

KCSIE 2026 (Keeping Children Safe in Education) comes into force on **1 September 2026** and contains some of the most significant safeguarding updates in recent years. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[virtual-co...lege.co.uk\]](#)

Key changes at a glance

1. All staff must read Part One

- **Annex A has been removed.**
- Schools can no longer rely on some staff reading only the condensed safeguarding guidance.
- **All staff are expected to read Part One in full**, reinforcing that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[virtual-co...lege.co.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

2. Stronger emphasis on early help and multi-agency working

- Greater focus on **early identification of safeguarding concerns**.
- New references to **Family Help** and closer alignment with **Working Together to Safeguard Children** reforms.
- Schools are expected to make timely referrals and work effectively with external agencies. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[virtual-co...lege.co.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

3. Mental health becomes more prominent

- Expanded guidance on recognising and responding to mental health concerns.
- Specific references to **suicidal ideation**, self-harm indicators and the need for urgent action where a child may be at immediate risk. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[wardhadaway.com\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

4. Increased focus on misogyny, VAWG and harmful sexual behaviour

- New emphasis on **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**.
- Greater recognition of **misogyny**, harmful attitudes and harmful sexual behaviour as safeguarding concerns.
- Updates to child-on-child abuse guidance to reflect these risks. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[virtual-co...lege.co.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

5. AI and online safety

- AI is now explicitly recognised as a safeguarding issue.
- Schools should consider risks such as:
 - AI-generated intimate images
 - Deepfakes
 - Misinformation and disinformation
 - Unsafe use of generative AI tools

- Monitoring and filtering systems must be reviewed regularly, at least annually. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[learning.n...pcc.org.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

6. Safer recruitment changes

- A major change affects **volunteers**.
- The previous "supervision exemption" has been removed.
- More volunteers may now be considered to be undertaking **regulated activity**, requiring enhanced DBS and barred-list checks. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[epm.co.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

7. Stronger information-sharing requirements

- Clearer expectations around:
 - Sharing safeguarding information
 - Transferring child protection files
 - Ensuring continuity when pupils move schools
- Emphasis on effective DSL and deputy DSL arrangements. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#)

8. Updated safeguarding risk indicators

Staff should be alert to a broader range of risks including:

- Modern slavery
- Serious violence
- Child criminal exploitation
- Child-to-parent/carers abuse
- Mental health concerns
- Children missing or absent from education. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[learning.n...pcc.org.uk\]](#), [\[wardhadaway.com\]](#)

9. Gender-questioning children

- KCSIE now incorporates the government's guidance regarding **gender-questioning children**.
- There is an expectation of parental involvement in most circumstances, alongside safeguarding considerations. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[epm.co.uk\]](#)

10. Attendance and absence

- Reinforces that **being absent from education**, not only missing education, may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns and should be considered within safeguarding procedures. [\[learning.n...pcc.org.uk\]](#)
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What schools should prioritise before September 2026

1. Update safeguarding and child protection policies.
2. Ensure all staff read **Part One**.
3. Review staff safeguarding training.
4. Review volunteer roles and DBS requirements.
5. Update online safety, AI, filtering and mobile phone policies.
6. Brief governors and trustees on the new duties.
7. Review mental health and early-help referral processes. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[epm.co.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)

For DSLs, headteachers and governors, the biggest practical impacts are likely to be **mandatory reading of Part One, the volunteer DBS changes, enhanced mental health expectations, and the new AI safeguarding requirements**. [\[farrer.co.uk\]](#), [\[epm.co.uk\]](#), [\[childprote...ompany.com\]](#)