



Safeguarding Update- May

This month's staff safeguarding Newsletter focuses on the Working Together to Safeguard Children Updates.



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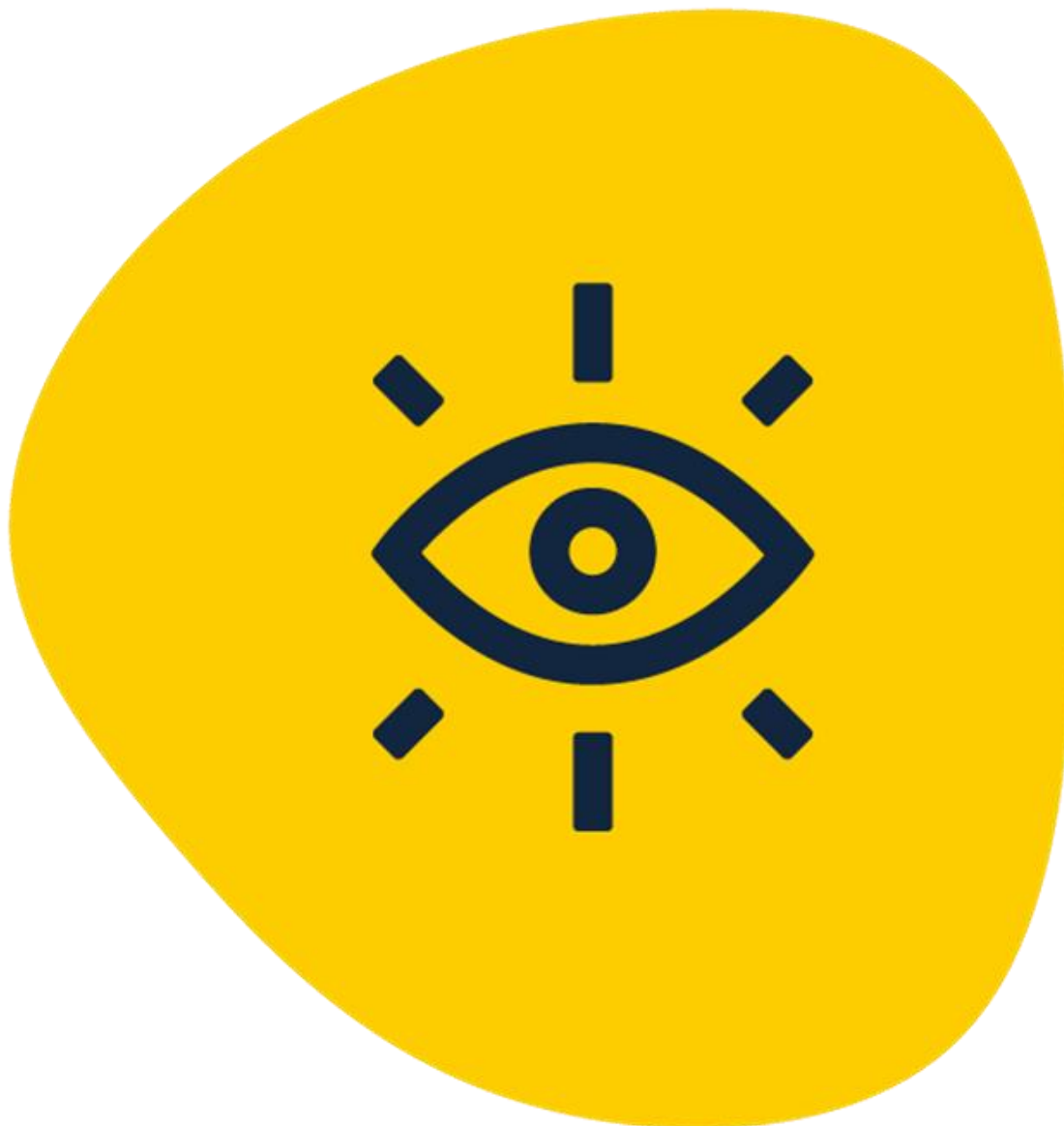
## What is this guidance?



Working Together to Safeguard Children is a piece of statutory guidance that sets out how local authorities (LAs), partner agencies and organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

Although education settings must follow the guidance, not all of the updates will be relevant to you – some will be more relevant for our designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and senior leaders.

