

Child sexual exploitation - support information for schools

You'll be aware that as a governor, you have a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Given that your duty is to ensure that your school meets its statutory responsibilities, and that the children and young people attending are safe, we're keen to update you on a child sexual exploitation (CSE) awareness raising campaign.

Secondary schools in particular, have an important role to play in raising the awareness of child sexual exploitation. This support information has been designed to update governors on the 'spot the signs?' campaign which is being run by the two local safeguarding children boards.

Could you spot the signs? This campaign, developed by partners throughout Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, aims to raise awareness of the signs of child sexual exploitation and what to do if you have concerns. It targets a number of different audiences including children and young people, parents, businesses and practitioners.

Leaflets for parents and carers and young people (aged over 12) are available from the safeguarding boards. A tour of Chelsea's Choice, a hard-hitting play designed to raise awareness, is also taking place throughout schools this autumn.

What is child sexual exploitation? Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. Victims are manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act, either as a part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or in return for attention, gifts, money, alcohol, drugs or somewhere to stay.

Who does it affect? This type of abuse could happen to any child or young person up to the age of 18 from any background. It happens to boys and young men as well as girls and young women.

What are the signs? Often the victims of sexual exploitation are not aware they are being exploited. Signs of sexual exploitation range significantly but a number of tell tale signs you should look out for in children, young people and their friends, include:

- regularly missing or not taking part in education / misusing alcohol or drugs / appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions / chatting online to people they have never met / changes in physical appearance / changes in eating patterns / mood swings or being emotionally upset.

Five key questions governors should ask:

1. Does the school have a child protection policy and procedures in place that are publicly available?
2. Have all staff received training to spot the signs of CSE?
3. Do all staff know the procedure to follow if they have concerns about a child? How do you know?
4. Does the school have a clear plan for teaching about personal safety?
5. How is the school working in partnership with the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) and other local specialist agencies?

We understand that governors are strategic leads for safeguarding and should not be involved in any specific cases. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the local safeguarding children boards on the number below.

Kind regards

Victor Cook Chair of LLR CSE, trafficking and missing sub group

Contact Your normal safeguarding lead or

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Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board Leicestershire County Council, Room 600, County Hall, Glenfield
LE3 8RA 0116 305 7130 www.lrsb.org.uk/cse