

Safeguarding In Schools

with Specialist Safeguarding Consultant, Andrew Hall



Safeguarding Briefing - 31st March 2025

DBS Update Service - Visitors to School

When I visit schools, I am routinely asked to show photo identification and my DBS certificate. Sometimes I'm also asked to provide written evidence that I am subscribed to the DBS Update Service.

It is important to note that the only valid way to confirm that an individual is on the DBS Update Service is to carry out an online status check. A printed copy or screenshot provided by the visitor offers no more assurance than the DBS certificate itself.

Where a visitor states they are on the DBS Update Service, school staff should verify this by conducting an online check at:

<https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/check>

This process is quick and straightforward. Follow these steps:

1. **Obtain the visitor's consent** to carry out the status check.
2. **Verify the person's identity using official photographic ID**, to ensure the DBS certificate belongs to the individual presenting it.
3. Go to: <https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/check>
4. Use the **certificate number** from the DBS certificate.
5. Enter the **person's date of birth** (as shown on the certificate – do not ask the individual directly).

The result of the check will be one of three standard messages. Note that the outcome will not disclose any convictions or cautions:

1. **"This Certificate did not reveal any information and remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue."**
This means the certificate showed no criminal or barring information when issued, and there is still no new information.
2. **"This Certificate remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue."**
This means the certificate did include criminal or barring information at the time of issue, but there is no new information since.

3. **“This Certificate is no longer current. Please apply for a new DBS check to get the most up-to-date information.”**

This indicates that new information is available, and the existing certificate should no longer be relied upon. A new DBS check must be completed.

If a status check returns this final outcome, the member of staff should refer the matter to the headteacher immediately. The headteacher must then risk assess whether to allow the visitor to continue with their planned activity in school. This decision should include a discussion with the visitor.

Additional Considerations

- It is not mandatory for any individual to join the DBS Update Service.
- DBS certificates do not have a formal expiry date. However, their reliability diminishes over time as they reflect the status only at the time of issue.
- The older the DBS certificate, the more important it is to rely on the Update Service check for current information.
- If the Update Service indicates that a certificate is no longer current, headteachers should assess the risk of allowing access. Often ensuring appropriate supervision or limiting contact with pupils may be sufficient to manage the risk.
- **Schools should avoid recording the visitor's certificate number or date of birth unless strictly necessary.** These details should be used only to complete the check and should be processed in line with data protection principles.

Introducing the DSL Blog - Seth James

This year, Seth James, a DSL based in Nottingham has set out to build a blog aimed at DSLs. The blog hosts reflections on the every day issues found in the DSL space. The blog provides a fresh look on a field still finding its way through complex duties. His latest article 'Does being a parent make you a better DSL?', deals with the unique characteristics of working as a DSL whilst having your own children. If interested, please follow the link: <https://thedsblog.substack.com/>

Understanding the Intimate Behaviour of Teens - Lucy Faithfull Foundation

Every child will develop in their own way. During their teenage years most children will go through puberty, start to have sexual feelings, form different types of relationships and look for sexual experiences. As a

parent or a teacher charged with their education, it can feel uncomfortable to think about this and to know how to help for them. Teens get information and ideas about sex and relationships from the media, social media and friends. Needless to say, this is not a particularly conducive to a good knowledge transfer. Indeed, learning in this manner can expose them to unnecessary risks. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation has published an article on these issues over on their website, if you're interested please follow the link

below: <https://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/advice/concerned-about-a-child-or-young-persons-sexual-behaviour/helping-parents-and-carers-understand-the-sexual-behaviour-of-teenagers/>

Question of the Week

What is one thing we could change as a school to strengthen our safeguarding culture; and what might that look like?

For example, one practical starting point could be:

Introduce regular safeguarding-focused reflective prompts into team meetings, briefings, and staff communications.

For example:

- "What's one thing you've noticed this week that made you pause, even slightly, about a child's wellbeing?"
- "Is there a student or situation you're holding in mind at the moment?"
- "How are we modelling safe, trusted adult behaviours today?"

Other examples might include:

Refresh the displays of safeguarding information around school so that it stands out and doesn't just become 'wallpaper'

Be ready to ask a 'professionally-curious' question like:

- I've noticed you've seemed a bit different lately — is there anything going on that you want to talk about?
- Who do you talk to when things feel tough — is there someone in or out of school?

The 2024 Drug Trend Report - Russell Webster

The Office for National Statistics published its latest overview of the extent and trends of illicit drug use, drawing on data from the latest

edition of the Crime Survey for England and Wales and covering the year ending March 2024. Russell Webster has published their analysis of this new report, covering all of last year's data over on their site. Narcotics and their use, have long been an issue among older pupils and their associates in school grounds. It is therefore important to stay across events occurring in the drugs market, the data presented in this report are excellent points to plot the current state of things in the underground. You can find out more here: <https://www.russellwebster.com/the-latest-2024-drug-trends/>

Safe Podcast - Youth Endowment Fund

At some point, violence affects us all, directly or indirectly. For some children, it can be a daily reality. Every year, hundreds of young people across England and Wales are killed or injured by a sharp object. 5% of teenagers carry a weapon, 20% are a recent victim of violence and most worry about it. But whilst violence is happening every day, it is prevented too – we just don't hear enough about it. Why does it happen? How can we solve it? Hosted by Ciaran Thapar, author, youth worker and Director of Public Affairs and Communications at YEF – Safe is a conversation about violence affecting children and young people with those working to stop it. If interested in tuning in, then please follow the link here: <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/safe-podcast>

Children Dealing with Loneliness - NSPCC

Loneliness is a difficult feeling for anyone, so it's not surprising that children can really struggle when they feel lonely. By learning more about loneliness, you can work with your pupils to combat it. The Campaign to End Loneliness defines this feeling as: 'a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when there is a mismatch between the quantity and quality of the social relationships that we have, and those that we want'. While loneliness can be caused by being physically alone, being alone doesn't necessarily lead to feeling lonely. Sometimes children can feel lonely even if they're often with other people. They might be feeling this way if they don't feel properly seen or understood. Loneliness can look and feel different for everyone, but if you're worried about a child in your care, it's good to talk to them about what they might be feeling and experiencing. The NSPCC's new guidance on this issue is well worth a read, and you can find it by following the link below:

Advanced Safeguarding for DSLs

"I just wanted to say that I thought today's training was absolutely fantastic. By a mile it was the most engaging training I have done."

The on-demand course is always available and is updated after each live session [Book Online](#)

Next live online course: Friday 25th April 2025 [Book here](#)

Other available online courses include:

- Whole School Safeguarding Course for 2024/2025 (2 hours of content plus a break)

Online courses - Safeguarding.Pro

All our other courses are now available in [Safeguarding.Pro](#) These courses can be accessed for a full year.

Current courses include:

- Safeguarding Refresher
- An Introduction to Cybersecurity
- Safeguarding and AI: Risks and Rewards
- Safeguarding for Governance
- Safeguarding Induction for new staff

For further details, go to: <https://safeguarding.pro/>

This will be the last briefing until the 28th April 2025, have a good Easter break and we'll see you when term returns!

Andrew Hall
Specialist Safeguarding Consultant,
Director, Success In Schools Ltd.

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