

Education Safeguarding Child Protection Newsletter

May 2024

Welcome

Welcome to the 5th Child Protection Newsletter for the 2023-24 academic year. We hope that the following articles and information we share will be useful for you.

This newsletter is published by the Education Safeguarding Service and issued to schools, early years providers and local authority staff. For this newsletter to be effective, please ensure that it is shared with staff, including all Designated Safeguarding Leads.

We are aware that there is a lot of information but recommend that you try to find time to read and digest its contents as it will help you in your role as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

We include links to external websites in our articles; we try and provide useful resources but cannot be responsible for their content and advice and some information/events may have expired. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

If you have any questions regarding any of the articles, or the need for safeguarding advice, please contact the service using the details provided.

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Education Safeguarding Service (ESS) Updates

Advice and Support Line

We'd like to share a reminder that our service provides advice and support to education settings on **non-urgent** safeguarding queries relating to children. If a child is alleging something that gives you concerns about them going home and/or you feel are a clear child protection issue, then you should always go to the Front Door in the first instance. As we are now part of Integrated Children's Services in KCC, if we advise that an urgent request for support is needed as part of an advice and support call, we will ask for the name of the child.

For non-urgent concerns, please ensure you telephone the service via our area or central phone numbers, rather than emailing or calling individual staff directly as this can result in delays to your queries, especially when staff are out of the office.

ESS Contact Information and Links Reminder

Please ensure your address books and documentation reflects our KCC email addresses and phone numbers to avoid any delays or missed enquiries and remember our policy and guidance content can currently be found on the [Education People website](#). If you cannot find the information you need via the link above, please email us at edsafeguardinghq@kent.gov.uk

National Safeguarding Updates

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024/2025

Ministers have decided that KCSIE 2024 will undergo technical changes only before final publication in September 2024, with a view to providing a more substantively updated document, encompassing wider changes, to be delivered in 2025.



The 2025 call for evidence can be found here: [Safeguarding Children in Schools and Colleges: A Call for Evidence - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#),

The call for evidence is split into the following sections.

- Section 1: Respondent's information.
- Section 2: The role of the designated safeguarding lead
- Section 3: Recording, retaining, and sharing child safeguarding information
- Section 4: Safer recruitment
- Section 5: Filtering and monitoring systems and safeguarding children online
- Section 6: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Section 7: Protecting children in boarding schools and residential special schools
- Section 8: Quality assuring safeguarding arrangements in schools and colleges
- Section 9: Other safeguarding issues on which we welcome your views

We would encourage you and your leadership teams to participate as it is a real opportunity to shape future guidance.

DfE Information Sharing Guidance - Updated

The DfE have updated '[Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services](#)'. The updated document includes clarity on the use of consent and the legal frameworks needed to support the sharing of information. The document also reflected the updated Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and will be helpful for practitioners working with vulnerable adults and adults who could pose a risk to children.

We recommend DSLs access this document and share it with staff.

New DfE Guidance: Protective Security and Preparedness for Education Settings

The Department for Education (DfE) have released new non-statutory guidance for all educational settings to help them respond to major incidents: [Protective security and preparedness for education settings](#).

This non-statutory guidance has been developed in collaboration with the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office ([NaCTSO](#)) and sector partners and is aimed at security and incident leads as well as all members of staff, including non-teaching staff.

The guidance applies to all education settings and childcare providers and will support them to improve security awareness, help staff and learners identify security vulnerabilities and suspicious activities and sets out practical, low-cost steps to improve settings preparedness and response plans.

The guidance outlines how to plan effectively for incidents including lockdown, invacuation and evacuation (full, partial, phased or directional) and staff roles within this, including:

- writing a plan
- ensuring the plan is tailored to your setting
- having clear roles and ensuring everyone is aware of their responsibilities
- considering individual needs and those who may require adjustments – personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS)
- conducting practice drills
- communicating during an incident

It also includes an '[Act for Education](#)' interactive e-learning resource which can help teach learners aged 11-16 how to identify security vulnerabilities and suspicious activity and how to respond when there is an incident.