## Updated Definition of safeguarding



The guidance has extended the definition of safeguarding. It is now centred around:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment both within and outside the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of **children's mental and physical health** or development
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care agreement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) currently still uses the previous definition, but this could be updated in 2024.

## Podcast discussing the updates to Working Together to Safeguard Children



## Types of Abuse



### Physical abuse

This is when someone hurts a child on purpose and with the intent to cause harm. This can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, or suffocating. If it causes them physical harm, such as cuts, bruises, broken bones or other injuries, it is physical abuse.

Anyone can hurt a child - a relative, friend or stranger. It can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### Signs of physical abuse

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained: bruises or cuts/burns or scalds/bite marks

Children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is when a child's feelings and emotions are manipulated or shamed on purpose. This can take different forms, for example:

- when a child is unfairly blamed for everything
- told they are stupid, worthless or ugly
- ignored or never shown any emotion in interactions

Emotional abuse is the severe and persistent ill treatment of a child. It can have long-lasting and devastating effects on a child's emotional health and development.

### **Signs of emotional abuse**

- The child is excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Emotional abuse may be the only form of abuse suffered by a child, or it might be part of a wider pattern of abuse.

### **Sexual abuse and exploitation**

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child, or inducing a child to act in sexually inappropriate ways.

*Many children and young people do not recognise themselves as victims. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong.*

The sexual abuse of children is more than just physical sexual contact. It includes:

- sexual touching, masturbation, kissing, rubbing - clothed or unclothed
- all penetrative sex
- intentionally engaging in sexual activity in front of a child
- making, showing, or distributing indecent images of children.
- grooming children for future abuse - in person or online

### **Signs of sexual abuse**

- displaying knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- using sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- asking others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- exhibiting physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy

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

### **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. This is when an individual or group takes advantage of a child (anyone under 18) to coerce, manipulate or deceive them into sexual activity.

This is done:

- in exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Even if the activity appears consensual, the victim still may have been sexually manipulated. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, and can also occur online or through social media.

### **Signs of child sexual exploitation**

- appearing regularly with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or pregnancies
- changes in emotional well-being
- misuse of drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing school or not taking part in education

### **Neglect**

Neglect is where a child is not looked after. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic and essential needs.

This can include:

- not providing adequate food, water, clothing, and shelter
- leaving a child alone in dangerous situations, or to watch after themselves when they are very young

