Safeguarding for Governors - Leap (hillingdon.gov.uk)

Governor Safeguarding Briefing

2025-2026 Academic Year

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Learning Outcomes:

- Provide an awareness of safeguarding and different types of abuse
- Raise awareness of the statutory role of Governors & good practice in supporting schools in safeguarding
- Increase understanding about how to create a safe culture in your school



There may be some information shared, or topics discussed, that cause you to feel uncomfortable, feel free to take a break if you need to.

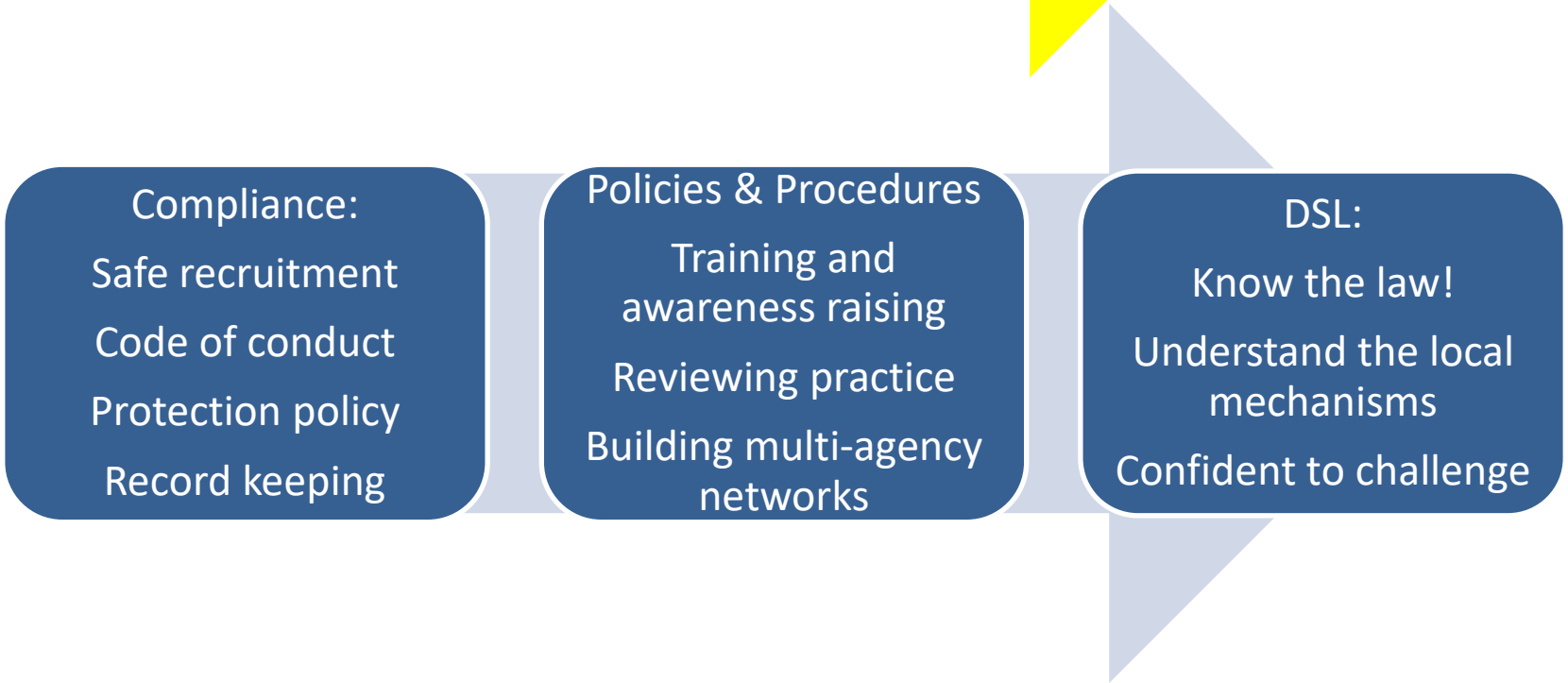
You are talking to:

A child or young person
A parent
A volunteer

Explain what safeguarding is and what might happen if there is a safeguarding concern

Safeguarding in practice





HM Government

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children

December 2023

Department for Education

Keeping children safe in education 2025

Statutory guidance for schools and colleges

September 2025

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings

February 2022

Safer Recruitment Consortium

Acknowledgments: Adapted and updated by the Safer Recruitment Consortium from an original IRSC / DfE document and with thanks to CAPE (Child Protection in Education) and NASS (National Association of Independent Schools and Non-Maintained Special Schools)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

5 Parts

- Pt1: Role & responsibility of staff in safeguarding
- Pt2: Management of safeguarding
- Pt3: Safe recruitment
- Pt4: Managing allegations against members of staff
- Pt5: Child on child sexual violence & sexual harassment

Technology

"plan technology for your school"

Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Addressing child-on-child abuse: a resource for schools and colleges.

Healthy Relationships. Gender Questioning

Improving School Attendance

Removal of ‘spectrum’, ‘disorder’ for autism+

Lucy Faithfull Foundation’s ‘Shore Space’
https://shorespace.org.uk/.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identity-proofing-and-verification-of-an-individual





Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility

A child centred approach

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Preventing impairment to children's **mental and physical** health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents or their family network

Safeguarding = everyone



Child protection

= (significant) harm



What do we mean by ‘harm’?