Local Safeguarding Updates

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme - referral process for families to access free holiday activities

The HAF programme in Kent provides healthy, nutritious food and exciting, enriching activities for children during the school holidays. It also supports their physical and mental health and wellbeing. Families of children aged four to 16 years, who receive benefits-related free school meals (FSM), can access the opportunities for free during the Easter, Summer, and Christmas holidays. More information is available on the [HAF Programme website](#).

All eligible families will be issued an electronic EVoucher from **6th March 2024**. These can be used by the families to find a local HAF Programme and request a place. It enables the HAF Programme partners to know that the child is eligible for a free place, without the need for further eligibility checks. Most families will be familiar with receiving KCC funded electronic supermarket vouchers from the same Evoucher system.

There maybe other children you are working with who **do not** receive FSM who may benefit from being able to attend a HAF Programme this summer. To enable them to access a free place, please review the list of [HAF Programmes](#) (list will be available online soon) or email KentHAF@theeducationpeople.org for details of providers in your area.

KCC Private Law Proceedings - Practice Guidance

KCC guidance, written by social care practitioners is available to support professionals with all aspects of [Private Law](#), including understanding parental alienation. Although this document is predominantly aimed at supporting social workers, we feel it would be helpful to share as it details the numerous different aspects of care proceedings that as a DSL you could come across.



As always, when parents are entering into the legal arena and seeking to involve the school or early years setting in some way, please be careful how you respond to any requests. As we have said before, do not be pressured by solicitors or parents asking for welfare or similar reports of their child; only respond when a court is asking for such a document.

KSCMP: Updated Safeguarding Children Abused Through Exploitation Procedures



KSCMP have published updated '[Safeguarding Children Abused Through Exploitation procedures](#)'. Staff in schools, colleges, early years settings, and other education establishments, are uniquely placed to recognise and refer children who are abused through exploitation and to help children avoid being exploited.

We encourage DSLs to access this updated local guidance which provides a means of supporting all professionals and communities in Kent and Medway to identify, respond appropriately and safety children who are being exploited or who are at risk of exploitation. The updated procedures include new definitions and local contacts and procedures for DSLs and staff to follow if they have a concern that a child may be at risk of any form of exploitation.

KSCMP: Courageous and Challenging Conversations Resources

KSCMP have developed [new resources](#) to support professionals holding difficult and challenging conversations. Learning from case reviews frequently identifies a lack of sufficient or effective challenge by professionals, which has affected the ability for children to be safeguarded.

It is important that professionals can hold courageous and challenging conversations when needed and without significant delay. The [new KSCMP resources](#) aim to highlight the importance of these conversations in practice, explore approaches to prepare for a difficult conversation, and help build confidence for professionals. The resources include guidance and a tool for professionals to use to help plan conversations.

NSPCC TALK RELATIONSHIPS - Talk Relationships Phase 2

In addition to [Speak Out, Stay Safe](#), the NSPCC has now launched a Whole School Approach Framework to Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), as a part of Phase 2 of [Talk Relationships](#).



The framework is made up of 5 elements/key documents that when used together will support school leaders to implement a whole-school approach to sex and relationships education based on evidence and best practice:

- Evidence base document
- Implementation guide
- Whole School Approach Framework
 - 8 components that work together to make up a whole-school approach to sex and relationships education.
 - A set of key overarching 'benchmarks' for each component, that your school should implement to achieve an effective whole-school approach.
 - Good practice examples of the benchmarks in action.
- Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Snapshot - a self-assessment tool
- An editable action plan template

[The documents can be accessed for free by completing a short registration form.](#)

If you have any questions about the Whole School Approach Framework, Talk Relationships or any of the school programmes, please contact Caroline Nicholson, Schools Coordinator - NSPCC Schools Service, Kent& Medway: Caroline.Nicholson@nspcc.org.uk

Domestic Abuse Practice Newsletter 2024 Spring Edition

The Spring edition of the [domestic abuse practice newsletter](#) focuses on:

- Domestic Abuse and Stalking Perpetrator Programmes
- Understanding victim blaming and how to reframe your language.
- Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) for Kitty
- Plans for area-based visits to support your domestic abuse practice.
- Information on a Domestic Abuse Assessment Tool consultation and how it can further support the referral pathways within Domestic Abuse

The newsletter provides some useful resources highlighted in the Domestic Abuse Development Programme, which should help all practitioners continue to support children and families who are victims of domestic abuse.

