



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Protecting and Supporting Families in Health and Care (BMHP5021_LON)

Week 5 Policy and Legislation Related to Child Protection

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Week beginning	Topic	Notes
1 8 th June	Introduction to Children Rights and Parenting	
2 15 th June	Factors influencing the experiences of children and families	
3 22 nd June	Safeguarding, assessment of needs and theories of child development	
4 29 th June	History of children Protection in the UK	
5 6 th July	Policy and Legislation related to Child Protection	
6 13 th July	Multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership with children, young people and families	
7 20 th July	Factors which impact on the multi and inter disciplinary responses and partnership working with families' practice	Submission for the 24 th of July for C1 - reference list
8 27 th July	Impact of emerging digital technologies on the role of practitioner and service user	Assessment Presentations – round the table C1
9 3 rd August	Revision and Assignment Support	
10 10 th August	Assignment Support	C2 – 14th of August

Learning objectives

- Explain the process of intervention by relevant health and social care agencies and current relevant policy.
- Discuss and evaluate current policy and the roles of multi-disciplinary services within the case study and the potential impact of their actions on the children, young people and family.

Safeguarding Children

- **Safeguarding Children** is a term for a range of measures and approaches to keeping children safe.
- It includes child protection, safe recruitment, statutory duties, patient safety, and partnership working between organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.



Who is responsible for safeguarding and child protection at national level?

- The Department for Education (DfE) is responsible for child protection in England.
- It sets out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work.



Department
for Education

Who is responsible for safeguarding and child protection at local level?

The local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

- the Local Authority
- the Integrated Care Board (previously Clinical Commissioning Group or 'CCG')
- the Police.

A child centred approach to safeguarding

- A child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child.
- A child centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.



Working in Partnership

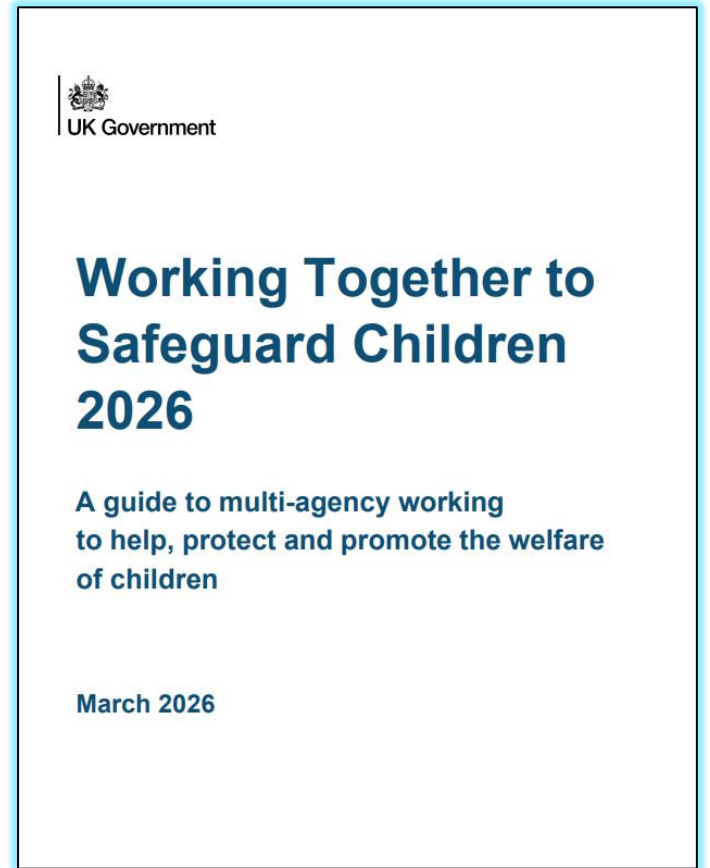


[Partnership working in child protection](#)

Statutory Guide

This guidance covers:

- The legislative requirements placed on individual services.
- A framework for the three local safeguarding partners (the local authority; the Integrated Care Board (ICB); and the chief officer of police for a police area, to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children including identifying and responding to their needs.



What is the status of this guidance?

- This guidance applies to all organisations and agencies who have functions relating to children.
- Specifically, this guidance applies to all local authorities, health services, police and all other organisations and agencies.
- It applies, in its entirety, to all schools.
- It applies to all children up to the age of 18 years whether living with their families, in state care, or living independently.

Multi-agency working

Source: DfE

Date published: 08 May 2025

The Department for Education (DfE) has added new materials to support 'Working together to safeguard children',. These include an illustrated guide, an animated video and a toolkit of resources designed for practitioners to share and use with children, young people and their families.

