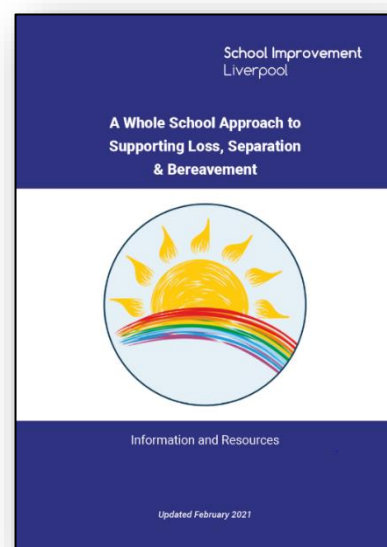
The **NSPCC** has published the learning from serious case reviews involving teenagers:

[Teenagers: learning from case reviews briefing](#)

'The case reviews highlight that: practitioners sometimes struggle to work with teenagers who are experiencing complex issues; interventions can focus on tackling challenging behaviour, rather than exploring the underlying causes and risk factors; and practitioners sometimes lose sight of the fact that teenagers are children in need of protection.' NSPCC

The **DfE** has published guidance for schools and colleges setting out eight principles for promoting emotional health and wellbeing.

[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#)



The **DfE** has published [‘Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition: non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school settings’](#)

This non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) aims to:

- help providers of out-of-school settings (OOSS) understand best practice for creating a safe environment for children in their care
- give parents and carers confidence that their child is in a safe activity or learning environment

The **UK Government** has published a strategy for [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse](#)

The Gov states: The strategy is the first of its kind in setting out the government’s vision for preventing, tackling and responding to child sexual abuse in all its forms, whether it is committed in person or online, in families or communities, here in this country or overseas.

The strategy is based on the following three objectives:

- objective 1: tackling all forms of child sexual abuse and bringing offenders to justice
- objective 2: preventing offending and re-offending
- objective 3: protecting and safeguarding children and young people, and supporting all victims and survivors

The **Children’s Society and NWG Network**, have developed a [Missing Children Response Assessment Tool](#) aimed at local safeguarding partnerships to help them assess their area’s response to missing children. The tool includes: a series of 12 checklists which cover all the stages of a young person’s journey from going missing from both home and care to the offer of follow up support; and procedural issues such as information sharing and data collection.

Research has recently been published into the prevalence of **homophobic bullying in schools**.

[Homophobic bullying at schools: A systematic review of research, prevalence, school-related predictors and consequences - ScienceDirect](#)

A recent report from the **NSPCC** highlights the significant increase in domestic abuse during lockdown:

‘The NSPCC has released figures on calls to the NSPCC helpline from adults worried about children living with domestic abuse. Figures show that a monthly average of 930 calls about domestic abuse were received in the period since lockdown restrictions were implemented (1 April – 31 December 2020) 53% higher than the pre-lockdown average.’ NSPCC

[Calls to NSPCC about children living in violent homes rise by over 50% as we urge government to support all children](#)

The **Education Policy Institute (EPI)** and **The Prince’s Trust** have published a report **on the mental health and wellbeing of young people**. Analysis of data from the Millennium Cohort Study of 5,000 young people at ages 11, 14 and 17 living in England and virtual focus groups with young people aged 14 to 16 carried out in November 2020 finds: the wellbeing and self-esteem of all young people drops as they move into secondary school and continues to fall as they grow older, but girls see a far greater decline than boys; heavy use of social media is shown to negatively affect girls’ wellbeing and self-esteem at ages 14 and 17; and those from low-income families are more likely to have lower levels of wellbeing and self-esteem, and more depressive symptoms.’ NSPCC

[Young people’s mental and emotional health](#)

# Safer Internet Day – Every day!

Safer Internet Day was celebrated this week with over 5000 children, families or schools engaging in a live assembly delivered by UK Safer Internet Centre (UKSIC) and Liverpool Football Club. The day was a fabulous success.



