



Child Protection Refresher 2022

Introduction

Learning about abuse can be distressing, and for some, it may remind them of past experiences such as being abused as a child, or failing to act when they suspected a child was suffering abuse. If this applies to you, it may be helpful to talk to someone who is experienced in providing support.

For example:

- **Samaritans** www.samaritans.org or telephone 116 123
- **The National Association for People Abused in Childhood** www.napac.org.uk or telephone 0808 801 0331
- **The Survivors Trust** www.thesurvivorstrust.org or telephone 0808 801 0818
- The **NSPCC** www.nspcc.org.uk or call their national helpline on 0808 800 5000
- **The International Association of Internet Hotlines, INHOPE** inhope.org

Welcome to your Refresher course on Child Protection.

The purpose of the course is to help you understand:

- the definitions and signs of abuse
- a refresher on responding to and reporting abuse
- recent changes in child protection legislation, statutory guidance, and government advice.

The terminology, legislation, guidance, and practice relating to child protection vary between the different UK nations. However, the principles are broadly the same. Governments across the different nations issue statutory guidance for schools, colleges, and other organisations. This is practical guidance for the implementation of legislation and is updated as required. It changes when new laws are enacted or standards are amended.

Advice and guidance for education

England

The statutory guidance that contains information on what schools and colleges must do to keep children safe is called '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**'. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read at least Part One of this guidance. Those staff who do not work directly with children should read either Part One or Annex A (a condensed version of Part One). This is entirely a matter for the school or college and should be based on the senior leadership team and governing body's assessment of which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Wales

Keeping learners safe: the role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002 is the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers. The guidance is intended for all those working with children and young people in an education setting or related agency.

Scotland

National guidance for child protection in Scotland provides the framework for agencies and practitioners at local level to agree processes for working together to safeguard and promote child wellbeing.

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Northern Ireland

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools

This guidance helps to assist schools in fulfilling their responsibilities regarding their safeguarding and child protection role.

Terminology

The course refers to 'children and young people' which includes babies, toddlers, infants, children, and teenagers from birth right up to the age of 18.

Module 1 – Back to basics

In this module we will cover:

- the difference between safeguarding and child protection
- a reminder of the definitions and signs of abuse
- specific safeguarding issues.

Safeguarding or child protection?

It is important to note the difference between the terms 'safeguarding' and 'child protection'.

The term **safeguarding** is what we do for ALL children and is linked to 'promoting welfare'.

Safeguarding and promoting welfare can be defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental health and physical health or development
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

UNICEF defines **child protection** as preventing and responding to violence, exploitation, and abuse against children. This includes commercial exploitation, trafficking, child labour, and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation.

Child protection therefore forms a small part of safeguarding and promoting welfare, but effective child protection processes are an essential part of the wider work to safeguard and promote welfare; they also reduce the need for action to protect children from harm.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include the impact of witnessing the ill treatment of others; for example, children seeing the domestic abuse of a parent and being powerless to prevent it.

Child abuse can and does happen to children from any background, culture, class, ethnicity, or faith. There are many children who experience abuse or neglect but do not come to the notice of people who can help them. Abusers can go to great lengths to conceal their abuse.

Children can also abuse their peers on and offline. This can take the form of abuse, harassment, the non-consensual sharing of self-generated child sexual abuse images, abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.

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Knowing what to look for is vital for the early identification of abuse and neglect and specific safeguarding issues, so that staff are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

You can play your part in helping to protect children by being aware that abuse exists and being prepared to act should you suspect abuse.

When considering the possibility of abuse, it is important to evaluate what you know about the child, then consider both the physical and behavioural signs that are giving you cause for concern.

Further information

Extra-familial harm refers to harm that occurs to children outside of the family unit. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms, including sexual harassment and exploitation, domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Forms of child abuse

There are four main types of child abuse. The following signs of abuse are not exhaustive. Remember that a child may be experiencing more than one type of abuse.

Child abuse can be:

- physical
- sexual
- emotional
- neglectful behaviour towards a child or young person.

