

# Safeguarding News



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## Safeguarding in education: How teachers can spot signs of abuse

Detecting signs that a child has been abused, either physically or mentally, can be difficult. Here we take a look at signs teachers can look out for if they suspect a pupil is being abused. Education professionals (and teachers specifically) play a crucial role in safeguarding pupils because of the nature of their work. Frequently coming into close contact with children means that they are in a position to spot any signs of abuse, whether this be physically or mentally. By identifying concerns at an early stage, the relevant help and support can be provided to help the child understand how to stay safe from abuse, while they are referred to the relevant agencies.

However, much of the time, it can be difficult for teachers to spot signs of abuse especially when it comes to challenging parents or guardians because these relationships rely heavily on mutual trust and support.



## Spotlight

All Incidents must be logged on CPOMS under the category of INCIDENT OPEN.

If you have concerns on how to use CPOMS please contact the Safeguarding Team and talk to them.

## Neglect

It is important for education professionals to spot signs of neglect, as often this can develop into more serious types of abuse. Yet this isn't always easy as children come in all sorts of shapes and sizes and may be overweight or underweight due to no fault of their parents or guardians.

Signs that teachers can look out for link to whether any health concerns or medical problems have gone unattended, if they have poor hygiene, body odour or an unkempt appearance, inappropriate clothing, or lack of supervision. A child turning up to school hungry on a regular basis is also a common sign of neglect

## Physical Abuse

Of course, much of the time bruises, cuts and harm that children have come from general childhood activities like running and playing with others, which is why it can be hard to separate injuries like this from abuse. However, when wounds become common, follow patterns and a child appears to have overall poor health, it is a teacher's duty to act. Common indications of physical abuse include harm that appears after weekends or school holidays, suspicious fractures and multiple injuries. Behavioural indications of this type of abuse could include a child being uncomfortable undressing for PE in front of others, unable to explain their injuries, or acting aggressively or in a withdrawn manner.

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For any other questions please contact a member of your Safeguarding Team

## Sexual Abuse

Should a teacher or other educational professional spot any indication of a child being sexually abused, they must report their concerns immediately in order to prevent and protect the child from further abuse. Physical indicators of this type of abuse can include:

- Regular bladder infections or STDs
- Bruising, swelling, itching, bleeding or pain in the genital or anal region
- Pregnancy in pre-teen girls
- Blood in the child's underwear

When it comes to the child's behaviour, they may suddenly start acting differently, becoming depressed and suicidal or regressing to more childlike behaviour. They may start acting in a promiscuous manner or talk about having sex or being touched. Refusing to undress during PE sessions could also be a sign that a child has been sexually abused.

For teachers, social workers and others working in childcare, complying with the government's latest advice on safeguarding guidance for schools is essential.



**Please read ;**

**Keeping Children Safe in Education for more information.**

**Ensure you read your Academy Safeguarding Policy and code of conduct to ensure that you understand the academy procedures and what your responsibilities are.**

**Remember that anyone can and should know how to make a referral.**

If a child is at immediate risk	<b>POLICE 999</b>
To make an urgent referral i.e. a child is likely to suffer or is suffering significant harm	Bristol 0117 903 6444 South Gloucestershire 01454 866000 North Somerset 01275 888808 Bath & NE Somerset 01225 396339
To raise concerns and ask for advice on extremism	PREVENT DUTY 01179455536
To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to someone who works with children	Bristol LADO Nicola Laird 0117 903 7795 07795091020 nico-la.laird@bristol.gcsx.gov.uk South Glos LADO Tina Wilson 01454 868508 ti-na.wilson@southglos.gov.uk NSC LADO Julie Bishop 01275 888808 lado@n-somerset.gcsx.gov.uk BANES LADO Jackie Deas 01225 396810 <a href="mailto:jackie_deas@bathnes.gov.uk">jackie_deas@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
For advice and guidance about whether to make a referral	Early Help (N) 0117 3521499 Early Help (EC) 0117 9415886 Early Help (S) 0117 9037770