

Safeguarding Briefing

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Kido Nursery Cyberattack: UK 17-year olds arrested

Cybercrime is one of the fastest-growing threats schools face. The recent Kido Nursery hack, where the details and photographs of 8,000 children were stolen and posted online, was described by experts as “immature” in approach but deeply distressing in impact. Strikingly, the suspects were not overseas gangs but two 17-year-olds from Hertfordshire.

This highlights the dual risk: protecting school data from external attackers while recognising that students themselves may be capable of serious digital offences. Research by the Information Commissioner’s Office, based on 215 data-breach reports in the education sector between January 2022 and August 2024, found that 57% of insider cyber incidents were caused by pupils or students. Of cases involving stolen login credentials, 97% were carried out by students (ICO, 2025).

The Cyber Choices programme, run by the National Crime Agency, helps prevent this by supporting early intervention. It is designed to help young people understand the law, avoid online risks, and channel their skills into positive, legal careers.

DSLs could consider contacting Cyber Choices if they are concerned that a student is:

- Showing a strong interest in hacking tools or techniques.
- Talking about wanting to “try out” cyber attacks.
- Repeatedly pushing digital boundaries in ways that could escalate.

- Displaying online curiosity that might cross into risky or illegal activity.

The programme is voluntary and cannot work with anyone already under cybercrime investigation until that case is resolved.

The Cyberchoices website is here:

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/cyber-choices>

Halloween and Children's Safety - Child Accident Prevention Trust

It's October which every teacher knows means two things; half-term and Halloween. Halloween has long given concern to school leaders and parents as well as the general public. Largely this has been due to anti-social behaviour, social disorder linked to trick or treating, house party overflows, late opening hours in the nightlife sector and so on.

Whilst educational professionals up and down the country may spend the lead up focusing on preventing anti-social behaviour, there are other dangers lurking for children and young people. These secondary dangers including unsafe costume design, and the low nocturnal visibility of participants have been addressed in a recent article from the Child Accident Prevention Trust.

Find out more here: [Halloween and Children's Safety \(CAPT\)](#)

Free Webinar: Protective Security & Preparedness for Schools (EduShield)

Louis Donald, a senior leader at Creative Education, recently completed the College of Policing's Multi-Agency Gold Incident Command (MAGIC) course, usually reserved for police, fire and ambulance leaders. The course combines learning, interactive exercises and immersive simulations, including a scenario where a plane crash required coordination across schools, utilities and communities.

Louis has already embedded this learning in his current role by setting up a Critical Incident Working Group, creating emergency “grab bags” with essential documents, and rolling out role-specific staff training and structured decision logs.

Drawing on his unique perspective, Louis has created a free webinar for school leaders on the Department for Education’s new guidance for protective security and preparedness. The session offers practical steps, case studies and safeguarding links.

From October, Louis will be available to support schools with this area of security and preparedness work as an independent safeguarding consultant.

To watch the webinar, go to:

<https://www.edushield.org.uk/majorincidentguidance>

You can find the government guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-security-and-preparedness-for-education-settings>

Question of the Week

What is cuckooing, what signs might you notice, who might be more at risk, and what tactics do criminals use?

Answer:

Cuckooing refers to criminals taking over someone’s home, usually that of a vulnerable person, and using it for illegal activities such as drug dealing, storing weapons, or exploiting the resident. (The name comes from the cuckoo bird, which lays its eggs in other birds’ nests.) Victims may feel unable to say no due to fear, intimidation, or dependency on the offenders.

Tactics criminals use

- Grooming and befriending: building trust or a relationship to gain access.

- Offering incentives: providing money, drugs, clothing, or to pay bills in return for “borrowing a room.”
- Coercion and isolation: using threats, discouraging visitors, and reducing support so the victim becomes trapped.

Signs to watch for

- Frequent visitors at unusual hours.
- A resident who appears more anxious or withdrawn.
- A home that looks neglected or deteriorating.
- Fewer visits from family, friends, or support staff.
- Increased anti-social behaviour at or around the property.
- Litter or rubbish piling up outside the home.

Who might be more at risk?