Support for children with possible eating disorders in Kent

The [All-Age Eating Disorder Service \(AADS\)](#) for Kent and Medway is a specialist service which aims to bring hope and confidence, through help and support, to those who have an eating disorder, to enable them to take back control of their life by overcoming their eating disorder. The minimum age for referrals to this service is 8 years.



Core Safeguarding Training for DSLs

All training dates for ESS courses for the remainder of the academic year are published on the new training platform hosted on [The Education People website](#).

Upcoming dates for May/June/July 2024: Schools and Colleges

- [DSL](#): 14.5.24, Bridgewood Manor Hotel
- [DSL](#): 22/5/24, Bridgewood Manor Hotel
- [New to Role DSL](#): 4/6/24, Howfield Manor Hotel
- [DSL](#): 4/6/24, Holiday Inn Maidstone-Sevenoaks
- [New to Role DSL](#): 5 and 6/6/2024, Zoom
- [New to Role DSL](#): 12 and 13/6/24, Zoom
- [New to Role DSL](#): 13/6/24, Bridgewood Manor Hotel
- [DSL](#): 18/6/24, Eastgate
- [New to Role DSL](#): 25/6/24, Eastgate
- [DSL](#): 27/6/24, Howfield Manor Hotel
- [DSL](#): 4/7/24, Singleton Environment Centre
- [Online Safety for DSLs](#): 9 and 10/7/24, Zoom
- [New to Role DSLs](#): 10/7/24, Holiday Inn Maidstone-Sevenoaks

Upcoming dates for May/June/July 2024: Early Years Providers

- [New to Role EYDSL](#): 15 and 16/5/24: Zoom
- [New to Role EYDSL](#): 21/5/24, Eastgate
- [New to Role DSL](#): 5 and 6/6/2024, Zoom
- [Early Years Child Protection Basic Awareness](#): 11/6/24, Zoom
- [EYDSL](#): 11/6/24, Aldington Eco Centre
- [New to Role EYDSL](#): 19/6/24, Howfield Manor Hotel
- [New to Role EYDSL](#): 26 and 27/6/24, Zoom
- [EYDSL](#): 3/7/24, Eastgate
- [New to Role EYDSLs](#): 16 and 17/7/24, Zoom

Feedback for some of the training delivered by the service this year includes:

'Excellent delivered, relevant and up to date content, good pace and discussion.'

'Both presenters really were experts in the field - I went away feeling confident and up to date.'

'I have been to multiple safeguarding training sessions and this one was extremely well delivered and relevant to my own school context. The trainers were knowledgeable and could talk through real experiences, which was extremely useful. There was a good balance of trainer led learning and table discussion. The trainers gave clear advice with well justified reasons for the actions we would need to take in a range of different scenarios.'

'This was an excellent training session and although I have done safeguarding in my role for a number of years it really helped to clarify and has given me a better confidence and understanding of the EYDSL role.'

As a reminder, whilst ESS is part of KCC, we are following the Education People [terms and conditions](#) in relation to bookings and cancellations. We do appreciate there may be extenuating circumstances where staff are unable to attend training at short notice, however we will be applying this policy consistently as venue costs are incurred when there is non-attendance.

For any queries relating to our core or bespoke training offer, please contact your area advisor, or our [Training and Development Manager](#).

Early Years and Childcare

New Early Years Educator Criteria

The new Early Years Educator (EYE) criteria will come into effect from September 2024 and the [Early Years Qualifications](#) List (EYQL) provides the approved qualifications that meet the DfE's criteria.



