

## General / Opening Prompts

**Q: Why do you think some staff still believe ‘this couldn’t happen here’?A:**

- A false sense of security. Small or rural schools may feel "immune."
- Lack of exposure to real-life cases or media stories.
- Discomfort in acknowledging uncomfortable truths.
- Misunderstanding of what abuse looks like. It's not always obvious.
- Safeguarding fatigue. People become desensitised.

**Q: What does ‘safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility’ actually look like in school?A:**

- All staff noticing and recording concerns, not waiting for a pattern.
- Support staff, cleaners, admin staff, and volunteers knowing how to report concerns.
- Teachers noticing changes in behaviour, appearance, or attendance.
- Being proactive, not passive. Asking questions, offering support.

## KCSIE 2025 & Filtering/Monitoring

**Q: Do you know what filtering and monitoring systems are in place here? Are they working?A:**

- Staff should be aware of the school's filtering software (e.g. Smoothwall, Securly) and how monitoring alerts are handled.
- ‘Working’ means they balance safeguarding with access e.g. not blocking mental health resources.
- Schools must check effectiveness, not just compliance.

**Q: What might misinformation look like in a school context?A:**

- Pupils believing conspiracy theories (e.g. vaccines contain trackers).
- Online challenges shared as fact (e.g. Blue Whale, Momo).
- Misunderstanding of rights (e.g. “School can’t touch my phone—it’s illegal!”).
- Peer-shared ‘facts’ about sex, drugs, crime or self-harm.

## Social Care Reform / Multi-Agency Working

**Q: How can schools build better relationships with external agencies?A:**

- Consistency: same staff attending meetings builds trust.
- Communication: timely, respectful, and clear.
- Understanding roles and pressure. Mutual empathy.
- Offering school as a hub for meetings or contact with families.

**Q: When was the last time we worked with extended family as a protective factor?A:**

- Use this to prompt thinking about kinship support: grandparents, older siblings, family friends.
- Often overlooked, but key to safety planning.
- Consider in early help assessments and referrals.

## **Types of Abuse / Safeguarding Categories**

**Group Task: Can you name all the ‘other’ types of abuse we might see in school? Give an example.A:**

- Domestic abuse: child affected by witnessing.
- Child criminal exploitation e.g. county lines.
- Child sexual exploitation: gifts or secrecy in relationships.
- Online abuse: grooming via games/socials.
- Honour-based abuse: extreme restrictions or fear at home.
- Fabricated/induced illness: frequent unexplained absences.
- Peer-on-peer abuse: bullying, coercion, sexualised behaviour.
- Neglect. Always a risk, not just physical signs.

**Q: Which of these are you seeing more often and why?A:**

- Online abuse and exploitation: linked to increased device access.
- Peer-on-peer issues: normalisation via social media.
- Mental health-related neglect: potentially due to family pressure or cost of living.

## **Vulnerable Groups**

**Q: Are there groups of pupils we might be unintentionally overlooking?A:**

- Young carers, those with SEND, or EAL pupils.
- Children who are ‘always fine’: they blend in.
- Boys: less likely to disclose sexual abuse.

**Q: Are there children we’re unintentionally overlooking because they seem ‘resilient’ or ‘quiet’?A:**

- Yes: resilient’ often masks survival mode.
- Quiet doesn’t mean safe.
- These pupils need as much checking-in as vocal or ‘challenging’ ones.

## **Online Harms**

**Q: Which of these risks are your pupils talking about?A:**

- Share specific examples: sexting, gaming chat abuse, harmful trends.
- Staff may notice trends before DSLs do.

**Q: Which ones worry you most?A:**

- Sextortion, anonymous apps, incel forums: hidden harms.
- Age-inappropriate content shaping identity.

**Q: Which of these are you hearing about from pupils—and which do you think we’re underestimating?A:**

- Underestimating exposure to radical/extreme content in mainstream platforms like YouTube or TikTok.

- Hearing more about peer pressure to share images.

## **Exploitation / Sextortion**

**Q: Would we know if this was happening in Year 7? How?A:**

- Unlikely unless trained to notice changes: secrecy, anxiety, reluctance to use devices in class.
- May manifest as behaviour, not words.

