



SAFEGUARDING: KCSiE 2026

Training and Update

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Looking after ourselves

Some of the contents of this presentation is sensitive and may be difficult to discuss. We must look after ourselves.

If you would like to talk to someone about any of the issues raised, please approach the facilitator or your line manager.

Contents

Learning to be safer together

- ❑ Student case studies - learning about the new and emerging safeguarding issues affecting children and families.
- ❑ Trust Safeguarding Practice Model [Think Family - Think Community]
- ❑ Learning how to model safer working practices
 - ❑ How to report a concern about a professional.

Recognise, Respond, Record & Refer

Learning about the new and emerging safeguarding issues
affecting children and families

Case Study 1: It Understands Me Better Than Anyone



Case Study 1: It Understands Me Better Than Anyone

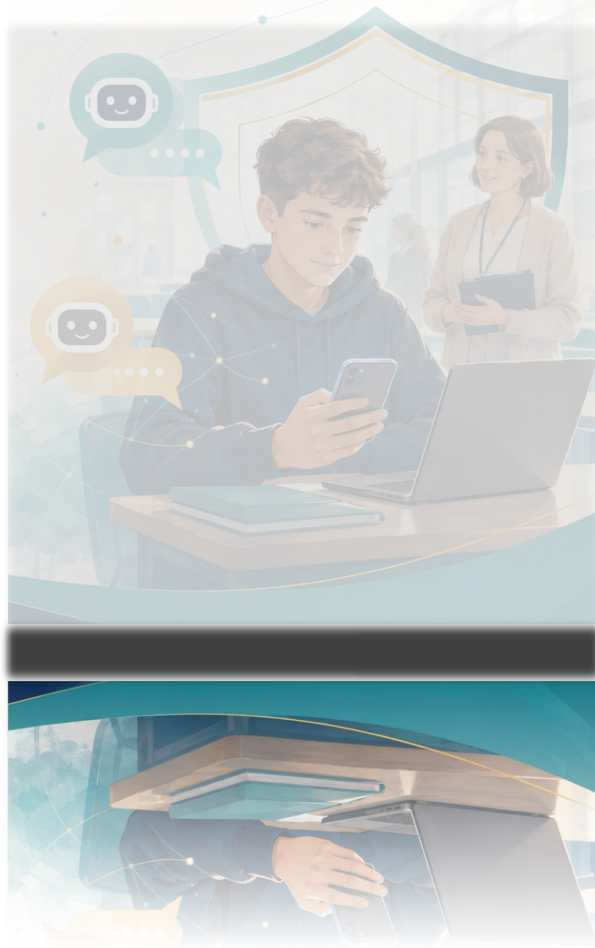
Jayden, aged 14, attends a secondary school within the trust. His younger sister, Amelia, aged nine, attends a nearby trust primary school.

Jayden has become quieter, stopped spending time with friends and appears tired. He becomes distressed when separated from his mobile phone and keeps a second phone hidden in his blazer, despite the school's mobile-phone policy.

Jayden tells a teaching assistant that he has an “AI girlfriend” who understands him better than real people. He speaks to the chatbot late at night about loneliness, family arguments and difficulties with other students. It uses affectionate language, describes their relationship as special and encourages him to keep conversations private. Jayden has shared photographs and details about his school and family.

During an ICT lesson, Jayden uses a generative-AI tool to create a fake nude image of another student by altering an ordinary photograph. He sends it widely through Snapchat. A related search and prompt generates a Smoothwall Filter alert, but it is categorised as low-level. The member of staff assumes Smoothwall has blocked the material and takes no further action.

Amelia has started using the same chatbot on an old phone Jayden gave her. She talks about an online “friend”, asks to stay indoors to use a classroom tablet and says: “It knows secrets about my family. It told me not to tell grown-ups because they might stop us talking.” A lunchtime supervisor assumes she is describing an imaginary friend and tells her not to worry.



5 Key learning points

1

Online safety is safeguarding. Concerns involving chatbots, generative AI, mobile phones, Snapchat or other platforms must be reported to the DSL.

2

Take chatbot relationships seriously. Secrecy, emotional dependence, withdrawal and sharing personal information are warning signs requiring professional curiosity.

3

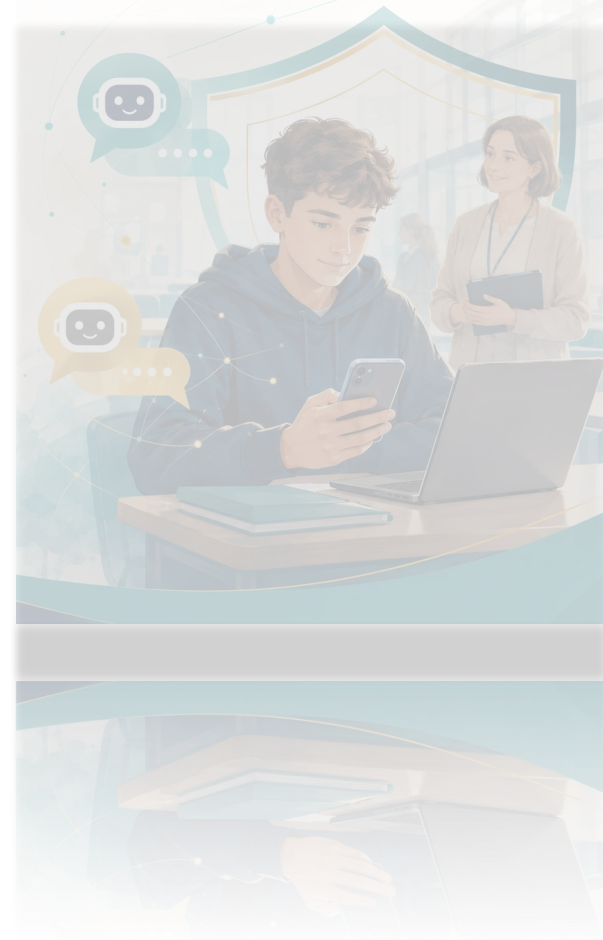
AI-generated nude images are a serious safeguarding concern. Report immediately and treat them as possible child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and harmful online behaviour.