Access the materials: [Working together to safeguard children](#)



Multi-agency co-operation

- To be effective, practitioners need to continue to develop their knowledge and skills in this area and be aware of the new and emerging threats, including online abuse, grooming, sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and radicalisation.
- Practitioners should also continue to develop their understanding of domestic abuse, which includes controlling and coercive behaviour from perpetrators of domestic abuse, and the impact this has on children.
- To enable this, the three safeguarding partners should consider what training is needed locally and how they will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any training they commission.

Multi-agency co-operation

- Multi-agency training will be important in supporting this collective understanding of local need and the services available to support children and young people.
- Practitioners working in both universal services and specialist services have a responsibility to identify the symptoms and triggers of abuse and neglect, to share that information, and to provide children with the help they need.

Thinking of your assessment.....

What sort of knowledge / skills do multi-agency workers need?

Why legislation is important for safeguarding children

- Legislation provides the framework for safeguarding and child protection in England.
- It makes clear the expectations and requirements around duties of care to children and creates accountability for these.
- The main legislation in England is the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Legislation

- Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child: listen to what they say; take their views seriously; and work with them and their families collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs.
- Special provision should be put in place to support dialogue with children who have communication difficulties, unaccompanied children, refugees and those children who are victims of modern slavery and/or trafficking.

Equality Act 2010

- The Equality Act 2010, which puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.
- This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment.
- No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs.

Children and Social Work Act 2017

- The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (the Act) is intended to improve support for looked after children and care leavers, promote the welfare and safeguarding of children, and make provisions about the regulation of social workers.
- The Act sets out corporate parenting principles for the council as a whole to be the 'best parent' it can be to children in its care.
- Local authorities will be required to publish their support offer to care leavers and to promote the educational attainment of children who have been adopted or placed in other long-term arrangements.

Local Government Association (2017). Get in on the Act. [online] Available at:

https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/9.36_Get_in_on_the_Act_-_Children_02%20web.pdf.

Domestic Abuse Bill 2021

Children who live in a home where domestic abuse takes place recognised as **victims in their own right** rather than witnesses for the first time.

Extends victim protections to young people aged 16 and over.

Local authorities obliged to provide refuge

Key elements of the Bill include strengthening rules surrounding controlling or coercive behaviour e.g. **coercive control also post-separation**

Targets revenge porn and end the "rough sex defence" in court.

Creates new DAPO (Domestic Abuse Protection Order).

Reflects victim-survivor experience of coercive control

Accounts from survivors described how it was the non-physical aspects of abuse that were more difficult to deal with (threat, humiliation, isolation, economic abuse etc).

It deals with the (previously) non-criminal acts of perpetrators which **undermine the self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth** of survivors over time.

It is these acts of undermining a persons' sense of self, which keeps a victim within an abusive relationship irrespective of whether physical abuse is present or not.

Stark, E. (2007) Coercive Control: How Men Entrap Women in Personal Life. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Legislation – the Children Acts



Children Act 1989



Children Act 2004

All practitioners should follow the principles of the **Children Acts 1989 and 2004** - that state that the welfare of children is paramount and that they are best looked after within their families, with their parents playing a full part in their lives, unless compulsory intervention in family life is necessary.

Source: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

Why was the 1989 Children Act introduced?

In the years preceding the Children Act 1989, a series of high-profile child abuse cases had triggered a public conversation on how to best protect vulnerable children.

Source: <https://www.politics.co.uk/reference/children-act-1989/>



Children Act 1989



Children Act 1989

What is the 1989 Children's Act?

- The 1989 Children Act brought together and simplified existing legislation relating to the care of children. Within family law, it shifted the legislative focus towards keeping families together, and valuing children as individuals with their own interests and rights.
- In order to strengthen protection for children, the law now placed new duties on local authorities to provide help to needy children and families in their areas. It's statutory guidance also resulted in increased specialisation within public care services.

Source: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

Child In Need

Children Act 1989 (Section 17)

Children are defined as being “in need” when their vulnerability is such that:

- They are unlikely to achieve or maintain, a satisfactory level of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority
- Their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of such services
- They are disabled – children automatically defined as Children In Need (CIN)

At Risk of Significant Harm

Children Act 1989 (Section 47)

The Local Authority has a duty to make enquiries when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm **to enable them to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare**

Video: Children Act

(Law Commission England and Wales)



