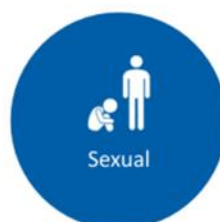
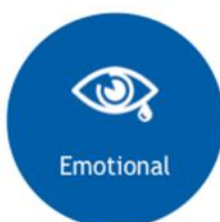




Safeguarding Update - September 24

This month's staff safeguarding Newsletter focuses on the four main types of abuse and what to look out for.

The Four Types of Abuse



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What do we mean by abuse?



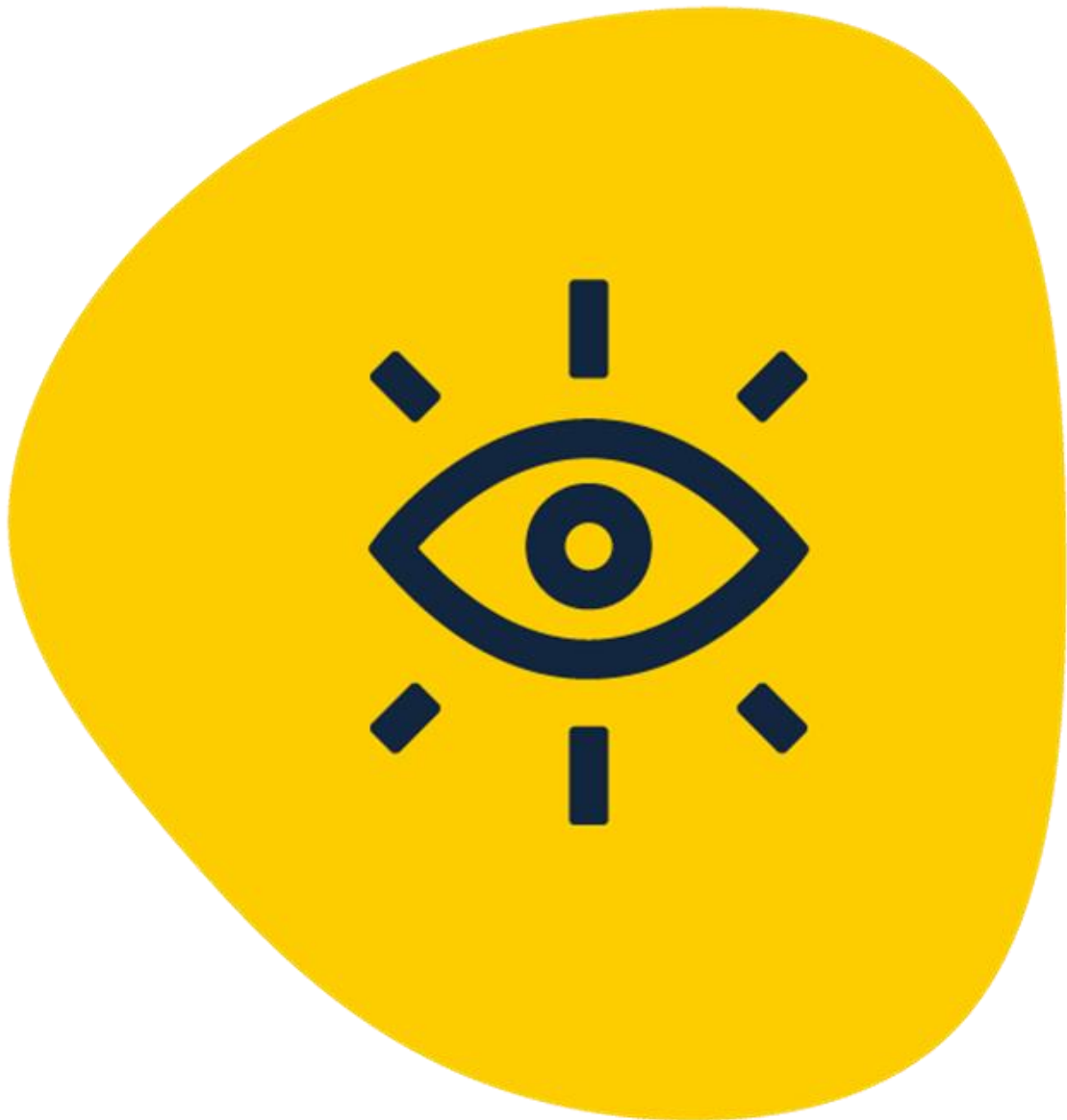
Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, where someone inflicts harm on a child, or fails to act to prevent harm.