4

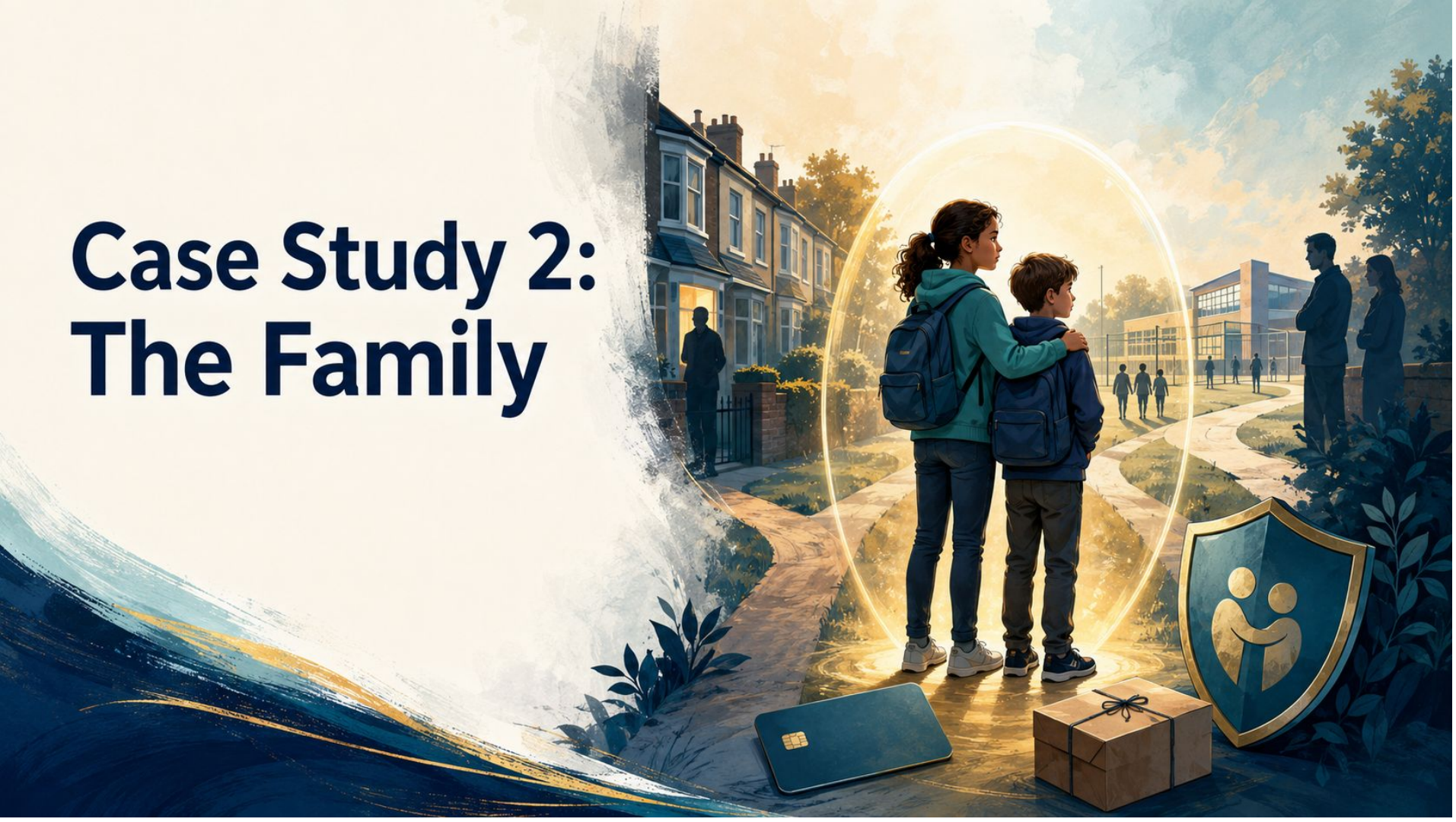
Do not view, copy, save or forward the image. Do not investigate; record what you have been told and pass it to the DSL.

5

Smoothwall alerts do not replace professional judgement. Staff must act on concerns, escalate incorrect classifications and never assume the system has resolved the risk.



