

Centre of
expertise
on child
sexual abuse

Implementing a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse

A framework for
all education settings
working with children



April 2026

About the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre)

The CSA Centre's overall aim is to reduce the impact of child sexual abuse through improved prevention and better response, so that children can live free from the threat and harm of sexual abuse.

We are a multi-disciplinary team, funded by the Home Office and hosted by Barnardo's, working closely with key partners from academic institutions, local authorities, health, education, police and the voluntary sector. We aim to:

- increase the priority given to child sexual abuse, by improving understanding of its scale and nature
- improve identification of and response to all children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse
- enable more effective disruption and prevention of child sexual abuse, through better understanding of sexually abusive behaviour/perpetration.

We seek to bring about these changes by:

- producing and sharing information about the scale and nature of, and response to, child sexual abuse
- addressing gaps in knowledge through sharing research and evidence
- providing training and support for professionals and researchers working in the field
- engaging with and influencing policy.

For more information on our work, please visit our website:

www.csacentre.org.uk 

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Introduction

Child sexual abuse affects more children than many of us realise. Analysis by the Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse (CSA Centre) indicates that **around one in 10 children experience some form of sexual abuse before they turn 16**. Girls are three times as likely than boys to be abused, though boys are also at significant risk. Most children who are sexually abused will not tell anyone at the time, and many never tell anyone at all.

This is not because children do not want our help. Research consistently shows that children face significant barriers to telling such as fear, shame, confusion, loyalty to the person harming them, or simply not having the words or understanding to describe what is happening. Some survivors recall trying to tell someone, but their attempts were not understood, or the signs were noticed but attributed to something else entirely.

In education, a 'whole-school approach' offers a way to tackle complex issues by involving the whole community in working together to build and embed processes and strategies that provide a sustainable and holistic response to issues such as health and wellbeing, behaviour and learning. Applied to child sexual abuse, this approach can ensure that all professionals in your education setting have the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to talk to children when they have concerns, and that those concerns will be responded to consistently. This includes concerns about sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour with an online element.

The evidence tells us that, when education settings respond well and staff feel equipped to notice concerns and speak to children about them, the effect can be transformative. Children who are listened to and believed are more likely to access support, and to begin recovering from the harm that has happened to them.

Who is this framework for?

This framework is for anyone working in an education setting who has additional safeguarding responsibilities, including those who deliver and review safeguarding improvement activities. Whether you are a **designated safeguarding lead/professional**,¹ a **staff professional development coordinator**, part of a **leadership team**, or a **governor or trustee**, the framework provides evidence-based resources and learning to:

- help you review how well your education setting understands, prevents and responds to all forms of child sexual abuse
- support your improvement activity.

As an education leader, you are in a unique position. You and your colleagues see children every day, often over many years. You notice when something changes. You build relationships that can become the foundation for a child to feel safe enough to seek help. And when abuse does become known, your response can shape whether that child's experience is one of being believed and supported, or of being dismissed and silenced.

Even thinking about children you know being sexually abused, or displaying harmful sexual behaviour themselves, can be difficult – and taking action can feel even more daunting. But you are not alone. You already have the skills to be able to recognise, support and safeguard a sexually abused child, and keep them and other children safe. What this framework offers is a structure to build on what you already do well, with specific knowledge about child sexual abuse that will help you and your colleagues respond with greater confidence.

1. The role is 'designated safeguarding lead' in England and 'designated safeguarding professional' in Wales.

We understand that you may be contemplating using this framework while facing a mountain of competing pressures which make it feel like now is not the right time. It is worth keeping in mind, however, that children in your education setting are very likely to be experiencing child sexual abuse already, and that incidents of harmful sexual behaviour between pupils – including in online contexts – are rising. The need to respond well to these issues is not something that can wait indefinitely, and implementing a whole-school approach will significantly reduce pressures in the longer term.

If your capacity is genuinely limited right now, it may help to know that this framework does not need to be completed all at once. The audit is divided into six areas of practice which can be worked through individually over time, and the process can be shaped around your setting's existing improvement planning cycles. In the meantime, we recommend two free resources that are relevant to every adult in your setting and can be used immediately:

- [*What You Need to Know about Child Sexual Abuse*](#)
- our 90-minute [eLearning](#) course on identifying and responding to intra-familial child sexual abuse.

They will give your colleagues an excellent grounding for when there is more capacity for a broader piece of work.

How the framework was developed

The framework for a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse was developed by the CSA Centre in partnership with a range of education settings across England and Wales, in two waves during the academic years 2023/24 and 2025/26. Education settings that have piloted the framework include primary and secondary schools (some of which also have early years provision) in both the state and independent sectors, and a pupil referral unit.

Leaders in each of these pilot settings undertook an audit, designed to help them think about their practice in relation to child sexual abuse. Once their audits were complete, the pilot settings were supported to develop improvement plans to address the audit findings. They determined their own improvement activities, supported by research-informed training and practice resources developed by the CSA Centre.

Throughout the pilots, the CSA Centre's research and evaluation team tracked the progress made by the participating settings, identifying the enablers and barriers that emerged. This allowed us to learn alongside the pilot settings, and helped shape and strengthen the final framework. Learning from the first wave of pilots in 2023/24 informed the second wave, which is still ongoing at the time of publication; learning from the second wave will be incorporated into future editions of this resource.

Terminology

For the sake of simplicity, in this resource we generally use the term '**child**' to mean anyone under the age of 18. It is important to remember that teenagers as well as younger children can be subjected to child sexual abuse.

We use the term '**parent**' to encompass any parent/carer of a child, including a biological parent, step-parent, adoptive parent, foster parent or any other relative (such as a grandparent) who is the child's main caregiver.

We use '**setting**' to refer to a child's place of learning; the term covers early years provision, primary and secondary schools (including residential schools), special schools, post-16 provision, pupil referral units, etc.

Summary of the framework process

The framework for implementing a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse consists of four broad stages, which are reflected in the structure of this resource:

- A. Prepare
- B. Audit
- C. Plan improvements
- D. Deliver and embed

We have produced templates and guides to support you through each stage of the process, and to help you to respond to specific pupil groups.

Settings are encouraged to take a collaborative approach to each stage of the framework.

The audit of your setting is broken down into six areas of practice; these can be audited simultaneously, or individually over a longer time period if there are competing priorities for your setting at present.



2. What is a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse?

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Beyond individual practice: structures, systems and culture

We know that most children who have been sexually abused never receive any intervention from children's social care or the police, because the abuse is not recognised or it is deemed not to meet the threshold for statutory intervention. This does not mean that the abuse hasn't happened, or that they don't need support. Rather than telling anyone verbally that they have been abused, some children will show signs that something is wrong, such as changes in behaviour, difficulties with attendance, or withdrawal from learning. Some others may instead completely immerse themselves in their education and over-perform.

Children need adults who are willing to be curious, to ask careful questions, and to take their concerns seriously, even when the child cannot yet put their experience into words. Doing this opens the door to support. It communicates to the child that they matter; that what is happening to them is not OK; that they are not alone; and, if they have been able to talk to you, that you believe them. For many children, this is where healing begins.

Confident, skilled staff are therefore essential, but how well your education setting identifies and responds to child sexual abuse also depends on its structures and systems that surround individual practice. These include:

- how policies are reviewed and implemented
- how concerns are recorded and reviewed
- how information is shared
- how your curriculum addresses relationships and safety
- how your culture supports children to trust the adults around them, and supports those adults to exercise their curiosity and discuss their concerns.

This framework will guide you through an audit of these broad elements, to help you identify where your systems strengthen practice and where they may inadvertently create gaps. You may find, for example, that your staff feel confident responding to disclosures but your recording practices make it difficult to spot patterns over time – or that your safeguarding policy is in place but is not well understood by all staff.

By taking this structured, whole-school approach, responsibility for responding to child sexual abuse moves beyond individual expertise and becomes embedded across your setting. When your structures, systems and culture align, children are more likely to be noticed, believed and supported regardless of which member of staff they happen to encounter.

Working with others, but focusing on where you can make a difference

The phrase ‘whole-school approach’ can sometimes create a misunderstanding that it means tackling issues without external input, but we know an effective whole-school safeguarding approach requires multi-agency working: social care, police, health services, and specialist support organisations all have critical roles to play. Nothing in this framework is intended to replace those partnerships, or to suggest that staff in a child’s education setting should become the sole responders to child sexual abuse.

However, the reality is that you have the most influence over what happens within your own setting. You can shape your culture, train your staff team, strengthen your curriculum, and improve how you respond when concerns arise. You have less control over what happens in other agencies, including their thresholds for involvement, their capacity, and their response times. By focusing on what you can influence, you can create a safer, more consistent environment for children, regardless of the challenges beyond your setting.

A whole-school approach provides a foundation that makes multi-agency working more effective: when education settings are consistent, well-trained and clear in their own responses, they are better placed to work alongside statutory agencies and other organisations to protect children.

