

Safeguarding in Education Autumn Term Bulletin

2021-22

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the latest edition of 'Safeguarding in Education' by Together for Children. This edition is packed with information about sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools as well as lots of useful and practical resources around exploitation, extremism and supporting mental health.

If you have any queries about anything contained in this bulletin, please speak to your school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL.)

As the end of term quickly approaches, I want to thank all staff in schools across the city for their hard work this term.

Wishing you all a happy Christmas.

Best wishes,

Simon Marshall
Director of Education



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If you have any queries about any of the information contained within this bulletin, please speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the first instance.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL ABUSE IN SCHOOLS

Ofsted recently published a report into sexual harassment and sexual abuse in schools.

The statistics are shocking. Ofsted reported that around **9 in 10 of the girls spoken to** said that sexist name calling and being sent unwanted explicit pictures or videos happened 'a lot' or 'sometimes.' Inspectors were also told that boys talk about whose 'nudes' they have and share them among themselves like a 'collection game', typically on platforms like WhatsApp or Snapchat.

Ofsted concluded that sexual harassment and sexual violence is happening in all schools. Sexual harassment and sexual violence is never acceptable and should never be dismissed as "banter."

All incidents must be reported to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL.)

Ofsted found that pupils often do not disclose their experiences of sexual harassment or sexual violence but when they do, they often report it to their friends. All staff should be alert to the possible signs and indicators. Pupils may feel angry, upset, stressed, worried, scared or confused.

The NSPCC published a report in 2018 [Is this sexual abuse?](#), and stated children who have experienced sexual abuse may:

- have flashbacks,
- have difficulty sleeping,
- have nightmares / night terrors,
- show signs of anxiety,
- find it difficult to concentrate,
- try blocking out the memory or avoid remembering,
- be unable to remember exactly what happened,
- have difficulty in trusting people,
- think no one else understands them.

All staff should:

- not assume the concern has already been shared with the DSL by someone else.
- take immediate action to keep all pupils safe.
- provide reassurance and support to everyone involved.
- ensure those who have been harmed are aware their concerns are being taken seriously and never be made to feel ashamed or that it's their fault.
- not promise confidentiality – explain who you have to tell and why.

All staff should share any concerns with their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

If there's an online element you must not view or forward this and should seek support from your DSL.

The NSPCC have a dedicated helpline for children and young people who have experienced sexual harassment or abuse at school, and for worried adults and professionals that need support and guidance.

This dedicated helpline will offer support to:

- all children and young people making current and non-recent disclosures of sexual harassment or abuse on school grounds within school time, and incidents linked to school in any capacity.
- any children or young people who want to talk about being involved or witnessing any incidents.
- any adults who have experienced non-recent abuse.
- parents and carers who have any concerns about their own or other children.
- professionals who work in schools and need support in this or related issues.



Source: *Ofsted* [Research and analysis overview: Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Young people and adults can contact the NSPCC helpline, Report Abuse in Education on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

Independent law firm Farrar & Co have recently spoken to the Department for Education (DfE) around some confusion within schools over who to report low level concerns to. The DfE have clarified that low level concerns should be referred to the Headteacher unless it's about the Headteacher. Concerns about the Headteacher should be shared with the Chair of Governors.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) states a low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children.
- having favourites.
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone.
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Read more here: [https://sites-farrer.vuture.net/39/1884/uploads/low-level-concerns---clarification-from-the-department-for-education-\(18.11.21\)-.pdf](https://sites-farrer.vuture.net/39/1884/uploads/low-level-concerns---clarification-from-the-department-for-education-(18.11.21)-.pdf)

Source: Farrer & Co

WITCHCRAFT



Witchcraft is known by many terms; black magic, kindoki, ndoki, the evil eye, djinns, voodoo, obeah or child sorcerers. All link to a genuine belief held by the family or carers (and in some cases, even the children themselves) that a child is able to use an evil force to harm others.

While these beliefs are not confined to any particular countries, cultures or religions, one message is clear; child abuse is never acceptable in any community or culture, under any circumstances.

The National FGM Centre have launched a new resource to help professionals understand the impact of accusations of witchcraft on a child. Mardoche's story – Branded a Witch – is an animation on Mardoche's childhood in the UK where he was accused of being a witch by his aunt and uncle.