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtEz6TfIT48>

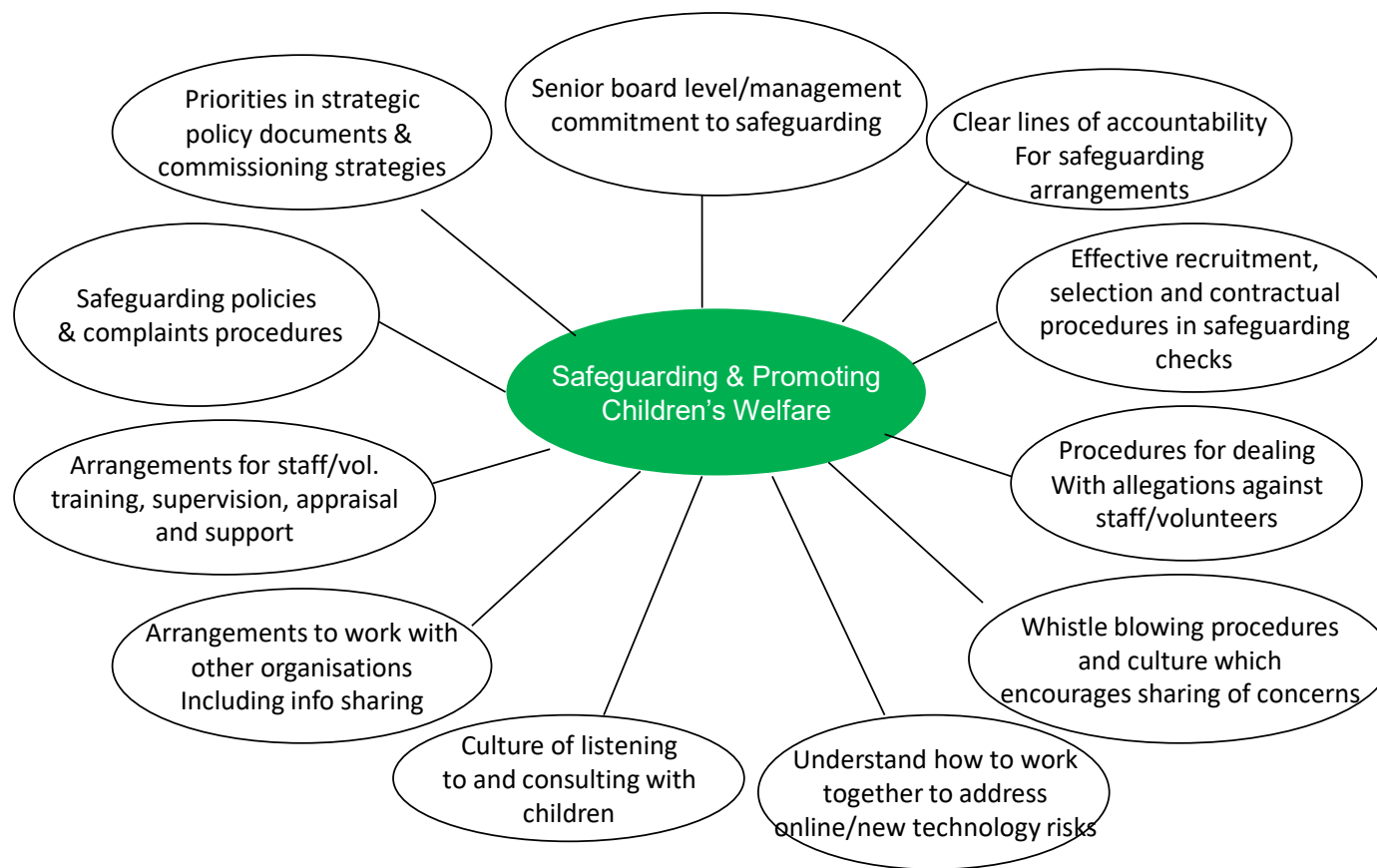
Children Act 2004

- Created the post of Children's Commissioner for England
- Responsibility for Children's Services transferred from Department of Health to Department for Education
- Placed a duty on local authorities to appoint a director of children's services and an elected lead member for children's services, who is ultimately accountable for the delivery of services.
- Updated the legislation on physical punishment ([section 58](#)) by limiting the use of the defence of reasonable punishment
- Introduced the role of a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, a person in every organisation working with children responsible for leading on and coordinating safeguarding efforts.
- Multi-agency training

Group Work Task

1. What work practices should organisations who work with children and parents have in place? Think about how you demonstrate the values that support good safeguarding
2. What is the role of **Designated Lead for Safeguarding**? What skills and knowledge do you need?
 - Discuss the task for 10 mins
 - Elect someone to feedback to the rest of the group

Services for children, parents or families should have in place:



Effective early help

Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child
- Local authorities, under section 10 of the **Children Act 2004**, have a responsibility to promote **inter-agency co-operation** to improve the welfare of all children.