Case Study 2: The Family



Case Study 2: The Family

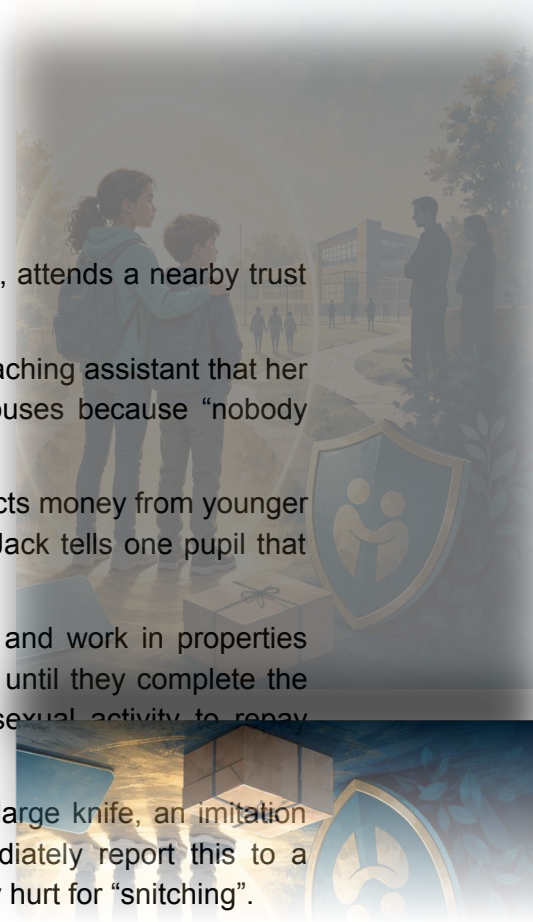
Jack, aged 15, attends a secondary school within the trust. His younger sister, Sophie, aged nine, attends a nearby trust primary school. Several adult relatives are believed to be involved in an organised criminal group.

Sophie has recently arrived at school with expensive trainers, phones and gift cards. She tells a teaching assistant that her uncle gives her “little jobs”, including carrying envelopes, cash and mobile phones between houses because “nobody suspects children”. She appears frightened and says her family will be angry if she talks.

Jack has become increasingly aggressive and regularly misses lessons. Pupils report that he collects money from younger students and allows older teenagers to use their bank accounts to receive and transfer money. Jack tells one pupil that anyone who refuses will have their family “dealt with”.

Staff hear that the group uses children to transport drugs and weapons, move criminal money and work in properties where drugs are prepared. Some children are driven to other towns and prevented from leaving until they complete the work. Older girls are reportedly taken to parties, given alcohol or drugs and pressured into sexual activity to repay supposed debts or receive money, accommodation and protection.

During lunchtime, two students find Jack’s unattended sports bag in a toilet. Inside, they see a large knife, an imitation firearm, several mobile phones and packages containing an unknown substance. They immediately report this to a member of staff. Jack then sends one of the students a message warning that they will be seriously hurt for “snitching”.



5 Key learning points

1

Exploitation is child abuse. Children carrying drugs, weapons, cash or phones must be treated as potentially exploited, even where they appear willing or benefit financially.

2

Recognise overlapping forms of harm. Criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, modern slavery and financial exploitation can occur together and may involve several children within one family.

3

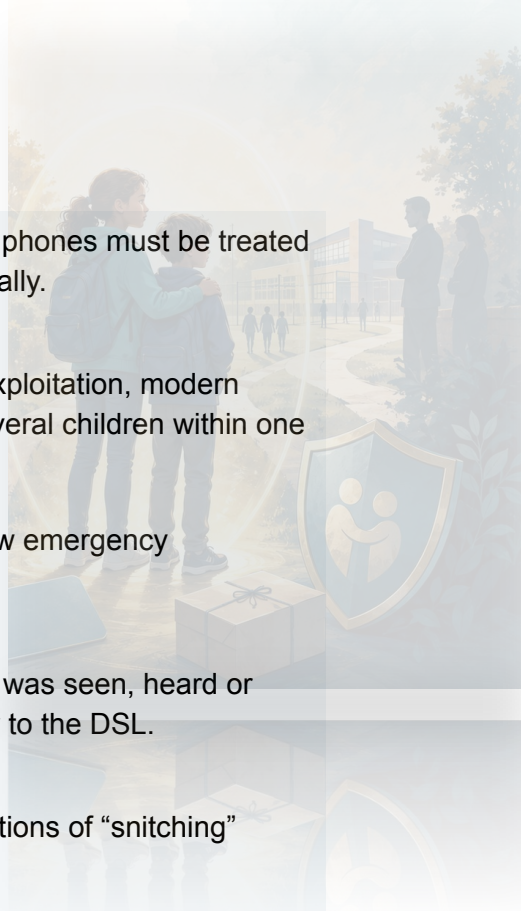
Weapons and threats require immediate action. Prioritise safety, follow emergency procedures and notify the DSL, senior leaders and police without delay.

4

Do not question suspected perpetrators or investigate. Record what was seen, heard or reported, preserve available evidence and pass the concern immediately to the DSL.

5

Protect children who report concerns. Threats of retaliation or accusations of “snitching” require immediate risk assessment and safety planning.



