



## Summary table: specific safeguarding issues

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This KeyDoc summarises the specific safeguarding issues identified on pages 12-13 of the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

It combines information from a variety of government and local authority documents, which are cited in the 'sources' column.

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Issue	Definition/Signs	Actions	Sources
<p><b>Bullying including cyber-bullying</b></p>	<p>Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.</p> <p>Bullying can take many forms (for example, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups.</p>	<p>Every school must have measures in place to prevent all forms of bullying.</p> <p>Schools can deal with bullying effectively by, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving parents and pupils</li> <li>• Implementing disciplinary actions</li> <li>• Providing effective staff training</li> <li>• Making it easier for pupils to report bullying</li> <li>• Developing policies on tackling bullying and the acceptable use of technology</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Preventing and tackling bullying: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, DfE</a> (see pages 4, 6, 7 and 8)</p> <p><a href="#">Cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff, DfE</a></p>
<p><b>Child missing education (CME)</b></p>	<p>A child going missing from education can be a sign of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>For example, it could indicate other safeguarding concerns such as sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.</p>	<p>All schools must inform their local authority (LA) of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the admission register at a non-standard transition point.</p> <p>Schools should have appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.</p> <p>In particular, schools and LAs are expected to have procedures in place to carry out 'reasonable enquiries' where a child is missing education.</p>	<p><a href="#">Children missing education, DfE</a></p> <p><a href="#">Keeping children safe in education, DfE</a> (see pages 51-53)</p> <p><a href="#">School attendance, DfE</a> (see pages 5-7)</p>