Source: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e7501ab418ab055592a7b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf

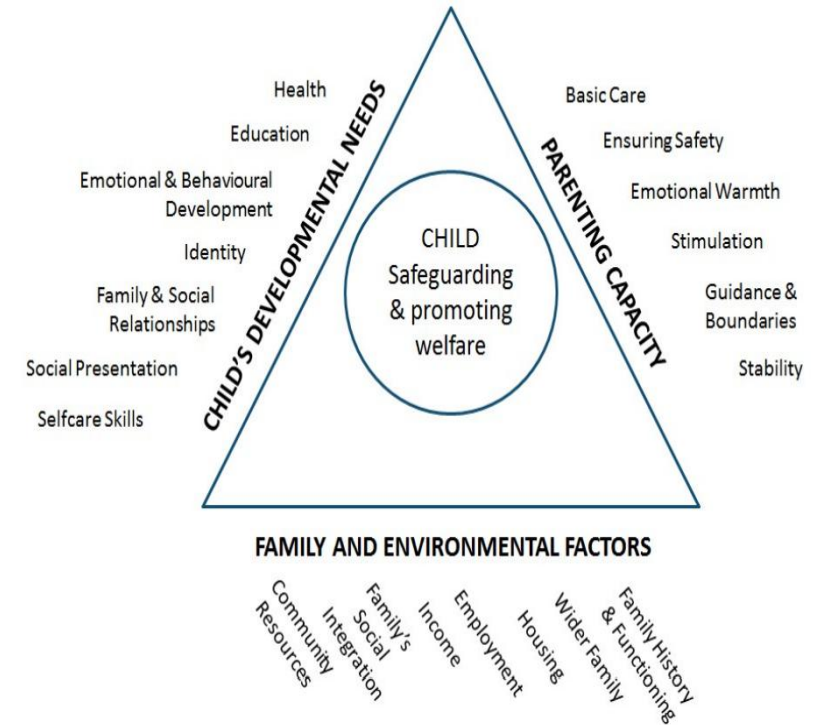
Assessment

Every Assessment should be focused on outcomes, deciding which services and support to provide to deliver improved welfare for the child and reflect the child's best interests.

In the course of the Assessment, the social worker and their line manager should determine:

- Is this a Child in Need? (**Section 17** Children Act 1989);
- Is there reasonable cause to suspect that this child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, **Significant Harm**? (**Section 47** Children Act 1989);
- Is this a child in need of accommodation? (**Section 20** or Section 31A Children Act 1989).

Assessment Framework



Positive outcomes of early help

Improved child outcomes: Early help services are linked to better social, health, and behavioral outcomes for children and families.

Reduced need for intensive intervention: Investing in early help can lead to fewer children entering the care system.