'Harm' can include ill treatment that isn't physical, and the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others.

Children can be at risk of abuse in situations both outside and within their families.

It can happen online and offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.

The four main types of abuse



The four main types of abuse are:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another. The critical thing is to be **professional curious** and be able to **spot that something might be wrong**.

Types of Abuse



Physical abuse

This is when someone hurts a child on purpose and with the intent to cause harm. This can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, or suffocating. If it causes them physical harm, such as cuts, bruises, broken bones or other injuries, it is physical abuse.

Anyone can hurt a child - a relative, friend or stranger. It can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs of physical abuse

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained: bruises or cuts/burns or scalds/bite marks

Children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is when a child's feelings and emotions are manipulated or shamed on purpose. This can take different forms, for example:

- when a child is unfairly blamed for everything
- told they are stupid, worthless or ugly
- ignored or never shown any emotion in interactions

Emotional abuse is the severe and persistent ill treatment of a child. It can have long-lasting and devastating effects on a child's emotional health and development.

Signs of emotional abuse

- The child is excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Emotional abuse may be the only form of abuse suffered by a child, or it might be part of a wider pattern of abuse.

Sexual abuse and exploitation

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child, or inducing a child to act in sexually inappropriate ways.

Many children and young people do not recognise themselves as victims. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong.

The sexual abuse of children is more than just physical sexual contact. It includes:

- sexual touching, masturbation, kissing, rubbing - clothed or unclothed
- all penetrative sex
- intentionally engaging in sexual activity in front of a child
- making, showing, or distributing indecent images of children.
- grooming children for future abuse - in person or online

Signs of sexual abuse

- displaying knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- using sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- asking others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- exhibiting physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy

Sexual abuse is not only perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. This is when an individual or group takes advantage of a child (anyone under 18) to coerce, manipulate or deceive them into sexual activity.

This is done:

- in exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Even if the activity appears consensual, the victim still may have been sexually manipulated. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, and can also occur online or through social media.

Signs of child sexual exploitation

- appearing regularly with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or pregnancies
- changes in emotional well-being
- misuse of drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing school or not taking part in education

Neglect

Neglect is where a child is not looked after. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic and essential needs.

This can include:

- not providing adequate food, water, clothing, and shelter
- leaving a child alone in dangerous situations, or to watch after themselves when they are very young
- failure to provide medical care
- failure to meet the child's emotional needs

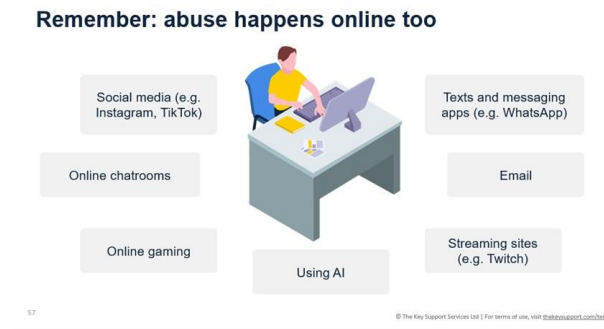
Warning signs of neglect

- living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- persistent hunger and signs of malnutrition
- lack of hygiene - dirty clothes and hair that may lead to lice or nits
- lack of adequate clothing for the time of year - such as not having a winter coat
- living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- often acting angry, aggressive or self-harming

- failing to receive basic health care
- parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or injured

If a child does not have a safe and stable home, this is neglect.