Department
for Education

As per the updated EYFS (2024), EY providers are responsible for ensuring their staff hold approved qualifications to work within the staff-child ratios and meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Providers should pay attention to the start date of qualifications and ensure they check the EYQL for validity. Providers should also ensure that staff who obtained their qualification after 30 June 2016 must obtain a paediatric first aid qualification within three months of starting work in order to be included in the required staff: child ratios.

EYFS Consultation

The Department for Education are [consulting on proposals](#) to strengthen the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS. As such, they are seeking views from anybody with an interest in childcare, including childminders, early years providers and practitioners, preschools, and parents and carers. The proposals include changes to:

- Safer recruitment
- Attendance
- Safeguarding training, including designated safeguarding leads
- Paediatric First Aid qualifications for students, volunteers and apprentices
- Safer eating
- Toileting and privacy

Evidence tells us the importance of high-quality early childhood education and care for children's development and outcomes in both the short and long term, particularly for the most disadvantaged children. Make sure you share your voice on [these proposed changes](#). The deadline for responses is 17th June 2024.

Rise in cruelty for under 5's

Children
at the Table

The [Children's Charities Coalition](#) reports the number of child cruelty crimes involving babies and young children has risen every year since the pandemic. Child cruelty crimes against children aged under 5 continue to rise with a 16% increase on pre-pandemic levels and more than 9,300 offences last year. The NSPCC Helpline refers more than 10 babies and young children to agencies, such as police and social services, daily because of neglect and physical abuse.

The [Children at the Table campaign](#) argues that many babies and young children are not getting the safe, happy, and healthy start they deserve, and urges the next government to make good childhoods a priority.

Online Safety Alert from the National Crime Agency

The National Crime Agency's [CEOP Education](#) have issued an [alert to all education settings](#) following a large national increase in reports of financially motivated sexual extortion targeting children.



What you can do:

- Share the NCA alert with staff and ensure they are aware of the updated [‘Sharing nudes and semi-nudes’ guidance from UKCIS](#).
- Follow your existing child protection procedures if you receive a disclosure from a child or have concerns that a child has been targeted for financially motivated sexual extortion and ensure local police are aware.
- Ensure staff are trauma informed and [avoid victim-blaming language](#) when speaking with children and parents.
- Whilst children are never responsible for their own abuse, schools should support children to recognise the risk and to respond safely to requests or pressure to share nude or semi-nude images through [preventative education approaches](#).

The NCA have also included a template letter for parents to advise them on how to talk to their children about this issue and what to do if it happens to them. Parents should be encouraged to contact the DSL in school if they have any concerns about their child's online safety.

Free Online Safety Webinar for Parents

Eastern Region Counter Terrorism Policing are providing free online webinars for parents and carers of children in Year 5 (age 9) and above, to help them understand more about cybercrime, cyber security, and online safety.

Part 1 features an input from our own Online Safety Development Officer on general online safety risks and how parents/carers can keep their children safer online. The Eastern Region Cyber Choices Team will also introduce [the Cyber Choices programme](#), with an overview of what cybercrime is, what the risks to young people are, how the Cyber Choices supports individuals and how to refer a young person into the programme.

- [Wednesday 5th June 2024 @ 1300](#)
- [Wednesday 3rd July 2024 @ 1600](#)

Part 2 will be delivered by the Eastern Region Cyber Protect Team, providing advice, tools and techniques to improve the cyber security of families at home.

- [Wednesday 12th June 2024 @ 1300](#)
- [Wednesday 10th July 2024 @ 1600](#)

Ofcom Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2024



Ofcom have published their [latest report](#) into the media use and attitudes among children and young people aged 3-17. This annual research provides an insight into current trends, children's online experiences and their understanding of online safety.

This year, Ofcom introduced two new questions about online safety lessons in schools. They found that almost all children aged 8-17 (93%) recall having had at least one lesson at school about being online and the possible risks, but only three in ten (30%) say they recall having had regular online safety lessons in school. The report states that online safety education may be slightly less effective for children living with at least one impacting condition, which reflects similar findings from [research](#) and the [changing conversations report](#) by [Internet Matters](#).