It is important to remember children often get bumps and bruises during their everyday play or social interaction, but it doesn't mean that they are being abused. All injuries need to be considered in the light of the age of the child, their stage of development, their social background, where injuries are on their body, and any explanation given.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve:

- hitting
- shaking
- throwing
- drowning
- burning or scalding
- poisoning
- suffocating
- otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child. It can also include the inappropriate use of restraint.

Possible signs of physical abuse

Physical signs may include:

- pressure marks from fingers

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- bruising in unlikely places
- injuries that form a shape or pattern
- scald marks and burning, including cigarette marks
- broken bones, bite marks
- poisoning or over-medicating
- injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation given
- bruising to babies that are immobile.

Behavioural signs may include:

- flinching when touched
- inability to recall how injuries occurred
- avoiding getting changed for sport or other activities
- wearing trousers and shirts or blouses with long sleeves even on hot sunny days, although consider this in the light of the individual child (e.g. some children are dressed modestly for religious and/or cultural reasons)
- reluctance to go home
- excessively eager to please
- being aggressive or withdrawn
- attempts to run away.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves someone forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. This may not necessarily involve a high level of violence and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Sexually harmful behaviour from young people is not always contrived or with the intent to harm others. There may be many reasons why a young person engages in sexually harmful behaviour, and both the instigator and the person it is intended towards may find it distressing.

Sexual activities may involve physical contact, including:

- assault by penetration
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.
- It may also include non-contact activities, such as:
- watching sexual activities
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- inappropriate role play
- involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Possible signs of sexual abuse

Signs of sexual abuse may include:

- a change in behaviour; a child may start to become withdrawn, become aggressive or have difficulty in sleeping
- sexual knowledge, language, and behaviours beyond their age
- self-harming
- fear or avoidance of being with a person or a group of people

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- being withdrawn
- unexplained amounts of money
- disturbed sleep
- sexualised drawings
- physical problems such as soreness in the genital area, or sexually transmitted infections
- issues at school, such as difficulty in learning and concentrating.

Note

Many children who are sexually abused by a carer will have no visible signs at all due to the attacker not wanting to leave evidence, among other reasons that emerge during the grooming process.

Emotional/psychological abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe adverse effects on the child's health and emotional development.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- conveying to a child they are worthless or unloved
- not giving the child the opportunities to express their views
- deliberately silencing them, degrading, or making fun of them
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child
- rejecting or ignoring a child completely
- preventing the child from interacting socially.

Possible signs of emotional abuse

Signs of emotional abuse may include:

- self-harm
- delayed development
- avoiding home
- lack of trust with adults
- appearing anxious and/or withdrawn
- difficulty in forming relationships
- inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- unexplained underachievement at school
- running away from home or missing from school
- disturbed sleep including bedwetting and nightmares.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance misuse.



Neglect can be caused intentionally; for example, withholding food or deliberately not providing adequate clothing, or unintentionally, also known as passive neglect. This can occur if a parent does not have the ability to provide the care a child requires.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

Possible signs of neglect

Physical signs may include:

- untreated medical conditions
- unkempt appearance and poor personal hygiene
- inadequate clothing
- untreated skin or hair problems (rashes, sores, flea bites, head lice)
- constantly hungry.

Behavioural signs may include:

- demanding constant attention and affection
- changes in behaviour such as becoming withdrawn, anxious and/or aggressive
- missing or irregularly attending school or nursery
- low self-esteem
- developmental delay (weight, language, social skills).

Specific safeguarding issues

Child protection concerns are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another; a child that is being sexually exploited will often experience physical and emotional abuse as well.

Honour-based abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators not only from the UK but also from abroad.

Crimes committed in the name of so-called honour may include:

- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- breast ironing
- domestic abuse
- being held against their will.



Female genital mutilation (FGM)

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. It is also known as “female circumcision” or cutting. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful, and has serious consequences at the time the mutilation is carried out and in later life, both physically and mentally. FGM is an unacceptable practice for which there is no justification. It is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls.