Financial savings: Early help is more cost-effective than the crisis-driven, intensive social services that families need when problems escalate.

Gaps in provision

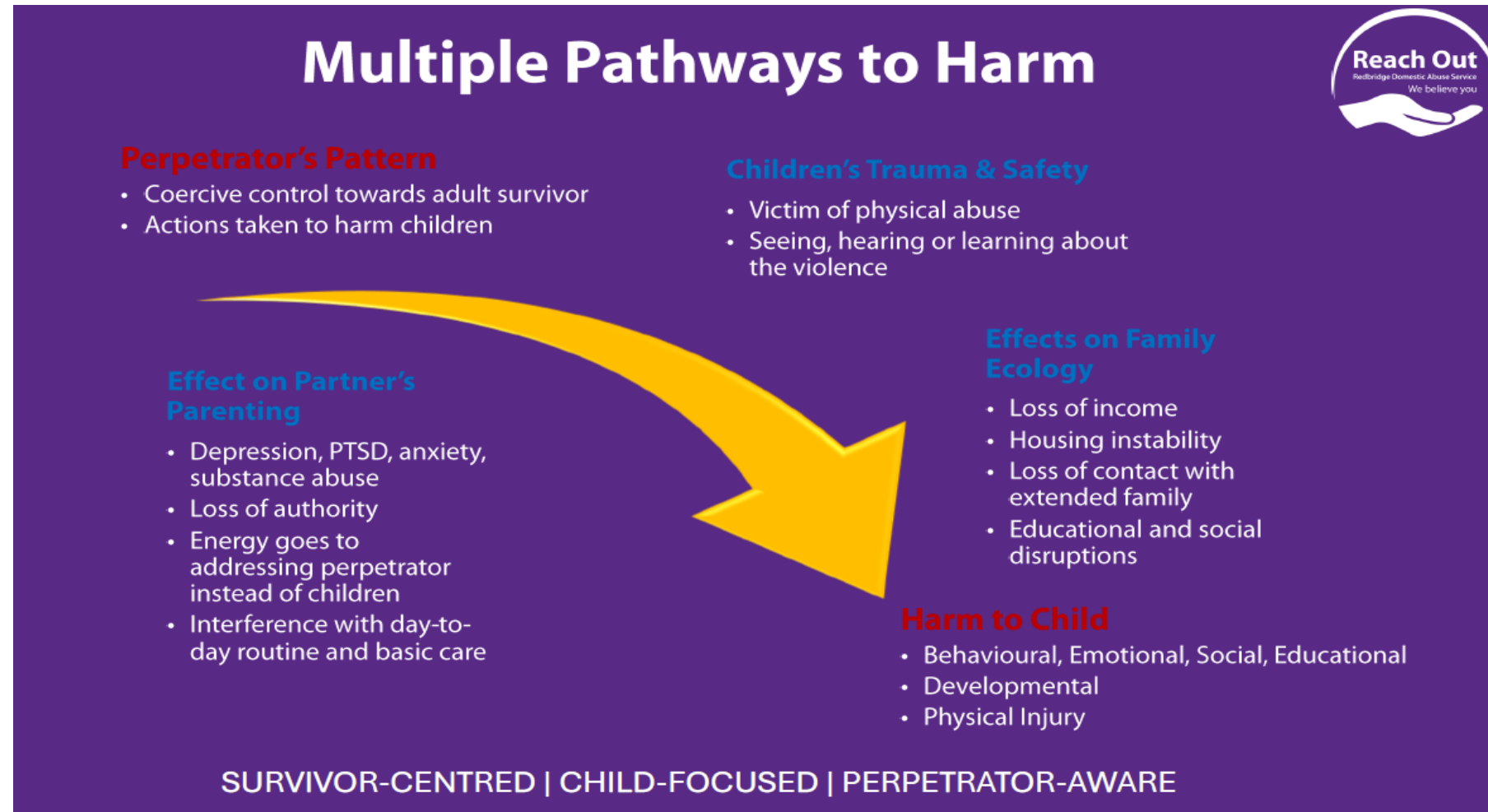
- **Insufficient services:** The "prevention ratio" in England is estimated at two children receiving targeted early help for every three receiving more costly, intensive social care services, suggesting early help is not reaching as many children as it should.
- **Underfunding:** Between 2010/11 and 2018/19, spending on early help services by local authorities fell by 44%, while spending on late intervention services increased by 29%.
- **Inconsistent delivery:** There is significant variation in the provision of early help services between local authorities in England, which is not clearly explained by differences in the underlying need for services.
- **Missed opportunities:** One study found an estimated 64,000 children miss out on early help services each year.