- Ill treatment: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse (PENS)
- Exploitation: sexual, criminal
- The impairment of physical, emotional or mental health
- Victim of a crime: rape; sexual assault; harassment; serious assault; domestic abuse; hate crime; robbery, systematic theft…
- Abuse of loved ones: children; vulnerable adults; parents; siblings



Role of the Safeguarding Team

- Manage concerns
- Liaise with head teacher/ principal
- Keep accurate records
- Support and advice to staff
- Raise awareness
- Understanding the views of children



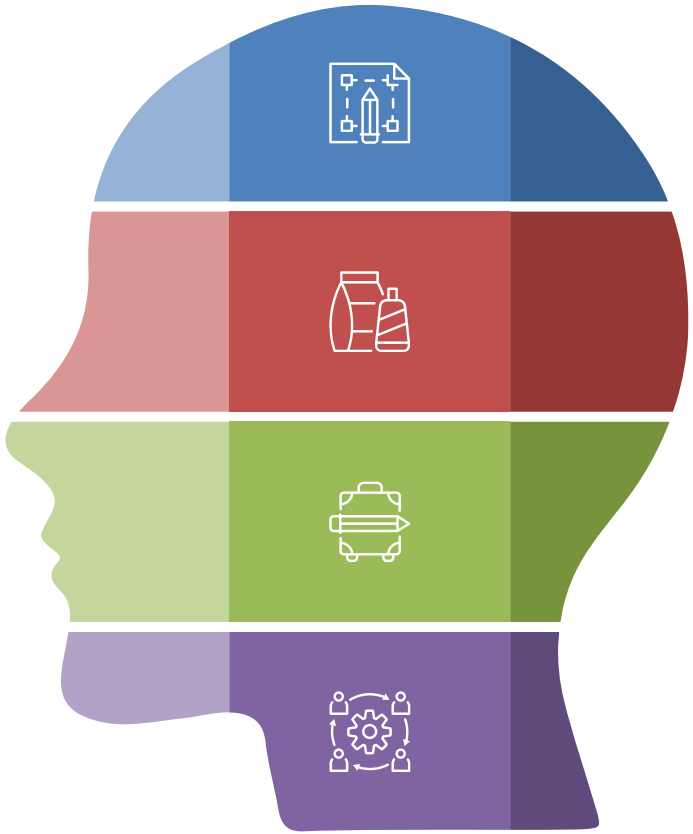
DSL Role in Practice

1 Confidence

2 Curiosity

3 Persistence

4 Communication



Role of Safeguarding Governor & all Governors

Role of the DSL

- Child Protection Policy (include child on child abuse and online safety)
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Behaviour Policy (include bullying prevention)
- Code of Conduct & Acceptable Use Policy
- Policy for handling allegations against staff & volunteers

Was the DSL right?

The mother of a 14 girl asks to speak to the DSL. She tells him that she is concerned about her daughter, Jenny, and hoped he could help. Jenny told her mum that Jenny's ex-boyfriend (same age as Jenny) had sexually assaulted her. This happened when she was in year 9 but she only told her mum about it 3 weeks ago. She said Jenny didn't want to make a fuss about it but hoped she could see a counsellor or something.



The DSL consults with the headteacher. They decide to abide by the family wishes and refer Jenny to the school counsellor.

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- the impact of new technologies on sexual behaviour, for example sexting
- relationship abuse
- mental health related issues
- child on child abuse
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, e.g. gang activity, youth violence, county lines
- domestic violence
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting, particularly in relation to babies and young children
- other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development







Physical Abuse





Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.



Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Making a child feel they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or only have value insofar as they meet the needs of another



Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another

Serious bullying, including cyber bullying

Making fun of them, or silencing their views

Having unrealistic expectations

Causing them to feel frightened, or in danger

Exploiting or corrupting them

Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.





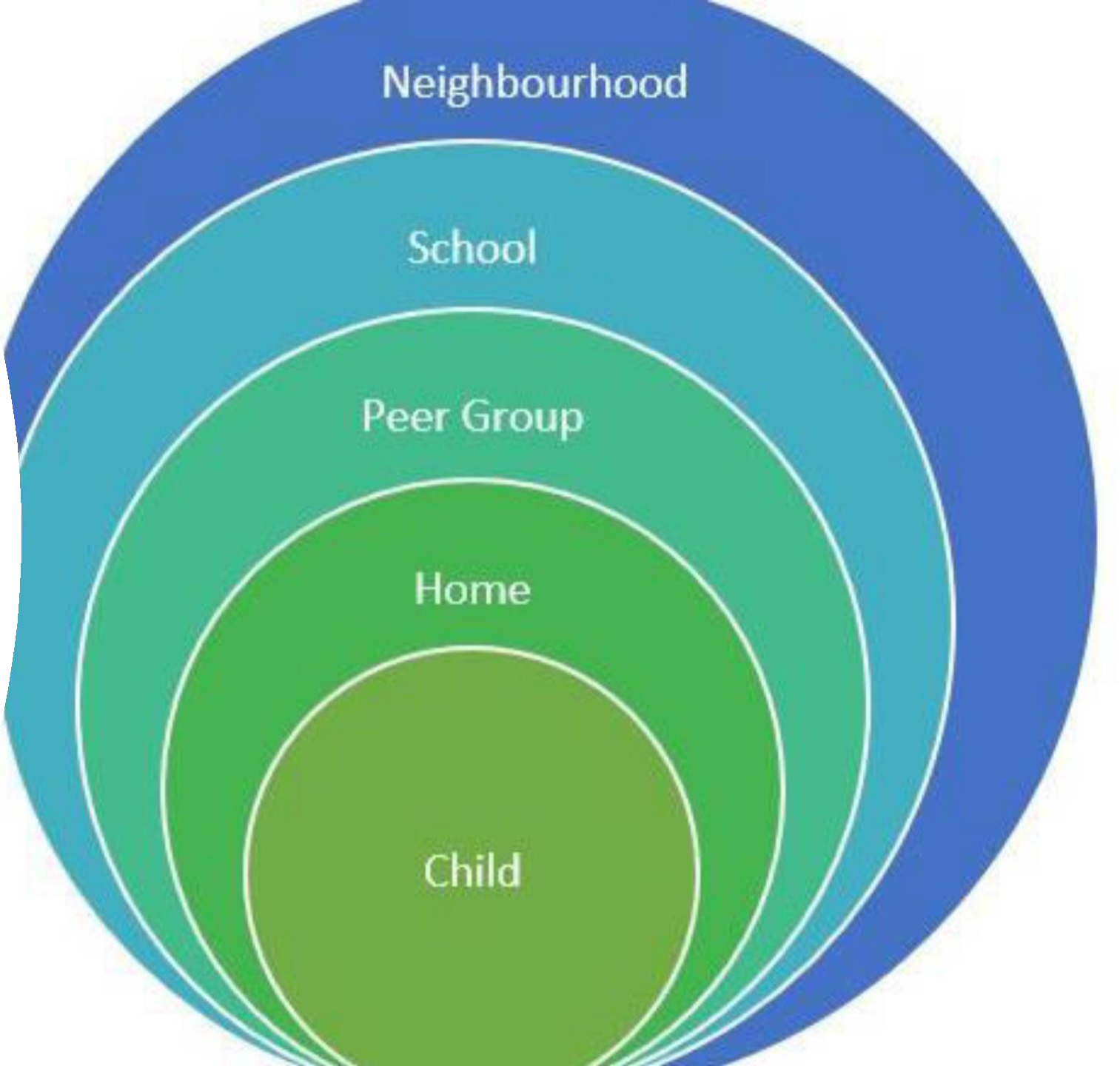
Online Safety
What are the risks?