- failure to provide medical care
- failure to meet the child's emotional needs

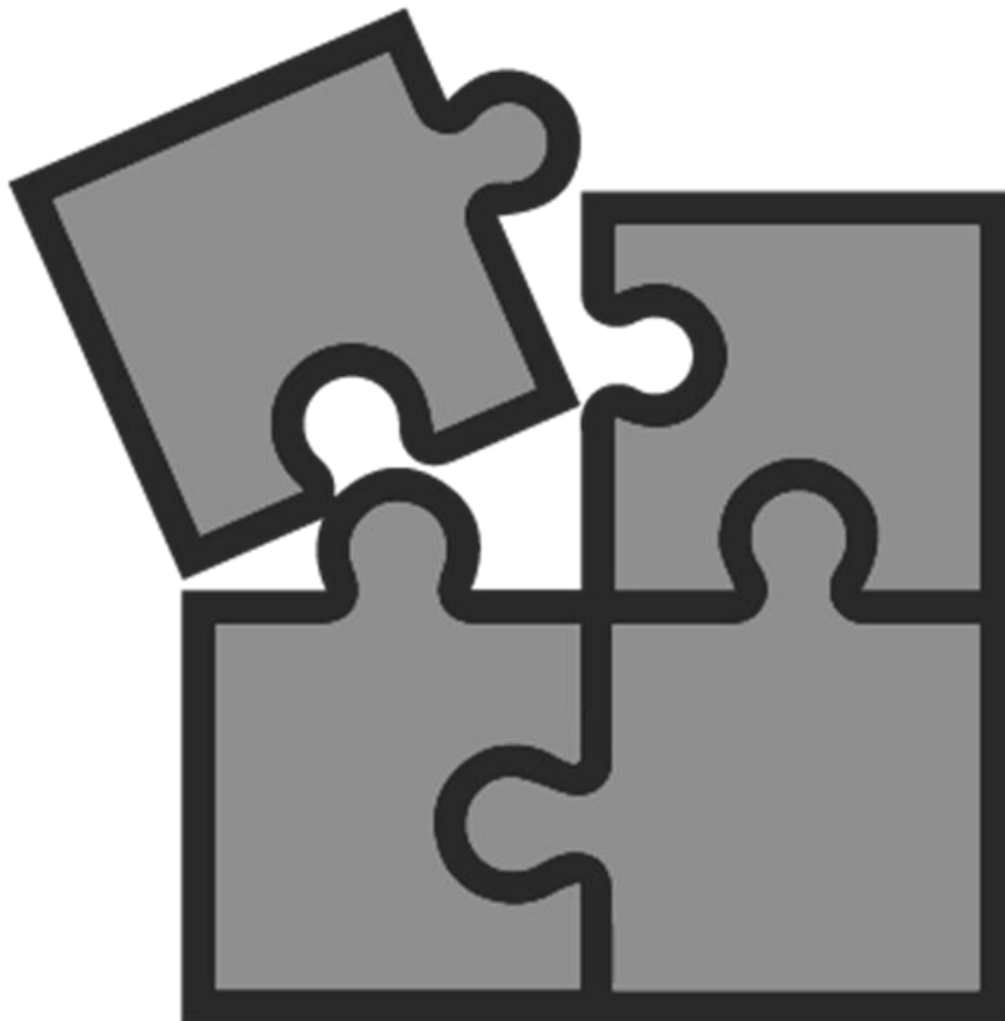
**Warning signs of neglect**

- living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- persistent hunger and signs of malnutrition
- lack of hygiene - dirty clothes and hair that may lead to lice or nits
- lack of adequate clothing for the time of year - such as not having a winter coat
- living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- often acting angry, aggressive or self-harming
- failing to receive basic health care
- parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or injured

If a child does not have a safe and stable home, this is neglect.



## What is Parental Conflict?



- Some level of arguing and conflict between parents or carers is often a normal part of everyday life
- Conflict between parents or carers that is frequent, intense and poorly resolved can have a significant negative impact on children's mental health and long-term life chances
- Damaging conflict between parents or carers could be unresolved arguing, silence, lack of respect or lack of resolution
- This conflict can affect children in all types of parental relationships, such as:
  - Parents/carers who are in a relationship, whether married or not
  - Parents/carers who have separated or divorced
  - Biological and step-parents, or other family members taking a parenting role

- Foster and adoptive parents
- Same-sex couples

### **Guidelines on working with parents and carers**

When working with parents and carers, you should:

- Avoid reinforcing family shame, suffering and blaming
- Work sensitively with parents/carers and families to understand the impact of adversity and trauma on their lives
- Understand families' backgrounds and potential barriers to accessing help and support
- Be alert and recognise when parents/carers might not be acting in the best interests of the child or the child may be experiencing abuse (and follow your school's policies and procedures)
- Make sure any communication is respectful, clear and accessible, adapted to the parents/carers' needs and makes use of translations or interpreters where necessary
- Signpost parents/carers to sources of help and support available locally and through your LA, and make sure they're aware of support that's available when meeting with the school (e.g. they can bring a friend/family member with them)

### **Extra details on 'early help'**

The updated guidance emphasises that people in education, like ourselves, are in a unique position to identify concerns and address them early, as we have daily contact with children and their families.

There are some additional risk factors that you should also consider when identifying a child who may benefit from early help. These are children who are:

- Bereaved
- Showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime
- Viewing problematic and/or inappropriate online content (for example, linked to violence), or developing inappropriate relationships online
- Suffering from mental ill health
- The child of a parent or carer in custody
- Missing education, or persistently absent from school or not receiving full-time education

Find a full list on pages 46 to 47 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

## Safeguarding Concerns

Are you  
concerned  
about a child?

### Speak to a DSL



Ms Martin  
Headteacher



Mr Gadsby  
Deputy Headteacher



Mrs Bramley  
Assistant Headteacher



Mr Glanney  
KS1 Leader



Mrs Tarling  
Acting EYFS Lead  
Nursery Lead

Record your concern in writing on

**CPOMS**

<https://biertoncombined.cpoms.net/>