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Policy for different agencies

Safe and Together Model

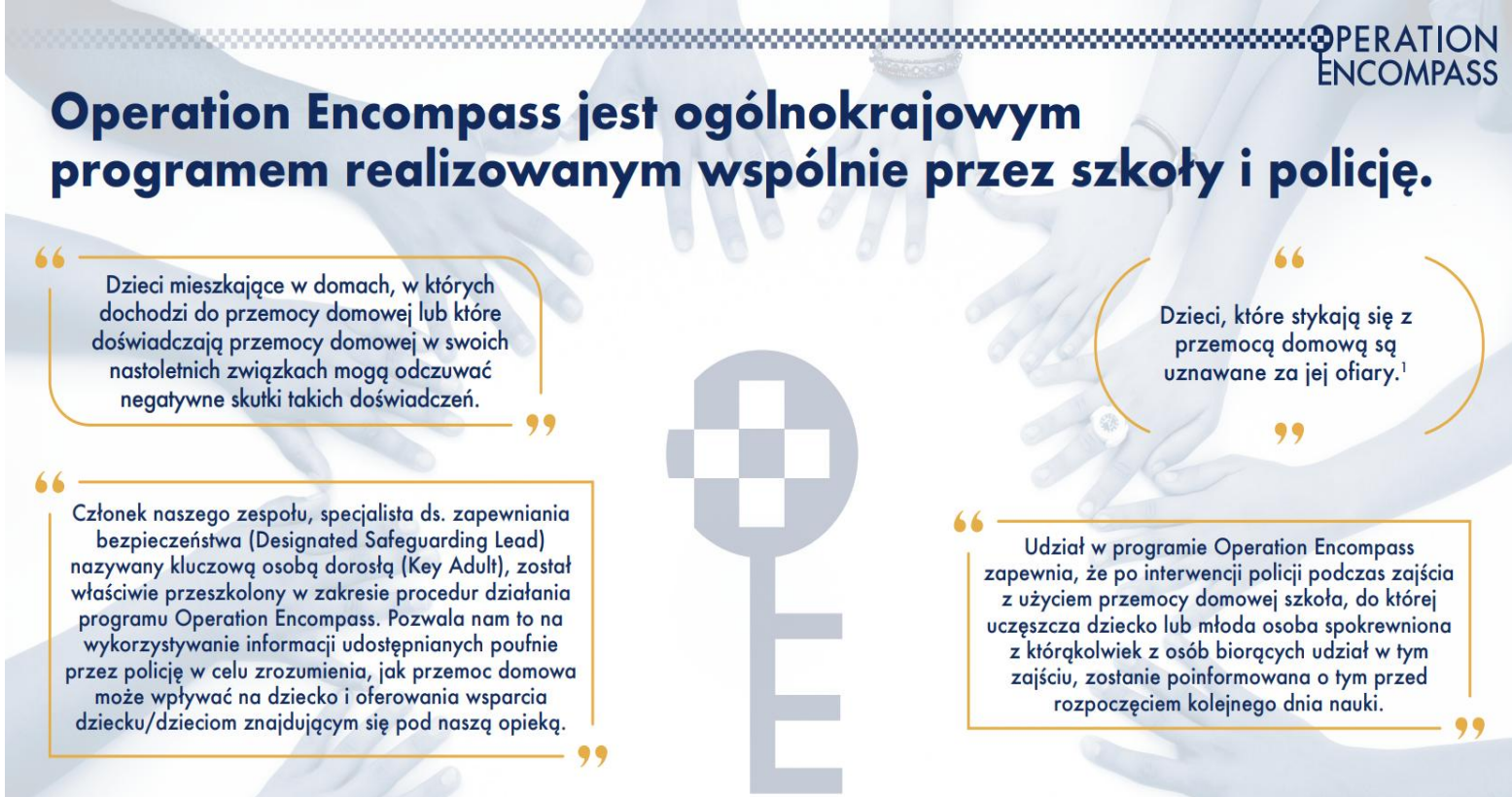


[Resources for educational settings : Operation Encompass](#)

Police - Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership designed to support children who have experienced domestic abuse.

It works by notifying a child's school, before the start of the next school day when the police have attended a domestic incident where the child is involved. This allows schools to provide immediate support to the child. The initiative is now a statutory obligation for police forces in England and Wales.



OPERATION ENCOMPASS

Operation Encompass jest ogólnokrajowym programem realizowanym wspólnie przez szkoły i policję.

“ Dzieci mieszkające w domach, w których dochodzi do przemocy domowej lub które doświadczają przemocy domowej w swoich nastoletnich związkach mogą odczuwać negatywne skutki takich doświadczeń. ”

“ Członek naszego zespołu, specjalista ds. zapewniania bezpieczeństwa (Designated Safeguarding Lead) nazywany kluczową osobą dorosłą (Key Adult), został właściwie przeszkolony w zakresie procedur działania programu Operation Encompass. Pozwala nam to na wykorzystywanie informacji udostępnianych poufnie przez policję w celu zrozumienia, jak przemoc domowa może wpływać na dziecko i oferowania wsparcia dziecku/dzieciom znajdującym się pod naszą opieką. ”

“ Dzieci, które stykają się z przemocą domową są uznawane za jej ofiary.¹ ”

“ Udział w programie Operation Encompass zapewnia, że po interwencji policji podczas zajęcia z użyciem przemocy domowej szkoła, do której uczęszcza dziecko lub młoda osoba spokrewniona z którąkolwiek z osób biorących udział w tym zajęciu, zostanie poinformowana o tym przed rozpoczęciem kolejnego dnia nauki. ”

The role of health in safeguarding children



RCPCH Child Protection Portal – Child protection and safeguarding in the UK: your essential resource to help inform clinical practice, child protection procedures, and professional and expert opinion in the legal system. [online] Available at: <https://childprotection.rcpch.ac.uk/>.