- **Grooming**
- **Cyber-bulling**
- **Radicalisation**
- **Sexual Image sharing/Sexting**
- **Exploitation**
- **Emotional abuse**
- **Exposure to adult/ inappropriate material**



Contextual Safeguarding

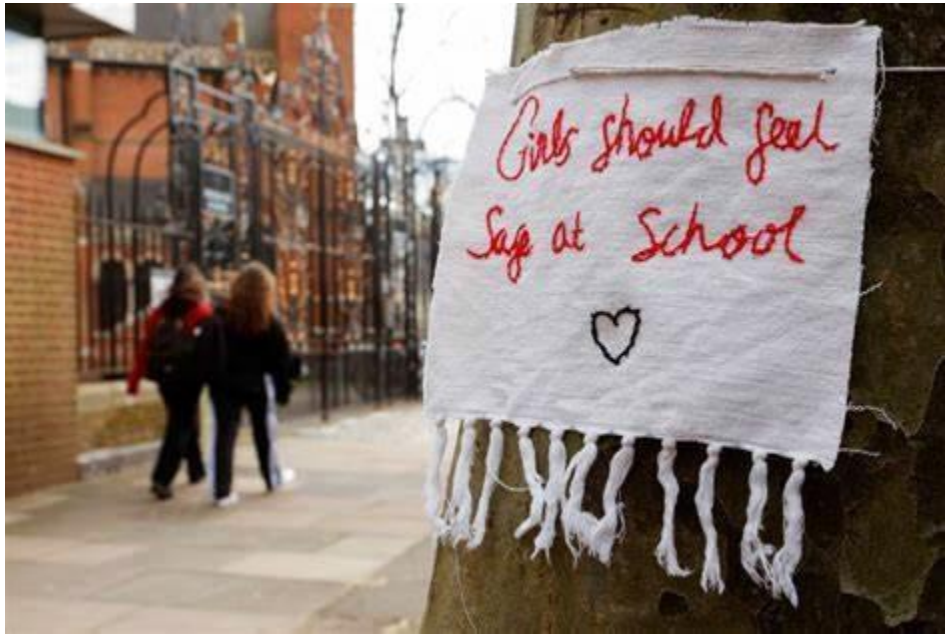
- Young people experience harm beyond their families
- Parents have little influence over these wider contexts
- Schools are ideally placed to consider risks outside of immediate family context
- Schools need to consider the location and culture of their school and identify any risks young people may be exposed to





Child on Child Abuse

- Bullying (including cyber-bullying)
- Physical Abuse
- Abuse within intimate partner relationships



Harmful Sexual Behaviours

- Sexual Violence/Harassment
- Up-skirting
- Sexting
- Hazing

Radicalisation/Extremism

The Prevent Duty Guidance places a duty on schools, and child care providers, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Radicalisation is usually a process not an event.

****All school staff including governors should complete the Home Office e learning module: Introduction to Prevent. Senior Leaders and DSLs should complete the additional module around making referrals ****

