

Safeguarding In Schools

with Specialist Safeguarding Consultant, **Andrew Hall**



Safeguarding Briefing - 12th May 2025

Suicidal Thoughts in Young People - Papyrus

It is not uncommon for young people to experience emotional distress or turbulence as they navigate adolescence. However, any talk of hopelessness, self-harm, or suicide should never be dismissed or minimised. Suicidal thoughts are a clear indication that a young person is struggling and needs support.

Recognising the signs can be difficult. Changes in behaviour, withdrawal from others, or increased risk-taking may signal deeper concerns. It's vital to create a safe, non-judgemental space where pupils feel able to talk. These conversations can be uncomfortable, but they can also be life-saving.

Papyrus, a national charity dedicated to preventing suicide in young people, offers practical advice on how to take these concerns seriously and respond appropriately. Staff are encouraged to read and share the following resource:

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/the-importance-of-taking-suicidal-thoughts-in-young-people-seriously/>

Exam Revision and Stress - NSPCC

Out of 1,647 calls made to Childline from 1st April 2024 to the 31st March 2025 an average of 137 each month regarded exam or revision stress. This data set demonstrated a peak in May 2024, with 359 calls centred around these issues. That particular month showed an increase of two

and a half over the norm. 50% were calls with young people aged 12 to 15, while 39% were from pupils aged 16 – 18. Childline has published a page breaking down this data, and is well worth the read. If interested, please follow the link below:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2025/rise-in-calls-to-Childline-about-exam-and-revision-stress-during-the-exam-period-last-year/>

Safeguarding Conference 2025: Strengthening Practice, Protecting Children (The Village Hotel, Bury)

Join safeguarding professionals on Tuesday 20th May 2025, at The Village Hotel, Bury, for this annual Safeguarding Conference. This full-day, in-person event offers a valuable opportunity to explore current safeguarding challenges, share best practice, and engage with expert-led keynotes and workshops. Topics include child sexual abuse, domestic abuse, youth violence, and trauma-informed approaches. Designed for practitioners working with children and families, this conference supports professional development and promotes effective safeguarding practice.

For more information, go to: <https://kdsafeguarding.co.uk/courses/kd-safeguarding-annual-safeguarding-conference-2025>

New Survey on Smartphones - South West Grid for Learning

The South West Grid for Learning launched a new survey this month. The survey seeks to understand the concerns, expectations and experiences that parents and carers expect to face after giving a child their first smartphone. The overall objective is to map how this milestone is seen by those charged with caring for children. This is a little understood area, despite the impact that smartphones have on children. In particular the role these devices play in introducing children to the digital world. This survey is designed to change that. With concrete insights into how families navigate this transition, the SWGfL seeks to

produce a support kit to help with these issues. This survey would be well worth completing, and passing on to carers and parents in your institution. If interested please follow the link below:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/take-our-survey-share-your-experience-on-your-childs-first-smartphone/>

Question of the Week: A parent tells you their child is ‘making things up’ about home life. How do you respond?

Answer: If a parent tells you their child is ‘making things up’ about home life, remain calm and professional. Do not ask what the child has said or agree with the parent. Acknowledge their concern and explain that you are required to pass on any comments that *might* relate to a child’s wellbeing. Do not explore further. Record the conversation factually and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay.

Stay calm and professional

Avoid reacting emotionally. Keep a neutral tone and body language.

Do not ask what the child has said

You are not investigating. Do not try to clarify or explore the details.

Avoid agreeing, disagreeing, or reassuring

Phrases like “I’m sure it’s nothing” or “Children do that sometimes” must be avoided.

Acknowledge without judgement

Say: “Thank you for letting me know. I’m going to pass this on to our Designated Safeguarding Lead, as we are required to share any comments that might relate to a child’s wellbeing.”

Record factually and promptly

Use direct quotes where possible. Stick to what was said — not what you think it might mean.

Alert the DSL immediately

Log the concern. Do not delay.

Breathing Exercise Guide - Education Support

Being an educational professional is rarely easy. Schools can be a frustrating and chaotic place at the best of times. Mental health for staff is sometimes side-lined in the pursuit of maximising pupil happiness. One way in which staff can improve their coping skills when inhabiting this mentally challenging environment is breathing. Breathing exercises reduce your fight or flight response by lowering stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. Better managing the physical causes of these issues, allows for the restoration of control and improves mental resilience. The speed of a situation can consequently be radically slowed through allowing the brain to take charge. This allows response mechanisms to be well thought through, rather than the physical knee-jerk reaction which can sometimes drive behaviours. If interested in reading more, please follow the link below:

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-individuals/guides/breathing-exercises-for-beating-stress-and-creating-calm>

Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs

"I just wanted to say that I thought today's training was absolutely fantastic. By a mile it was the most engaging training I have done."

Next live online Advanced Safeguarding Course for DSLs is Thursday, 12th July 2025 [Book Online](#)

The on-demand course is always available and is updated after each live session [Book Online](#)

Other available online courses include:

Whole School Safeguarding Course for 2024/2025 (2 hours of content plus a break) [Book Online](#)

Online courses - Safeguarding.Pro

All our other courses are now available in [Safeguarding.Pro](#) These courses can be accessed for a full year.

Current courses include:

- Safeguarding Refresher
- An Introduction to Cybersecurity
- Safeguarding and AI: Risks and Rewards
- Safeguarding for Governance
- Safeguarding Induction for new staff
- Understanding Incel Culture and the Manosphere

For further details, go to: <https://safeguarding.pro/>

Until next time, keep safe!

Andrew Hall

Specialist Safeguarding Consultant,
Director, Success In Schools Ltd.

Are you a busy DSL with no time?

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