

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE): September 2023 changes

An updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) will come into force on 1 September. Understand the changes and what your next steps should be.

Updated on 8 June 2022

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The 2023 version of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) comes into force on 1 September.

Please note, this article only summarises the changes between KCSIE 2022 and 2023.

There are minimal changes this year, but get up to speed with everything that's new below.

Part 1: safeguarding information for all staff

All staff working directly with children are expected to read at least part 1 of KCSIE (those who don't work directly with children can read the condensed version of part 1, in Annex A). The changes to part 1 are:

Emphasis on filtering and monitoring:

- As part of their safeguarding and online safety training, staff need to understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring systems (paragraph 14). This new emphasis is repeated several times throughout the guidance

This section also now links to the latest version of the [behaviour in schools guidance](#).

Part 2: the management of safeguarding

This sets out the responsibility of governing bodies, proprietors and management committees.

Around filtering and monitoring:

- Your governing board should make sure the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place as part of their role (paragraph 103)
- Your board should also make sure all staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of their safeguarding training (paragraph 124)
- Your child protection policy should include how your school approaches filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks (paragraph 138)
- Governing boards should review the DfE's [filtering and monitoring standards](#). Your board should discuss with your IT staff and service provider what needs to be done to support your school in meeting the standards (paragraph 142)

New wording added for clarification:

- That some children are at greater risk of harm than others, both **online and offline** (previously, it didn't make reference to online) (paragraph 170)
- Around how the term 'children missing education' is different from 'children absent from education'
- Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat can act as a warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. The guidance specifies it's important that your school's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying any abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risks of them becoming a child missing education in future (paragraph 175)

A new line has been added into the section on elective home education (EHE):

- If the parent/carer of a child with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has expressed their intention to educate their child at home, local authorities will need to review the plan and work closely with parents/carers (paragraph 178)

It's been updated with links to extra guidance and information for schools to use:

- When thinking about information security and access management, your school should consider meeting the [cyber security standards for schools and colleges](#) (paragraph 144)
- When out-of-school-setting providers use your school premises for non-school activities, guidance on [keeping children safe in out-of-school settings](#) lists the safeguarding arrangements you should expect these providers to have in place (paragraph 167)
- For further support on children with special educational needs, schools can use the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Support Services (SENDIASS) (paragraph 202)

Part 3: more details on safer recruitment measures

You should:

- Inform shortlisted candidates that you might conduct an online search as part of due diligence checks in the recruitment process (paragraph 221). Schools were prompted to consider doing these checks in KCSIE 2022, and now KCSIE 2023 adds that it's good practice to let shortlisted candidates know about these checks
- As part of ongoing vigilance, create the right culture so staff feel comfortable discussing safeguarding matters in and outside of work – the guidance has added that this includes online (paragraph 343)

Other changes

Part 4: handling allegations against staff

There's a new heading and paragraph in this section titled 'organisations or individuals using school premises'.

It says that if your school receives an allegation relating to an incident where an individual or organisation was using your school premises for running an activity for children, you should follow your safeguarding policies and procedures and inform the local authority designated officer (LADO), as you would with any safeguarding allegation (paragraph 377).

Part 5: child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

The word 'sanction' has replaced the word 'discipline' to reflect the most recent behaviour guidance:

- Paragraphs 542 and 544 now say that teachers can **sanction** pupils whose conduct falls below the standard which could be reasonably expected of them
- The heading above paragraph 544 has been tweaked to '**sanctions** and the alleged perpetrator(s)'

Annex A: safeguarding information for school and college staff

The changes here reflect the changes in section 1 of the guidance: all staff should receive appropriate safeguarding training that includes understanding their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of online safety (page 136).

Annex B: further information

Children who are absent from education

- This section has been updated to reflect the difference between children absent from education and children missing education. It says that children being absent from

school repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, as well as children missing education, can act as a warning sign of potential safeguarding issues. Early intervention is essential to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future

- **Note:** it isn't completely clear, but the guidance implies that 'children missing education' is the next step up from children being absent from education (pages 144 and 145, also see paragraph 175)

Mental health

- Attendance has been added to the list of things which can be impacted by mental health (page 148)

Radicalisation, the Prevent duty and Channel

- The section on preventing radicalisation says children may be 'susceptible' to extremist ideology and radicalisation, rather than 'vulnerable' on preventing radicalisation (page 149)
- The section on Channel has also removed the term 'vulnerable', and now refers to people as 'susceptible' and 'at risk' of being drawn into terrorism (page 151)
- There's more clarity around the fact that someone referred to Channel will be required to provide their consent before any support through the programme is provided (page 151)

Forced marriage

- Since February 2023, it's been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their 18th birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. This applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages (pages 155 and 156)

Annex C: role of the designated safeguarding lead

The only change here is that the DSL's responsibilities have been updated to include their role in taking the lead on understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place in school (page 164).

Next steps

- Check whether you need to reflect any of these changes in your [child protection policy](#).
- Make sure your child protection policy (and [online safety policy](#) if you have one) covers how your school approaches filtering and monitoring
- Check your [attendance policy](#) reflects support for children absent from education and the potential impact of mental health on attendance.
- If you have other organisations or individuals using your school premises, check your procedures for responding to any allegations, and the safeguarding arrangements these providers have in place
- Check you're meeting the DfE's [digital and technology standards](#), especially around filtering and monitoring
- Make sure your [behaviour policy](#) reflects the latest guidance.
- The next time you're recruiting, remember to inform shortlisted candidates that you might conduct an online search.

