

Safeguarding Newsletter

May 2022



Missing from School

The 'Missing' operations group have been looking at recent trends and themes with regards to our children going missing from their school site. This half term there has been an increase in children going missing during the school day.

Please ensure that if the whereabouts of the child cannot be ascertained, that you contact the Police to report that they are missing. On some occasions when parents are directed/advised to report to the Police, this has not been done and the missing episode goes unreported.

This then gives a distorted view of how many times the child is missing and therefore the level of contextualised safeguarding risk that they are exposed to.

Please ensure that your policies are clear regarding children going missing from the school site and that **ALL** staff are aware of the processes and the role that they **ALL** play in this. In particular the importance of the completing class registers at the earliest opportunities.

Child Sexual Abuse

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse recently published a report on child sexual exploitation.

Some key points that staff should be aware of that are relevant to them are:

- Child sexual exploitation is happening in all areas
- We shouldn't assume it's declining as an issue, because it's not
- Victims of child sexual exploitation are often vulnerable already. For example, they might be victims of neglect, have witnessed domestic abuse, seen parental substance abuse or experienced family breakdown. Children with disabilities are also more vulnerable to exploitation

Remember:

- They're still children until the age of 18, and even if they're 16 or 17 and can legally consent to having sex, they can still be sexually exploited
- In secondary school, it might be easy to put teenagers' behaviour down to them being teenagers and taking more risks or acting out, or to think they're more mature than they are. But in reality, they're still children and are still vulnerable
- If you see a change in behaviour, ask yourself what might be going on there. You might see them changing how they dress or their appearance, drinking alcohol or using drugs, or missing school. And crucially, share what you've seen

If you would like support from school, please contact Derek for further signposting