Case Study 3: I Just Want to Feel Safe at School



Case Study 3: I Just Want to Feel Safe at School

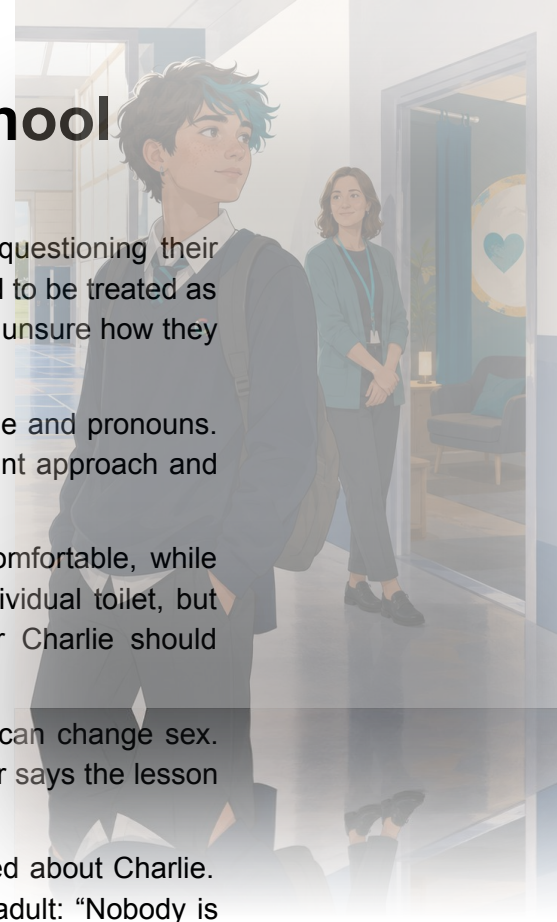
Charlie, aged 13, attends secondary school and tells a pastoral member of staff that they are questioning their gender. Charlie is biologically male but asks to be known as Charlotte, to use she/her pronouns and to be treated as a girl throughout school. Charlie asks the member of staff not to tell their parents because they are unsure how they will react.

Without referring the request to senior leaders or the DSL, several staff begin using the new name and pronouns. Other teachers continue using Charlie's recorded name. Charlie becomes upset by the inconsistent approach and reports that pupils are making insulting comments and asking intrusive personal questions.

Charlie asks to use the girls' toilets and changing room. Some pupils say they would feel uncomfortable, while Charlie says the boys' facilities feel humiliating and unsafe. The school has a self-contained individual toilet, but Charlie worries that using it will identify them as different. PE staff are also unsure whether Charlie should participate with the girls during a contact-sport unit and an inter-school competition.

During an RSHE lesson, pupils ask about biological sex, gender identity and whether someone can change sex. The teacher avoids answering because they are worried about saying the wrong thing. Charlie later says the lesson made them feel invisible, while another pupil reports hostile discussion in a class messaging group.

Charlie's younger sister, Emily, aged nine, attends a trust primary school. She reports being teased about Charlie. Charlie has stopped attending PE, avoids using the toilet throughout the day and tells a trusted adult: "Nobody is listening to me, and I don't feel safe anywhere."



5 Key learning points

1

Do not make individual decisions about social transition. Listen respectfully, report the request and follow the school's documented process, normally involving parents unless this creates safeguarding risk.

2

Protect the child from bullying and explore wider needs. Gender questioning is not itself a safeguarding concern, but distress, bullying, family relationships and mental-health needs require professional curiosity.

3

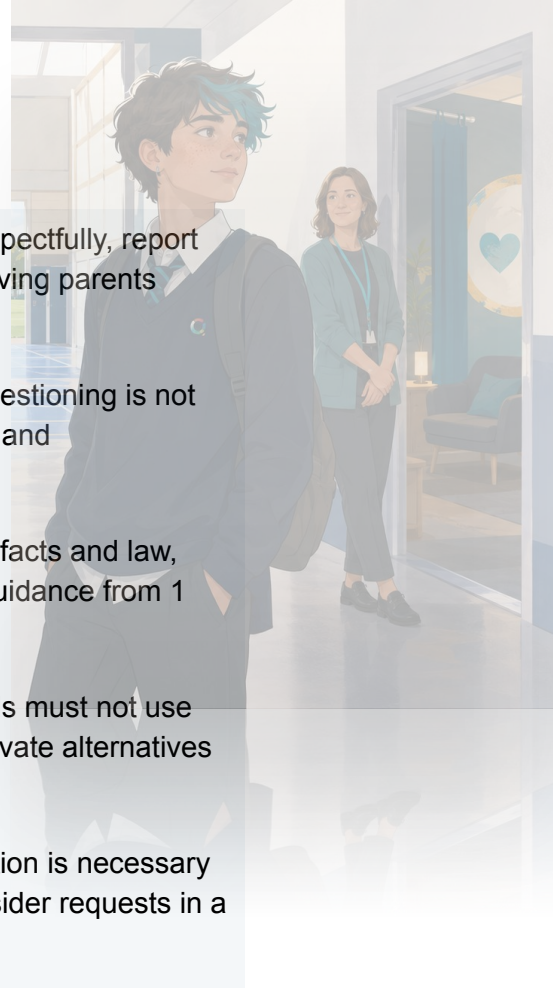
RSHE must be accurate, respectful and age-appropriate. Teach the facts and law, equality and respectful disagreement in line with the revised statutory guidance from 1 September 2026.

4

Single-sex toilets and changing facilities must be maintained. Pupils must not use facilities designated for the opposite biological sex; consider suitable private alternatives that protect dignity and safety.

5

Sports decisions depend on safety and fairness. Where sex separation is necessary for safety there should be no exceptions; otherwise leaders should consider requests in a balanced and documented way.



