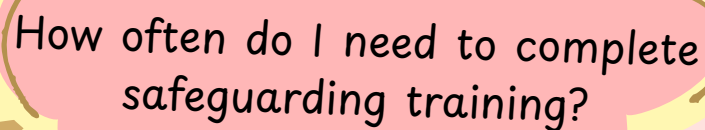
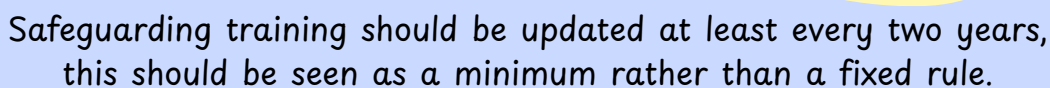


FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

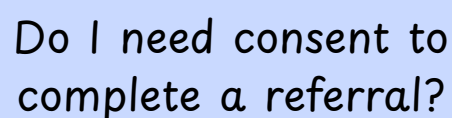


How often do I need to complete safeguarding training?

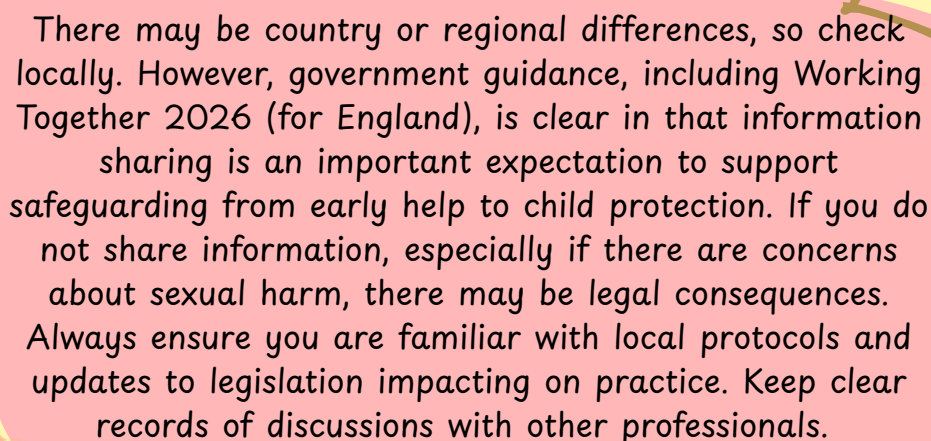


Safeguarding training should be updated at least every two years, this should be seen as a minimum rather than a fixed rule.

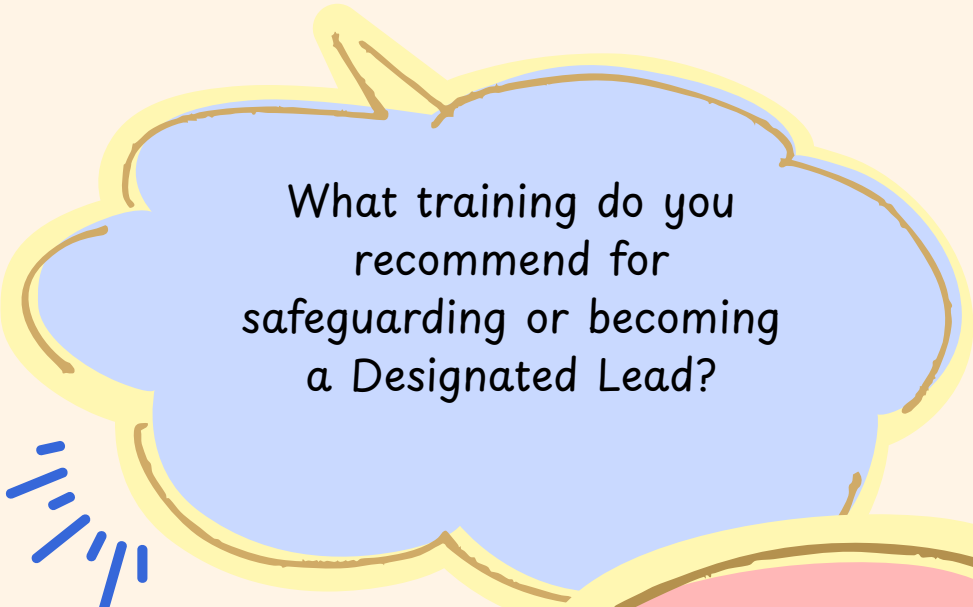
Safeguarding is always changing, whether that is legislation, guidance, or the kinds of risks children are facing, so it is important that your knowledge keeps pace with your practice. For play therapists, especially those working independently or across different settings, training should not be something you only revisit every couple of years. You need to feel confident that you can recognise and respond to concerns as they arise in your day-to-day work. In reality, this often means refreshing your knowledge annually, keeping up to date through CPD, and seeking further training or supervision when you need. It is also important to make sure your training reflects the requirements of the UK nation you are working in. Safeguarding training should not be viewed as a "tick-box" requirement; it is an ongoing professional responsibility.



