



Safeguarding Bulletin Autumn Term 2025 ~ Issue 01

Dear Parents / Carers / Guardians,

Welcome to our newsletter from the Safeguarding Team at Bredon School. Our aim is to provide you with the latest support and advice which could affect you and your children's lives.

Free Parent Prevent Course

Cardiff City Council, in partnership with Wise Kids, have created a completely free 'Preventing Online Radicalisation' course. There's no login or sign-up required, and although it's aimed at parents, carers, and professionals working with children and families i.e. Early Help practitioners, it's a valuable resource for anyone who supports children and young people.

The course has 12 short sections and takes around an hour to complete. It explores how children and young people can be influenced online and how adults can help them develop critical thinking and resilience against extremist content.

What is 'Prevent'?

Prevent is part of the UK Government's safeguarding strategy that helps protect people from being drawn into terrorism or extremist ideologies. In education, it's about teaching children and young people to question information, recognise risks, and make safe choices online. The focus is always on education, awareness, and early support, not punishment.

You can access the free course here: [Preventing Online Radicalisation – Wise Kids & Cardiff City Council](#)

Source: Wise Kids & Cardiff City Council, 2025

Child Mental Health

The Youth Endowment Fund has published a report exploring access to mental health support for children and young people involved in, or at risk of, serious youth violence in England and Wales. Drawing on literature reviews, data analysis, service mapping, and interviews with professionals, caregivers, and young people, the report highlights significant barriers to accessing timely and appropriate support — particularly for those with the greatest needs and facing additional marginalisation. Barriers include restrictive eligibility criteria, long waiting times, and stigma, distrust, and fear of criminalisation. The report calls for systemic reform to improve access to mental health support.

Further information please see below:

Read the report: [Access to mental health support for children and young people involved in or at-risk of serious youth violence across England and Wales](#)

See also on NSPCC Learning: [Child mental health: recognising and responding to concerns](#)

Source: NSPCC & Youth Endowment fund, 2025

Roblox Age Estimation and Safety Updates

As one of the world's most popular online gaming platforms, Roblox is used by millions of children and young people to play, create, and connect. Like many social gaming spaces, it has faced scrutiny around online safety and predatory behaviour, especially where adults may attempt to pose as younger players.

Roblox has now announced that it is expanding facial age estimation and ID verification to all users who access the platform's communication features. The company is also introducing new systems designed to limit communication between adults and children unless they already know each other in real life.

These developments form part of a wider effort to strengthen safeguarding on the platform, Roblox reports that more than 100 new safety initiatives have been introduced since January 2025.

Parents and carers can find more detailed information about these updates and how to set up parental controls and privacy settings on the official Roblox website which can be found [here](#).

Top Tips for Parents

- **Explore together:** Spend time playing Roblox with your child to understand how the platform works.
- **Set up parental controls:** Use Roblox's parental PIN, privacy settings, and communication restrictions to limit who can contact your child.
- **Check age verification:** Encourage your child to use accurate age settings, as this affects which features they can access.
- **Talk regularly:** Discuss online interactions, appropriate behaviour, and what to do if something feels uncomfortable.
- **Use trusted resources:** Visit [Internet Matters – Roblox Guide for Parents](#) or [NSPCC – Online Gaming Safety](#) for more detailed support.

Source: NSPCC & Internet Matters, 2025

The Impact of AI on Child Safety

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) is raising new concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people online. Recent findings from Childlight's second Index Report on Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA) reveal worrying global trends.

Key findings include:

- Around **7%** of children across Western Europe are raped or sexually assaulted before the age of 18.
- **19.6%** of Western European children report experiencing unwanted or pressured sexual interactions online by age 18.
- A **1,325%** rise (2023–2024) has been recorded in AI-generated child sexual abuse material, showing how new technology can be misused to create harmful, exploitative content.

The report highlights the urgent need for continued education, digital literacy, and online vigilance among families, schools, and platforms.

Further information please see below:

- **Read the news story:** [Study finds millions of children face sexual violence – and AI deepfakes surge is driving new harm](#)
- **Read the report:** [Into the light index](#)
- **See also on NSPCC Learning:** [Protecting children from sexual abuse](#)

Source: NSPCC & Childlight Global Child Safety Institute, 2025

What Children & Young People Need to Know about **FREE SPEECH VS HATE SPEECH**

Everyone in the UK has the right of "freedom of expression". That's the right to voice your opinions and share information and ideas with others. It's not the right to say whatever you want without regard for others' feelings and values. We all have a responsibility to use this right properly: being respectful and inclusive to others. Whether online or offline, communication attacking or discriminating against groups or individuals (because of protected characteristics like race or religion) is hate speech, not free speech.

Free speech is a person's legal right to share information, opinions and ideas without fear of retaliation, censorship or legal consequences. This freedom of expression is recognised in international human rights legislation, and here's what it does for us in our day-to-day lives ...

The Human Rights Act 1988 states that everyone has the right to express themselves freely – even if their views are unpopular and might offend others.