Case Study 4: I Told Him to Stop



Case Study 4: “I told him to stop”

Grace is a secondary-school pupil with moderate learning difficulties and communication needs. Her younger brother, Oliver, attends a trust primary school.

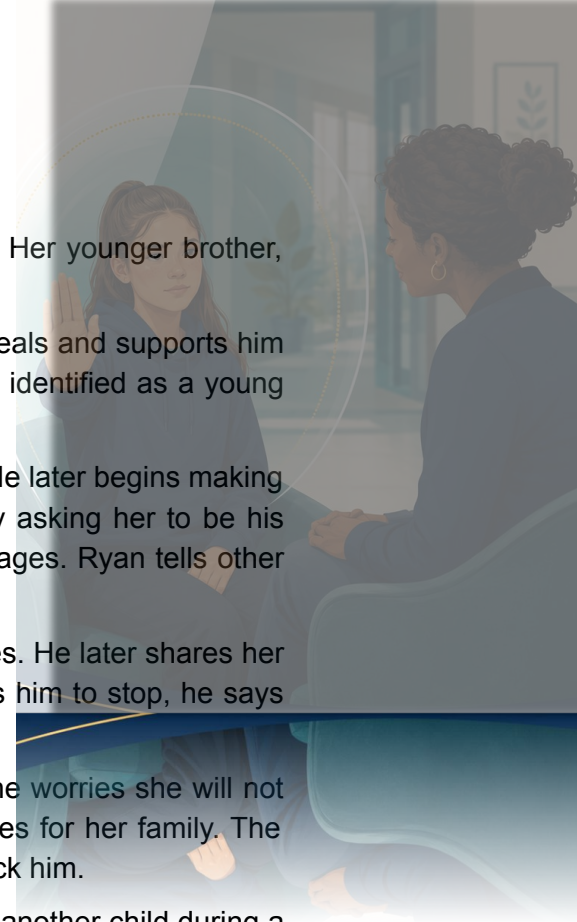
Their mother has a serious health condition. Grace helps Oliver get ready for school, prepares meals and supports him when he becomes distressed. She frequently arrives late and misses activities but has not been identified as a young carer.

A pupil called Ryan initially becomes friendly with Grace and offers to help her between lessons. He later begins making inappropriate comments about her appearance, touching her without permission and repeatedly asking her to be his girlfriend. Grace sometimes laughs when uncomfortable and uses emojis when replying to messages. Ryan tells other pupils this means she agrees with his behaviour.

Ryan pressures Grace to send him a private image and threatens to spread rumours if she refuses. He later shares her private messages and makes sexualised comments about her in a group chat. When Grace tells him to stop, he says she “did not mind before”.

Grace tells a teaching assistant that she feels frightened but does not want anyone informed. She worries she will not be believed, that Ryan will stop helping her and that raising concerns will create further difficulties for her family. The teaching assistant describes the situation as a relationship disagreement and suggests Grace block him.

At primary school, Oliver begins using sexualised language and behaves inappropriately towards another child during a game. He says he saw messages on Grace’s phone while she was helping him get ready. Staff record the incident as inappropriate behaviour but do not contact the DSL.



5 Key learning points

1

Sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour must never be dismissed. Unwanted comments, touching, pressure, threats and online behaviour must be reported immediately to the DSL.

2

Consent must be freely given and can be withdrawn. Friendliness, laughter, emojis or earlier agreement do not provide continuing consent; pressure, fear or dependency may remove free choice.

3

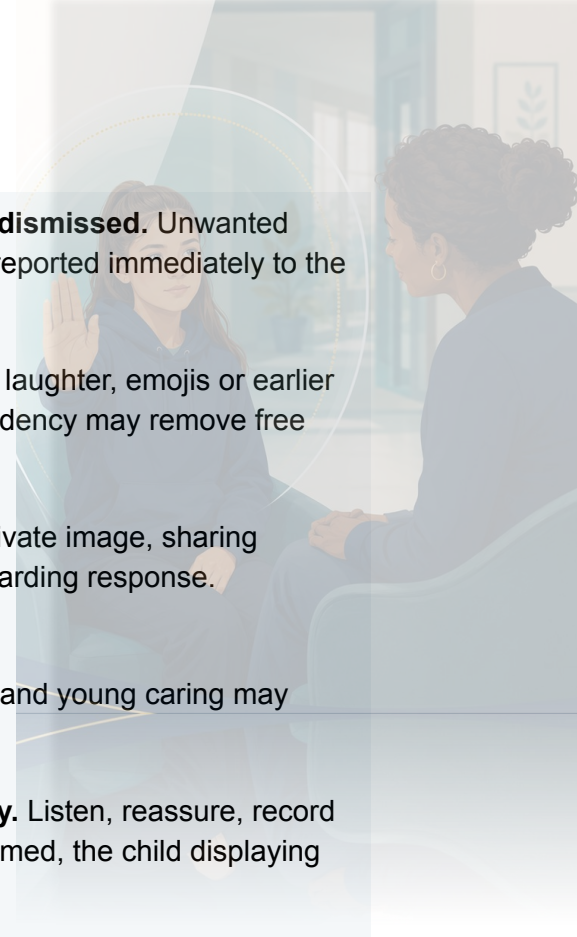
Online behaviour is still a safeguarding concern. Pressure for a private image, sharing messages, rumours and unwanted sexual comments require a safeguarding response.