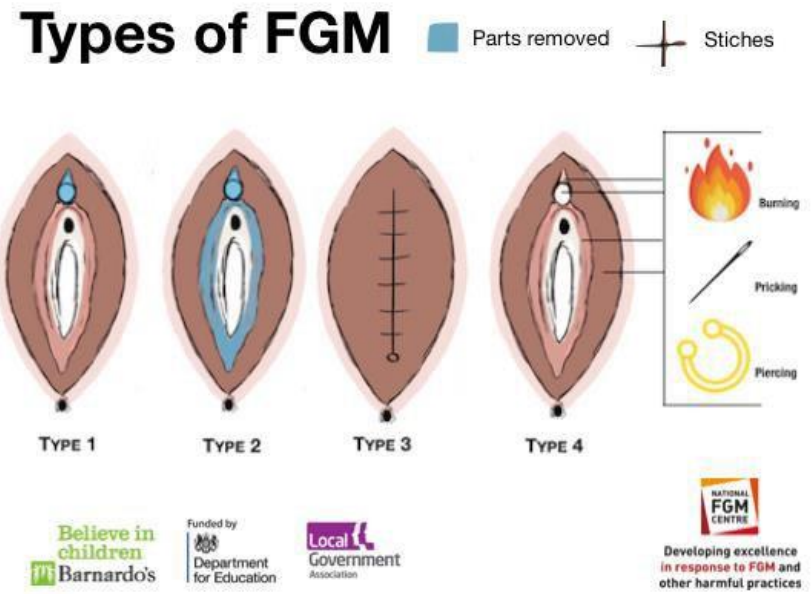


Types of Abuse

Domestic Abuse



Harmful Practices



Forced Marriage

Breast Flattening

Honour Based Violence

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM Home Office E-learning

Mandatory reporting



- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Serious Youth Violence

Axis

A child is a child
Not a criminal



What might be the reason behind the behaviour?

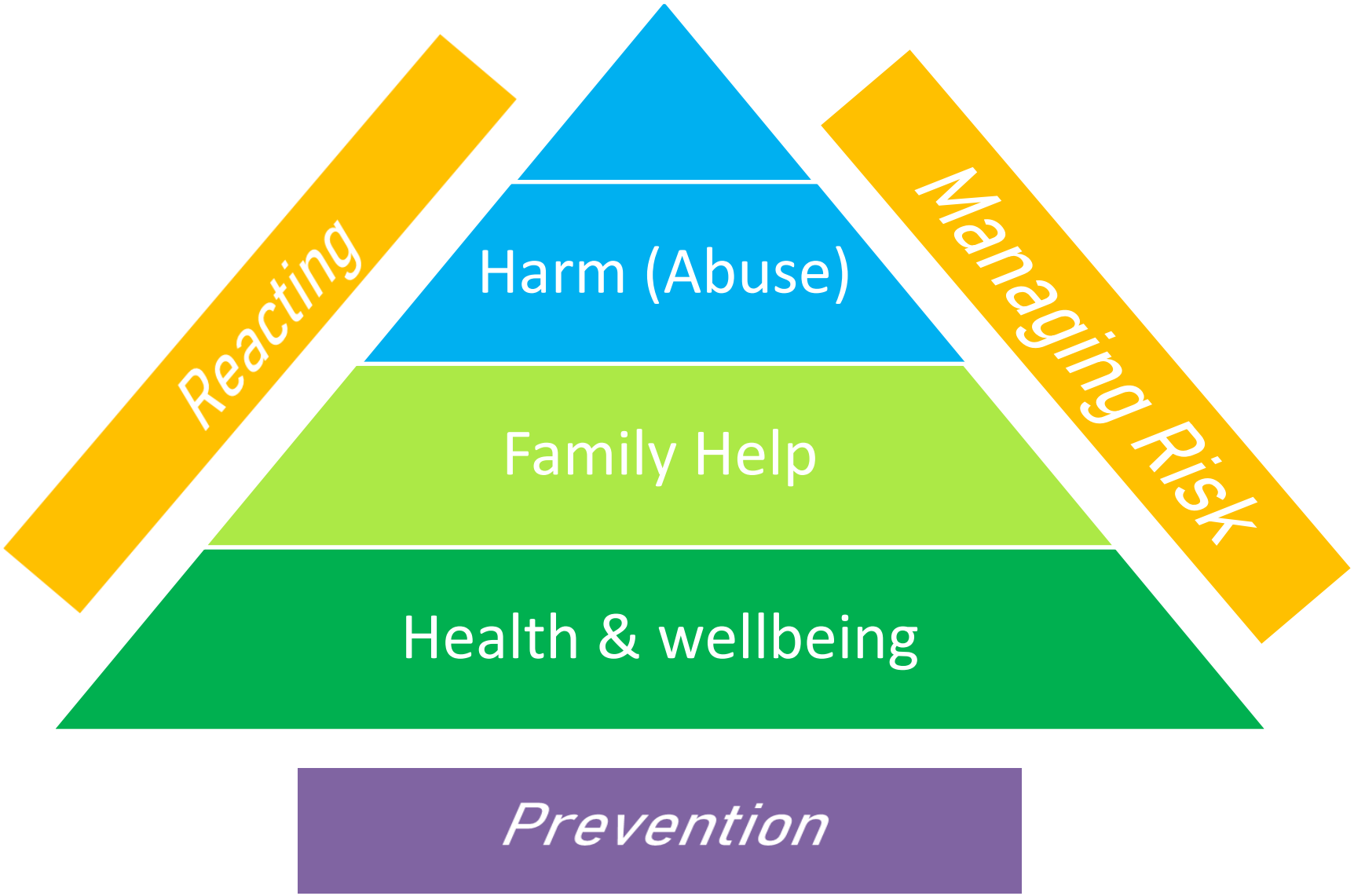
What are we doing to support?