To watch the video visit: [Branded a Witch - Mardoche's Story - YouTube](#)

Concerns over Witchcraft must be shared with your Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Source: Manchester Safeguarding Children Partnership

WORKING WITH EDUCATION TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM EXPLOITATION

The Children's Society's Disrupting Exploitation Programme Team have produced a Disrupting Exploitation online toolkit to help school staff develop an understanding of exploitation and how best to respond.

It was based on feedback from teachers, school-based work with young people and experience supporting children and families who are victims of child exploitation.

The toolkit is broken down into three sections:

[Part 1: Training Hub](#) - Key training videos produced across the organisation.

[Part 2: Helpful documents](#) - Key resources that will support schools and school staff in safeguarding children from exploitation.

[Part 3: PHSE Sessions](#) - Key resources to support PHSE sessions focused on safety, consent and raising awareness of exploitation in an age appropriate way.

To access the toolkit visit: <https://thechildrenssociety.notion.site/thechildrenssociety/Working-with-Education-to-protect-Young-People-from-exploitation-13d2cb10916a43db8d64e2eba58a822c>

Source: *The Children's Society*

**The
Children's
Society**

PRACTICAL RESOURCE FOR EMPOWERING PUPILS TO RECOGNISE EXTREMISM - GOING TOO FAR?

London Grid for Learning (LWfL) have produced a practical resource for teachers to empower pupils to:



- recognise examples of extremist behaviour and content online.
- understand actions which could be identified as criminal activity.
- techniques used for persuasion and build resilience through critical thinking.
- access support from trusted individuals and organisations.

Each section includes:

- starter videos featuring experts or case studies.
- scenario-based activities to promote discussion and reflection.
- guidance to facilitate discussions in an age-appropriate way and consolidate learning.

To access the resource visit: [Going Too Far? \(lgfl.org.uk\)](http://lgfl.org.uk)

Source: *London Grid for Learning*

PROMOTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH



10.6% of 6 to 16 year olds missed more than 15 days of school during the 2020 Autumn term. Children with a probable mental disorder were twice as likely to have missed this much school (18.2%) as those unlikely to have a mental disorder (8.8%).

NHS Digital has published a report looking at the mental health of children and young people in England in 2021 and how this has changed since 2017. Findings from a sample of 3,667 children and young people aged between 6 and 23 years old include:

- 39% of children aged 6 to 16 experienced a deterioration in their mental health between 2017 and 2021, 22% saw an improvement.
- girls aged between 11 and 16 were more likely to have experienced a decline in mental health (43%) than boys the same age (34%).

The report also includes statistics on eating problems; sleeping problems; loneliness; substance misuse; social media; family connectiveness; and the perceived impact of coronavirus restrictions.

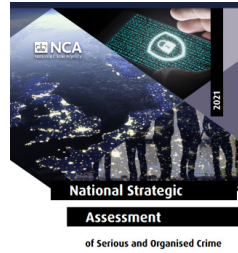
To read the report visit: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2021-follow-up-to-the-2017-survey#>

The DfE have produced guidance for creating a whole school approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing which they say, if applied consistently and comprehensively, will help contribute towards protecting and promoting children and young people's mental health.

To access the guidance visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-emotional-health-and-wellbeing#history>

Source: NSPCC & Gov.uk

NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY – NATIONAL STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT



The National Crime Agency have published their latest National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime.

The report estimates that there are between 550,000 and 850,000 UK based individuals who pose varying degrees of risk to children and there's been a 77% increase in the number of reports of self-generated indecent imagery (SGII).

To read the National Threat Assessment visit: <https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications/533-national-strategic-assessment-of-serious-and-organised-crime-2021/file>

All concerns for child sexual abuse should be reported to your DSL and to Police and Children's Social Care. In an emergency, you should call 999.

Professionals can support children and young people in a number of ways by registering with www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Parents can get advice from www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents or www.parentsprotect.co.uk

Those with concerns about their own behaviour towards children can access help and support at www.stopitnow.org.uk

Source: National Crime Agency

TRANSGENDER ISSUES IN THE COURT OF APPEAL



Independent law firm Farrer & Co have produced a very useful update for schools on the Transgender issues in the Court of Appeal: Bell v Tavistock.

To read the guidance visit <https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/transgender-issues-in-the-court-of-appeal-bell-v-tavistock-update/>

Source: Farrer & Co