Safeguarding issues

Online safety

The four categories of online risks defined by Keeping Children Safe in Education include:

- **Content risks** - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content.
- **Commerce risks** - risks with a financial implication.
- **Contact risks** - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users.
- **Conduct risks** - online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

Online safety risks include:

- Child-on-child abuse
- Artificial intelligence
- Inappropriate language
- Grooming
- Cyberbullying

- Sextortion
- Adults posing as children
- Live chat
- Sending and receiving explicit images

- Fake news
- Radicalisation
- Financial scams

Sextortion

What is it?

A combination of the words 'sex' and 'extortion' and refers to a type of financially-motivated online blackmail. It commonly involves the non-consensual sharing of 'nudes' or 'semi-nude' photos and videos in exchange for money.

How to deal with sextortion

It is easy to assume that sexual imagery is likely to have been shared by a teenager but sextortion can also target younger children. Providing age-appropriate education is key.

If you discover that a child or young person in your care is a victim of sextortion, there are some key steps to follow. The National Crime Agency and British police recommend that you: stay calm, stop contact with the blackmailer, do not pay, keep hold of anything that can be used as evidence and report the situation to the police.

More detailed information can be found on **the Hub.**

Safeguarding issues

What can we do about online safety?

- Keep the conversation open and engage pupil voice
- Build your awareness of the 'hidden' online language
- Reinforce online safety guidance with your pupils
- Display, and reference, internet safety posters in your classroom to keep pupils regularly reminded about the potential risks
- Use a range of online safety links such as CEOP Safety Centre and Internet Matters

Prevent duty

The objectives of the Prevent duty were reviewed in 2023 and are to:

- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation
- Enable people who have already been engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

Indicators of radicalisation include:

- Seeming withdrawn, isolated or excluded
- Adopting speech that sounds scripted
- Expressing a disregard for differing opinions
- Experiencing family pressure or upheaval
- Changing their friendship groups
- Appearing to make less effort at school
- Fixated on a new subject, such as immigration
- Lying to their family or other trusted adults

Mixed, Unclear or Unstable (MUU) Ideology

Incel stands for 'involuntary celebate' and is a term adopted by individuals in the incel community to describe themselves. It promotes an extremist ideology, and presents a risk of radicalisation.

Whilst self-reported research from the incel community shows that there are incels from all backgrounds, much incel ideology includes elements of racial hatred, alongside the characteristic misogyny.

We must not assume that the incel phenomenon only has implications for secondary safeguarding practice – primary schools must be alert too.

More detailed information can be found on the Hub.

High Speed Training™

Mental health

Prioritising good mental health in children is vital, as a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development, mental wellbeing, and their physical and social health.

Signs to look out for regarding mental health include:

- Destructive behaviour
- Having educational difficulties
- Tiredness and stress
- Heightened emotions, such as excessive crying or hyperactivity
- Lack of confidence
- Changes in eating habits
- Withdrawal and lack of enthusiasm for things previously enjoyed

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

How can we support positive mental health?

- Encourage social time
- Have an open-door policy
- Let the child share as much or as little as they want to
- Make mental health known and talk about ways of dealing with stress and pressure

> ⓘ **Remember** that only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of mental health problems, but you are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify concerns.

↗ More detailed information can be found on **the Hub.**

Child-on-child abuse

What is child-on-child abuse?

Children are capable of abusing their peers, even at a young age. This can come in the form of violence towards another student, sexual assault, or emotional abuse.

This can include:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment

- Acts of violence and physical hitting abuse (such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting or hair pulling)
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission

- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos (also known as sexting)

How can we prevent, and respond to, child-on-child abuse?

- Challenge inappropriate behaviours between children
  - Staff should make it clear that it is not acceptable, will never be tolerated, and is not an inevitable part of growing up.
- Have systems in place for children to confidently report abuse
  - Your school should have systems in place regarding how allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with.
- Don't tolerate or dismiss sexual violence or harassment
  - This means not dismissing sexual violence or harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys".
- Recognise that a child who has harmed other children may have unidentified needs of their own
  - They may require external agency support where appropriate.

> (!) **Remember** that you should consider the potential impact of social media.