- People with a history of domestic violence, parental substance misuse, mental health issues, or criminality.
- People who are homeless or living in insecure accommodation.
- People who are socially isolated, lonely, or experiencing social difficulties.
- People with a physical or learning disability.
- People experiencing mental health issues or substance misuse difficulties.

What to do

If you suspect cuckooing, report it immediately through safeguarding and community safety channels. Trust your instincts, it is always better to share a concern than to stay silent.

Further information

In association with the Metropolitan Police, Tower Hamlets Borough Council has further information and a useful poster about cuckooing on their website: <https://towerhamletscrimewatch.org/crime-prevention/cuckooing>

Follow up to last week's safeguarding question

Last week's safeguarding question was: if a child discloses something worrying to you, what are the two most important things you must (and must not) do in that moment?

Steve Akers from Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust emailed to make an important point about the words 'secret' and 'confidential'.

Steve wrote, 'I like to make a distinction between 'secret' and 'confidential' in the context of safeguarding. Secrets are unsafe, we don't keep secrets (we may be persuaded to keep the odd trivial one, like a birthday gift for example), but we do keep safeguarding information 'Confidential'. By that I mean the information is treated carefully, respectfully, and only shared with key adults who need the information in order to keep the child safe. In practice, adults [need to be] clear about how the information will be handled. It will be shared, but in a sensitive, professional manner.

"Taking a disclosure is so fundamental to our work. Safeguarding professionals can have attended a million courses, be able to quote various sections of the children act and wax lyrical about the latest AI threats. But, if we don't get those moments right when a young person decides to break their silence, then we really miss the point of it all.'

Online Safety for Parents - London Grid for Learning

The London Grid for Learning has developed a new [Parent Online Safety Toolkit for Schools](https://parentonlinesafety.lgfl.net/). It has been designed to help empower parents to keep their children safe and start those key safeguarding conversations. Based on the latest research, risks and trends around generative AI, social media and gaming, it includes a ready-to-use presentation for staff to deliver to parents and is free to all schools to download at <https://parentonlinesafety.lgfl.net/>. To help DSLs and staff get the best out of the resource they will be running a FREE Webinar on **Tuesday 25th Nov, 4pm: Parent Online Safety Webinar: introducing a new Toolkit for Schools: Tuesday 25th Nov, 4pm**. The 45-minute webinar introduces a new resource to help schools and settings working with

children empower parents around online safety. During the webinar their expert will take you through:

- *tips and strategies to plan and personalise your parent sessions and promote parental engagement*
- *discussion starters and activities to empower parents to start key safeguarding conversations and keep children safe online*
- *resources and guidance to help parents manage device use, safety settings and expectations*

Who should attend? This course is suitable for DSLs, SLT, Governors and anyone with responsibility for online safety in schools and community settings. You can sign up here:

<https://lgfl.bookinglive.com/book/add/p/222>

Swiggle, a Child Friendly Search Engine - South West Grid for Learning

Swiggle is a child friendly search engine from the excellent people at the South West Grid for Learning. The engine is the fruit of the company's twenty years of work in the educational environment. The search engine is ad free and like other search engines it's free to use. Included in the Swiggle engine are reporting tools, a screen cover widget, a search blocker and more. It works on tablets and mobiles and puts educational results first. If you're interested in finding out what Swiggle can do, please follow the link below:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/services/swiggle/>

WEBINAR: Creating Safe Spaces: Introducing Therapeutic Supervision in Schools with Kate Hall

Online using WebinarJam | Monday 20th October 2025 4:00 - 5:30pm | £59+vat

Staff wellbeing sits at the heart of safe, thriving school communities. In this 90-minute webinar, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist Catherine Hall (MEd. Cantab) will introduce therapeutic supervision — a relational,

person-centred way to support staff working in the high-pressure world of education.

To book, go to:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/harbourcounselling/1892906>

Forthcoming Courses

Advanced Safeguarding for Designated Safeguarding Leads

"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:

Wednesday 26th November 2025 [Book Online](#)

The on-demand version is available year-round and is updated regularly [Book Online](#)

Take a look at our other courses here:

<https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/availablecourses>

Many of our online courses are available in [Safeguarding.Pro](#) with full-year access included.

Are you a busy DSL with no time?

Need a place to ask questions. find support and download resources

Click here and join Safeguarding.Pro today!