Compliance with statutory safeguarding guidance and recommended good practice

All education settings have to comply with firmly established statutory duties to safeguard children, set out in statutory guidance such as the following:

Country	Guidance title	What does this cover?
England	<u><i>Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)</i></u>	Safeguarding and safer recruitment in schools and colleges
England	<u><i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i></u>	Inter-agency child protection across sectors
Wales	<u><i>Keeping Learners Safe</i></u>	Statutory duties under the Education Act 2002 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
Wales	<u><i>Handling Allegations of Abuse against Staff</i></u>	Procedures for managing staff abuse allegations
Wales	<u><i>Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse in Wales</i></u>	National strategy setting out how Wales will prevent and respond to child sexual abuse, including by equipping professionals with the knowledge and tools needed to respond effectively
Wales	<u><i>Safeguarding guidance collection</i></u>	Supplementary statutory frameworks and tools

For example, paragraph 79 of [*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*](#) states:

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools and colleges are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding.

However, while statutory guidance sets out clear expectations for safeguarding and recommends taking a whole-school approach, it is limited in the advice about how to embed the most promising practice.

This framework addresses that issue, guiding you and your setting through a comprehensive audit and improvement-planning process so you can pinpoint areas for improvement and successfully implement a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse.

In November 2024, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel published the findings from a national review, [*“I Wanted Them All to Notice”: Protecting Children and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment*](#). While the focus of the national review was child sexual abuse within the family, its findings and recommendations are applicable to all forms of child sexual abuse. The report stated:

The findings of this national review clearly illustrate the scale of the challenge facing practitioners, and indeed wider society, in identifying, responding to and preventing child sexual abuse in the family environment. They highlight a systemic failure across all agencies to recognise and respond when children are at risk of, or are already, being sexually abused by someone in their family environment.

Among the report’s recommendations were two that are especially relevant to the framework for a whole-school approach.

Recommendation 2: Professional knowledge, skills and confidence.

Government should take the necessary steps, working with professional bodies, to ensure that practitioners and managers have the necessary skills, knowledge and capabilities, including access to relevant guidance and multi agency training.

Recommendation 5: Talking to children. *Government should ensure that practitioners understand that they can and should talk directly to children, and families, about concerns of sexual abuse.*

The framework gives your setting access to high-quality practice resources, information and guidance so your staff have the skills and knowledge specified in these recommendations.

How can a whole-school approach make a difference in your education setting?

The CSA Centre has produced a wide range of resources (detailed in our [CSA Centre resources sheet](#)) to support education professionals' practice in relation to child sexual abuse – but using our framework to implement a whole-school approach will enable you to go beyond individual practice and ensure that your setting's structures and systems are facilitating rather than hindering your response to that abuse. Please note that these are only examples of the differences that a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse can make.

Improved understanding of all forms of child sexual abuse

All education settings must respond dynamically to changing safeguarding priorities. These can be influenced by many factors, including what you know about the risks to individual children or groups of children, or other factors and contexts which may increase the opportunities for harm to occur.

The media can also heavily influence the lens through which we see child sexual abuse, driving both national and local agendas. This can result in staff in your setting having a narrow focus on the type of harm and circumstances where they think child sexual abuse is most likely to happen. Additionally, they may find it difficult to accept that anyone would sexually abuse children, and especially certain groups such as very young children and disabled children.

To keep children safe, your staff should be considering all forms of child sexual abuse and know that this abuse can happen to any child – and that children themselves can engage in harmful sexual behaviour.

“The thought of telling anyone was just ... It just didn't even dawn on me. I mean I don't even know what happened to me, I didn't know this happened to boys – who would believe me?”²

By supporting you to audit staff knowledge and confidence across your setting, and to implement improvements, this framework can give you confidence that staff across your setting appreciate the scale and nature of child sexual abuse and understand the different contexts in which it takes place, including::

- child sexual abuse by adults in the family network (including neighbours and friends of the family)
- child sexual abuse by other trusted adults
- harmful sexual behaviour by siblings
- harmful sexual behaviour by other children or young people
- child sexual exploitation
- child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour in online contexts; it is important to note, though, that digital technologies can feature in almost all forms of child sexual abuse.

2. Interviewee in the study *The Voices of Male Survivors: The Lived Experiences of Adult Male Victims of Child Sexual Abuse* (Azzaro, 2019; University of Pennsylvania).

Recognising and identifying signs and indicators of possible child sexual abuse

“I think that sometimes people slip through the net, because they are very good at hiding, and they don’t always show what they really feel about things so I think, sometimes too many people get missed ... Sometimes it’s right under people’s noses and they just don’t recognise it.”³

Research shows that children face many barriers to communicating about sexual abuse, so it is up to adults to notice the signs and indicators of possible sexual abuse and speak to children when they have concerns. This can include signs in the behaviour of the children themselves, and also in the behaviour of adults (whether within the child’s family/social network or in formal settings such as health or education, for example) who may be of concern; people who sexually abuse children are most often known to them, and education settings are not exempt from this reality.

With training and support, these signs and indicators can be better understood, and changes in a child’s well-being, engagement or behaviour can be explored as potential indicators of abuse. Without training, misconceptions can influence thinking and practice – staff may make assumptions about who is likely to offend, how prevalent sexual abuse is, or which children are most at risk. Any child can be sexually abused; this harm cuts across all socio-economic backgrounds, and those who offend are often known to the child, often within their immediate family or wider network.

“My college tutor ... was absolutely amazing. He noticed something was wrong, I don’t know how because he didn’t really know me.”⁴

As well as enabling you to identify gaps in knowledge and confidence so you can arrange appropriate training around identifying signs and indicators, this framework can also help you to embed consistent practices so that individual colleagues’ concerns that a child is being or has been sexually abused can be combined to construct a fuller picture of what is going on.

Talking to children about child sexual abuse

“I never went and asked for help, but no one ever asked me if I needed help.”⁵

Many education practitioners will have received limited training or support to inform their practice around child sexual abuse, and may believe that talking to a child about sexual abuse is something that only a specialist can do.

However, it’s imperative to realise that a confident early response can prevent abuse from continuing or escalating. If a staff member has a concern about possible sexual abuse, it is often most appropriate for them to talk to the child about it themselves immediately– and in cases where a child feels able to approach a staff member and tell them about sexual abuse, that staff member will need to know what they should and should not do or say at that point. As paragraph 3.18 of *Keeping Learners Safe* says:

Children will talk about their concerns and problems with people they feel they can trust and are comfortable with. This will not necessarily be a teacher or the [designated safeguarding professional], but could be any member of staff within the education setting. It is therefore essential that all staff and volunteers know how to respond sensitively to a child’s concerns, who to approach for advice, and the importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality.

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3. Interviewee in the study *Child Sexual Exploitation in South-East Wales: Problems and Solutions from the Perspectives of Young People and Professionals* (Hallett, 2013; University of Cardiff).
 4. Interviewee in the study *Making Noise: Children’s Voices for Positive Change after Sexual Abuse. Children’s Experiences of Help-seeking and Support after Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment* (Warrington et al, 2017; University of Bedfordshire).
 5. Interviewee in the study *No One Noticed, No One Heard: A Study of Disclosures of Childhood Abuse* (Allnock and Miller, 2013; NSPCC).

A whole-school approach can ensure that policies and procedures are clear, so that all staff know exactly what they should do in different circumstances – and recognise that they already have the skills they need to talk to a child about even such a sensitive subject.

Responding to harmful sexual behaviour between children

“We’re still being a bit too reactive and not proactive enough so we’re not going on to CPOMS and putting in reports and saying what is our data telling us? We’re not analysing trends over time and looking at what is happening in the community.”⁶

The CSA Centre’s [Key Messages from Research on Children and Young People Who Display Harmful Sexual Behaviour](#) highlights that harmful sexual behaviour is more common than is widely thought, and is often an indicator of other issues:

There are no accurate prevalence figures on the full spectrum of harmful sexual behaviours. However, available data suggests that under-18s are responsible for a significant proportion of child sexual abuse, and there is considerable concern about widespread and ‘normalised’ sexual harassment and abuse between students in schools. ... Most pre-adolescent children displaying harmful sexual behaviour have themselves been sexually abused or experienced other kinds of trauma or neglect.

If incidents of harmful sexual behaviour occur involving children in your setting, there are many challenges to ensure that your response is proportionate and fair – especially if you are managing conflicting expectations from the children involved, their parents, and other people in their network – each of whom may hold a very different view about how the incident should be responded to. This can be further complicated by factors relating to the ages of the children, when and where the incident took place, who was involved, whether there was an online element and/or images were involved, and misinformation on social media.

This framework supports your setting to consider the factors that inform your response to incidents of harmful sexual behaviour, and to focus on consistency in the recording and reporting of concerns and incidents. Consistent data recording, followed by analysis, can help you to:

- plan improved responses and interventions
- review your curriculum offer
- review your policies and practice
- plan support and training for your staff
- engage with specialist support.

Recording reliable data can also improve information sharing with other professionals, including your local or regional safeguarding partnership, potentially helping to identify trends and develop a broader system response.

6. Project leader in one of the schools that piloted the whole-school approach

Part A. Prepare

Preliminary steps

For this framework to be enacted successfully, your education setting will need governors, trustees and a senior leadership team that are all fully informed about and committed to the decision to develop a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse. They will need to demonstrate visible commitment by allocating resources so that the audit, improvement planning and delivery stages run as smoothly as they can.