Some other key findings in the report include:

- YouTube is still the most popular platform among the children in our study, with more than 80% of children using the video sharing platform.
- Video gaming continues to be a key activity for children; gaming is often used as a tool to communicate with their peers, however 31% of children who game online, communicate with strangers as well.
- 51% of children under the age of 13 admit to using social media under-age, with a higher proportion of 5-7- year-olds with their own profiles on specific social media platforms, compared to last year.
- TikTok is the most-used single source for news among 12-15- year-old news consumer, however teens felt less confident in their ability to judge whether what they see online is real or fake than last year.
- The right to freedom of speech, regardless of the impact on other people's feelings, is a growing priority for older children.
- Nearly half of children have used artificial intelligence technology, and they are twice as likely as adults to have done so, mostly 'for fun'.

IWF Annual Report 2023

[The Internet Watch Foundation \(IWF\)](#) have published their [latest report](#) for 2023, providing an insight into the breadth of child sexual abuse material they have assessed and removed from the internet last year.



Some of the key data and trends they have identified in the report includes:

- 275,652 reports from the public confirmed to show child sexual abuse in 2023; over 2 million images and videos assessed and 'hashed' in total.
- 92% of content removed contained "self-generated" child sexual abuse material.
- Over 141,000 'self-generated' images featured an 11–13-year-old girl; this represents 51% of all actioned reports.
- Over 104,000 'self-generated' images featured a 7–10-year-old; this is a 65% increase on 2022.
- Over 2,000 'self-generated' images included a 3–6-year-old child; 91% were girls.

The term 'self-generated' child sexual abuse material refers to incidents whereby children are groomed or extorted into capturing images or videos of themselves by someone who is not physically present in the room with them. All staff should recognise that children are never responsible for their own sexual abuse and are sometimes may be completely unaware they have been recorded or that an image has been captured or shared by abusers.

New Research from Internet Matters: More Than a Game

[Internet Matters](#) have published [new research](#), supported by Roblox, exploring neurodivergent young people's (aged 11-17 years old) views and experiences of online gaming.



- 9 in 10 neurodivergent children play video games offline or online.
- 58% say that gaming makes them happy.
- Around 20% had experience of issues such as bullying online, being contacted by strangers, and exposure to violence and hate speech.

Less than half of neurodivergent young people were aware of certain actions that they could take to keep themselves safe online, suggesting that more could be done to educate young people. Only 18% talked to a teacher or adult at school when they experienced an issue online.

To help parents and carers support neurodivergent children as they game, Internet Matters have created a selection of resources to help young people spot risks and take action online:

- [for neurodivergent teens](#)
- [for parents of neurodivergent gamers](#)
- [a video series for neurodivergent gamers on YouTube](#)

Latest data from the Revenge Porn Helpline

[The Revenge Porn Helpline](#) is a UK service provided by [SWGfL](#) to support adults (aged 18+) who have experienced intimate image abuse, such as 'sextortion' or so called 'revenge porn'.

The [latest data](#) published from the helpline indicates a 106% increase in reports over the last year. The service has now removed over 305,000 non-consensually shared intimate images online since launching in 2015, with a consistent [90% removal rate](#). They are now [campaigning to bridge the legal gaps](#) that prevent further action from being taken in cases where websites ignore removal requests and continue to host non-consensual intimate image abuse material.

Young people (under 18) can use [Report Remove](#), hosted by Childline and IWF to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet, however schools should always follow their [existing child protection procedures](#) if they know a child or young person has been the victim of intimate image abuse.

New Guidance to Support Schools with Online Reputational Concerns

The [newly published guidance](#) produced by the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline](#) intends to support school leaders, governors, federations, and trusts to navigate online reputational issues whilst giving a better understanding of what resources they have available to help manage these situations.

