

Safeguarding Bulletin - 15 July 2026

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Safeguarding bulletin



Hello

from Southwark's Safeguarding in Schools Team

Safeguarding
in Schools

This is the last safeguarding bulletin for the current academic year. As the Safeguarding in Schools Team, we thank you for all your hard work to safeguard and protect the children in your schools/settings and wish you a well-deserved good summer break. We look forward to seeing you all in the new academic year in September.

Please note that the finalised version of [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026](#) has now been published and will come into force on 1 September 2026. We are currently in the process of making significant updates to our [model safeguarding policy for schools](#) in line with the new version of KCSIE and will share it as soon as possible.

Southwark news

>> Request from MASH: DSL availability over summer

Safeguarding issues still arise over the summer break, but schools have varying arrangements around DSL/DDSL/staff availability. If MASH are screening a referral and require information from school, they will still seek to obtain this and the standard timescales would apply for when the information needs to be provided in

order for the screening to be completed. To assist this process, MASH would like to know whether DSLs will still be available over the summer break and how's best to contact them. **Please email MASH@southwark.gov.uk with information about availability or cover arrangements over the summer break and relevant contact details for any information requests to be sent to.** We also recommend setting an auto-reply on your emails to explain your availability and sign post to any alternative contacts as needed.

>> Setting up a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system

In relation to the above request from MASH, the new [Keeping children safe in education 2026](#) that will come into force on 1 September 2026 recommends that "whenever the DSL is unavailable, there is a clear, reliable, and known arrangement in place so that concerns can be raised. This could, for example, include a confidential shared mailbox or equivalent system to ensure that safeguarding concerns are received, monitored, and acted upon without delay." **As the Safeguarding in Schools Team, we support this arrangement.** Schools may want to work with their IT teams to get this in place for the new term and plan things like cover / duty arrangements.

>> Transition from Year 6 to Year 7 in Southwark

The transition from primary to secondary is a key milestone for children and young people but also for their parents. Recognising this Southwark Council has brought together some of the key offers and sources of information in this handy transition information pack.

For the vulnerable cohorts the Council have commissioned [Little Fish to run a free 10 day summer transition programme](#). This is a great opportunity for young people to get a taster of secondary school life and work through some common areas of worry through arts, crafts and laughter. Please share with families.

Over the next few weeks, parents will be contacted about the Best Start Family Hub transition drop-ins during the last two weeks of August. These sessions will be a great opportunity for the whole family to access support on a range of topics.

The Adolescent Sure Start team are also hand to attend transition days or assemblies being run in schools: AdolescentSureStartTeam@southwark.gov.uk.

>> Speech and Language Therapy in Southwark – Update for Schools

Southwark Council and NHS partners have completed a review of Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) services offered to children and young people and have developed options for the future borough model as part of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Joint Commissioning Strategy and Government SEND Reform Plan.

>> Think Family! Conference 2026: save the date – 23 September 2026

The **Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership** and **Southwark Adult Safeguarding Board** are delighted to invite you to save the date for **Think Family!** on **23 September 2026**. Join us for a day of **inspiring speakers, interactive workshops, networking opportunities, and information stalls**, all focused on strengthening our *Think Family* approach to safeguarding. Further details to follow. Please **save the date in your diary** – we look forward to seeing you there!

>> Free SEND group therapy programme for Spanish-speaking families in Southwark

The **Indoamerican Refugee and Migrant Organisation (IRMO)** is a Latin American-led charity in South London supporting their community through a range of education, wellbeing and advice services. They have a new **free group therapy programme** for Spanish-speaking parents and carers of children and young people with Autism/SEND living in Southwark. The programme will be delivered in Spanish by professional Family Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists, providing therapeutic support, practical strategies and the opportunity to connect with other families through a peer support network called **Familias Neurodiversas**. Programme starts on Monday 10 August, every two weeks until December 10.00am to 12.30pm at IRMO, Unit 9, Warwick House, Overton Road, London, SW9 7JP. Families can access more information and sign up via [Folmulario de Inscripción: Programa de Terapia Familiar](#).



Online safety

>> Safely using online communities

Online communities can be a great way to make and sustain social connections. But it's important to know how to stay safe online. [Mental Health Foundation](#) asked young people for their advice on how to stay safe and sensibly negotiate online spaces. They published a tip sheet with suggestions on safely using online communities for mental health, created by their [Young Leaders](#).