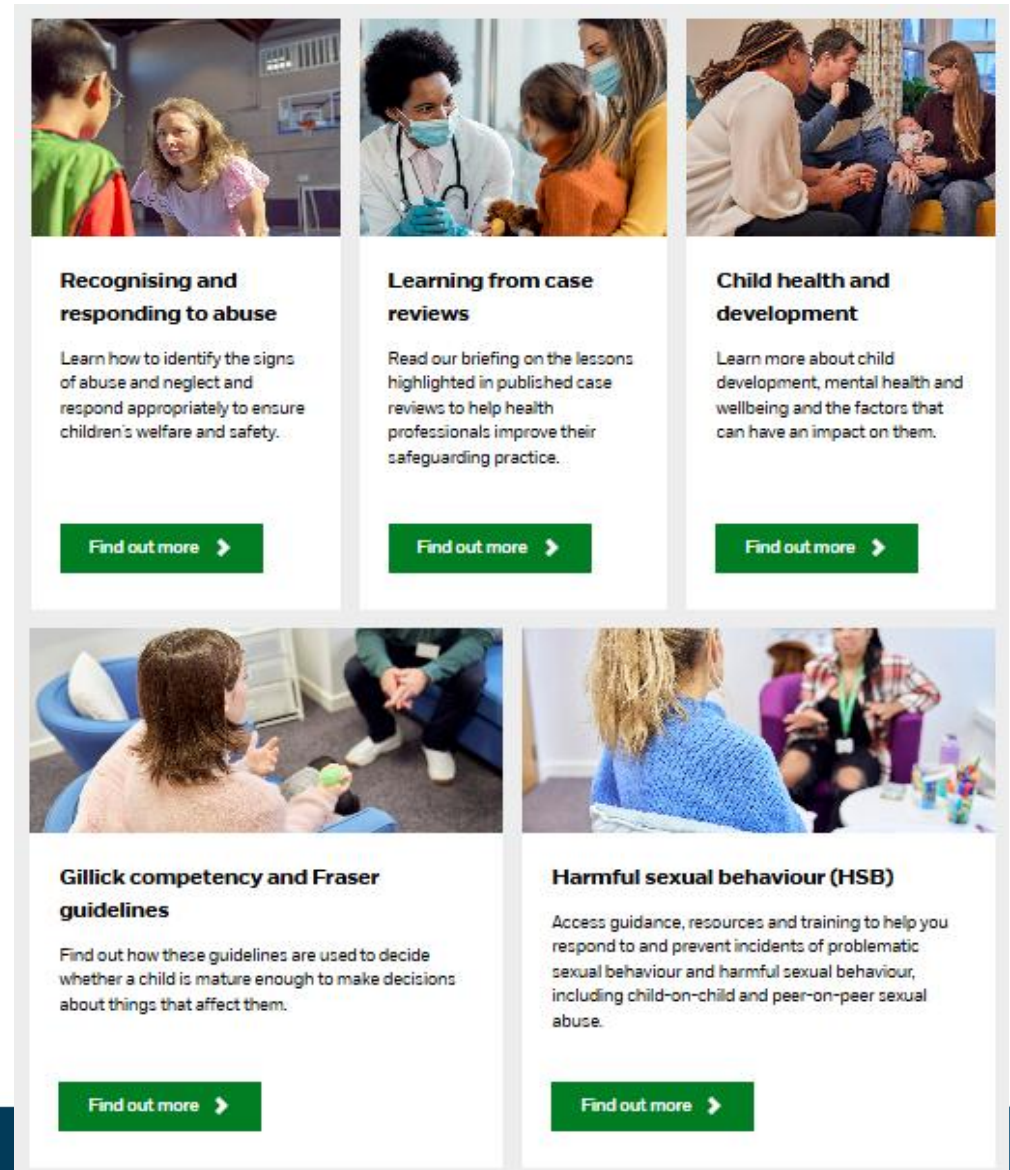
The screenshot shows the homepage of the RCPCH Child Protection Portal. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for 'About us' and 'Log in'. Below the header, the main title 'On child protection and safeguarding in the UK' is displayed in large white text on a dark blue background. A subtitle explains that the portal provides essential and evidence-based resources to help inform clinical practice, child protection procedures, and professional and expert opinion in the legal system. The main content area features six cards, each with an icon and a brief description of a resource, with a 'Read more' link at the bottom of each card. The cards are: 1. Child Protection Companion (book icon), 2. Physical signs of child sexual abuse (Purple Book) (child being held icon), 3. Child Protection Evidence (magnifying glass over bar chart icon), 4. Child protection resources (person at laptop icon), 5. Child protection advocacy and legislation (scales of justice icon), and 6. Educational opportunities in safeguarding (group of people at a presentation icon).

Protecting children in the health sector

NSPCC
Learning

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/health-safeguarding-child-protection>

What helps to support effective multi-agency working and information sharing?





Recognising and responding to abuse

Learn how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect and respond appropriately to ensure children's welfare and safety.

[Find out more >](#)



Learning from case reviews

Read our briefing on the lessons highlighted in published case reviews to help health professionals improve their safeguarding practice.

[Find out more >](#)



Child health and development

Learn more about child development, mental health and wellbeing and the factors that can have an impact on them.

[Find out more >](#)



Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines

Find out how these guidelines are used to decide whether a child is mature enough to make decisions about things that affect them.

[Find out more >](#)



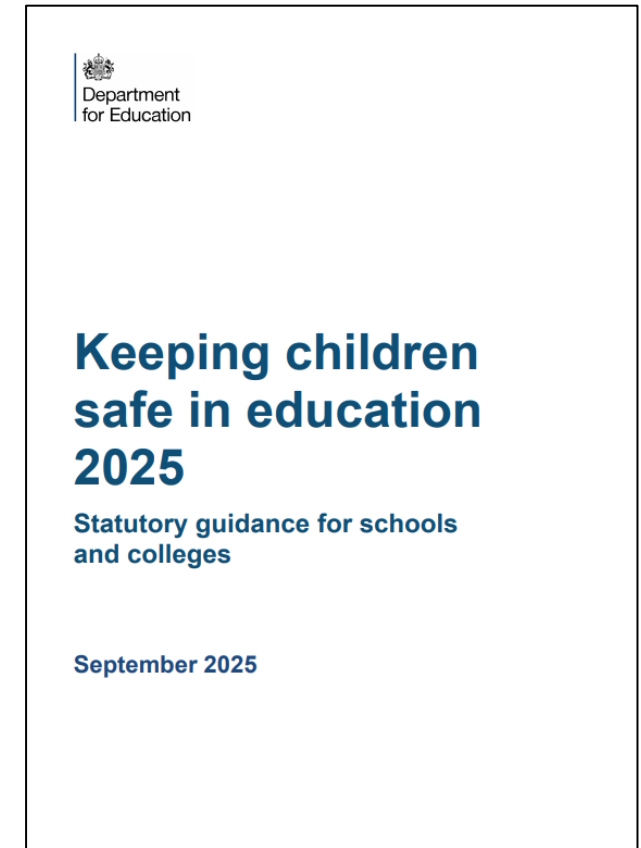
Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