Indicators of FGM

Girls who are threatened with or have undergone FGM may:

- be withdrawn from education, restricting their educational and personal development
- go to school or college but absent themselves from lessons, possibly spending prolonged periods in the toilets
- have extended absence from school or college
- have a sudden decline in performance, aspiration, or motivation
- not turn up for health appointments
- feel unable to disobey their family
- be generally anxious, depressed or emotionally withdrawn
- be anxious leading up to holidays
- talk about a ‘special ceremony’.

Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporting duty for FGM requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under 18-year-olds to the police. This responsibility cannot be transferred.

While mandatory reporting is limited to specified professionals, if you suspect that a girl under the age of 18 has had the act of FGM carried out on her or observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out, then you should report this to your designated safeguarding lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate.

In Northern Ireland it is an offence not to report any arrestable offence to the police.

Breast ironing/flattening

This is the practice where a pubescent girl’s breasts are ironed, massaged and flattened in order to delay the development of the breasts. The process normally starts at the first sign of puberty and can go on for many years. Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against both men and women and a serious abuse of human rights. The pressure put on the person to marry can be physical, emotional and/or financial.

Indicators of forced marriage:

- anxiety, depression, being emotionally withdrawn



- low self-esteem
- absence from school or permission sought for extended leave
- less commonly, cut or shaved hair as a punishment for disobeying, or a girl may say she has been to a doctor to see if she is a virgin
- showing fear about forthcoming school holidays.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse includes a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents.

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

psychological

physical

sexual

financial

emotional.

Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). Where physical violence is present there is an additional danger to children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse, or may have to leave the family home as a result.

Any domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, wellbeing, development, and ability to learn.

Further information

Operation Encompass is a charitable organisation operating in England. They ensure that a notification is sent by the police to the school's designated safeguarding lead prior to the start of the next school day, after an incident where police attended a domestic abuse incident where there were children related to the adults involved.

Child exploitation

Child exploitation refers to a child or young person being used for someone else's gain. It is a form of abuse which can involve sexual, abusive, or manipulative behaviour. It normally occurs due to an 'imbalance of power', such as age, physical strength, gender, cognitive ability, or access to resources such as food, clothes, and a place to stay. It can also include deceiving a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants; for example, increased status and/or financial gain.

Different forms of harm often overlap. Child exploitation occurs online and offline, by groups and individuals, and affects both males and females.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It can include seemingly consensual relationships or sexual activity. Children often trust their abuser; they may believe they are in a loving, caring relationship. Sexual exploitation is sometimes experienced by children who are trafficked into another country. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence that may happen without the child's immediate knowledge; for example, image sharing.



Sexual abuse can include assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts.

It may also include non-contact activities such as:

- involving children in the production of sexual images
- forcing children to watch sexual activities
- encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way
- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (offline or via the internet).

Child criminal exploitation

This is a form of abuse in which an individual is coerced to commit an offence for the benefit of an individual or group who hold more power than they do.

Children can be forced or manipulated to:

- transport drugs or money through county lines
- be involved in shoplifting or pickpocketing
- commit or threaten serious violence to others
- carry weapons.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. Younger siblings are often recruited through fear of violence against the family or the exploitation of their brother or sister.

Indicators of child sexual/criminal exploitation

In addition to the general signs of sexual abuse, behavioural signs of child sexual exploitation include:

- being absent from education
- associating with other children involved in exploitation
- possessing unexplained gifts
- alcohol and drug misuse
- going missing or going home late
- suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- having older friends.

County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money.

Children may feel peer pressure, a sense of belonging, that they are protected from harm, or fear retribution if they don't become involved. Children are increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media.

Child trafficking and modern slavery

Child trafficking is a very serious issue that can have a devastating and lasting impact on its victims. Children can be trafficked into, within, and out of the UK.



Children are trafficked for many reasons including:

- sexual exploitation
- domestic servitude
- labour
- benefit fraud
- criminal activity such as pickpocketing, theft, and working in cannabis farms
- being exploited in the sex industry.