The guidance considers multiple scenarios involving reputational concerns, such as dealing with negative online reviews, online community groups and how to address concerns around images published outside of the school and includes information on:

- Responding to online posts
- Online reputational issues that can be successfully reported
- Other routes to resolution
- Support available from other organisations

School leaders in Kent may also find our [Dealing with Complaints on Social Media - Guidance for Headteachers and Managers](#) and may wish to seek support from our service or the Area Directors for Education if there are specific concerns relating to their school's online reputation.

New Reliability Resources from Childnet



Childnet have produced an [new interactive resource](#), to explore reliability online. Developed with the [Childnet Youth Advisory Board](#), designed to help young people to identify what they can or cannot trust when they go online, the gamified resource recreates the online environment through fabricated accounts, posts, and comments, covering a variety of risks including AI generated imagery, scams, fake news, giveaways, body image, and social media bots.

Originally created for Safer Internet Day 2023, Childnet have also published their [Youth Voice in Online Safety Toolkit](#). These resources have been designed to use with children from 3-18 years to start conversations and explore:

- What issues really matter to children and young people?
- What changes to they want to see?
- What online safety advice and support do they need?

The resources are split by age range and include three activities which can be run together to form a 1-hour lesson, plus other quick activities. There are also activities that can support a whole school approach, for example by engaging family members at home, or encouraging young people to take the lead.

These resources will be useful for schools looking to demonstrate 'pupil voice' or to explore opportunities to develop peer education approaches.

KSCMP: Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology and safeguarding risks to children factsheet



KSCMP have produced a factsheet relating to the potential safeguarding risks to children posed by [artificial intelligence \(AI\) technology](#).

The factsheet explores the risks in relation to Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), exposure to inappropriate content, bullying and harassment, disinformation and fraud, impact on education and learning, bias and discrimination and privacy. It also explores the current legislation and signposts to further resources which can be used to support children, parents/carers and staff understand the possible impact.

The Cass Review

On the 10th April Dr Hilary Cass submitted her [final report](#) and recommendations to NHS England in her role as Chair of the Independent Review of gender identity services for children and young people.



The Review was commissioned by NHS England to make recommendations on how to improve NHS gender identity services, and ensure that children and young people who are questioning their gender identity or experiencing gender dysphoria receive a high standard of care, that meets their needs, is safe, holistic and effective.

The report describes what is known about the young people who are seeking NHS support around their gender identity and sets out the recommended clinical approach to care and support they should expect, the interventions that should be available, and how services should be organised across the country. It also makes recommendations on the quality improvement and research infrastructure required to ensure that the evidence base underpinning care is strengthened.

Whilst this recent review was detailed exploring the issues around the review of gender identity services for children and young people from a predominantly health perspective, there will be findings and discussions within it relevant for those in education.

The Beaumont Society: Support for parents of a transgender child/young person

[The Beaumont Society](#) is a national self-help body run by and for the transgender community; they can offer support for those transitioning and also facilitates a support group for carers and parents of children and young people who are transgender.



Girls on board - empowering girls to find their own solutions



A recent review of a safeguarding practice in a girl's school by one of our advisors identified a useful resource schools may find helpful. [Girls On Board](#) is an approach to help girls, their parents and their teachers to understand the complexities and dynamics of girl friendships. The language, methods and ideas empower girls to solve their own friendship problems and recognises that they are usually the only ones who can.

Absence rates for young carers

The Carer's Trust has reacted to [new figures](#) suggesting that young carers are more likely to miss at least 10% of school than their peers.



Carers Trust's Policy and Practice Manager, Andy McGowan, said "*On average [young carers] miss 23 days of school per year, far more than those without a caring role. This lays bare the glaring inequality in the life opportunities for young carers compared to their classmates.*"

[Young Carers Action Day 2024](#) saw the launch of [The Young Carer's Covenant](#). Organisations, including schools and settings, are urged to sign a landmark new commitment that aims to transform the lives of over one million young and young adult carers by ensuring they are identified early for support, live free from poverty and can access education, training and employment opportunities.

Calm Harm



[Calm Harm](#) is a free app funded by teenage mental health charity [stem4](#) that can help children and young people manage or resist the urge to self-harm. It uses principles from an evidence-based psychological treatment called Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). The app provides immediate activities and techniques to help break the cycle of self-harm behaviour and explore underlying triggers factors.