As Paul Bradshaw, Senior School Improvement Officer - New Technologies & Online Safety, often says it's about making every day safe for children and young people whilst on the internet. With this in mind, schools may want to draw upon these resources:

[UKSIC & Facebook Release a New Guide for Schools using Apps](#)

[UKSIC Social media guides](#)

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

[London Grid for Learning: Safeguarding during remote learning and lockdown](#)

[London Grid for Learning online resource centre](#)

['Think You Know' Online home activity packs](#)

['Think You Know' professionals resource bank](#)

['Think You Know' Jessie & Friends: online safety education for 4-7s'](#)

['Think You Know' Band Runner game and website for 8-10s](#)

['Think You Know' Send me a pic? Three sessions for 12-14 year olds on issues around nude image sharing](#)

['Think You Know' New Online blackmail resource for 15-18 year olds](#)

[NSPCC online safety resources](#) and guidance particularly for families.

[UK Safer Internet Centre resources](#) including guidance for young people, parents/carers and school staff.

[Childnet](#) online safety activities that you can do from your home.

[Internet Matters](#) starter tips to keep kids safe online.

[CEOP](#) if you 'are worried about online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating with you online'.

[Reporting Harmful Content Online](#)

[Professionals Online Safety Helpline](#)

[Own it App and Keyboard](#) and other [Own It](#) resources and guidance

[Anti-bullying alliance -online bullying](#)

[NSPCC online bullying](#)

For issues related to online safety colleagues can also contact **Paul Bradshaw**:  
[paul.bradshaw@sl.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:paul.bradshaw@sl.liverpool.gov.uk)

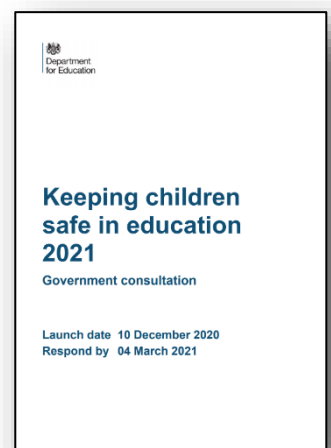
Paul Bradshaw's online safety updates can be found here:  
[www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/online-safety](http://www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/online-safety) and resources here:  
<http://tinyurl.com/sl-online-safety-1617>

## Consultation about *proposed* changes to the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

Schools can take part in the consultation [here](#).

Appendix G of the *proposed* revised [guidance](#) includes a list of substantive changes. Some of the proposed changes include:

- Providing an abridged version of part 1 of KCSiE for those staff not regularly working with children
- Giving greater prominence to online safety in part 2 of the main body of the guidance
- A new paragraph to highlight the vulnerability of young people who attend alternative provision
- Guidance to Designated Safeguarding Leads to clarify the type of additional support that may be provided to children with a social worker to help them achieve their potential
- A new 'whole school approach to safeguarding' paragraph/section has been added to emphasise the need for a strategic and joined up approach with everyone contributing to the effectiveness of safeguarding
- The sections on managing allegations against staff and volunteers and separately safer recruitment have been substantially re-drafted to improve everyone's understanding
- There is a new paragraph/section on the use of school premises for non-school activities
- There are proposed changes to Part 5 of KCSiE relating to sexual violence and sexual harassment. The consultation relating to the statutory guidance can also be found [here](#).



**Once these changes are finalised we will write again to schools, confirming the changes and highlighting the implications.**



## Revised 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance.

The revised guidance can be found [here](#) and reflects a number of changes made to Keeping Children Safe in Education in September including:

- The definition of safeguarding has been revised to specifically mention 'physical and mental health'.
- The risks to young people outside the home are highlighted, including abusive teenage relationships
- The definition of an allegation has been revised in line with KCSiE
- There are additional references to domestic abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour
- The need to recognise emerging mental health issues as an indicator of abuse and harm is highlighted