<p><b>Child missing from home or care</b></p>	<p>Children who go missing from their family home or local authority care may be running away from a problem (such as abuse at home) or to somewhere they want to be. They may have been coerced by someone else.</p> <p>Missing children may be vulnerable to risks such as sexual exploitation, gang exploitation, and drug and alcohol misuse.</p>	<p>Schools should work together with other agencies, including the LA and police, to provide intelligence and support in cases where children are missing from home or care.</p>	<p><a href="#">Children who run away or go missing from home or care, DfE</a></p> <p><a href="#">Missing children and adults strategy, Home Office</a></p>
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<p><b>Child sexual exploitation (CSE)</b></p>	<p>CSE is a form of child abuse which involves children and young people receiving something in exchange for sexual activity. It does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.</p> <p>Signs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions</li> <li>• Associating with other young people involved in exploitation</li> <li>• Having older boyfriends or girlfriends</li> <li>• Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour</li> <li>• Going missing or regularly coming home late</li> <li>• Regularly missing school or not taking part in education</li> </ul>	<p>Where there is a concern about CSE, the safeguarding lead should initiate local safeguarding procedures, including referral to the LA's children's social care and the police.</p> <p>Staff should remember that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A child under the age of 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sex or any other type of sexual touching</li> <li>• Sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence</li> <li>• Non-consensual sex is rape whatever the age of the victim</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Keeping children safe in education, DfE</a> (see page 54)</p> <p><a href="#">What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually exploited, DfE</a> (see pages 1-2)</p>
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<p><b>Domestic violence</b></p>	<p>Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.</p> <p>It can involve, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological abuse</li> <li>• Physical abuse</li> <li>• Sexual abuse</li> <li>• Financial abuse</li> <li>• Emotional abuse</li> </ul>	<p>The safeguarding lead should discuss disclosures of domestic violence with children's social care, which will be able to advise whether a referral should be made.</p> <p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p> <p>Schools can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display relevant helpline stickers, leaflets and posters around school,</li> <li>• Display posters and leaflets during parents' evenings and open days</li> <li>• Publicise support services that are available in school and in the local community</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/topics/domestic-violence">Domestic violence and abuse, GOV.UK</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/childrens-social-care/child-protection/child-protection-procedures/child-protection-procedures-for-schools">Domestic violence: protocol for schools, Leicestershire County Council</a> (see pages 6-7)</p>
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<p><b>Drugs</b></p>	<p>'Drugs' includes alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances ("legal highs") and volatile substances.</p>	<p>Pupils affected by their own or others' drug misuse should have early access to support through the school and other local services.</p> <p>Schools can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a drugs policy in consultation with the whole school community</li> <li>• Have a designated senior member of staff with responsibility for drug-related issues</li> <li>• Establish relationships with children's services, health services and voluntary organisations</li> <li>• Include drug education in a supportive environment, such as personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE)</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools, DfE</a></p>
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<p><b>Fabricated or induced illness</b></p>	<p>A rare form of child abuse, which may include parents or carers fabricating signs and symptoms of illness, falsifying medical records, letters or documents, or inducing illness.</p> <p>Signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent and unexplained absences from school, particularly from PE lessons</li> <li>• Regular absences for doctor's or hospital appointments</li> <li>• Repeated claims by parent(s) that a child is frequently unwell and that he/she requires medical attention for symptoms which, when described, are vague in nature, difficult to diagnose and which teachers/early years staff have not themselves noticed (for example, headaches, tummy aches, dizzy spells)</li> <li>• Frequent contact with opticians and/or dentists or referrals for second opinions</li> </ul>	<p>Schools should act in accordance with procedures set down by their Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and refrain from conducting their own enquiries.</p> <p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p>	<p><a href="#">Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced.</a>  <a href="#">Department of Health (DoH), DfE, Home Office</a> (see pages 3, 31 and 32)</p>
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<p><b>Faith abuse</b></p>	<p>Certain kinds of child abuse are linked to faith or belief.</p> <p>These include belief in witchcraft, spirit possession, demons or the devil and use of fear of the supernatural to make children comply with being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation.</p>	<p>Standard child safeguarding procedures apply in all cases where abuse or neglect is suspected, including those that may be linked to particular belief systems.</p> <p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p>	<p><a href="#">National action plan to tackle child abuse linked to faith or belief, DfE</a> (see pages 2-4)</p>
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<p><b>Female genital mutilation (FGM)</b></p>	<p>Also known as ‘female circumcision’. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.</p> <p>Risk factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coming from a community or country where FGM is common</li> <li>• Parents stating that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period</li> <li>• A girl talking about a long holiday to a country where FGM is prevalent</li> <li>• Parents seeking to withdraw their children from PSHE</li> </ul>	<p>Staff should be alert to the signs of potential abuse, particularly during the summer holidays.</p> <p>If staff are concerned that FGM may be carried out on a child, they should activate local safeguarding procedures.</p> <p>Under a statutory duty introduced in October 2015, teachers and healthcare professionals must report known cases of FGM in girls under 18 to the police.</p> <p>Schools can also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate and display relevant materials about FGM</li> <li>• Provide staff training on FGM</li> <li>• Make books or DVDs available</li> <li>• Introduce FGM into the school curriculum in relevant classes, such as PSHE, science and citizenship</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Keeping children safe in education, DfE</a> (see pages 54-55)</p> <p><a href="#">Multi-agency statutory guidance on FGM, HM Government</a> (see pages 8-9, 38-39, and 59-61)</p>
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<p><b>Forced marriage</b></p>	<p>A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.</p> <p>Signs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence and persistent absence</li> <li>• Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin</li> <li>• Fear about forthcoming school holidays</li> <li>• Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school</li> <li>• Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality</li> <li>• Not being allowed to attend extra-curricular activities</li> <li>• Being prevented from going on to further/higher education</li> </ul>	<p>Ideally, professionals should discuss cases of forced marriage with, and seek advice from, a designated professional or another statutory agency.</p> <p>There may be occasions when immediate emergency action is necessary to prevent a child from being forced to marry or abducted, for instance, police protection or emergency protection orders.</p> <p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p> <p>Through the relevant agencies, schools may offer training or briefing on forced marriage, and advice on what to do if staff members have concerns about a child.</p>	<p><a href="#">Keeping children safe in education, DfE</a> (see page 55-56)</p> <p><a href="#">The right to choose: multi-agency statutory guidance, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)</a> (see pages 5, 13 and 21)</p>
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<p><b>Gangs and youth violence</b></p>	<p>Gangs are defined as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group</li> <li>• Engage in criminal activity and violence</li> <li>• Lay claim over territory</li> <li>• Have some form of identifiable structural feature</li> <li>• Are in conflict with other, similar gangs</li> </ul> <p>Early warning signs of gang involvement or youth violence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggression</li> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Substance use</li> </ul>	<p>Schools that are affected by gang and youth violence should work with local police and 'community safety partners' when developing an approach.</p> <p>Effective approaches include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring programmes</li> <li>• Bullying prevention</li> <li>• Improving social skills and resilience</li> <li>• Involving parents</li> <li>• Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Addressing youth violence and gangs: practical advice for school and colleges, Home Office</a></p> <p><a href="#">Have you got what it takes? Tackling gangs and youth violence, Home Office</a></p>
<p><b>Gender-based violence/Violence against women and girls</b></p>	<p>Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a term that covers a number of offences including domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, forced marriage and FGM.</p>	<p>Schools should educate children about healthy relationships and consent so that children recognise abuse and know they can seek help.</p> <p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p>	<p><a href="#">Ending violence against women and girls, Home Office</a></p>

<b>Hate</b>	See 'Radicalisation'	See 'Radicalisation'	See 'Radicalisation'
<b>Mental health</b>	<p>School-based risk factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships</li> <li>• Deviant peer influences</li> <li>• Peer pressure</li> <li>• Poor pupil to teacher relationships</li> </ul>	<p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, including self-harm, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p> <p>Schools can support pupils' mental health by, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a culture that values all pupils, allows them to feel a sense of belonging and enables them to talk about problems in a non-stigmatising way</li> <li>• Offering continuing professional development (CPD) for staff that informs them about the early signs of mental health problems and what to do if they have concerns</li> <li>• Working with other agencies to provide interventions for pupils with mental health problems</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Mental health and behaviour in schools, DfE</a> (see pages 9-12)</p>

