

Safeguarding Guidance – Types of Abuse and harm



Children and young people specific

The following is a list of types of abuse and harm or prohibited conduct. Prohibited conduct includes all forms of abuse, harassment, discrimination, bullying and exploitation. The categories of Prohibited Conduct outlined here are not mutually exclusive, nor are the examples provided an exhaustive list. Prohibited conduct is determined by the behaviours viewed objectively, and not whether harm was intended by the perpetrator, or actually results from the behaviours.

Links within each category are to the NSPCC website which explains each type in more details including what to look for and how to support and reporting.

Physical

[Physical abuse](#) is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. It includes: hitting with hands or objects, slapping and punching, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning and scalding, biting and scratching, breaking bones, drowning.

It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Neglect

[Neglect](#) is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger and it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing

Emotional

[Emotional abuse](#) is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It is sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.

Sexual

When a child or young person is [sexually abused](#), they're forced, tricked or manipulated into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong for the abuser to do this to them. They might be afraid to tell someone or behave as though this is normal for them to experience, both are valid for the child to be displaying. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online.

Child Sexual Exploitation

[Child sexual exploitation](#) (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. It happens when a child or young person is coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection.

Bullying and cyber bullying

[Bullying](#) is intentional behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

[Cyberbullying](#) is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone. A person can be bullied online and offline at the same time.

Female Genital Mutilation

[Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\)](#) is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', but has many other names. FGM is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK.

Harmful sexual behaviour

[Harmful sexual behaviour \(HSB\)](#) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people that is harmful or abusive (Hackett, 2014)¹.

Peer-on-peer abuse is a form of HSB where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.

Problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) is developmentally inappropriate or socially unexpected, sexualised behaviour that doesn't have an overt element of victimisation or abuse.

Some children and young people have been found to engage in a range of harmful sexual behaviours, both contact and non-contact.

Child trafficking

[Child trafficking](#) is where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for; sexual exploitation, benefit fraud, forced marriage, domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare, forced labour in factories or agriculture, committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.

County lines

[County lines](#) is a form of criminal exploitation. It refers to gangs using children and vulnerable adults to move, hold and sell drugs across the UK.

Criminal exploitation

[Criminal exploitation](#) is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes.

Domestic abuse

[Domestic abuse](#) is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or have been in a relationship. It can also happen between adults related to one another. It can seriously harm children and young people, and experiencing domestic abuse is child abuse.

Non-recent abuse

[Non-recent child abuse](#), sometimes called historical abuse, is when an adult was abused as a child or young person under the age of 18. Sometimes adults who were abused in childhood blame themselves or are made to feel it's their fault. But this is never the case: there's no excuse for abuse.

Grooming

[Grooming](#) is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Abuse of trust

Sexual activity between an adult in a position of trust and a child is deemed to be an abuse of trust and is unlawful, even if the child is over the age of consent (i.e. 16 or 17). Coaches and other officials should ensure they maintain healthy, positive and professional relationships with all participants. Coaches and others in positions of authority and trust in relation to athletes aged under 18 must not engage in sexual relationships with them while that unequal power relationship exists. In England and Wales any suspicions of abuse of trust must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Radicalisation & Extremism

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Radicalisation can lead to someone being willing to commit violence based on a set of ideas or ideals.

Extremism is defined as:-

“Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.” (HM Government Prevent Strategy).

If you have a concern that someone is becoming or has been radicalised you must report this to the relevant authority in your area, to your Safeguarding Officer and/or the BHS Safeguarding Officer.

You can report to:-

- Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321
- Crime stoppers: 0800 555 111
- Relevant police force: 101
- www.gov.uk/report-suspicious-activity-to-mi5
- To report any online terrorist-related material: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism

Poor Practice and low-level concerns

Poor practice is behaviour;

- that may be on the fringe of abuse and/or if repeated would amount to abuse
- which may not be immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful but nevertheless harms or places a child at risk of harm, or has a negative effect on their welfare and/or safety
- that indicates an individual may pose an actual or risk of harm to a child
- that is inconsistent or contrary with the British Horse Society Safeguarding Policies, Codes of conduct, best practice, and guidance.

Poor practice is not acceptable and must be responded to appropriately when identified and reported.

A **low-level concern** is any minor worry, nagging doubt, or uneasy feeling that someone's behaviour does not meet expected codes of conduct.