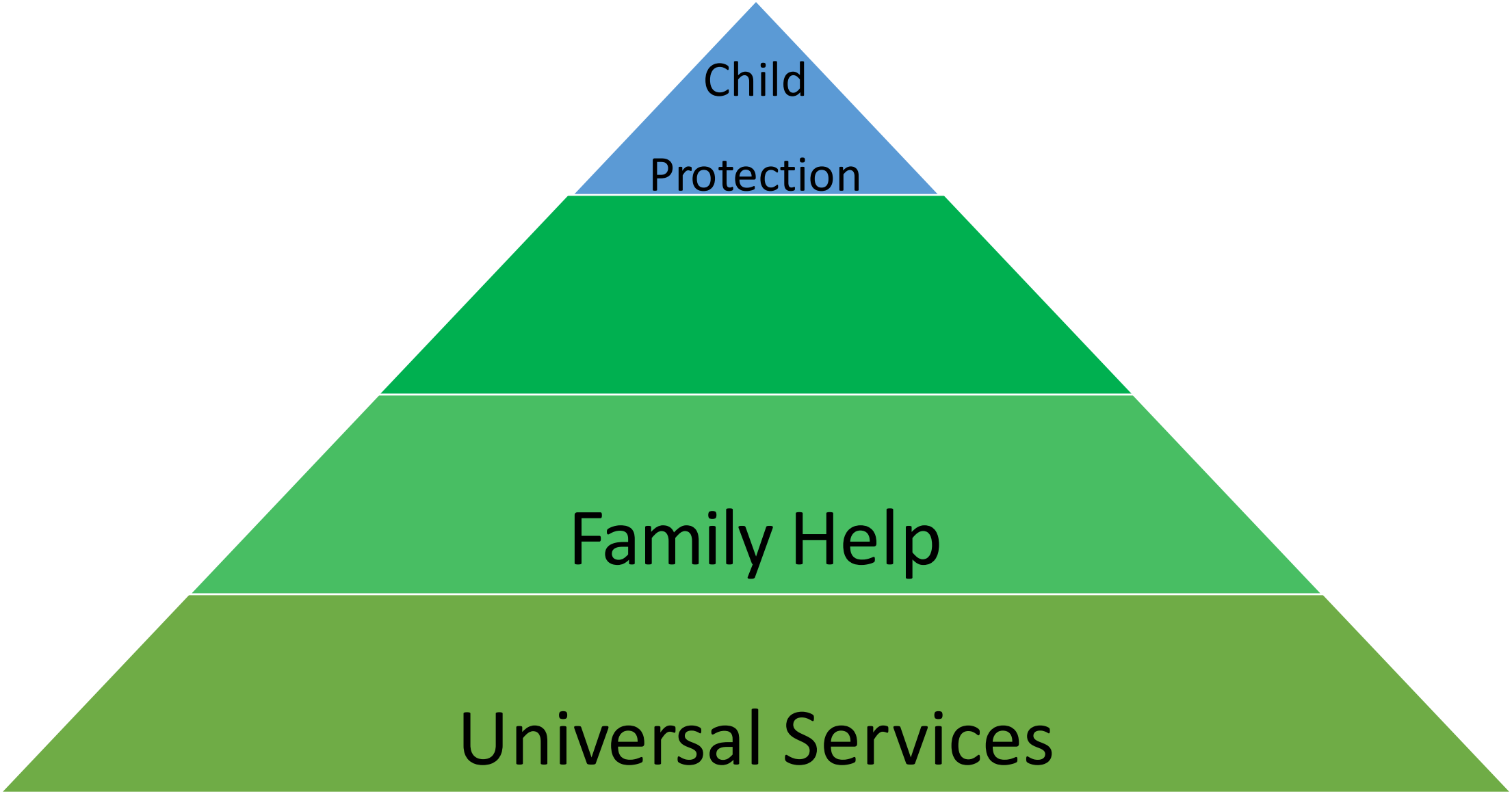
How is your school trying to change the narrative?

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Safeguarding & Protection




Child
Protection
Family Help
Universal Services

Low level neglect concerns

Has a disability or additional needs

Is frequently missing / goes missing from care or home

Young Carer

Showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour

Challenging family circumstances for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues or domestic abuse

Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited

Is persistently absent from school at risk of exclusion

Has a mental health need

Privately fostered

Has a family member in prison or is effected by parental offending



What Next?