The senior leadership team should identify a **project leader** who will lead the work in your setting, and a deputy/assistant leader, just as they would for any significant improvement activity. Make sure the project leader is allocated time to understand the process and to prepare before engaging other colleagues.

Consider when it will be best to undertake this work, and how long to allow for it to take; how will working through the framework fit with your existing improvement or development plan schedules? If you intend to implement your improvement plan at the start of an academic year, you should start your audit activities at the beginning of the preceding term, or earlier if possible. This will give you time to prepare, engage colleagues and other stakeholders, and then plan and schedule your improvement activity.

Think too about how long the process is likely to take. The audit of your setting is divided into six areas of practice, which do not have to be audited all at the same time; while maintaining momentum will be important, you need to think realistically about your setting's capacity and other current priorities.

Remember that the audit and improvement planning activities are best completed with a range of staff input. At the appropriate points, these will need to be built into existing meeting schedules so that colleagues can prepare and are not overburdened.



Getting started as project leader

If you are the project leader, it is helpful for you to summarise the characteristics of your setting prior to the audit. Information to record includes categories of pupil needs and any recent concerns or recorded incidents relating to any form of child sexual abuse – from low-level incidents through to the most serious. You may have this information easily to hand, or you can collate it on our [‘Characteristics of your education setting’ template](#).

The next step is to arrange a full staff meeting where you brief your colleagues about why your setting is using this framework to develop and implement a whole-school approach to child sexual abuse. You can use or adapt our [staff briefing handout](#) to support this meeting.

Identifying colleagues to help you conduct the audit

The audit of your setting will be divided into six areas of practice, covering **whether** and **how**:

- (1) your **ethos, values** and **culture** promote safe and respectful relationships
- (2) staff are **equipped to notice, respond to and prevent** child sexual abuse
- (3) learning opportunities throughout the curriculum **promote safe and healthy relationships**
- (4) engagement with and support for children is **underpinned by trauma-informed practice**
- (5) **engagement with your community and professional networks** informs your response to child sexual abuse
- (6) you respond to concerns about child sexual abuse **promptly, fairly and consistently**.

These six areas do not need to be audited all at once; if you have limited time and resources for a full audit in your setting over the next academic year, talk to your leadership team about the potential to defer auditing some areas until the following year.

We recommend that you enlist at least one named colleague to complete and ‘own’ each of the six audit areas; this will ensure that a range of viewpoints are captured, and will reduce your workload at this stage. It may be appropriate for multiple colleagues to co-own sections.

With your leadership team, identify which colleague(s) will coordinate the audit of each area of practice. Colleagues to consider involving include the RSHE lead, the Pastoral/SEND lead, the Safeguarding Governor/Trustee, lunch/break-time supervisors, and the admin/IT lead for data.

Part B. Audit

Why is the audit divided into six areas?

As noted in Part A above, the audit is divided into six broad areas of practice, each of which has prompts to help you develop an understanding of your education setting's current practice in response to child sexual abuse. Completing the audit will give you an indication of where practice is secure and help you identify any gaps in practice.

This division enables the audits of the different areas of practice to be led and 'owned' by the most appropriate staff members; allows the full audit to be completed in sections rather than all at once if necessary; and helps all staff to think about their response to child sexual abuse in a structured way.

"It was really nice to have a structure to that thinking rather than just this blank canvas of 'Where do I begin?' And the way it was formatted is nice and quite simple, but also really good to be able to populate it as much or as little as I felt was best for my thinking. It had that degree of flexibility."⁷

(1) Do your setting's ethos, values and culture promote safe and respectful relationships between all members of the community?

Paragraph 345 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025* states:

Good safeguarding requires a continuing commitment from governing bodies, proprietors, and all staff to ensure the safety and welfare of children is embedded in all of the organisation's processes and procedures and consequentially enshrined in its ethos.

When your setting genuinely lives its values around safe and respectful relationships, children are more likely to trust adults enough to seek help. Having a clear commitment that promotes safe and respectful relationships can be a highly protective factor – but it needs all staff to feel able to share concerns, including those relating to a colleague's inappropriate behaviour, no matter what position they each hold in your setting.

Such a commitment helps to prevent child sexual abuse by reducing risk, increasing early identification, and creating environments in which children feel secure and supported. Statutory safeguarding guidance emphasises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and that all staff must help provide a safe environment for children to learn.

An ethos of respectful relationships helps to support the curriculum and wider practice that teaches children about boundaries, consent, respect, and where to get help. It also helps your setting to respond better when concerns arise, by ensuring that your staff act consistently, calmly and in line with safeguarding procedures.

In settings where a culture of respectful relationships is 'alive' in daily practice, children are more likely view the adults around them as trustworthy, and recognise where those adults' behaviour may be inappropriate or abusive – and, if they seek help, they will have confidence that they will be listened to.

7. Project leader in one of the schools that piloted the whole-school approach.

(2) Is your staff team equipped to notice, respond to and prevent child sexual abuse?

All education staff – from early years settings through to post 16 provision – must be equipped to notice and respond to the signs and indicators of child sexual abuse, and to prevent that abuse. Children may not tell anyone at the time (or ever feel able to tell anyone) about sexual abuse, for a variety of reasons: they may feel fear, shame, confusion, or loyalty to the abuser; they may be coerced or threatened; or they may not recognise what is happening to them as harmful. The CSA Centre's [What You Need to Know about Child Sexual Abuse](#) advises all professionals:

Children may display different signs of having been abused, including emotional, behavioural and/or physical signs. Be alert too for indicators of harm in the people around the child, or vulnerabilities in the family or environment around them.

Education staff are uniquely placed to notice concerns early or spot changes over time, after which they can take action to prevent harm from continuing or escalating. Paragraphs 4 and 50 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) highlight that, while children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone, this should not stop staff from exercising professional curiosity and intervening when they have concerns.

School and college staff are particularly important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. ... If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

When staff feel equipped with knowledge and confidence about how to talk to children and identify signs and indicators of possible sexual abuse, they are better able to protect children and prevent further harm. As the CSA Centre's [Key Messages from Research on Identifying and Responding to Disclosures of Child Sexual Abuse](#) notes:

Teachers are the professionals to whom children will most commonly disclose, but the disclosure process can be helped or hindered by the way in which any professional engages with a child.

(3) Do learning opportunities throughout the curriculum promote safe and healthy relationships?

High-quality, sensitively delivered PSHE/RSE can be a highly protective factor for children. It helps them to understand and develop safe, respectful relationships and learn about issues such as personal boundaries, consent, abuse, grooming, coercion and harassment. It can also help children to recognise harm, and give them the language and confidence to tell someone about any concerns they might have – while giving staff opportunities to interact with children and learn what issues most affect them. As the [PSHE Association website](#) says:

RSE supports pupils to develop healthy relationships in various contexts, and to know when to seek help.

Reviews by both Estyn and Ofsted have highlighted that pupils want clearer teaching about topics that are important to them; for PSHE and RSE curriculums to be effective, they need to align more with what is happening in children's lives. To help achieve that, children need well-planned, safe and inclusive opportunities to share what is important to them – and their education settings should also seek their views about how content is delivered and how it might be improved. The UK Government's [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education Guidance](#) acknowledges:

Listening and responding to the views of pupils and parents helps to ensure that RSE meets pupils' needs and that topics are taught at the right time to support children to build positive relationships and avoid harms before they occur.

(4) Is engagement with and support for pupils underpinned by an understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma?

An understanding of trauma-informed practice is crucial when responding to concerns about sexual abuse, because trauma can shape how children behave, communicate and talk to adults. Many children are embarrassed, threatened, or unable to describe what is happening; as a consequence, their behaviour may change or be difficult to make sense of or understand. Paragraph 538 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#) advises:

Children who have experienced sexual violence display a very wide range of responses to their experience, including in some cases clear signs of trauma, physical and emotional responses, or no overt signs at all. Schools and colleges should remain alert to the possible challenges of detecting those signs and show sensitivity to the needs of the child (e.g. about attendance in lessons) irrespective of how overt the child's distress is.

Staff in your setting may need to consider additional factors in order to understand fully the experiences of children from different backgrounds or with different characteristics, and those with certain special educational needs or disabilities; our advice guides (see [Appendix 1](#)) contain supporting information which can help your thinking.

Examples of trauma-informed practice include listening calmly, avoiding repeated questioning, being transparent about what needs to happen next, and ensuring that the child is reassured and not blamed. These help staff to:

- prioritise the child's safety, trust and empowerment – children who feel believed and supported are more likely to engage with help
- look beyond presenting behaviour
- respond in ways that reduce re-traumatisation.

(5) Is your setting's response to child sexual abuse informed by engagement with your community and professional networks?

Children's vulnerability to sexual abuse can be influenced by their peer groups, neighbourhoods, local venues and online spaces; engaging with community partners can help your setting to understand where and how risks are emerging locally (for example, by identifying unsupervised spaces, online trends, or dynamics between groups of children). Paragraph 66 of [*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*](#) states:

Strong, effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements should be responsive to local circumstances and engage the right people in a collaborative way. This approach requires flexibility from all relevant agencies, to enable joint identification and response to existing and emerging needs, and to agree priorities to improve outcomes for children.