A Longer Read: Physical Chastisement in England

A recent report from [the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health's \(RCPCH\) report](#) sets out why England and Northern Ireland should follow the example of Scotland and Wales in changing the law to make physical punishment of children illegal. We have written about this issue before in this newsletter and will often advise DSLs on what might constitute significant harm and what may be within the bounds of 'reasonable chastisement'.

It goes without saying that to smack a child at any level is not something that should ideally be in any parents' toolkit to manage behaviour, however parents from many different backgrounds and cultures may still use it as a discipline approach.

The Children Act 2004 says it is unlawful to assault a child causing actual or grievous bodily harm, or cruelty, but a review of studies by RCPCH found smacking can be damaging to children's behaviour, health and wellbeing. [The report](#) identified that children who experience physical punishment are nearly three times more likely to develop poor mental health and twice as likely to be on the receiving end of serious physical assault and abuse.

Corporal punishment of children in Scotland was made illegal in 2020 and in Wales in 2022. Although it is too soon to say if there has been a reduction in physical punishment since, the experiences of countries such as Germany, Romania and Sweden suggest that changing the law can have a real impact. ([BBC April 2024 article](#))

In April 2023, the government resisted pressure to make physical chastisement of a child illegal in England and Northern Ireland, stating that it trusted parents to discipline their own children. This is despite 67% of a [public poll](#) saying they felt it should be banned.

If a child alleges that they are being smacked or chastised in any way, we would always recommend a follow up discussion with them to clarify and establish the level of punishment they are alleging. Use the TED method of communication:

- Encourage the child to "Tell," "Explain," and "Describe" their concern.
- [Use open-ended questions like "What?" "When?" "Who?" "How?" and "Where?" to seek further clarification.](#)
- Remember that questions should only be asked to help clarify whether the child is at risk

of harm; once clarification is achieved, no further questions should be asked.

Kent County Council has written some further guidance on the law and helpful ways to approach parents and carers when having to have those difficult conversations around smacking or other inappropriate methods of discipline.

[Physical Chastisement Including Smacking](#) to support practitioners with understanding the law and to offer practice tips. The document also has some excellent resources for further support at the end of the guidance.

Education Safeguarding Service Contacts

Head Office: Room 2.30 Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ	
Claire Ray Head of Service	03000 423 169
Rebecca Avery Training and Development Manager	03000 423 168
Robin Brivio Senior Safeguarding Advisor	03000 423 169
Online Safety	03000 423 164
<p>For non-urgent advice on safeguarding issues please call your area office</p> <p>If a child may be at risk of imminent harm, call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411 111 or the Police on 999</p>	
Ashford	03000 423154
Canterbury	03000 423157
Dartford	03000 423149
Dover	03000 423154
Folkestone & Hythe	03000 423154
Gravesham	03000 423149
Maidstone	03000 423158
Sevenoaks	03000 423149
Swale	03000 423157
Thanet	03000 423157
Tonbridge & Malling	03000 423158
Tunbridge Wells	03000 423158

Other Kent County Council Contacts

Worried about a child?

If your call is urgent i.e., a child is in **immediate danger**, call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411 111 (outside office hours 03000 419 191)

Early Help Contacts (district teams) can be found on www.kelsi.org.uk

Allegation Against a Member of the Children's Workforce?

LADO Team contact number: 03000 410 888

Email: kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk

If your call is urgent i.e., a child is in **immediate danger** and you cannot be connected to the County LADO Service, call the Integrated Front Door on 03000 411 111

Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU

Assistant Director of Education

South Kent – David Adams 03000 412 309

East Kent – Rob Veale 03000 418 794

West Kent – Nick Abrahams 03000 410 058

North Kent – Ian Watts 03000 414 302

Prevent Education Officers

North/West/Medway - Sally Green sally.green2@kent.gov.uk 03000 413 439

South/East - Rachel Murray Rachel.murray@kent.gov.uk 03000 412431