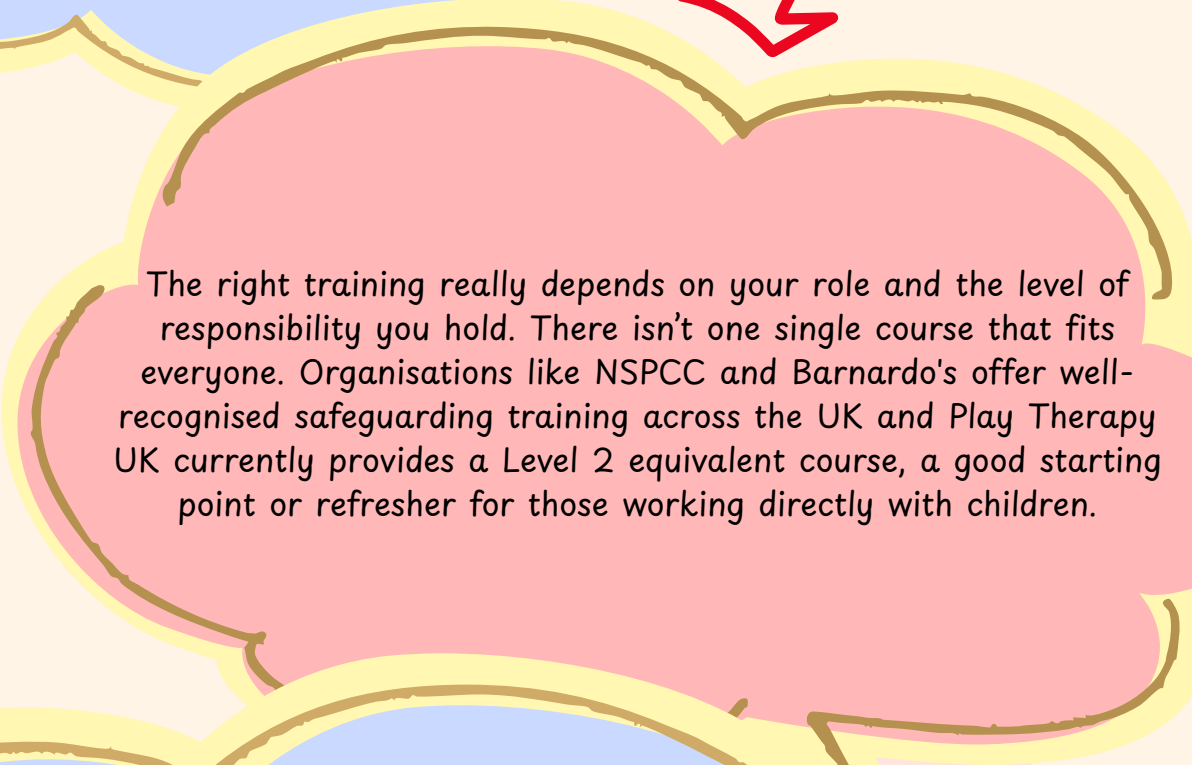
Do I need consent to complete a referral?