Safe Culture

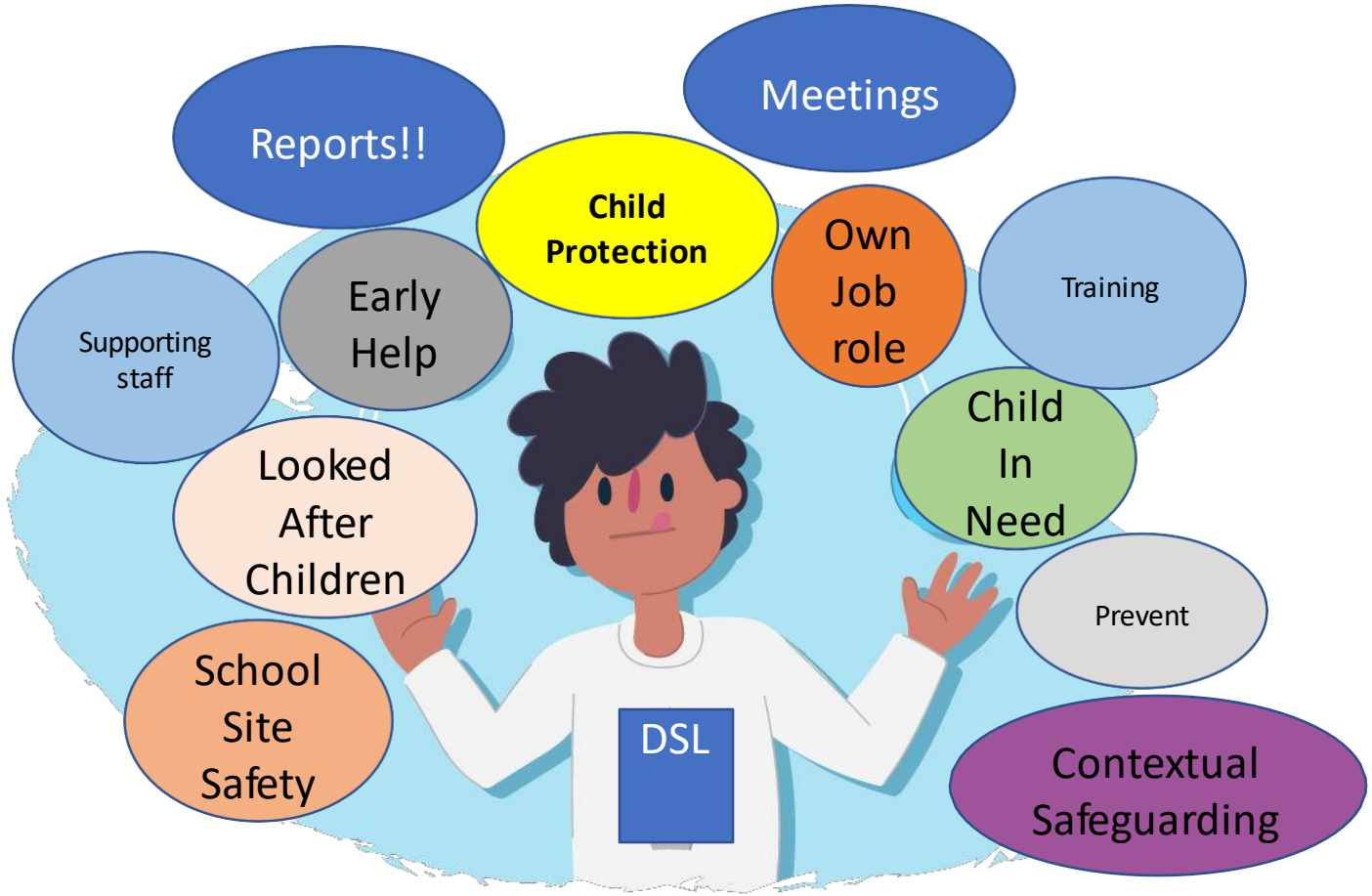
Demonstrating courageous leadership – attitude of '**it does happen here**' and taking action if it does

- Induction; Safeguarding Training day 1, read & understood policy's & procedures
- Probation; Setting standards, probationary periods, early identification of concern
- Supervision & Management; Regular supervision, Observing, managing & recording conduct and performance information
- Identifying & Managing concerns; allegations, **low level concerns**, risk assessments, whistle-blowing
- Keep safeguarding high on everyone's agenda; ongoing training, monitoring
- Managing leavers and referring information; recording exit information, referring concerns, giving references

Governors & the DSL/SLT

Isolated

Unvalued



Anxious

Big responsibility

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Governor Responsibilities

- Dedicated governor responsible for safeguarding
- Consider Deputy, any other link governors?
- Governors are responsible for ensuring your school has and implements safeguarding and child protection policies
- Annual training for staff
- All governors have safeguarding and online safety training at induction and receive regular updates
- Working with SLT to ensure the school promotes safeguarding – being a critical friend
- Being involved in the recruitment process
- Contributing to the schools annual safeguarding report

Governor Responsibilities

- Staff training and updates on safeguarding
- Safeguarding in the curriculum
- Systems for record keeping should be secure, records should be clear, where and how are they records
- Data should be analysed to look at trends and to help schools respond, i.e. attendance, bullying, child protection issues
- Safeguarding audit
- Confirms safeguarding practice is compliantwith procedures
- Identifies improvements



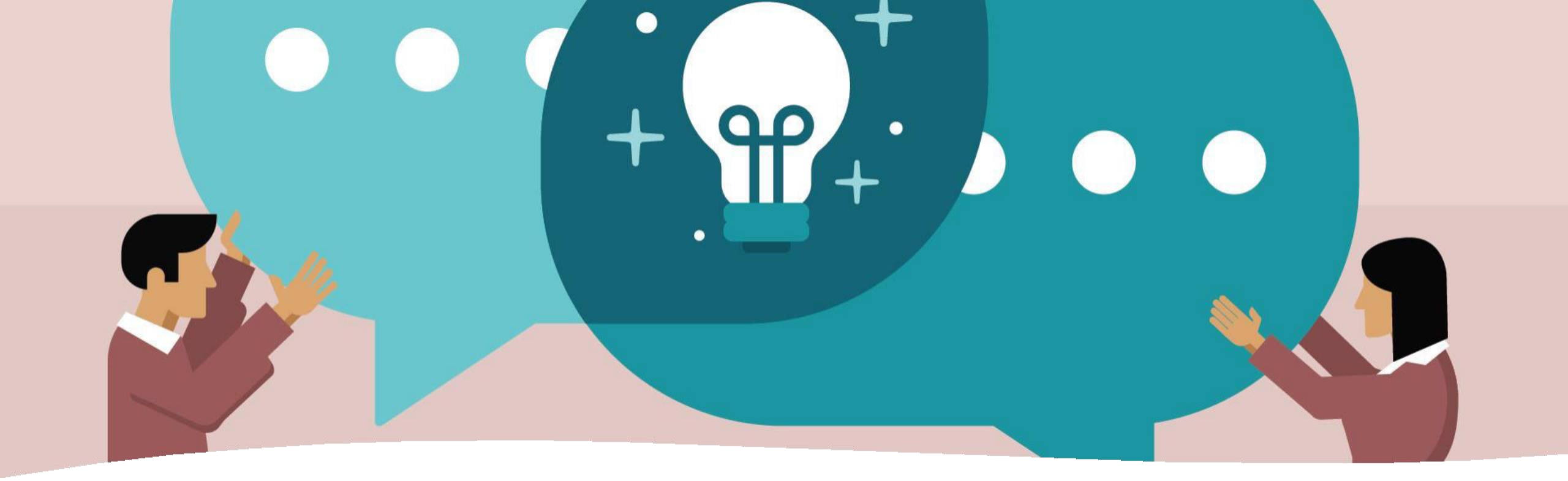


Hillingdon SCP
safeguarding children partnership

How well do you know your school community & local area?