Remember: Abuse happens online too



It can be very easy to assume that abuse happens in a physical space like the home or the classroom, but it's important to remember that emotional and sexual abuse can also happen virtually

This can include:

- Social media sites, such as X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat, as well as any other website where comments can be left on content a child has created (e.g. YouTube)
- Via email
- Using AI to generate harmful imagery, such as indecent images or to make fun of someone
- In online chatrooms, where children talk to each other virtually
- Texts and messaging apps, such as WhatsApp
- Streaming sites, where someone records themselves doing something live and can receive comments (e.g. gaming streaming on Twitch)
- Online gaming sites such as Roblox or Fortnite, where players can talk to each other while they play

Emotional Abuse Online

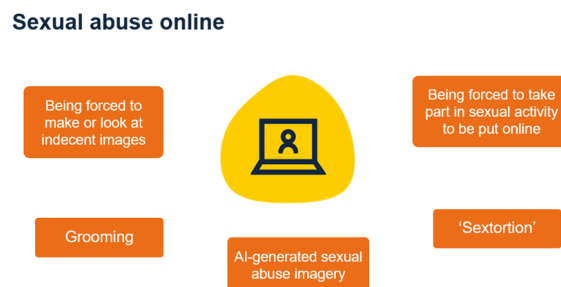


This image shows some common ways that abuse can happen online, but this isn't an exhaustive list. Any sort of abuse that comes from spoken word, coercion, etc. can be done online just as it happens in the 'real world'

Emotional abuse online may, for example, look like:

- Cyber-bullying, e.g. being teased or bullied via text, messenger apps, emails or comments
- Being excluded from things online, e.g. scheduled plans to play an online game together, or being repeatedly kicked out of an online game
- Making fake accounts or posting videos of a person with the intention of humiliating or embarrassing them
- Being constantly messaged by parents or caregivers while at school, to a degree that the child seems upset or unable to focus on schoolwork

Sexual Abuse Online



Sexual abuse online may, for example, look like:

- Being forced to look at indecent pictures or videos – e.g. by being sent them on messaging apps. This could include AI-generated content
- Being filmed or photographed during sexual activities and then having these images or videos put online
- Being befriended online by someone, with the intention of being groomed by them for further abuse, exploitation or trafficking – e.g. someone pretending to be a child of the same age on social media and convincing them to meet up, only to then commit further abuse
- 'Sextortion' – this is when an adult threatens to release nudes or semi-nudes of a child unless they pay money or do something to benefit them. Children of any age are potential targets, but older teenagers are particularly at risk
- Using AI to create indecent images of a child. For example, adults could use a photo of a child to generate a 'deepfake', which is where a photo or video of someone has been digitally altered so they appear to be someone else. These 'deepfake' images or video can be sexually explicit and are classed as child sexual abuse material

A lot of these things can also happen as a form of child-on-child abuse. For example, children could create AI-generated images of another child

Look Out For:

- The child may be spending more time online, or more time offline. This might be reported by their parents or carers. They might complain of being tired because they were online all night, or have their phone going off a lot
- They could have stronger emotional responses or outburst to being online – for example, the child may get unusually angry, upset or distant after checking their phone or using their computer/tablet
- Being secretive about their use of the internet or a device – they may refuse to hand their phone in if it's part of school policy, or refuse to tell you what they get up to online
- The more general signs of sexual abuse that we saw earlier could indicate a child is being sexually abused online
- If a child tells you that they use their device unsupervised – for example, they play on their iPad when they go to bed – this could be a red flag

As with other safeguarding issues, always look for **changes in behaviour or mood**. Although a change might not suggest a child is being abused online, the DSL will look into the situation further

Reminder of DSL Team



Safeguarding Concerns

Are YOU concerned about a child?

Speak to a DSL

 Ms Martin Headteacher	 Mr Gadsby Deputy Headteacher	 Mrs Bramley Assistant Headteacher
 Mr Glanney Yr3/4 Leader	 Mrs Tarling EYFS and Nursery Lead	 Mrs Beesley Family Liaison Officer

Record your concern in writing on
CPOMS
<https://biertoncombined.cpoms.net/>