4

Recognise overlapping vulnerability. SEND, communication needs and young caring may affect understanding, disclosure and a child's ability to seek help.

5

Support all affected children and do not investigate independently. Listen, reassure, record and report; the DSL should assess safety and support for the child harmed, the child displaying the behaviour and others affected.



Staff may also read this after the training session

Early Years Foundation Stage: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework should be read alongside KCSiE where children aged 0 to 5 attend school-based nurseries or reception classes:

- **Early Help and Family Help:** Updated terminology to include “universal services and community-based early help” and “the targeted early help level of Family Help.” .
- **Sexual Imagery:** Replaced “indecent”, “nude, semi-nude” and “also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery” with “making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes”.
- **Misogyny and Misandry:** Increased emphasis of educating young people about masculinity, sexism and misogyny.
- **Child on Child Abuse:** Retitled “Child-on-child abuse” to “Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence).”
- **Expanded child-on-child abuse content to emphasise that:** it is a safeguarding issue for both victim and alleged perpetrator, it is preventable and it may involve serious physical harm or threats involving weapons.
- **Expanded Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation content:** “This can be committed or facilitated by an organised network or gang, and victims may identify as part of this group.”, “This may constitute modern slavery...”

KCSiE 2026:

Summary of key changes

Annex 1

Information for staff

- **Generative AI Guidance:** There's an added link to the Department for Education's guidance on "Generative AI: product safety expectations." This clarifies how filtering and monitoring requirements apply to the use of generative AI in educational settings to ensure student safety.
- **Added “racism” and “derogatory behaviour or other forms of physical violence and conflict.”** - Working together to safeguarding Children 2026 also references anti-racist practice.
- **Updated content on children who are LGB or gender-questioning** - Process for involving parents and carers and dealing with safeguarding matters.
- **Added new section on safeguarding children with medical conditions** - Suicide ideation and self harm included.
- **Added new section on “Young carers” and their specific needs.**
- **Sexually harmful behaviour:** substantially rewritten to highlight the progressive continuum from harmful sexual behaviour through to sexual violence.

This is not an exclusive list of the changes. Further information on the changes can be found in Annex C: KCSiE 2026: Summary of changes

Trust Safeguarding Practice Model

Think Family - Think Community

HLT Safeguarding Practice Model

The 'HLT Safeguarding Practice Model' recognises that **no single practitioner, parent or carer can have a full picture of the child's needs and circumstances.** If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. The approach is based on the '*team around the child*' model of whether everyone can contribute to actions to support children, families and the community.

The following elements outline the key components of the model.

- ❑ Safeguarding Practice Principles
- ❑ (i)TAS Internal Team Around the Student
- ❑ RE-Think Formulation
- ❑ Outcome Focused Supervision



What is RE-Think Formulation?

The 'Rethink Formulation' approach to **Recognising** (safeguarding issues and concerns), **Assessing** (risks, needs and vulnerabilities) **Planning** (to address concerns at the earliest possible stage).

The main elements to consider to help aid the 'Recognising, Assessing and Planning' approach are:

- ☐ **Presenting Issues** What's happening right now that's causing concern?
- ☐ **Precipitating Factors** What triggers things?
- ☐ **Predisposing Factors** Family history, challenges and vulnerabilities?
- ☐ **Protective Factors** What positives and strengths are there?
- ☐ **Predicting Factors** What could happen if things don't change?
- ☐ **Perpetuating Factors** What's keeping the issues going?

HLT Safeguarding Practice Principles

1. Always working WITH

Creating a context of high support and high challenge with children, young people, and families and each other.

2. Relationship based

Assuming that engagement and **best outcomes are achieved through trusting and respectful relationships with each other**, taking responsibility for creating and maintaining effective relationships at all levels.

3. Enabling the utility of the family

Putting the family at the heart of everything we do; recognising and enabling the networks and skills within the family; and wherever possible, families determine the direction of care and intervention. We want to ensure that children, young people and families are as fully informed as possible and are always involved in and understand decisions that concern themselves and their families.