Engaging with the wider community (including families, local services, faith/community groups, and youth services) and professional networks (such as local safeguarding partners, designated safeguarding lead/professional networks, local health services, children's social care, the police, and specialist services) is important because child sexual abuse risk is shaped by context, and no single setting is likely to hold the full picture.

The introduction to [*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*](#) states:

[Protecting and supporting children] requires individuals, agencies, and organisations to be clear about their own and each other's roles and responsibilities, and how they work together. ... Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

Community engagement helps your setting to better understand the lived experiences for the children in your care, and to avoid making assumptions. It can also contribute to improving how individuals within communities seek help when they need it.

(6) Does your setting respond to concerns about child sexual abuse promptly, fairly and consistently?

Responding to incidents or concerns about child sexual abuse promptly, fairly and consistently is essential: it protects children from further harm, builds trust so that children feel able to speak up, and helps your setting to meet its safeguarding duties in a child centred way. It also reduces the risk of unsafe practice (such as delay, minimisation, or inappropriate responses) and supports proportionate decision making for everyone involved.

- When concerns are acted on promptly, your setting can take immediate protective action. This can safeguard children by stopping the abuse or preventing escalation.
- A fair response avoids victim blaming, does not minimise the harm that a child has suffered, is not based on assumptions, and can help the child feel listened to and supported.
- A consistent response helps to reduce the impact of unconscious bias and ensures that children receive similar levels of support – tailored to their needs – regardless of their background, vulnerability, disability, language needs, or identity.

Plan and carry out the audit

As project leader, you should study the [audit template](#) carefully before commencing the audit, and refer to the [audit guide](#) for advice on populating the template with your findings. Appendix 2 shows the structure of the audit template; for each area of practice, it lists the key themes and the elements of knowledge/practice to be audited, as well as the CSA Centre resources relevant to that theme.

We recommend that you also have an early conversation with each of your 'area coordinators' – the colleagues you have asked to lead the audit of each area of practice – to explain why they have been chosen and why it is important to gain an understanding of your setting's practice in that area (see section A2).

You may decide that the colleague(s) responsible for completing each audit area would benefit from a short briefing session to go through the template and guide, so they understand how the audit stage should be conducted.

The audit is designed to be completed in three stages. Across all stages, you as project leader hold overall responsibility for coordinating the process, while your area coordinators are responsible for gathering and presenting evidence for their allocated area.

In terms of overall effort, the audit is designed to be manageable; the work is spread across a project leader and area coordinators working largely in parallel, so no single person carries the full load. The suggested timings below are estimates and will depend on the size of your setting. In addition, the time required will vary depending on whether surveys and/or focus groups are used to gather views, and how well existing meeting structures can be drawn on. How long the audit takes from start to finish will depend on your staff availability and the scope of the approach you take.



Stage 1: Introductory meeting

Led by the project leader

Estimated time: 1 hour

Bring together all area coordinators for a structured briefing. Use this session to:

- explain the purpose and structure of the audit
- walk through the audit template together, so everyone understands how evidence should be recorded and rated
- confirm which colleague(s) are coordinating each of the six areas
- agree a timeline for Stages 2 and 3, including a date for the reflection and rating meeting
- discuss whether to use pupil surveys, staff surveys or focus groups (see Chapter B3 below) – and, if so, agree who will lead these and when.

Stage 2: Evidence gathering

Led by each area coordinator, working independently between Stages 1 and 3

Estimated time per area coordinator: 1–3 hours for core evidence gathering, plus additional time if surveys and/or focus groups are used

Following the introductory meeting, each area coordinator gathers evidence for their area of practice. They should draw on a range of sources to build a rounded picture of how child sexual abuse is currently noticed, responded to and prevented in your setting; methods used may include brief observations, short conversations with relevant colleagues, and a review of relevant documents, policies or records.

We estimate that this core evidence-gathering activity is likely to take up to three hours for each area of practice. More time will be required if pupil/staff surveys or focus groups are used to inform any of the six areas – but the additional insights that these can provide are valuable and worth the extra time and effort where possible.

As they conduct the audit, the area coordinators should note their evidence and any areas for improvement that they identify, ready to present their findings at the reflection and rating meeting.

Stage 3: Reflection and rating meeting

Facilitated by the project leader; all area coordinators attend and present their findings

Estimated time: 1–1.5 hours

Once the evidence gathering is complete, bring the group back together for a session where:

- each area coordinator briefly presents the evidence they have gathered for their area of practice
- the group discusses and agrees a rating for each line of enquiry, placing evidence under the most accurate descriptor ('A consistently strong feature', 'Some good practice', or 'An emerging area of practice')
- promising practice and gaps in practice are noted
- initial ideas for the improvement plan are captured in the final column of the audit template.

Because each area coordinator should arrive prepared with their evidence, this meeting is focused on discussion and recording rather than starting from scratch; hence it can be completed in a relatively short time.



Gather data from different sources

B3

A broad range of evidence will strengthen your assessment of current practice in each area of the audit. Consider how you can represent a wide range of stakeholders from across your setting, so that different views and perspectives can inform your assessment. To assist you, we have produced:

- questions for each area of practice, which you can use to lead discussions with [staff, pupils and/or parents](#) and with [governors/trustees](#)
- [sample pupil surveys](#) for different age groups
- [a sample staff survey](#).

The surveys and the stakeholder discussions are all optional; you can use any or all of them. Alternatively, you can complete your audit using none of them, but you may then capture a less complete picture of your key stakeholders' views and experiences.

Pupil and staff surveys provide a more rounded evidence base for the audit by capturing the lived experiences, confidence levels and perceptions of those at the heart of your setting; they can help identify hidden strengths and gaps in practice, ensuring that your improvement plan is genuinely informed by the voices of the people it is designed to support and protect. In our work to pilot the framework, surveying pupils in particular was found to provide valuable insights which other evidence-gathering methods may have been less likely to reveal, but it did involve additional work; you may be able to gain similar learning through focus groups.

Whatever methods you use to gather stakeholder views, and especially if you conduct surveys, make sure you allow time to prepare, deliver and review them so they can inform your improvement plan.



Part C: Plan improvements

C1

Identify priority areas for improvement

Having conducted your audit (or audited the agreed areas of practice for this academic year), you as the project leader should decide – with your full senior leadership team – which areas of practice to prioritise.

You can use the ‘audit outcome statements’ for your type of education setting (see [Appendix 3](#)) to help shape your thinking about what you hope to achieve in each area of practice, and what you want to achieve first.

C2

Decide a timeframe for achieving improvements

You’ll also need to decide the timeframe for implementing the improvement plan: will a one-, two- or three-year plan be most realistic for embedding practice? While it will be important to maintain momentum, you’ll need to balance this with the capacity in your setting.

If you opt for a two- or three-year improvement plan, consider how you will update practice as learning surfaces, and how you will maintain motivation in the face of potential competing priorities.



Formulate your improvement plan

Your next step is to transfer your priorities to an improvement plan and share this with your leadership team. If your setting does not already have an improvement planning format or template, you can use our [example improvement plan](#) to help your thinking; it is structured around the six areas of practice from your audit, and the key themes within each of those areas.

The example improvement plan also uses the 'Element to be audited' statements from the audit template as suggested outcomes, but you can adapt these to your individual setting. Remember that these suggested outcomes are intended to be useful prompts for all types of education setting; they may be broader than necessary for your setting. Consider them as starting points, and tailor them so they best reflect:

- the findings of your audit
- the age and needs of your pupils
- your setting type
- the needs of your staff team
- your structures and routines
- other factors that are specific to your setting's context.

Alternatively or additionally, you may want to incorporate some of the outcome statements for your type of setting listed in [Appendix 3](#).



The next step is to identify activities that will enable your setting to achieve your desired outcomes. Your area coordinators are likely to have identified some potential improvement activities while conducting or reflecting on their audits. In some cases, reading and acting on the advice in the CSA Centre's range of education practice resources will be an activity that helps you to achieve the outcome (see below).

Keep your improvement plan simple:

- Prioritise activities that will have the greatest impact on the priority improvement areas you identified.
- Give precedence to activities intended to develop your staff team's understanding, knowledge, skills and confidence, before considering those that are intended for your pupils or other stakeholders.

Make sure that your improvement plan addresses the needs of particular groups of children who may be at increased risk of harm. Our advice guides (see [Appendix 1](#)) can guide your thinking about:

- ensuring a child-centred approach to avoid victim blaming
- capturing children's voices to inform practice
- children exploring/questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity
- children from different ethnic, faith and cultural backgrounds
- children with special educational needs or disabilities
- children who have displayed or experienced harmful sexual behaviour, including technology-assisted harmful sexual behaviour.

Incorporating resources from the CSA Centre into your improvement plan

The CSA Centre has an excellent range of free, evidence-based resources – some of them tailored specifically for education professionals – which have been developed to improve the professional response to child sexual abuse. We encourage you to use these to support your setting in addressing key areas for improvement that you have identified.