- Build relationships
- Have consistent open communication including regular meetings
- Challenging in a positive and constructive way
- Respect their expertise – question and be prepared to learn
- Be prepared to have challenging conversations
- … but also know when to support
- Plan ahead
- Understand school policies and procedures

What kind of questions would you ask your DSL?

Hillingdon QA process

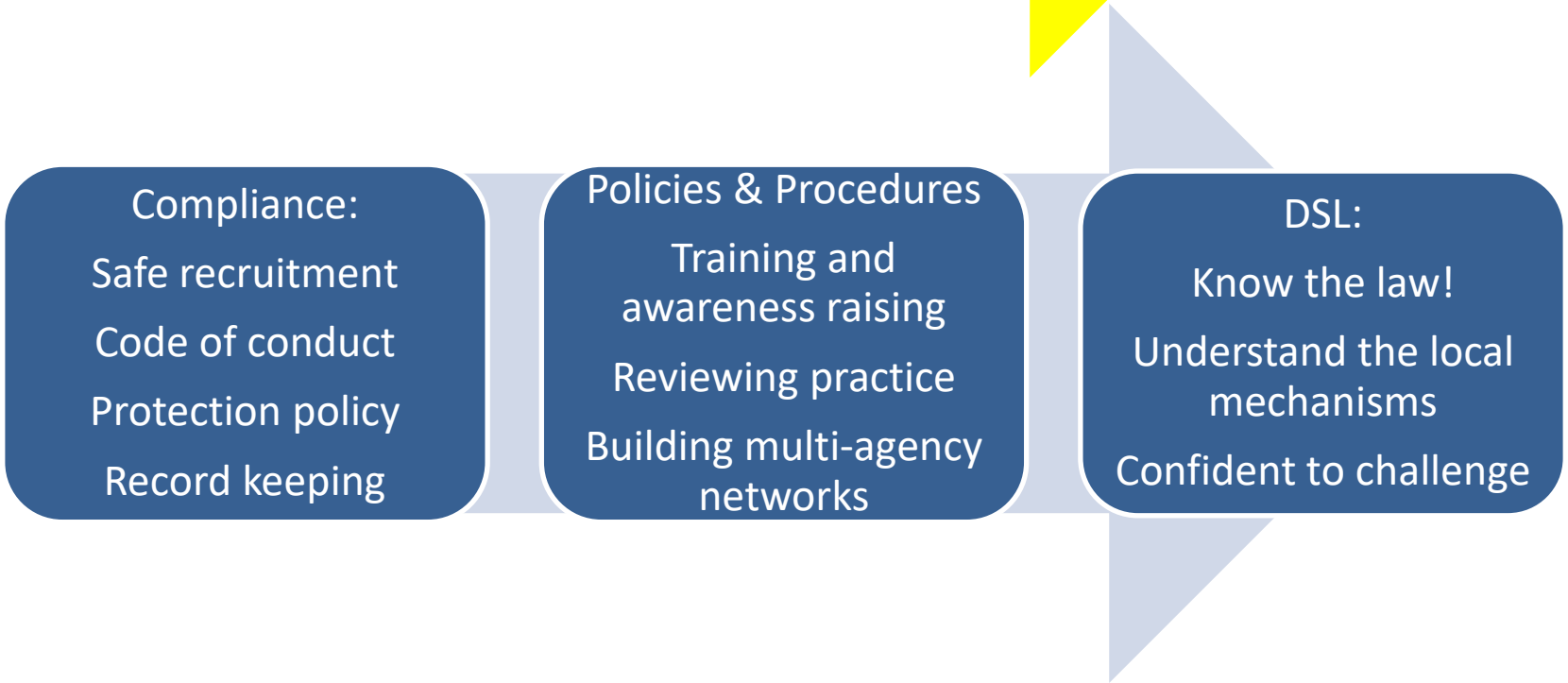
1. Safeguarding audit tool
2. DSL clusters and CPD days
3. Safeguarding action plan
4. Sample QA of plans
5. 2 Yr Action plan
6. Sample QA of updated plans



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Safeguarding in practice





Safe workforce – Starts with Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment is one of the most important elements of safeguarding. It is the first opportunity to minimise the risk of any harm happening to children.

It is more than a criminal record check

Includes all school staff – caretakers, managers, governors, volunteers, agency workers



Perpetrators of abuse may deliberately target settings that give them access to children.

Being confident the people you are bringing into your setting are the right people and are safe people who will keep children & young people safe from harm.

Assessing candidates have the right attitudes, values and behaviours to work with children & young people

Applying a safeguarding mindset to every stage of the employment journey with an aim to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children (KCSIE)

Local Authority Designated Officer

- Every Local Authority has a designated team/officer that deals specifically with allegations made against members of the children's workforce, whether they are staff or volunteers.

