

Keeping Children Safe in Education: statutory guidance

7. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children, including from harassment and violence. School and college staff are particularly important as they are often in a position to identify issues and intervene at an early stage. The DfE's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)¹ sets out the responsibilities that schools and colleges² have when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

8. The DfE has recently consulted on proposed revisions to strengthen the KCSIE guidance. A new version of the guidance will be issued shortly and come into force on 5 September 2016. To address concerns that incidents of sexual harassment were not being taken seriously in some cases, the guidance states specifically that: governors and proprietors should ensure the child protection policy reflects the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse and not be dismissed as part of normal behaviour. This could, for example, include girls being sexually assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence. The child protection policy should include procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and set out how allegations of abuse will be investigated and dealt with. There will be new requirements in the guidance to help children stay safe online. Children should be safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material when accessing the schools online systems. Governing bodies and proprietors are being asked to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place. In addition, governors and proprietors should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online.

¹ Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447595/KCSIE_July_2015.pdf

² including maintained nurseries and maintained schools, non-maintained special schools, independent schools, academies, pupil referrals units, further education and sixth form colleges.