For a full list of these resources, and the key themes that they relate to across all six areas of practice in your audit, see Appendix 2 and our [CSA Centre resources sheet](#); these can help you to identify where our resources may help your future practice, and to incorporate them easily into your improvement plan as needed.

Part D: Deliver and embed

Integrate the improvement plan into practice across your setting

D1.

As project leader, you'll probably be responsible for scheduling the improvement activities set out in your improvement plan. To keep this manageable:

- Enlist the support of colleagues to lead discrete improvement activities and encourage them to seek the views of your setting's external partners such as advisers, health workers and youth workers.
- Establish roles and responsibilities for delivering the activities, with clear timeframes and impact measures.
- Build in regular monitoring so that learning can be captured and actions don't drift.
- If any activities run over schedule, plan how this will be resolved or amend them as needed.
- Schedule improvement activities into your setting's staff calendar. Brief all colleagues on what they are expected to do, with whom, and when. Prepare other stakeholders when needed.



Monitor progress and measure impacts

Build in regular monitoring activities to review progress against your improvement plan and assess whether your activities are making a difference. Aim to do this termly where possible, so that you can identify what is working and adjust activities before the end of the academic year. Try to use existing systems to gather evidence, rather than creating new processes. For example:

- **Staff feedback** – include brief surveys or standing agenda items at staff meetings to capture changes in knowledge, skills and confidence.
- **Pupil feedback** – draw on existing pupil surveys or school council discussions to understand whether children feel safer and more informed.
- **Case studies** – request short written accounts from staff or pupils that illustrate the impact of a specific activity or change in practice.
- **Learning walks** – use these structured observations to see how changes to practice or the environment are being embedded day to day.
- **Behaviour and safeguarding data** – review trends in recorded concerns, incidents or referrals, to identify whether your activities are having a measurable effect.
- **Routine updates** – use existing reporting structures (such as governor meetings or designated safeguarding lead/professional briefings) to track and share progress.

Reflect and adjust

Set aside time to review what your monitoring is telling you, and use this to shape your next steps. If an activity has not had the intended impact, consider whether it needs to be adapted, delivered differently, or targeted at a specific group.

This reflection is especially important if your data suggests that particular groups of pupils may be at increased risk – for example, those with special educational needs or disabilities, those who are looked after, or pupils in specific year groups.

Share key findings and updates with colleagues and stakeholders so that the work remains visible and understood across your setting.

Embed practice and sustain change

Think carefully about how you will make changes stick beyond the life of the improvement plan, by:

- **incorporating pupil voice** – for example, through pupil surveys, focus groups, or school council involvement in reviewing policies or the curriculum
- **engaging parents and the wider community** – for example, through sharing information via newsletters, parent evenings or community events, and signposting families to relevant support your setting type
- **sustaining professional development** – for example, through building safeguarding updates into staff induction, appraisal cycles and continuing professional development, rather than relying on one-off training

Update your setting's policies

Identify which policies need updating and use your existing review cycle to manage this. Consider the following policies and any others that are relevant:

- Child protection and safeguarding
- Behaviour (including anti-bullying)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE)
- SEND
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Curriculum
- Staff induction and professional development
- Appraisal/performance management
- Grievance procedures
- Whistleblowing

Appendices

Appendix 1. CSA Centre advice guides for education settings

We have developed a series of brief advice guides as supplementary resources to draw on as your audit and improvement work progresses; they are not required reading for all staff at the outset. You can download them from www.csacentre.org.uk/guides/implementing-a-whole-school-approach-to-child-sexual-abuse/appendix-1-csa-centre-advice-guides-for-education-settings/.

The framework is designed for all education settings and all children, but your audit may reveal that particular groups of children in your setting face a heightened risk of sexual abuse or harmful sexual behaviour – or that staff would benefit from additional knowledge and confidence when working with those children. The guides can provide that knowledge and confidence.

They cover the following areas:

- 1. Adopting a child-centred response to all concerns.** This guide supports staff to respond in ways that keep the child's needs, safety and voice at the centre of every decision from the first moment a concern arises. It includes practical advice on language – in particular, how to avoid inadvertently implying that a child bears any responsibility for what happened to them, and how to use open, non-leading questions.
- 2. Capturing children's voices to inform practice.** This guide provides practical approaches to listening to children and using what they tell you to strengthen your setting's practice. It is designed to be useful throughout the improvement process, and particularly during the audit stage when children's perspectives can enrich your evidence base.
- 3. Supporting children from different ethnic, faith and cultural backgrounds.** This guide helps staff understand how factors such as ethnicity, faith, culture and language can shape how children experience and talk about abuse, and how your setting responds. It draws attention to the importance of not making assumptions, and of ensuring that your practice is genuinely accessible to all children – including those whose backgrounds may affect their ability or willingness to seek help.
- 4a. Responding to harmful sexual behaviour in young children.** Aimed at settings working with early years and primary-age children, this guide helps staff to understand age-appropriate sexual development, identify when sexual behaviour falls outside expected norms, and respond in ways that are proportionate, child-centred and consistent with safeguarding responsibilities
- 4b. Responding to harmful sexual behaviour in older children.** Designed for education settings working with secondary-age and post-16 children when concerns about harmful sexual behaviour arise, this guide includes advice on balancing the welfare needs of both the child who has displayed the behaviour and those who have been harmed by it.
- 5. Responding to technology-assisted harmful sexual behaviour.** This guide supports staff to understand and respond to harmful sexual behaviour that takes place online or through digital technologies. It clarifies the immediate steps that any staff member should take; the designated safeguarding lead/professional's referral responsibilities; how to talk to a child who has been harmed online (including by avoiding the common mistake of implying that their online presence contributed to the harm); and how to respond to a child who has displayed this behaviour. Also addressing prevention through the curriculum, the guide is relevant to settings working with children of all ages, recognising how central digital technologies are to children's social lives.

6. Supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities. This guide helps staff to recognise that children with SEND can face a significantly heightened risk of sexual abuse, and that additional barriers – including communication difficulties, dependency on adults and social isolation – may make it harder for them to tell someone what is happening. It supports staff to ensure their response is accessible, appropriately adapted and inclusive.
7. Supporting children who are exploring/questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity. This guide covers sensitive responses to the specific experiences and vulnerabilities of children and young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual (LGB), or are questioning their gender identity. It helps staff to understand the barriers these children may face to disclosing abuse – such as fear of being outed, having a limited number of trusted adults, and concern about professional prejudice – and common assumptions that staff should actively avoid making.

You may find that one or two guides are immediately relevant to your setting's context; others may become relevant as your improvement plan develops. You are not expected to use all of them, and they do not need to be read in order.



Appendix 2. Structure of the audit template

For each 'element of knowledge/practice to be audited' below, the area coordinators and project leader should discuss and agree a rating, and the relevant area coordinator should record their evidence on the [audit template](#) under the most accurate descriptor ('A consistently strong feature', 'Some good practice', or 'An emerging area of practice').

(1) Do your setting's ethos, values and culture promote safe and respectful relationships between all members of the community?

Key theme	Element of knowledge/practice to be audited	Relevant CSA Centre resources
a) The setting has a shared vision and values that promote positive relationships	<p>(i) The setting's values and ethos promote positive relationships that are evident in everyday practice</p> <p>(ii) Pupils, staff and parents understand the setting's values</p> <p>(iii) There is a strong emphasis on wellbeing for pupils and staff</p>	CSA Centre online directory: Find a child sexual abuse support service
b) Relationships across the setting reflect its vision and values	<p>(iv) The staff team are consistent in how they demonstrate their responsibility to be positive role models and trusted adults</p> <p>(v) Stereotypical or unkind/harmful behaviour between any members of the community is consistently challenged</p>	
c) The setting engages with stakeholders to review and refresh its practice, promoting positive relationships across the community	<p>(vi) The setting encourages stakeholder feedback about its practice – a range of activities are used to elicit views</p> <p>(vii) The setting supports stakeholders to contribute to policy review processes</p>	
d) The setting embraces and promotes diversity in opportunities for its whole community	<p>(viii) Learning resources and displays portray positive images that challenge stereotypes</p> <p>(ix) The setting demonstrates how sex/gender, cultural needs and protected characteristics are considered in practice</p>	
e) The setting has appropriate systems to support safe recruitment and the management of low-level concerns	<p>(x) The recruitment process ensures that candidates' attitudes to equality, diversity and inclusion are explored fully</p> <p>(xi) Mechanisms to report and manage low level concerns are in place and effective</p>	

(2) Is your staff team equipped to notice, respond to and prevent child sexual abuse?