- Allegations against members of the children's workforce, in a paid or volunteering capacity, must be taken seriously – Remember 'it does happen here'

- Any concerns staff have about a colleagues' conduct must be reported to the Head Teacher. If their concern is about the headteacher they should contact the Chair of Governors

- If they remain concerned, they should follow the whistleblowing policy and can contact the LADO directly







Policies & procedures

3 cornerstones of effective practice:







The 3 Ps: Policies, People, Practice a culture of vigilance.

- *The school's or college's safeguarding policies and procedures should be transparent, clear, and easy to understand for staff, pupils, students, parents, and carers.*

  Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children to confidently report, any form of abuse or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

  KCSIE 2025

  How do you achieve this? What does it look in your school?



- Young people input?
- EAL?
- SEND?

Review policies

When do policies fail?

1. They do not meet statutory guidance/Ofsted expectations
2. Poorly drafted, hard to follow
3. Ineffective dissemination
4. Staff knowledge not checked

Reviewing policies

1. Cover only what needs to be covered
2. Spin-out separate policies if needed
3. Critically assess and welcome challenge
4. Disseminate and train
5. Continuous improvement

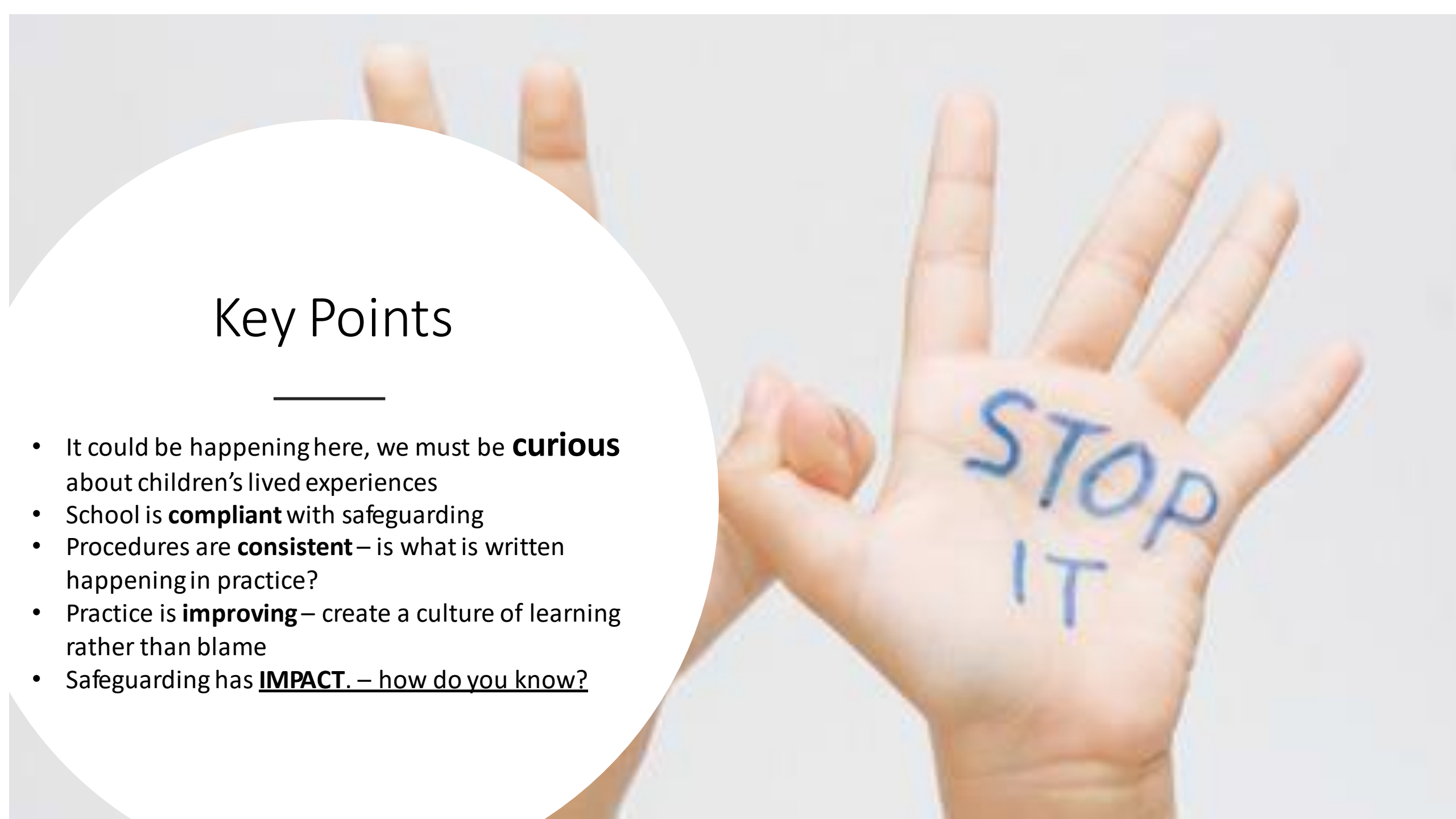
Brownejacobson safeguarding legal advice



- Team Structure
- Clear Job Descriptions
- Time & resources to do job
- Training
- Support from Safeguarding Governor
- Supervision
- Value

Key Points

- It could be happening here, we must be **curious** about children's lived experiences
- School is **compliant** with safeguarding
- Procedures are **consistent** – is what is written happening in practice?
- Practice is **improving** – create a culture of learning rather than blame
- Safeguarding has **IMPACT**. – how do you know?



Any Questions?

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Key Contacts

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- **National Domestic Abuse 24 hour Helpline: 0808 2000 247**

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