

Safeguarding Bulletin - 7 October 2026

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Safeguarding bulletin



Hello

from Southwark's Safeguarding in Schools Team

Safeguarding
in Schools

Southwark's Child Protection (CP) conferences resumption in person

As of **Monday 19 October 2026**, all Southwark Child Protection Conferences will be held face-to-face. Please ensure you check conference invites for full details.

Southwark news

>> [Have your say on social care reforms](#)

Major reform is coming to Social Care through the Government's [Families First Partnership Programme](#) which aims to create a seamless experience for families and partner agencies, reduce the disruption caused by moving between services, and to deliver a whole-family plan that builds on strengths to improve outcomes for children. This will mean some significant changes to the way our Family Early Help and social work services are structured in Southwark, with separate services and teams being merged into a single all-through Family Help service.

We are asking schools and other partner agencies to contribute to the ongoing consultation and share their views to help design the best system for Southwark. [Find more details on the schools' website, including how to feedback.](#)

>> **Updated letter of assurance for schools - September 2026**

Staff from Southwark Council's Children's Services are regularly required to visit schools and meet with children. Please see the updated letter which we hope provides clarity on the arrangements for this, including that staff shouldn't be required to show a physical copy of their DBS. Please ensure your safeguarding and office staff (and any other relevant colleagues) are aware of these arrangements. The letter has already been circulated to school Heads.

>> **Google search and AI safety - safeguarding and technical guidance for schools in Southwark**

A question was recently raised with local authority in Southwark about the safety of Google Search for children following the introduction of AI Overview and AI Mode. In response, [London Grid for Learning \(LGfL\)](#) has provided safeguarding and technical guidance for schools including a **block-by-default, allow-by-exception** approach for AI tools. A recent assessment by Common Sense Media rated Google Search's AI Overview and AI Mode as presenting an **'Unacceptable Risk'** for children and young people. Please take a look at our Schools' website for an overview and LGfL's advice including their Policy Toolkit providing practical support for developing a whole-school approach to AI.

Southwark training opportunities

>> **Safeguarding in Schools webinar: Tackling Misogyny in Schools, 22 October**

Staff from all schools and education settings across Southwark are invited to join this webinar on Thursday 22 October 2026, 12.30pm to 1.30pm to learn practical tools, activities and approaches to explore male identities, social media, the manosphere and healthy relationships with young people.

You can [sign up](#) or [download this direct calendar invite](#).

The session will be recorded and available to watch online, along with all previous recordings.

>> Working with Trauma: free one day training in Southwark, 17 November

Children and young people affected by traumatic events may present with a range of difficulties across different settings. The aim of this short course offered by the Hope Project at Southwark CAMHS is to increase knowledge and skills in the wider practitioner group. The course is free for local practitioners in Southwark who are working with children and young people and their families. Please see [Hope Project Trauma Course Info and Booking Form](#).

>> Mindset Reset – Safer London Programme for young people aged 11 to 25 in Southwark

The charity [YourStory](#) is working in partnership with [Safer London](#) to deliver *Mindset Reset*, a free six-session group programme for young people aged 11 to 25 who have had current or recent contact with the Criminal Justice System. Mindset Reset is delivered in small groups of 6 to 10 young people, with sessions lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The programme explores topics including decision-making and risk, exploitation and grooming, regulating emotions, social media and its influence, substance misuse, relationships, identity and self-development. Please see the [Mindset Reset flyer](#) and [Mindset Reset Group Work Referral Form](#) for further information.

Online safety

>> Free AI training and resources for UK schools

A [new report by the AI in Education working group](#) suggests that schools are “crying out” for guidance from the government on AI. It pinpointed the need for a national framework for AI adoption in education in England, including teacher training, to help schools develop “AI strategies” by September 2027. [Parent Zone](#) deliver free training and resources to UK educators and students – both face-to-face and virtually – from KS2 to KS3.

Other news

>> Updated ‘Kinship care: guidance for local authorities’

This statutory guidance about how local authorities should support children who are cared for by extended family, friends or connected persons and their families has been updated to reflect new duties on local authorities contained in the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and new national kinship standards.

>> A letter from the Chief Medical Officer and new resources to support pupil health, attendance and vaccination this autumn

As we approach that time of the year when coughs and colds begin, the DfE has recently published a new guidance and resources to help schools reduce the spread of seasonal illness, improve attendance and support vaccination programmes this autumn and winter. This includes a letter from the Chief Medical Officer, advice on communicating with parents, practical health resources, and information on supporting flu and other vaccination programmes.

>> Teenage steroid abuse resources for secondary schools

Staff in secondary schools may hear pupils talk about whether someone is "natty" or "not natty". It means natural, or using steroids. The Society for Endocrinology has published four free videos for secondary schools on its [You and Your Hormones](#) website. Developed by a team of doctors working across the UK in various specialities, these videos were developed to educate secondary school-aged children on the risks of misusing anabolic steroids. They are designed for PSHE lessons. They include an introduction video which covers what Anabolic steroids are and their therapeutic uses, as well as explaining about the hormone testosterone. The other 3 videos cover possible side effects and risks of **misuse** of Anabolic steroids.

Other training opportunities

>> SEND training materials from DfE

DfE has recently published a series of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) training materials:

- [SEND training for schools: supporting every child to achieve and thrive](#): Training materials to help teachers and teaching assistants improve learning outcomes **for all children**, including those with SEND.
- [SEND and inclusion training for mainstream schools](#): Free in-house training materials to help schools develop inclusive teaching practices.
- [SEND training for post-16 settings: guide to materials](#): Guidance to help facilitators provide in-house training on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and inclusion **in mainstream post-16 settings**.

>> Free webinar to share highlights from recent research studies exploring children and young people's mental health – 5 November, 5.30pm to 7.00pm

This webinar by the mental health charity [Anna Freud](#) will unpack their key research findings from the last 12 months and share highlights from recent studies exploring challenges and opportunities in supporting children and young people's mental health. Following a series of short talks, their researchers and young people will come together with the audience to explore what the findings mean for practice and policy. This webinar is suitable for anyone interested children and young people's mental health and wellbeing including schools and colleges. Young people, parents and carers are also welcome to join.

>> Anti-Bullying Week Student Webinar – 18 November

On Wednesday 18 November, [VotesforSchools](#) is bringing schools across the UK together for a LIVE webinar with the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Pupils can share their views, hear from other schools and put their questions directly to the experts.

>> Free Anti Bullying Week webinar – 19 November, 4.00pm to 5.30pm

This year's Anti-Bullying Week will take place 16 to 20 November. [Coram Kidscape](#) are inviting **parents, carers, and anyone supporting a young person** to a webinar to look at the impact bullying can have, how to build the kind of safety that helps a child open up, how to notice the quiet signs that are easy to miss, and how to respond in that first, fragile moment when a child finally does speak up. Also, because bullying rarely touches just one person, webinar will talk about what it can do to sibling relationships and how couples and co-parents can stay connected while supporting a struggling child.

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](#).