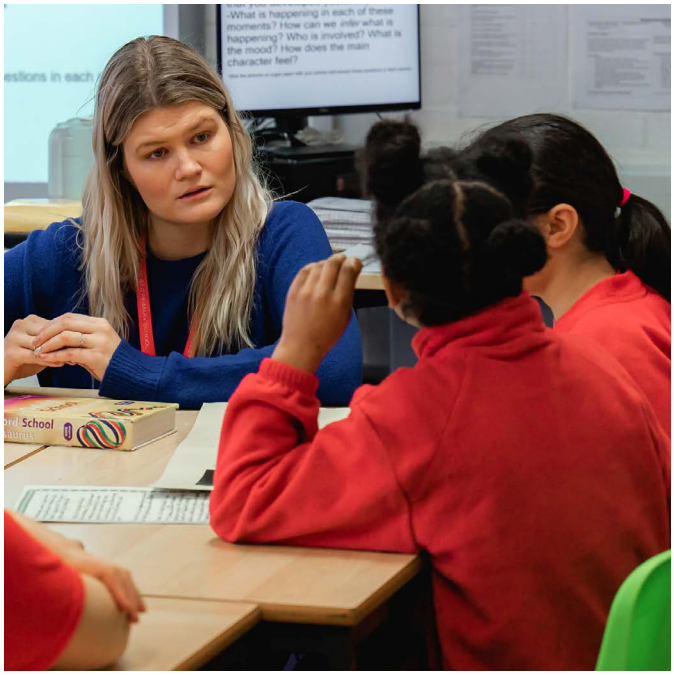
Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023: Summary of changes

The Department of Education (DfE) has updated their Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, which came into force on Friday 1st September 2023. This document includes an overview of the changes and guidance that will support you to fulfil your safeguarding responsibilities as supply staff.



Forced marriage

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022, which came into force in February 2023, states that it is a crime to carry out any conduct with the purpose of causing a child to marry before their 18th birthday. Existing forced marriage guidance applies to all kinds of marriages, including non-legally binding marriages.

Children missing and absent from education

Persistently absent children and children missing from education could be an indicator that a child is at risk of harm or that there are safeguarding issues within the family or local community around a child.

Government data shows that local authorities reported an estimated 24,700 children missing from education on census day in 2023. This figure is based on 23,100 reported by 92% of local authorities, plus an estimated figure for the missing 8%. Please see the document below for more information.

Children missing in education 2023

If you are worried about a child who is at risk of/who is missing or absent from education, report this immediately to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Filtering and monitoring online activity

The latest KCSIE update has a large focus on filtering and monitoring processes within schools. This refers to appropriate checks and safeguards being in place regarding a child's online activity when using school technology and to ensure that dangerous content is blocked. Equally, there needs to be an IT system in place to identify if a child is searching for harmful content, so that appropriate action can be taken to keep them safe.

How does this impact you?

- All staff, including supply staff, have a responsibility to contribute to the school's successful filtering and monitoring of their IT systems.
- All staff should know how to report and record concerns about a student's IT use – ensure you know how to report concerns to the school's DSL from the start of each placement.
- If you are concerned that a student has accessed something unsuitable, don't assume that it has been picked up by the filtering and monitoring system. You might report something that you overhear a young person mention they have accessed on the school system, or it could be something that they access in a lesson. Any concerns need to be reported to the DSL, who holds the responsibility for filtering and monitoring within their school.
- Report if you have been able to access unsuitable material on a school device.
- It can be helpful if you speak to the DSL and IT team in advance if you know that you will be teaching topics that will create unusual activity that could alert the IT monitoring system.
- Report if there is a failure in the software or abuse of the system, for example, if you notice abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material.

KCSIE guidance: Summary of changes

Part 1: Safeguarding information for all staff	
Paragraph 13 What staff need to know	Updated link to **Behaviour in schools** guidance.
Paragraph 14 What staff need to know	New text added to raise awareness of the existing expectation for relevant staff to understand filtering and monitoring.
Part 2: The management of safeguarding	
Paragraph 124 Staff training	New text added to make clear staff training should include understanding roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.
Paragraph 138 Online safety	Reference to child protection policies and appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks.
Paragraph 142 Filtering and monitoring	Added new section referencing the newly published filtering and monitoring standards. The standards are to support schools to meet their duty to have appropriate/effective filtering and monitoring systems in place.
Paragraph 144 Information security	Reference to cyber security standards.
Paragraph 167 Use of school or college premises for non-school/ college activities	Updated to reference keeping children safe in out-of-school settings.
Paragraph 175 Children who are absent from education	Clarification provided on the difference between children missing education and children absent from education.
Paragraph 202 Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues	Additional signposting to specialist organisations for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
Part 3: Safer recruitment	
Footnote 221 Recruitment - shortlisting	Clarification that it is good practice for schools to inform shortlisted candidates that online searches will be carried out.
Part 4: Allegations/concerns	
New heading and paragraph	Organisations or individuals using school premises.
Part five: Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment	
Throughout the guidance	Revised to reflect wording in behaviour in schools guidance. .
Annex A: Safeguarding information for school and college staff	
	Revised to reflect changes in KCSIE (Part 1).
Annex B: Further information	
Children absent from education	Revised to reflect the difference between children absent from education and children missing education.
Forced marriage	Reflects changes in law from February 2023.
Child exploitation	New reference to multi-agency practice principles.

The changes are reflected across the broader statutory guidance provided for schools and colleges. It's your responsibility as a staff member in education to ensure you have read the **Keeping children safe in education 2023: For school and college staff (part 1) guidance,** which is a condensed version of the full guidance document.