HLT Safeguarding Practice Principles

4. Early in the life of a problem

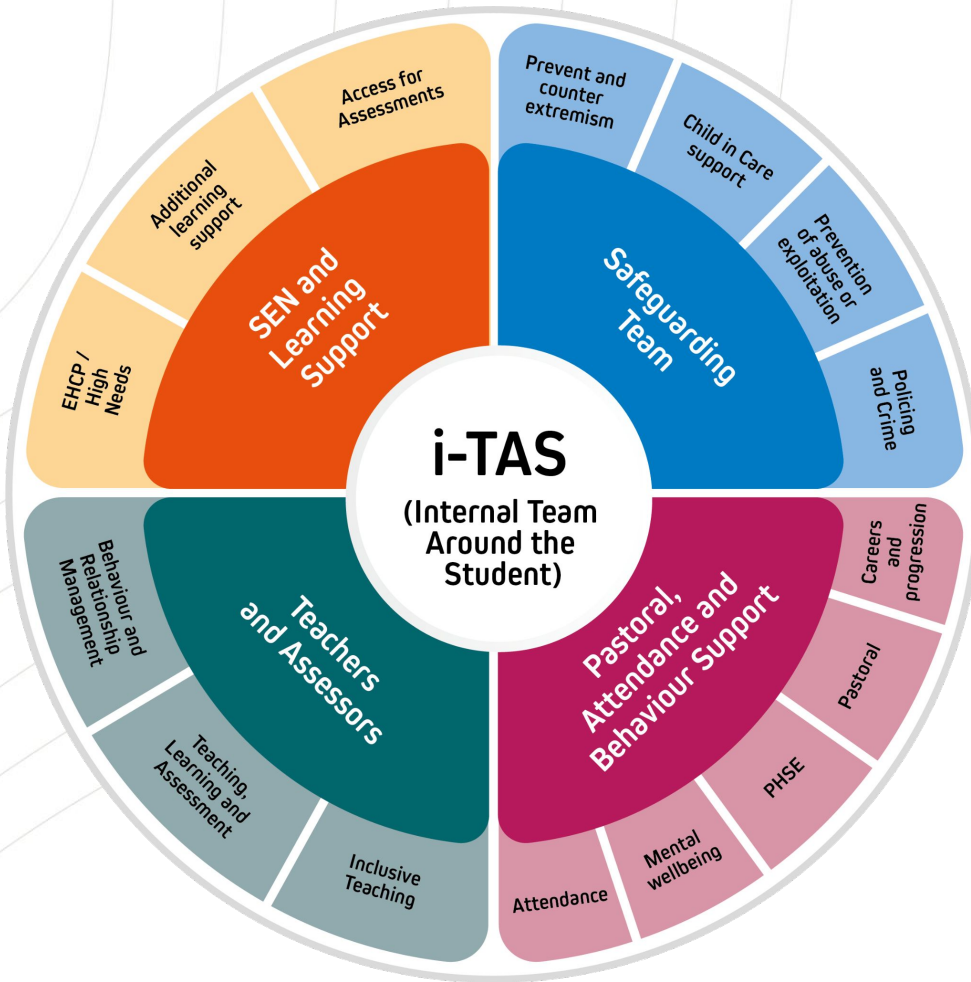
Engaging families in appropriate and effective support immediately when an issue is identified and maintaining a persistent offer to engage in support. We also recognise that engagement with education is a protective factor and we will seek to maximise attendance, attainment, and achievement.

5. Strength focussed

All interactions, interventions and plans are seeking, affirming and utilising existing knowledge, skills and abilities; and adopt an evidence-based approach to assessing needs and managing risk.

6. Accountability, evaluation, and sustainability

Always working to continually understand a situation, improve plans and find ways to enable independence and reduce reliability on services.



(iTAS) Internal Team Around the Student

If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

A variety of approaches and interventions are needed and everyone in the school will need to play their part.

Reporting a safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff.

Trust form to report a concern

Case study: Mr XXXX

Safeguarding reminder: The task is to recognise, record and report concerns. Staff should not decide whether the account is true, confront the adult or conduct their own investigation.

Concerns were initially raised by a midday supervisor following an incident involving Mr XXXX and a Year 9 student.

The student had refused an instruction to return to the classroom. The midday supervisor reported seeing Mr XXXX grip the student by the upper arm, push him backwards against a door and call him a ***** (expletive).

The student appeared shocked and became visibly upset. Mr XXXX did not report or record the physical contact. When later questioned, he stated that he had 'lost patience' and was only trying to move the student back into the classroom.

Following the incident, the Principal reviewed student voice information relating to Mr XXXX's classes. This identified several additional concerns:

- ☐ Students reported that they could obtain support from him through Snapchat and described this as 'super-quick support'.
- ☐ He had bought one student a birthday card and present because the student was going through a difficult time.
- ☐ He regularly allowed students to spend unstructured times in his classroom while the door was closed.
- ☐ Students shared their food with him at lunchtime because they liked spending time in his classroom with their friends.

Staff task

- What safeguarding and safer-working-practice concerns can you identify?
- Which information requires immediate escalation, and to whom should it be reported?
- What should the midday supervisor or any other member of staff record and do next?
- How could Mr XXXX have provided support and managed the situation more safely?

Five key learning points

- 1. Warm relationships still require clear boundaries.** Support should be professional, authorised, observable and accountable. Being well-liked or trusted does not reduce this expectation.
- 2. Loss of patience never justifies punitive force or abusive language.** Use de-escalation, the behaviour policy and support from colleagues. Any necessary physical intervention must be lawful, proportionate and recorded.
- 3. Report concerns - do not investigate or decide the threshold yourself.** Safeguarding allegations about staff go to the Principal/headteacher.
- 4. Use approved channels and arrangements.** Personal social media, individual gifts and closed-door access can create secrecy, dependency, favouritism or misunderstanding even where the stated intention is supportive.
- 5. Patterns matter.** Accurate reporting allows leaders to connect information, identify cumulative risk and act early. No concern should be dismissed because it appears small in isolation.

A man with dark curly hair and a beard, wearing a green button-down shirt and light-colored trousers, stands in a bright, modern living room. He is gesturing with his hands as if speaking. The room features a light wood wall, a white sofa, a wooden coffee table, and several potted plants. A large window on the left shows a view of greenery outside. A dark blue rectangular box with white text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

—
Manage
relationships
openly.