Key Theme	Element of knowledge/ practice to be audited	Relevant CSA Centre resources
a) Staff understand the prevalence of child sexual abuse	<p>(i) Staff know about the scale and nature of child sexual abuse</p> <p>(ii) The staff team know that any child can be sexually abused</p>	<p><u>What you need to know about child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>CSA Centre infographics</u></p>
b) Staff have appropriate training and resources to give them a good understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma	<p>(iii) Training opportunities allow all staff to develop their knowledge and understanding of child sexual abuse</p> <p>(iv) Staff with increased safeguarding responsibilities can access information, training and support</p>	<p><u>What you need to know about child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>CSA Centre infographics</u></p> <p><u>CSA Centre free webinars</u></p> <p><u>CSA Centre Data Insights Hub</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on intra-familial child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual exploitation</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual abuse in institutional contexts</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on the impacts of child sexual abuse</u></p>
c) Staff have the knowledge, confidence and resources to take appropriate action that will protect, identify and respond to child sexual abuse	<p>(v) All staff understand their role in protecting pupils from sexual abuse</p> <p>(vi) All staff can identify the signs and indicators of possible child sexual abuse</p> <p>(vii) All staff are confident in knowing how to speak to a pupil when there are concerns</p>	<p><u>What you need to know about child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>CSA Centre infographics</u></p> <p><u>CSA Centre free webinars</u></p> <p><u>Signs and indicators: A template for identifying and recording concerns of child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Communicating with Children Guide</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on intra-familial child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual exploitation</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual abuse in institutional contexts</u></p> <p><u>Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway</u></p>

(3) Do learning opportunities throughout the curriculum promote safe and healthy relationships?

Key Theme	Element of knowledge/practice to be audited	Relevant CSA Centre resources
<p>a) PSHE/RSE has high status, and teachers confidently deliver learning opportunities that promote safe and healthy relationships using age-appropriate methods</p>	<p>(i) The lead for PSHE/RSE liaises effectively with the designated safeguarding lead/professional and the safeguarding team about teaching and learning priorities</p> <p>(ii) Teachers access high-quality learning materials and continuing professional development to support high-quality delivery of PSHE/RSE</p> <p>(iii) Teachers deliver PSHE/RSE effectively, creating safe spaces to share learning and promote discussion</p> <p>(iv) PSHE/RSE leaders have capacity to respond to emerging issues, including engaging with external partners when needed</p> <p>(v) Key messaging about healthy relationships and how to seek help are supported throughout the wider curriculum</p> <p>(vi) The impacts (on mental health, relationships and body image) of social media and viewing pornography are taught to pupils</p>	<p><u>Communicating with Children Guide</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on harmful sexual behaviour in online contexts</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on intra-familial child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual abuse by adults in online contexts</u></p>
<p>b) Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of safe and healthy behaviours and relationships, and know how to seek help</p>	<p>(vii) Pupils use the correct language for intimate body parts</p> <p>(viii) Pupils apply age-appropriate knowledge about healthy relationships in different contexts</p> <p>(ix) Pupils are taught what to do if someone they know asks them to keep an unsafe secret or touches them in a way that feels wrong</p> <p>(x) Pupils understand how the internet and social media can be used to cause harm</p> <p>(xi) Pupils know to report concerns about inappropriate content online, and about sexual abuse, extortion or exploitation</p> <p>(xii) Pupils know how social media and/or pornography can distort the reality of healthy relationships</p> <p>(xiii) Pupils' views are sought to help shape the setting's policy, practice and curriculum</p>	<p><u>Pupil survey templates</u></p> <p><u>Questions for staff, pupils and parents/carers</u></p>

(4) Is engagement with and support for pupils underpinned by an understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma?

Key Theme	Element of knowledge/practice to be audited	Relevant CSA Centre resources
a) The setting's environment and routines are predictable, calm and supportive of emotional regulation	<p>(i) Pupils know how to seek help, and are encouraged to do so whenever they need it</p> <p>(ii) There are supervised, calm and regulated spaces which are accessible to pupils</p> <p>(iii) The setting has consistent, predictable routines which promote feelings of safety and reduce anxiety</p>	<p><u>Pupil survey templates</u></p> <p><u>Questions for staff, pupils and parents/carers</u></p>
b) Staff across the setting adapt their communication and responses based on the child's emotional state, demonstrating practical trauma-informed skills	<p>(iv) All staff understand the impact of abuse and trauma on children</p> <p>(v) All staff understand behaviour as communication; they engage with curiosity and avoid blame</p> <p>(vi) All staff demonstrate a deep understanding of what trauma-informed practice means</p>	<p><u>What you need to know about child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Signs and indicators: A template for identifying and recording concerns of child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour</u></p> <p><u>eLearning: Identifying and responding to intra-familial child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on the impacts of child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway</u></p>
c) Staff have the knowledge, confidence and resources to take appropriate action that will protect, identify and respond to child sexual abuse	<p>(vii) All staff can identify the possible signs and indicators of child sexual abuse</p> <p>(viii) All staff are aware of barriers to abused children's engagement with adults, and how these can be overcome</p>	<p><u>What you need to know about child sexual abuse</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual exploitation</u></p> <p><u>eLearning: Identifying and responding to intra-familial child sexual abuse</u></p>

(5) Is your setting's response to child sexual abuse informed by engagement with your community and professional networks?

Key Theme	Element of knowledge/practice to be audited	Relevant CSA Centre resources
<p>a) Leaders recognise the relevance of community, societal and individual factors which can influence community safeguarding practice</p>	<p>(i) The setting's leaders ensure that staff practice reflects an awareness of diversity and intersectionality, and the need for inclusion</p> <p>(ii) Pupils across all backgrounds and characteristics are supported by staff to share their views about their life outside school</p> <p>(iii) Activities are organised to raise awareness (among staff, pupils and/or families) of issues around child sexual abuse, and their impacts are measured</p> <p>(iv) Collaboration by leaders with community partners informs safeguarding activity</p> <p>(v) Pupils have opportunities to share concerns about issues in their community</p>	
<p>b) Families receive clear, accessible information about support; they understand and trust safeguarding processes</p>	<p>(vi) All staff know which community and voluntary organisations they can signpost pupils and families to for support</p> <p>(vii) Leaders facilitate and/or signpost parents to awareness-raising events/information</p>	<p>Supporting Parents and Carers Guide</p> <p>Webinar: Online sexual offending: Supporting families following arrest of a parent</p> <p>CSA Centre online directory: Find a child sexual abuse support service</p>

(6) Does your setting respond to concerns about child sexual abuse promptly, fairly and consistently?

Key Theme	Element of knowledge/practice to be audited	Relevant CSA Centre resources
a) Record-keeping is timely, thorough and child-centred; concerns about child sexual abuse are responded to promptly	<p>(i) All staff know how to record their concerns about child sexual abuse, including harmful sexual behaviour</p> <p>(ii) There is consistency in how concerns are recorded and followed up, including the action taken and outcomes</p> <p>(iii) Misunderstandings in recording and reporting are swiftly addressed</p> <p>(iv) Under/over-reporting of concerns relating to particular groups of pupils, or from particular staff groups or departments, is scrutinised</p>	<p><u>Key messages from research on children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on identifying and responding to disclosures of child sexual abuse</u></p> <p>Webinar: <u>Putting the Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway into practice</u></p>
b) Leaders review concerns and incidents of child sexual abuse to identify trends, and to ensure a fair and consistent response	<p>(v) Data is used effectively to identify trends, and to determine priorities, in relation to all child sexual abuse concerns</p> <p>(vi) There is a consistent approach to managing harmful sexual behaviour between pupils</p> <p>(vii) Concerning behaviours are explored as a possible sign of harm or unmet need</p> <p>(viii) Support plans in place for pupils are reviewed for effectiveness</p>	<p><u>Safety planning in education: A guide for professionals supporting children following incidents of harmful sexual behaviour</u></p>
c) Leaders engage effectively with statutory safeguarding agencies, and know how to challenge when appropriate	<p>(ix) Secure arrangements are in place with statutory partners; information, advice and learning are shared in a timely way</p> <p>(x) Where referrals to statutory partners do not meet the threshold for the partner to take action, leaders in the setting know what action they can take, including</p>	<p><u>Sharing information to tackle child sexual abuse: An introductory guide for professionals</u></p> <p>Webinar: <u>Putting the Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway into practice</u></p> <p><u>Child Sexual Abuse Response Pathway</u></p>
d) Leaders and governance arrangements ensure that practice is secure, to improve the prevention of and response to child sexual abuse	<p>(xi) Governors/trustees understand the key issues relating to child sexual abuse within the setting</p> <p>(xii) Monitoring and assurance activity helps to inform governors/trustees about the impact of child sexual abuse prevention and response interventions</p>	<p><u>CSA Centre infographics</u></p> <p><u>Key messages from research on child sexual abuse in institutional contexts</u></p> <p><u>Developing your strategic response to child sexual abuse</u></p>

Appendix 3. Outcome statements

Outcome statements: Early years settings

How might practice look different in the future for children, your staff team, your stakeholders, and across your setting's practice and systems?

(1) Ethos, values and culture promote safe and respectful relationships between all members of the community

Children: Pupils feel safe and settled. They seek out adults for comfort and reassurance. They are learning to express their feelings and to treat others kindly.

Staff team: Staff consistently model warm, respectful interactions with pupils and each other. They understand their role in creating an environment where pupils feel secure enough to communicate their needs.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents feel welcomed and included. They understand the setting's values and see these reflected in how staff interact with their child. They feel able to raise concerns, and have trust that they will be taken seriously.