Other news

>> Updated Working Together to Improve School Attendance (WTTISA) 2026

The DfE has published an updated version of the statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (July 2026). While there are no major changes to attendance legislation or policy, schools should note several important clarifications and strengthened expectations:

- Stronger expectations for consistent day-to-day attendance processes and registration practice.
- Enhanced guidance on attendance analysis, benchmarking and identifying priority cohorts.
- Explicit recognition of young carers as a group requiring attendance monitoring and support.
- Clearer advice on illness-related absence and the use of medical evidence.
- Reinforcement that remote education should only be used as a last resort and as part of a reintegration plan.
- Additional guidance on leave of absence decisions and attendance coding.
- Greater emphasis on local authority strategic leadership and multi-agency working to improve attendance.

>> Preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff

The DfE has recently published a new non-statutory guidance on how to prevent and tackle intimidation, harassment and bullying of school staff. The guidance provides clarity for employers on their legal duties to prevent and address intimidation, harassment and bullying of school staff. It sets out the actions schools should take to make sure all staff are supported, respected and protected.

>> New early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

The DfE has published a new version of the statutory guidance, which will take effect from 1 September 2026. It contains the standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5. The main changes to both versions for group and school-based providers and for childminders are updates on safer sleep, a requirement for providers to have regard to screen use, prohibiting childcare where banned dog breeds are present and other safeguarding clarifications. The group and school-based providers framework also requires providers of childcare on domestic premises to notify Ofsted or their childminder agency of changes to persons aged 16 or over living or working on the premises. Please note in particular 'Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements'.

>> DfE's updated guidance: School and college security

Guidance, templates and checklists to help schools and colleges manage their security effectively so they can meet their obligations. Update includes additional

information on risk assessments, preventative measures and visitors to school premises.

>> New NHS endorsed website for children's health – please share with parents

Healthier Together is a free, NHS-endorsed website with trusted information about common childhood health needs. It helps parents and carers know when to manage illness at home, when to seek help, and where to go. The site includes clear guidance on common childhood illnesses; advice on when and where to seek care; local services information for South East London; a translation tool for families whose first language is not English. Simply enter a South East London postcode on the homepage of [NHS Healthier Together website](#) and select your GP to get started. If you would like digital or printed posters to display in your school, please contact healthiertogether@selondonics.nhs.uk.

>> Child protection in sport

The NSPCC has published a news story on child protection concerns in sport based on contacts to its Helpline. There were 683 contacts from adults with child protection concerns in a sports setting in 2025/26, a 10% increase on the previous year. The most common concerns mentioned within sports settings were sexual abuse and exploitation, followed by emotional abuse and physical abuse.

>> Survey of all children in England – The Big Future

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, promotes and protects the rights of children and ensures their voices are heard by those who make decisions about their lives. Her latest survey, The Big Future, asks children about childhood today. Open until 23 October.

>> Recruiting schools for 'Challenging Extremism, Thoughtfully' project

Thoughtful (previously SAPERE) are recruiting London schools working with pupils aged 9 to 14 for the **fully funded** 2026/27 'Challenging Extremism, Thoughtfully' project. The project tackles the vulnerability of young people to extremism, radicalisation, racism and misogyny. If your school is interested [fill in the project's registration form](#).

>> 'Breakfast Clubs' at all Morrisons Cafés during the summer holidays

Families visiting their local Morrisons Café throughout the summer holidays can enjoy a free 'Kellogg's Breakfast', which includes a bowl of cereal and a portion of fruit. Adults get to eat completely free too. Both kids and adults can choose from

Corn Flakes or Rice Krispies, topped with their choice of dairy or non-dairy milk and a free apple or banana. The summer holiday offer will be available from 29 June to 6 September.

Organisations referenced in this bulletin are not necessarily commissioned or endorsed by Southwark council. Please apply your own due diligence.

If you have any colleagues who would like to receive this weekly safeguarding bulletin, they can [sign up to Southwark's Safeguarding in Schools bulletin](#).

Find out more about support from [Southwark's Safeguarding in Schools Team](#).

For safeguarding resources and training information visit [Safeguarding in Education](#).