KCSiE 2026 key changes



AI, deepfakes and online safety

KCSiE 2026 modernises its online safety content to reflect the rapid growth of artificial intelligence. A new explainer on indecent and semi-indecent images runs throughout the guidance and makes clear that images may be "digitally altered or wholly generated using artificial intelligence, including what are sometimes described as 'deepfakes'.

Two new paragraphs cover the safe and effective use of **generative AI in education**, and KCSiE 2026 updates the online risk categories. All incidents involving the sharing of indecent or semi-indecent images now require a safeguarding response, whether they are consensual or non-consensual.

If online safety is a priority for your setting, our online safety training for schools will cover these risks in depth come September.

Mental health

KCSiE 2026 substantially updates its mental health content. There is a clearer expectation that all staff understand how mental health concerns can be a safeguarding issue, and it expands the section on children requiring mental health support. Recognising concerns early, and knowing when to escalate, remains central to a whole-school safeguarding approach.

Filtering, monitoring and mobile phones

KCSiE 2026 strengthens the requirements around **filtering and monitoring**. Schools must review how well their systems work **at least once every academic year**. The senior leadership team member responsible leads the review, with support from the DSL and IT. Reviews should check that filtering works on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations, and schools should keep a record.

There is also a **new mobile phone policy section**, reinforcing the expectation that schools operate as mobile phone-free environments and set out their approach clearly.

Violence Against Women and Girls, misogyny and serious violence

Reflecting national priorities and the recent Casey Audit, KCSiE 2026 expands its content on **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**. It adds further references to misogyny (and misandry) and substantially updates the section on serious violence. KCSiE 2026 also rewrites Part Five, which covers child-on-child sexual harassment and sexual violence, to highlight the continuum from harmful sexual behaviour through to sexual violence.

Children who are LGB or gender-questioning

KCSiE 2026 updates the content relating to children who are LGB or gender-questioning, giving schools and colleges clearer guidance on how to support these pupils within a safeguarding framework.

Family Help and multi-agency working

KCSiE 2026 updates its terminology to reflect wider reforms to children's social care. You will now see references to **"universal services and community-based early help"** and **"the targeted early help level of Family Help"**, along with new content on referrals to Family Help. These changes anticipate legislation in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.

Safer recruitment: the "supervision exemption" has been removed

One of the most important practical changes sits in Part Three. The **Crime and Policing Act 2026 has removed the "supervision exemption" from regulated activity.** This means anyone who volunteers in a role that involves teaching, training, instructing or supervising children is now in **regulated activity**. That applies if they do so on more than three days in a month, or overnight, even when a colleague supervises them.

The practical effect is significant for volunteers and DBS checks. As a result, KCSiE 2026 updates or removes the regulated activity tables and the old DBS flowchart. If your setting uses volunteers, now is the time to review your checks. Once September rolls around, our safer recruitment training will reflect the new position.

Other updates worth knowing

KCSiE 2026 also includes:

- Updated data protection references to reflect the **Data (Use and Access) Act 2025**.
- New sections on **sport**, **young carers**, **safeguarding children with medical conditions**, and **boarding and residential accommodation**.
- "Child-on-child abuse" retitled to **"Child-on-child abuse (including harassment and violence)"**, with expanded content noting it is a safeguarding issue for both victim and alleged perpetrator.
- References to **trainee teachers** added throughout.
- Updated content on **reasonable force** to reflect new restrictive intervention guidance.