Managing Concerns and Allegations Against Staff

YOU MUST DO THE FOLLOWING:-

- **MUST BE REPORTED TO THE PRINCIPAL or EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL**
(in person or over the phone)
- (OR IN THEIR ABSENCE THE PERSON WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE SCHOOL)
- They report it to Director of Safeguarding or, in their absence, the Chief Operating Officer immediately
- Record this on the: [Reporting form](#)

YOU MUST NOT:-

- KEEP A CONCERN TO YOURSELF
- APPROACH THE COLLEAGUE YOURSELF
- CARRY OUT ANY FACT FINDING UNLESS TOLD TO DO SO



Allegation Made Against (School/Academy)	Reported to Recipient A (If unavailable refer immediately to Recipient B)		Report to Recipient B
Member of staff inc. volunteer, supply staff, contracted staff, visitor and contractor	Headteacher/Principal	DO NOT INVESTIGATE UNTIL RECIPIENT B HAS BEEN NOTIFIED AND ACTIONS HAVE BEEN AGREED	Director of Safeguarding (07716 088437)
Designated Safeguarding Lead (School)			Chief Operating Officer (07713 385382)
Headteacher/Principal/ Executive Principal	Director of Safeguarding (07716 088437) Chief Operating Officer (07713 385382)		Director of Safeguarding (07716 088437) Chief Operating Officer (07713 385382)
Member of Local Governing Committee (LGC)	Director of Safeguarding (07716 088437) Chief Operating Officer (07713 385382)		Chief Executive Officer (07827 919330)
Member of the central team (excl. Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive Officer)	Chief Operating Officer (07713 385382)		Chief Executive Officer (07827 919330) Chair of the Trust Board (chair@hlt.academy)
Director of Safeguarding	Chief Operating Officer (07713 385382)		Chief Executive Officer (07827 919330)
Chief Operating Officer	Chief Executive Officer (07827 919330)		Chair of the Trust Board (chair@hlt.academy)
Chief Executive Officer	Chair of the Trust Board (chair@hlt.academy)		Trustee - Safeguarding Lead (chair@hlt.academy)
Trustee (excl. Chair of the Trust Board)	Chair of the Trust Board (chair@hlt.academy)		Members
Chair of the Trust Board	Members		Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

Note: In cases of emergency where recipient A and B are unavailable, please call the LADO and/or the police on 999.

Trust Reporting Form - “Use the QR Code Posters”

- Record any allegation or low-level concern in a **secure environment**
 - [Click here to see the NEW Reporting form](#)

REPORT A CONCERN

How to report a safeguarding concern or allegation about staff or other professionals.

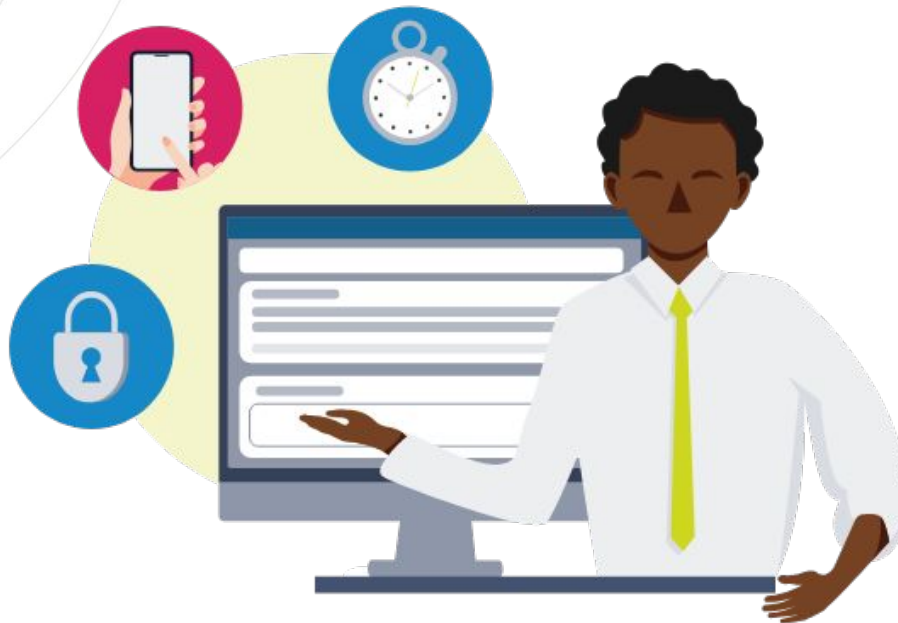
We want you to know that any allegation or concern that an employee or other professional has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, or has potentially breached the guidance of safer working practice, will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly, regardless of when or where the alleged incident took place.

The definition of ‘staff’ extends to volunteer, Governor, Trustee, supply staff, contractor or a third party organisation who deliver a service at the Trust or School.

Please also report this concern to Principal



Scan here



NEW Reporting Form - Use the NEW HLT Communication Hub Homepage



HEARTWOOD
LEARNING TRUST

Welcome to Heartwood Learning Trust's
Communications Hub

Our Trust ▾

Curriculum ▾

Professional Development ▾

News & Updates ▾

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Latest Updates

Useful Links

Report a Staff Safeguarding Concern

[Find out more](#)



Edupay

[Find out more](#)



MyNewTer

[Find out mo](#)



GMail



Google Calendar



Google Dri



Thank you for listening

Just approach the DSL in your school if you have any questions.