**Q: How might you spot this in a classroom, corridor or club?A:**

- Sudden behaviour shifts, withdrawal, anger.
- Fear around certain times (e.g. phone buzzing).
- Avoidance of peers or eye contact.

## **Prevent Duty / Radicalisation**

**Q: What does online radicalisation look like in schools today?A:**

- Memes, jokes, or coded language with violent, racist, or misogynistic undertones.
- Strong polarised thinking: "us vs them."
- Sudden change in ideology or appearance.

**Q: What does radicalisation look like at 12, not 18?A:**

- Identity-seeking: latching onto online personalities.
- Anger, injustice, or isolation.
- Using online forums to feel 'heard.'

## **Misinformation & Conspiracy Theories**

**Q: What would you say if a child insisted school is part of a government cover-up?A:**

- Stay calm and curious: "Tell me more about that—where did you hear it?"
- Avoid ridicule.
- Explore gently: "What makes you feel unsure about school?"
- Signpost support, not correction.

**Q: How can we respond without shutting conversation down?A:**

- Use open-ended questions.
- Acknowledge feelings before facts.
- Use 'I wonder' language: "I wonder why that video made you feel that way?"

**Q: How would you respond if a pupil said, 'School isn't safe because it's part of a cover-up' A:**

- "That sounds like something that's worrying you. Can we talk about why you feel unsafe?"
- Ask who or what gave them that idea, then work with DSL to assess the context.

## **Extremist Symbols**

**Q: Have you seen or heard any of these phrases or symbols in our school environment?A:**

- Common phrases or coded language might slip under the radar (e.g. “based,” “red-pilled,” numbers like 14/88).
- Some pupils may draw swastikas or runes as ‘jokes’.
- Keep awareness high without overreacting. Record and share concerns.

## **Child-on-Child Abuse**

**Q: Can you think of any examples?A:**

- Sexualised dares, coercion, sexting under pressure.
- Fighting or dominance-based games.
- Bullying disguised as “banter”.

**Q: What harmful behaviours have we normalised as ‘banter’ or ‘just what teenagers do’?A:**

- Inappropriate touching, sexualised jokes.
- Ranking pupils’ appearances.
- Excluding or isolating others socially.

## **Extra-Familial Harms**

**Q: What extra-familial harms are happening in your form group / year group?A:**

- Bullying outside school.
- Unsupervised online contact with older teens/adults.
- Exposure to domestic violence in peers’ homes.

**Q: What’s happening outside our gates that we need to know about?A:**

- Youth gatherings, risk of gang involvement.
- Predatory adults near local shops or parks.
- Social media groups involving harmful content.

## **Reporting & Recording**

**Q: What’s stopped you reporting a concern before? What would make it easier?A:**

- Fear of ‘getting it wrong’ or overreacting.
- Unsure if it’s ‘enough’ to report.
- Time constraints.
- Easier if reporting is digital, quick, and encouraged regularly.

**Q: Here’s a fictional disclosure. Have a go at writing what you’d record.***(This is activity-based—ensure responses include factual, neutral language, and avoid interpretation.)*

## **Disclosures – How to React**

**Q: How would you respond if a Year 3 child said, ‘I have a secret I don’t want to tell anyone’?A:**

- “Sometimes secrets can make people feel sad or worried. You can tell me anything, especially if it’s about keeping you safe.”
- Never promise secrecy.

**Q: What language do you use when you’re trying to keep a child talking—but not leading them?A:**

- “Tell me more about that.”
- “What happened next?”
- “How did that make you feel?”
- “Who was there?”

## **Professional Curiosity**

**Q: Can you think of a time when professional curiosity helped you protect a child?A:**

- This invites storytelling. Staff may recall a hunch or subtle concern that led to support.
- Encourage examples where small signs turned out to be significant.

**Q: Can you share a time when curiosity helped you notice something others didn’t?A:**

- E.g. noticing patterns in uniform, attendance, or body language.
- Even just asking one extra question can make a huge difference.

## **Closing Discussion**

**Q: What’s one thing you’ll do differently this term?A:**

- Encourage practical, small changes: “check in more with quiet pupils,” “read all the new guidance,” “report sooner.”
- Capture these as pledges if you want a visual takeaway.