Freedom of expression encourages listening to others and allowing opposing views to be heard. It's important to respect someone's opinion, even if we disagree with it. Free speech lets us engage in meaningful discussions with people who feel differently.

Any concept could potentially offend someone. Galileo's ideas were incredibly offensive to many at the time, while not everyone agrees with Darwin's theory today. Freely exchanging ideas promotes progress.

Free speech allows us to engage people we disagree with in a debate. The ability to challenge others' views is healthy – while having ours challenged helps us learn how to deal with criticism and think deeply about what we say and believe.

Free speech is a powerful tool for change, justice and reform. Many modern UK rights – such as women being allowed to vote or decent working conditions – couldn't have been achieved without it.

Freedom of expression includes the right not to do something, like not standing up for – or singing – the national anthem. Even though some people would find that offensive, it isn't illegal.

Hate speech refers to any communication – like talking, texting or posting online – which displays prejudice against someone's identity. Derogatory, demonising and dehumanising statements, threats, identity-based insults, offensive name-calling and slurs would all count as hate speech. Here are some common forms it takes ...

Targeting people or groups because of who they are – including but not limited to aspects such as race, sexuality, religion or a disability – and verbally abusing them with slurs and name-calling. The Equality Act 2010 has more information on this.

Content that dehumanises people based on those same attributes: referring to them as if they were animals, objects or other non-human entities, for example.

Calling for violence or hatred against certain people or groups and justifying and glorifying those actions.

Claiming that specific types of people are physically, mentally or morally inferior (or even that they are criminals) to encourage others to view them in the same way.

Making up or repeating insults about a person or group because something about their identity is different to the person who's posting.

Promoting the segregation of certain groups, or discrimination against them, because of who they are.

Meet Our Expert

The Global Equality Collective is an online community for homes, schools and businesses, a collective of hundreds of subject matter experts in diversity, equality and inclusion, and the organisation behind the GEC app, the world's first app for diversity, equality and inclusion.

GLOBAL
EQUALITY
COLLECTIVE

The
National
College

NOS
National
Online
Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/42/schedule/1/pt-1/article-10> Text: If everyone's got to be free to say what they like, then we've got to be free to say what we like. Freedom of expression

Cuckooing: What it is and What to Look Out For

Cuckooing occurs when criminals take over someone's home, often that of a vulnerable person, to use it for illegal activities such as drug dealing, storing weapons, or exploiting the resident. The term comes from the cuckoo bird, which lays its eggs in other birds' nests. Victims may feel unable to refuse due to fear, intimidation, or dependence on the offenders.

Tactics criminals use

- **Grooming and befriending:** Building trust or forming a relationship to gain access.
- **Offering incentives:** Providing money, drugs, gifts, or paying bills in exchange for "borrowing" a room.
- **Coercion and isolation:** Using threats, discouraging visitors, and reducing outside contact so the victim becomes trapped.

Signs to watch for

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

Who might be more at risk?

- People experiencing mental health or substance misuse difficulties.
- People who are socially isolated or living alone.
- People with learning or physical disabilities.
- People with a history of domestic abuse, homelessness, or unstable housing.

What to do

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

Further information please see below:

In association with the Metropolitan Police, Tower Hamlets Borough Council has further information and a useful poster about cuckooing on their website which can be found [here](#).



Source: Metropolitan Police & Tower Hamlets Borough Council, 2025

Children, Young People and Gangs

Gang involvement continues to be a safeguarding concern for children and young people across the UK. The Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board provides a clear and practical guide explaining why adolescents may be drawn to gangs, the associated risks, how to recognise the signs, and where to seek help.

Key points to be aware of:

- Gangs often thrive on secrecy, making involvement difficult to detect.
- Adolescents may be attracted by a sense of belonging, identity, or protection.
- Risks include criminal exploitation, violence, and serious harm.
- Warning signs can include changes in behaviour, friends, or appearance.

Further information please see below:

Website: [Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board: Gangs](#)

Source: Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), 2025

County Lines and Criminal Exploitation

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where gangs use children and young people to move drugs, money, or weapons, often across different areas. Offenders may groom, manipulate, or threaten young people into taking part, sometimes making them feel they have no choice.

Key facts:

- An estimated **46,000** children in England are involved in criminal groups.
- Around **4,000** teenagers in London are thought to be criminally exploited through county lines.
- **90%** of police forces in England have reported county lines activity in their area.
- **84%** of parents say they are worried about county lines in their community.

Signs to look out for:

- Sudden changes in behaviour, friends, or appearance
- Having new phones, money, or unexplained gifts
- Going missing or travelling to unfamiliar places
- Secrecy around calls or messages
- Signs of fear, anxiety, or withdrawal

If you are worried, contact your child's Head of House (All Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads), Miss Eaton (Deputy Head – Pastoral and Safeguarding, Designated Safeguarding Lead), Local Authority safeguarding team / board (Children's Services), the police, or The Children's Society for advice. Remember, children involved in county lines are victims of exploitation, not criminals.

Further information please see below:

Website: [Children's Society](#)

Source: Children's Society, 2025

Best wishes,



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