Access guidance, resources and training to help you respond to and prevent incidents of problematic sexual behaviour and harmful sexual behaviour, including child-on-child and peer-on-peer sexual abuse.

[Find out more >](#)

Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead under Keeping Safe in Education

- liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the mental health support team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health
- promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances
- understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes



- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them.
- liaise with the headteacher or principal to inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult.

Information Sharing & Reporting child abuse and neglect

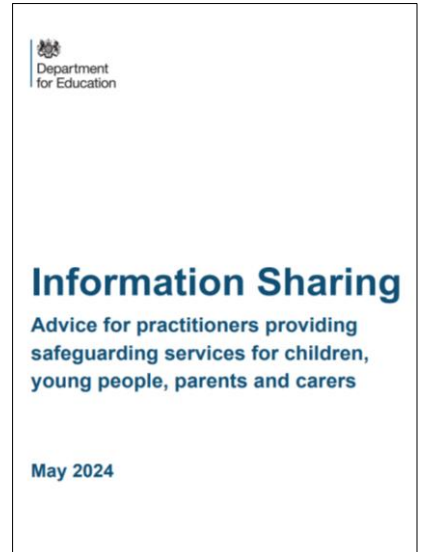
NSPCC Learning has published a Helplines insight briefing on barriers for professionals when reporting child abuse and neglect.

It is based on contacts to the NSPCC Helpline and NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line in 2022/23 by people working or volunteering with children and young people.

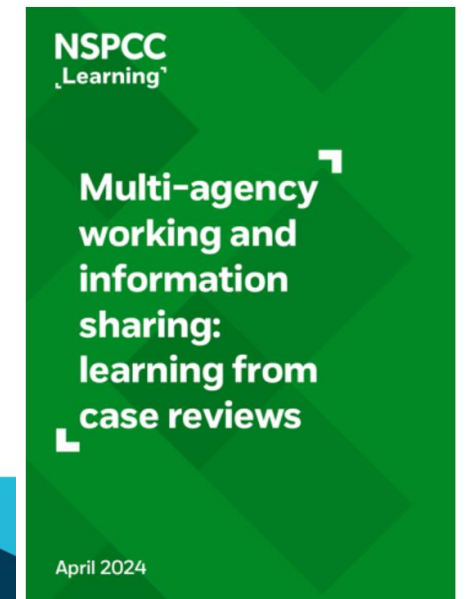
The briefing identified:

- Gaps in knowledge and confidence for some professionals including believing they needed to wait for permission to report concerns.
- There were also fears around sharing concerns, including worries about disrupting or breaking up families and fears for personal safety.
- Some professionals described organisational issues such as a lack of safeguarding processes and concealing of abuse

Read the briefing: [Barriers for professionals to reporting abuse and neglect: Helplines insight briefing](#)



Read the guidance [here](#)



When safeguarding fails..



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-24134861>

Legislation and policy is always changing

Sara Sharif

[Timeline of events](#)

Elective Home Education, [Guidance for local authorities and school about children educated at home](#)

[Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill 2024: policy summary](#)

UK news

Timeline

What were the missed chances to prevent Sara Sharif's death?

Trial revealed 15 occasions when authorities were made aware that the schoolgirl was potentially in danger

- Sara Sharif 'was doing her best to be a child' - while suffering years of abuse
- Father and stepmother of 10-year-old Sara Sharif found guilty of her murder



For more than a decade, Sara Sharif's father, Urfan Sharif, had repeatedly attracted the attention of police, social services and the education system. Photograph: Surrey Police/Surrey police



Urfan Sharif.
Photograph: Surrey

The murder of Sara Sharif has raised serious questions about missed chances to prevent her death, with the case revealing 15 occasions in which it was flagged to authorities that the schoolgirl was potentially in danger before she was killed in 2023.

For more than a decade, Urfan Sharif, 43, had repeatedly attracted the attention of police, social services and schools. He was never charged in relation to previous abuse allegations made against him, and was given custody of Sara in 2019 despite the years-long concerns about the risk he posed.



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Group Task



In your group research and discuss legislation and current policy and the roles of multi-disciplinary services within the case study you have chosen and the potential impact of their actions on the children, young people and family.



References

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