Setting's practice: The setting's values are visible in daily routines, interactions and the physical environment. Policies reflect a commitment to safe, respectful relationships, and staff can articulate what this looks like in practice.

(2) Staff are equipped to notice, respond to and prevent child sexual abuse

Children: Pupils are cared for by adults who notice changes in their behaviour, mood or wellbeing and respond with curiosity and concern.

Staff team: Staff understand that child sexual abuse can affect very young children. They know the signs and indicators relevant to this age group and feel confident raising concerns. They understand that behaviour is communication.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents are confident that staff are trained in safeguarding and know how to recognise and respond to concerns. They understand how the setting keeps children safe.

Setting's practice: Staff receive regular training on child sexual abuse, including content specific to early years. Supervision and team meetings include space to discuss concerns. Recording systems capture observations clearly and are reviewed.

(3) Learning opportunities throughout the curriculum promote safe and healthy relationships

Children: Pupils are learning about their bodies, personal boundaries, and the difference between safe and unsafe touch in age-appropriate ways. They know how to ask for help. They know the names for private body parts. They are learning that some secrets should be told to a trusted adult.

Staff team: Staff feel confident delivering age-appropriate content on bodies, boundaries and relationships. They create opportunities for pupils to learn about consent through everyday interactions and play. They notice when pupils need help, and support conversations.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand what their children are learning and why. They are given information about how to reinforce these messages at home, including establishing healthy routines for using devices

Setting's practice: The curriculum includes planned opportunities to teach pupils about bodies, boundaries and seeking help. Resources are age-appropriate and regularly reviewed. Staff and parents are informed about content and approach.

(4) Engagement with and support for pupils are underpinned by an understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma

Children: Pupils experience consistent, predictable routines that help them feel safe. When they are distressed, adults respond calmly and help them regulate their emotions.

Staff team: Staff understand how trauma and adverse experiences can affect young children's development, behaviour and attachment. They adapt their responses to meet individual pupils' needs without judgement.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents of children who have had adverse experiences feel supported rather than blamed. They see staff responding to their child with patience and understanding.

Setting's practice: The environment is calm and predictable. Staff have access to training and support on trauma-informed approaches. Individual pupils' needs are planned for.

(5) The response to child sexual abuse is informed by engagement with the community and professional networks

Children: Pupils benefit from joined-up support when they or their families need additional help. Their needs are understood in the context of their home and community.

Staff team: Staff know where to signpost families for support. They have good relationships with health visitors, social workers and other professionals. They share information appropriately and in the pupil's best interests.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents know where to access support in the community. They feel the setting understands their family's circumstances and works with them, not against them.

Setting's practice: The setting has strong links with local safeguarding partners, early help services and community organisations. Information is shared appropriately and in line with statutory guidance. Staff contribute to multi-agency working when needed.

(6) The response to concerns about child sexual abuse is prompt, fair and consistent

Children: When there are concerns about a pupil, adults act quickly to understand what is happening and to keep them safe. Pupils are not left waiting for help.

Staff team: Staff know how to record and report concerns. They are confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon. They understand the referral process and what happens after a concern is raised.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents are kept informed in ways that do not compromise their child's safety. They understand the setting's safeguarding responsibilities, and have trust that concerns are handled fairly.

Setting's practice: Recording systems are used consistently. Concerns are reviewed promptly and actions are tracked. The setting engages effectively with statutory partners and knows how to escalate when needed. Governance arrangements provide appropriate oversight.

Outcome statements: Primary settings

How might practice look different in the future for children, your staff team, your stakeholders, and across your setting's practice and systems?

(1) Ethos, values and culture promote safe and respectful relationships between all members of the community

Children: Pupils feel they belong and are valued. They treat each other with kindness and respect, and they know this is expected of everyone in the setting's community. They feel confident that adults will help if something is wrong.

Staff team: Staff model respectful behaviour in all their interactions. They consistently challenge unkind, stereotypical or harmful behaviour and understand why this matters for safeguarding. They feel valued and supported.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand the setting's values and see them reflected in how their children are treated. They feel welcomed and able to raise concerns. Governors understand their role in promoting a safe culture.

Setting's practice: Values are embedded in everyday practice, not just displayed on walls. Policies are understood and implemented consistently. Recruitment processes explore candidates' attitudes to inclusion and respect. Low-level concerns about staff are recorded and reviewed

(2) Staff are equipped to notice, respond to and prevent child sexual abuse

Children: Pupils are cared for by adults who notice when something is wrong and take the time to find out more. They know that if they tell an adult about a problem, the adult will listen.

Staff team: Staff understand the scale and nature of child sexual abuse and know it can happen to any child. They can recognise signs and indicators and feel confident speaking to a pupil when they have concerns. They know what to do next.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents are confident that staff are trained to recognise and respond to child sexual abuse. Governors receive appropriate information about safeguarding and ensure adequate training is in place.

Setting's practice: All staff receive regular training on child sexual abuse, including how to notice concerns and how to have conversations with pupils. Those with additional safeguarding responsibilities access further training and support. Knowledge is refreshed and applied in practice.

(3) Learning opportunities throughout the curriculum promote safe and healthy relationships

Children: Pupils learn about healthy relationships, consent and personal boundaries in age-appropriate ways throughout their time at the setting. They know the correct names for body parts. They understand what to do if someone makes them feel unsafe, including online. They know how to seek help.

Staff team: Staff feel confident delivering PSHE/RSE content on relationships, bodies and boundaries. They create safe spaces for discussion and know how to respond if a pupil raises a concern during a lesson. The PSHE/RSE lead works closely with the safeguarding team.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand what their children are learning and why it matters for keeping them safe. They are consulted on the RSE curriculum and given information to support conversations at home.

Setting's practice: The curriculum includes comprehensive, age-appropriate content on healthy relationships, consent, online safety and seeking help. Content is informed by what staff know about the pupils and the community. Pupil voice shapes curriculum development.

(4) Engagement with and support for pupils are underpinned by an understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma

Children: Pupils experience consistent routines and calm, predictable responses from adults. When they are struggling, staff respond with curiosity rather than judgement. Pupils who have experienced trauma receive support that helps them feel safe and able to learn.

Staff team: Staff understand how trauma affects children's behaviour, learning and relationships. They see behaviour as communication and adapt their responses accordingly. They know which pupils may need additional support, and they understand why.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents feel the setting understands their children. They are involved in planning support and do not feel blamed for any difficulties their children are having.

Setting's practice: The environment in the setting supports emotional regulation. Staff have access to training on trauma-informed practice. Individual pupils' needs are planned for and reviewed. Behaviour policies reflect an understanding of the impact of trauma.

(5) The response to child sexual abuse is informed by engagement with the community and professional networks

Children: Pupils benefit from adults who understand their lives outside the education setting. When they need extra support, it is available. Staff work with other professionals to help them.

Staff team: Staff know where to signpost families for support. They have good relationships with local safeguarding partners and community organisations. They share relevant information appropriately, and contribute to multi-agency working.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents know where to access support, and have trust that the setting will help them find it. Community partners view the setting as a reliable collaborator. Governors understand local safeguarding arrangements.

Setting's practice: The setting has strong, active relationships with statutory partners and community organisations. Staff understand the local context and how it affects pupils' lives. Information is shared appropriately, and referrals are made when needed.

(6) The response to concerns about child sexual abuse is prompt, fair and consistent

Children: When pupils have concerns, adults act quickly to understand what is happening and to help. Pupils are not left waiting. All pupils receive the same quality of response, regardless of their background or characteristics.

Staff team: Staff know how to record concerns and are confident that these will be acted upon. They understand what happens after they report a concern, and receive feedback where appropriate. They know how to challenge if they feel a concern is not being addressed.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand the setting's safeguarding responsibilities. When concerns arise, they are kept informed appropriately. There is effective governance of safeguarding practice.

Setting's practice: Recording is consistent, timely and child-centred. Data is used to identify patterns and inform priorities. The setting engages effectively with statutory partners and uses escalation procedures when needed. Responses to harmful sexual behaviour are proportionate and consistent.

Outcome statements: Secondary settings

How might practice look different in the future for children, your staff team, your stakeholders, and across your setting's practice and systems?

(1) Ethos, values and culture promote safe and respectful relationships between all members of the community

Children: Students feel respected and safe. Sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and sexist language are not ignored, and students are confident these will be challenged. Students know who to go to if they have concerns, and have trust that they will be taken seriously.

Staff team: Staff consistently model and promote respectful relationships. They challenge harmful attitudes and behaviours, including those that might be dismissed as 'banter'. They understand how cultural attitudes towards sex/gender and sexuality can influence harmful behaviour and vulnerability.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand the setting's expectations around respectful behaviour and relationships. They are confident that harmful behaviour will be addressed. Governors understand the prevalence of harmful sexual behaviour in education settings and their oversight responsibilities.

Setting's practice: The setting's values are visible in behaviour policy, pastoral support and how incidents are handled. Discriminatory language and behaviour are challenged consistently. Staff recruitment and management of low-level concerns reflect the setting's commitment to safe culture.

