



Governors Newsletter

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Updates September 2026

Dear Governors,

The Department for Education (DfE) has published the statutory guidance for **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**. These changes come into force on **1 September 2026**. Further information about this can be found by clicking on the following link. [Keeping children safe in education 2026: September 2026](#)

Governing Bodies hold a legal framework duty to ensure that the school's safeguarding policies, practices, and cultures align with the updated guidance. Below is a strategic summary of the core changes, their implications along with questions you may want to ask senior leaders to ensure compliance.

1. Gender-Questioning Children: New Strategic Legal Framework

The guidance introduces a highly structured, comprehensive new section regarding pupils who are questioning their gender.

- **What it means:** The DfE has formalised expectations around how schools respond to social transition requests (such as changes to names, pronouns, or uniforms).
- **Key requirement:** Decisions must be handled through a rigorous, documented process that balances statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act. Parental involvement is now a clear default expectation unless doing so poses a direct, verifiable risk to the child.

- **Governor Oversight:** Governors must ensure the school has a robust, legally compliant internal policy that prevents ad-hoc decision-making by individual staff members.

2. Online Safety, AI, and Deepfakes

The technological landscape has driven significant additions to online safety and peer-on-peer risks.

- **What it means:** The definition of child-on-child abuse has been updated to explicitly include the creation, sharing, or threat of AI-generated intimate images (deepfakes). This directly aligns the guidance with recent changes in criminal law.
- **Governor Oversight:** Governors must verify that the school's behaviour and safeguarding policies explicitly name AI-generated abuse and that clear disciplinary and support pathways are established.



3. Mandatory Annual Filtering and Monitoring Reviews

While previous editions emphasised digital safety, KCSIE 2026 tightens the governance loop around IT infrastructure.

- **What it means:** The governing body is now explicitly required to ensure that a formal, comprehensive review of the school's digital filtering and monitoring systems takes place at least annually.
- **Governor Oversight:** This cannot be treated as a passive IT task. Governors must actively review the effectiveness of these systems, typically through the designated safeguarding governor working alongside the network lead.

4. Total Restructuring of Child-on-Child Abuse & Misogyny

The sections detailing sexual violence and sexual harassment have been extensively rewritten.



- **What it means:** There is a renewed, urgent emphasis on identifying and proactively tackling cultures of misogyny and harassment before they escalate.
- **Governor Oversight:** Governors should look beyond safeguarding records and seek evidence of how the school uses the curriculum (such as RSHE)

and pupil voice to actively dismantle harmful behaviours.

5. Staff Compliance: The Removal of Annex A

In an operational shift that impacts all school workforces, Annex A (the condensed summary of safeguarding duties) has been entirely removed.

- **What it means:** All school staff are now legally required to read Part 1 of KCSIE 2026 in full.

- **Governor Oversight:** Governors must ensure that the school's compliance tracking systems are updated. A simple sign-off for Annex A is no longer legally sufficient.

Strategic Questions for Governors to Ask Senior Leaders

To demonstrate robust challenge and oversight, please consider raising these questions at your next meeting of the governing body:

1. **Policy Alignment:** Have our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies been fully updated to mirror the KCSIE 2026 wording, specifically regarding AI deepfakes and gender-questioning protocols?
2. **Staff Training:** How is the school tracking that 100% of staff have read and understood Part 1 in full, given the removal of Annex A?
3. **Digital Governance:** When is our formal annual review of filtering and monitoring scheduled to come to the governing body, and who is leading it?
4. **Culture Check:** What proactive measures are we taking this term to address misogyny and harassment within the pupil cohort, and how are we measuring success?

Next Steps for the Governing Body

- **Action 1:** Ensure that all governors read **Part 2 (Management of Safeguarding)** of KCSIE 2026, which details the specific legal responsibilities as a governing body.
- **Action 2:** The safeguarding governor should meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) early in the autumn term to review the updated risk register and policy drafts.

Thank you for your continued dedication to keeping our children safe.

Best wishes,

Peter

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