<p><b>Missing children and adults strategy</b></p>	<p>See 'Child missing from home or care'</p>	<p>See 'Child missing from home or care'</p>	<p>See 'Child missing from home or care'</p>
<p><b>Private fostering</b></p>	<p>Private fostering arrangements are arrangements made without the involvement of the LA for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative.</p> <p>Privately fostered children are a potentially vulnerable group.</p> <p>Schools should look out for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A child being collected from school by someone new on a regular basis</li> <li>• A child mentioning that he/she is staying somewhere else or that his/her parents have gone away</li> <li>• Something unusual or unclear in the child's administration file</li> </ul>	<p>Staff should notify the school's safeguarding lead where they become aware of private fostering arrangements.</p> <p>The safeguarding lead should speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform the LA.</p>	<p><a href="#">Replacement Children Act 1989: guidance on private fostering, DfE</a></p> <p><a href="#">Private fostering guidance for schools and other educational settings, Norfolk County Council</a></p>

<p><b>Radicalisation</b></p> <p>Schools' statutory duties for preventing radicalisation, in effect from 1 July 2015, are set out in our article '<a href="#">The Prevent strategy: schools' responsibilities</a>'.</p>	<p>Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.</p> <p>Indicators that an individual is engaged in an extremist group, ideology or cause, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists</li> <li>• Changing their style of dress or personal appearance in accord with the group</li> <li>• Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause</li> <li>• Possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (for example, the swastika for far right groups)</li> </ul>	<p>Schools should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism and put appropriate procedures in place</li> <li>• Ensure that “appropriate filters and monitoring systems” are in place to prevent children accessing extremist material in school</li> <li>• Understand when to refer pupils at risk of radicalisation to the Channel programme</li> </ul> <p>Schools can also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create explicit value statements that are inclusive of all students</li> <li>• Develop critical personal thinking skills</li> <li>• Implement social and emotional aspects of learning</li> <li>• Explore and promote diversity and shared values between and within communities</li> <li>• Challenge Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other prejudices</li> <li>• Support those at risk of being isolated</li> <li>• Build ties with all local communities, seeking opportunities for linking with other schools</li> <li>• Use 'safe to learn' anti-bullying strategies to minimise hate and prejudice-based bullying</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Channel: protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism, Home Office</a> (see pages 11-12)</p> <p><a href="#">Prevent duty guidance, Home Office</a> (see pages 10-12)</p> <p><a href="#">Keeping children safe in education, DfE</a> (see pages 56-58)</p> <p><a href="#">Educate against hate, HM Government</a></p>
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<p><b>Relationship abuse</b></p>	<p>Teenage relationship abuse consists of the same patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour as domestic abuse.</p> <p>These patterns might include sexual abuse, physical abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse or psychological abuse.</p> <p>Signs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical signs injury/illness</li> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Falling grades</li> <li>• Isolation from family and friends</li> <li>• Frequent texts and calls from boyfriend/girlfriend</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Self-harm</li> </ul>	<p>If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately.</p> <p>Schools can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform all staff members about child protection procedures and how they relate to teenage relationship abuse</li> <li>• Display information about local support services, including school counsellors or peer mentors</li> <li>• Deliver age-appropriate lessons on teenage relationship abuse</li> <li>• Promote gender equality and respectful relationships throughout school</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Teenage relationship abuse: a teacher's guide to violence and abuse in teenage relationships, Home Office</a></p> <p><a href="#">Expect respect: a toolkit for addressing teenage relationship abuse in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, Home Office</a></p> <p><a href="#">Relationship abuse, Disrespect NoBody</a></p> <p><a href="#">Tender</a></p>
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<p><b>Sexting</b></p>	<p>Sharing images or videos of a sexual or indecent nature that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of children (anyone under the age of 18), or</li> <li>• Generated by children</li> </ul> <p>It is against the law to take, make, share or possess such images.</p> <p>Sexting can be a form of peer-on-peer abuse.</p>	<p>Schools should ensure sexting and the school's approach to it is reflected in its child protection policy.</p> <p>Sexting disclosures should follow normal safeguarding protocols.</p> <p>Staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confiscate and secure the device(s) involved</li> <li>• Consider whether to inform the police</li> <li>• Not view the images unless there is a good and clear reason to do so, based on the designated safeguarding lead's professional judgement</li> <li>• Record the incident, whether or not a referral was made</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people, UK Council for Child Internet Safety</a> (see pages 10-19)</p> <p><a href="#">Sexting, Disrespect NoBody</a></p>
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<p><b>Trafficking</b></p>	<p>Any child transported for exploitative reasons is considered to be a trafficking victim.</p> <p>Exploitation includes prostitution or other sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or servitude.</p> <p>Signs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A history with missing links and unexplained moves</li> <li>• Indications of physical or sexual abuse</li> </ul>	<p>Schools should contact the local authority's children's social care where they are concerned that a child may have been trafficked.</p> <p>LSCBs may offer schools training or briefing on child trafficking, and advice on what to do if children go missing from the school roll.</p>	<p><a href="#">Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked: practice guidance, DfE, Home Office</a> (see pages 4-5, 12, and 19-21)</p>
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