(2) Staff are equipped to notice, respond to and prevent child sexual abuse

Children: Students know that staff will notice if something is wrong and will take concerns seriously. They have trust that disclosures will be handled sensitively and that they will be supported.

Staff team: Staff understand that child sexual abuse affects adolescents as well as younger children, and that it can take many forms, including online abuse and exploitation. They can recognise potential signs and indicators, and feel confident initiating conversations with students when they have concerns.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents are confident that staff are trained to recognise and respond to child sexual abuse and harmful sexual behaviour. Governors ensure that training is adequate, up to date and evaluated for impact.

Setting's practice: All staff receive regular training on child sexual abuse that reflects the experiences of adolescents, including online risks, exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour. Safeguarding leads have access to specialist training and peer networks. Staff confidence is monitored and supported.

(3) Learning opportunities throughout the curriculum promote safe and healthy relationships

Children: Students receive high-quality RSE that is relevant to their lives and addresses topics including consent, healthy relationships, pornography, online safety, exploitation and how to seek help. They have safe opportunities to ask questions and discuss issues that matter to them. Their views shape curriculum content and delivery.

Staff team: Staff feel confident delivering RSE content, including on sensitive topics. They know how to manage disclosures that arise during lessons. The RSE lead works closely with the safeguarding team to ensure that curriculum content responds to what is known about students' experiences.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand what is being taught and why. They are consulted appropriately and given information to support conversations at home. Governors have oversight of curriculum content and its impact.

Setting's practice: The RSE curriculum is comprehensive, evidence-informed and regularly reviewed. It addresses online and offline risks, the impact of pornography, and the realities of healthy relationships. Content is shaped by student voice and delivered by confident, well-supported staff.

(4) Engagement with and support for pupils are underpinned by an understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma

Children: Students who have experienced trauma or abuse are supported in ways that recognise how their experiences may affect their behaviour, attendance and engagement with learning. They are not judged or blamed.

Staff team: Staff understand how trauma can present in adolescence, including through behaviour that may appear challenging or disengaged. They approach students with curiosity and avoid responses that may re-traumatise. They know how to access specialist support.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents of students who have experienced trauma feel the setting understands their child and works with them to provide appropriate support. They are not blamed for their child's difficulties.

Setting's practice: Behaviour and attendance policies reflect an understanding of trauma. Staff have access to training and supervision that supports trauma-informed practice. Individual support plans are developed with the student's input and reviewed regularly.

(5) The response to child sexual abuse is informed by engagement with the community and professional networks

Children: Students benefit from adults who understand what is happening in their lives and their community. When they need extra support, including from specialist services, staff help them access it.

Staff team: Staff understand the local context, including risks in the community and online. They have strong working relationships with safeguarding partners, police, health services and specialist organisations. They contribute effectively to multi-agency responses.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents know where to access support and trust the setting to help them. Community partners see the setting as a proactive and reliable collaborator. Governors understand local safeguarding arrangements and the setting's role within them.

Setting's practice: The setting actively engages with local safeguarding partners and specialist services. Intelligence about local risks informs safeguarding priorities. Information is shared appropriately and referrals are made in a timely way.

(6) The response to concerns about child sexual abuse is prompt, fair and consistent

Children: When students raise concerns or when concerns are identified, action is taken quickly and fairly. All students receive the same quality of response. Students who have been harmed by sexual behaviour or abuse are supported, and students who have harmed others are held accountable and helped to change their behaviour.

Staff team: Staff know how to record and report concerns and are confident their concerns will be taken seriously. They understand what happens after they report and receive appropriate feedback. They know how to escalate if they feel a concern is not being addressed.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand the setting's safeguarding responsibilities. When concerns arise, they are communicated with appropriately. Governors provide effective oversight and challenge.

Setting's practice: Recording is consistent, thorough and child-centred. Data is used to identify patterns, including in relation to harmful sexual behaviour. The setting responds proportionately and consistently to all forms of child sexual abuse. Relationships with statutory partners are strong and escalation procedures are used when needed.

Outcome statements: Sixth-form and college settings

How might practice look different in the future for children, your staff team, your stakeholders, and across your setting's practice and systems?

(1) Ethos, values and culture promote safe and respectful relationships between all members of the community

Students: Students feel respected and safe. Sexual harassment, coercion and harmful behaviour are not tolerated. Students know how to report concerns and are confident these will be taken seriously, whether they relate to peers, staff or people outside the setting.

Staff team: Staff model respectful, bounded relationships with students. They understand the specific risks facing this age group, including in relation to exploitation and coercive relationships. They challenge harmful attitudes and behaviour, including those that may be normalised in wider culture.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents of students under 18 understand the setting's safeguarding responsibilities. Employers, placement providers and partner organisations understand and share the setting's expectations around safe behaviour. Governors understand the safeguarding context for this age group.

Setting's practice: The setting's values are reflected in policies, pastoral support and how incidents are handled. Expectations are clear for all members of the community, including visiting speakers, employers and placement providers. Staff recruitment and management of concerns reflect a commitment to safe culture.

(2) Staff are equipped to notice, respond to and prevent child sexual abuse

Students: Students know that staff will take concerns seriously. They have trust that disclosures will be handled sensitively, that confidentiality will be respected where possible, and that they will be supported regardless of their age.

Staff team: Staff understand that students under 18 are children for safeguarding purposes and that older students may also be vulnerable. They recognise signs of abuse, exploitation and coercive relationships, and feel confident raising concerns and initiating conversations with students.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents of students under 18 are confident that staff are trained to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns. Employers and placement providers understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Governors ensure that training is adequate and relevant.

Setting's practice: All staff receive training on safeguarding that is relevant to this age group, including exploitation, coercive control, online risks and harmful sexual behaviour. Safeguarding arrangements are clear for all learning contexts, including placements, work experience and off-site provision

(3) Learning opportunities throughout the curriculum promote safe and healthy relationships

Students: Students have access to education on healthy relationships, consent, coercive control, online safety and exploitation that is relevant to their lives and developmental stage. They understand how to recognise unhealthy relationships and where to seek help. Content reflects the realities of adult relationships, including in online contexts.

Staff team: Staff feel confident addressing sensitive topics with this age group. They know how to respond if a student raises a concern. Tutorial and pastoral staff work closely with safeguarding leads to ensure that content reflects current risks and student need.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents understand that relationship and safety education continues post-16. Employers and placement providers support messages about respectful behaviour and healthy relationships in workplace contexts.

Setting's practice: The curriculum includes relevant content on healthy relationships, consent, exploitation, coercive control and online safety. Delivery is tailored to diverse student groups and learning contexts. Student voice shapes content and approach. Staff delivering this content are supported and confident.

(4) Engagement with and support for pupils are underpinned by an understanding of child sexual abuse and trauma

Students: Students who have experienced trauma or abuse are supported in ways that recognise how their experiences may affect their engagement, relationships and wellbeing. They are treated with respect and not judged for their circumstances or choices.

Staff team: Staff understand how trauma can affect young people, including through mental health difficulties, relationship patterns and engagement with learning. They respond with compassion and know how to connect students with appropriate support.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents of students with additional needs or vulnerabilities feel the setting understands their young person and works with them to provide appropriate support.

Setting's practice: Student support services are accessible and trauma-informed. Staff have access to training and guidance. Support plans are developed with student involvement and respect their growing autonomy. Policies recognise the impact of trauma on attendance, behaviour and achievement.

(5) The response to child sexual abuse is informed by engagement with the community and professional networks

Students: Students benefit from strong links between the setting and specialist services. When they need extra support, including in relation to mental health, exploitation or domestic abuse, staff help them access it. Students on placements are protected by clear safeguarding arrangements.

Staff team: Staff know where to signpost students for support and have good relationships with relevant agencies, including those supporting young adults. They understand the local context and risks affecting this age group. They contribute effectively to multi-agency working where appropriate.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents, employers and placement providers understand safeguarding arrangements and their respective responsibilities. Community partners see the setting as a proactive and willing safeguarding partner.

Setting's practice: The setting has strong relationships with statutory partners, specialist services and community organisations. Safeguarding arrangements extend across all learning contexts, including placements and partnerships. Intelligence about local risks informs safeguarding priorities.

(6) The response to concerns about child sexual abuse is prompt, fair and consistent

Students: When students raise concerns or when concerns are identified, action is taken quickly and sensitively. Students are kept informed about what is happening, and are involved in decisions where appropriate. All students receive the same quality of response, regardless of age or background.

Staff team: Staff know how to record and report concerns and are confident that these will be acted upon. They understand what happens after they report, including when a concern relates to a student who is 18 or over. They know how to escalate if they feel a concern is not being addressed.

Parents and stakeholders: Parents of students under 18 are informed appropriately when concerns arise. Employers and placement providers understand their responsibilities for reporting concerns. Governors provide effective oversight.

Setting's practice: Recording is consistent, thorough and student-centred. The setting responds appropriately to concerns about students of all ages, recognising that some adults may also be vulnerable. Data is used to identify patterns. Relationships with statutory partners are strong and escalation procedures are used when needed.





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