Extremism/Radicalisation

As young people go through a process of testing and developing who they are and what they believe in, they might be exposed to extremist views and ideologies. This could make them vulnerable to grooming or radicalisation, which can happen face-to-face or online.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support the extreme ideologies that are mainly associated with terrorist groups. Radicalisation often occurs as people search for identity, meaning, and community, and therefore young people may be particularly vulnerable.

Extremism

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Non-violent extremism

Non-violent extremism is defined as extremism, but without violence. Non-violent extremism can create an atmosphere in a community which can popularise the view of terrorism which terrorists can then exploit.

Terrorism

Terrorism is the use or threat of action, designed to influence any international government organisation or to intimidate the public. It must also be for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial, or ideological cause. Planning, financing, assisting and even collecting information on how to commit terrorist acts are all crimes under British terrorism legislation.

Young people may be drawn into terrorism as they may:

- feel their culture or religion is under threat
- feel discriminated against
- have a personal grievance
- be looking for excitement.

Staff and volunteers should be able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and know what to do when they are identified. Those classed as vulnerable may be targeted by extremists who tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family.

In England, Wales and Scotland specified areas of work with children and young people; for example, health, social care, and educational settings must have “*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*” and there is a mandatory reporting duty. This duty is known as the Prevent duty and to fulfil it, it is essential that organisations conduct a risk assessment.

Indicators of extremism/radicalisation include:

- spending an increasing amount of time on the internet (may be secretive or have more than one online identity)
- refusing to listen to different points of view
- becoming increasingly argumentative and abusive to others
- sympathetic to extremist ideologies and groups
- unwilling to engage with other young people who have different ideologies
- feeling persecuted
- changing friends
- changing appearance
- no longer doing things they used to enjoy.

Child abduction and community safety incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim and by strangers.

Schools should report any concerns they have of people loitering near the school or unknown adults talking to the children.

Online Abuse

Children and young people have been brought up with the internet and most use technology intuitively, often showing their parents how to use it. Being online enables children and young people to socialise, learn and experience many things in a variety of different ways, but they also bring challenges and risks, particularly when children and their parents don't know enough about keeping themselves safe.

A young person's online activity can influence their life 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Many children and young people report feeling 'disconnected' from the world if they can't go online, but they are often unaware that what they do online might affect them offline. It is important to recognise that young people don't tend to differentiate between life online or offline; it is all part of their life.

Online risks

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm
- **commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, solicitation for substances, phishing and or financial scams.



Child-on-child abuse

Child-on-child abuse can be defined as any form of physical, sexual, emotional, financial, and/or coercive control exercised between children and young people; this includes intimate and non-intimate relationships. This means that a young person's experience of child-on-child abuse can fit within several definitions of violence or abuse.

Child-on-child abuse is likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- domestic violence and abuse
- child sexual exploitation
- harmful sexual behaviour
- serious youth violence
- gender-based violence
- intimate relationships between peers
- sexual activity without consent
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- bullying.

Indicators of child-on-child abuse

A child or young person may:

- miss school or college
- be anxious
- be aggressive or argumentative
- self-harm
- become involved in alcohol or substance misuse.

Child-on-child abuse can impact upon children and young people in many ways. The child or young person may think that it is a component of normal friendships or relationships.

All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children. It is important that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of child-on-child abuse and know how to respond if they have concerns.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any gender. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and harassment can occur face-to-face, online, physically, or verbally. It should not be tolerated nor should it be seen as 'banter', 'part of growing up', or 'just having a laugh'.

Summary

Abuse affects children deeply as they grow up, and feelings of being 'useless', 'worthless', or 'damaged goods' are often carried over into adult life.

Because you have regular or daily contact with the learners to whom you have a responsibility, you are well placed to notice their physical presentation, emotions, behaviours, and when they may need help or support.

You are now ready to complete the corresponding questionnaire. Click **Questionnaire 1** to begin the questions.

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