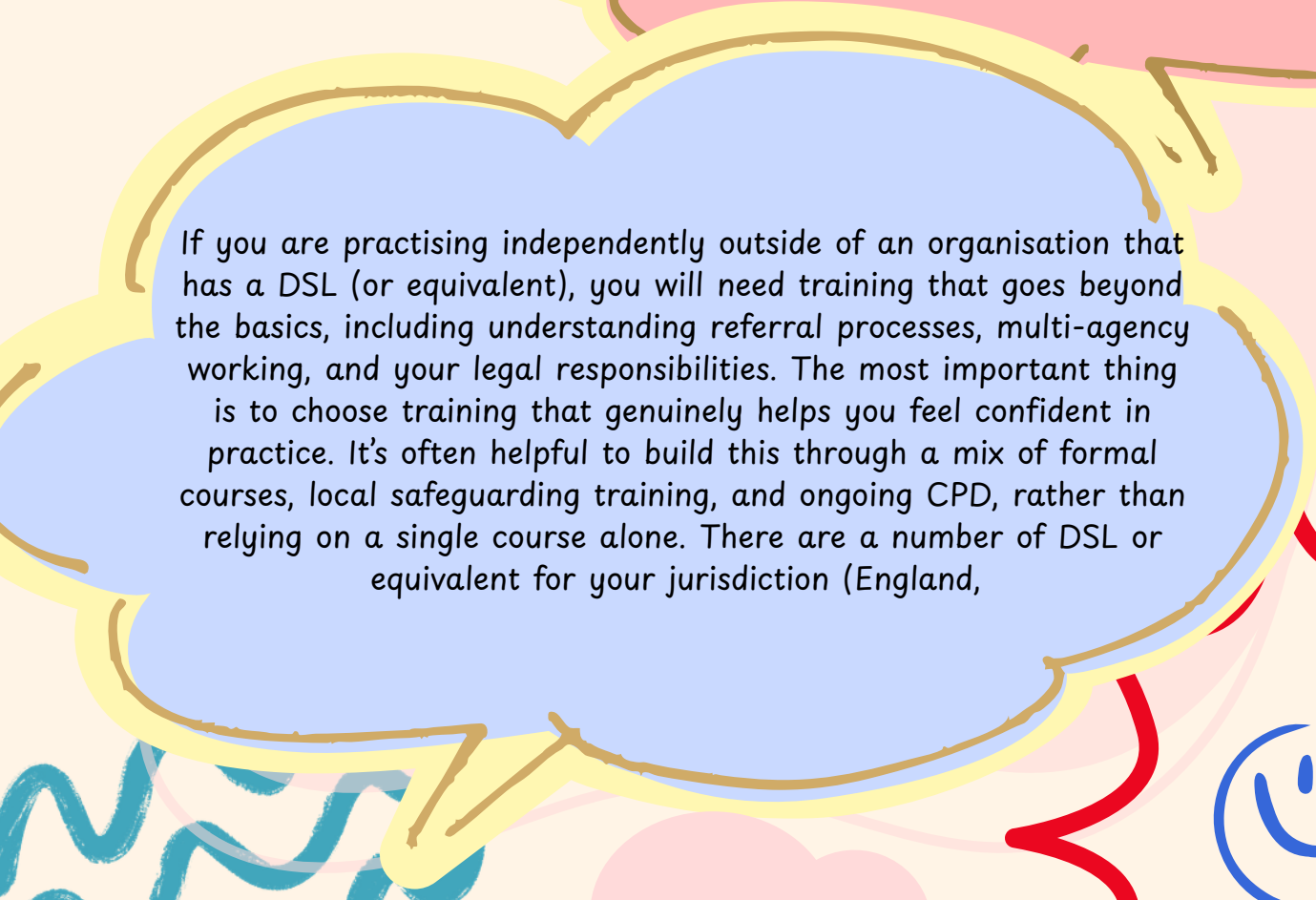
There may be country or regional differences, so check locally. However, government guidance, including Working Together 2026 (for England), is clear in that information sharing is an important expectation to support safeguarding from early help to child protection. If you do not share information, especially if there are concerns about sexual harm, there may be legal consequences. Always ensure you are familiar with local protocols and updates to legislation impacting on practice. Keep clear records of discussions with other professionals.



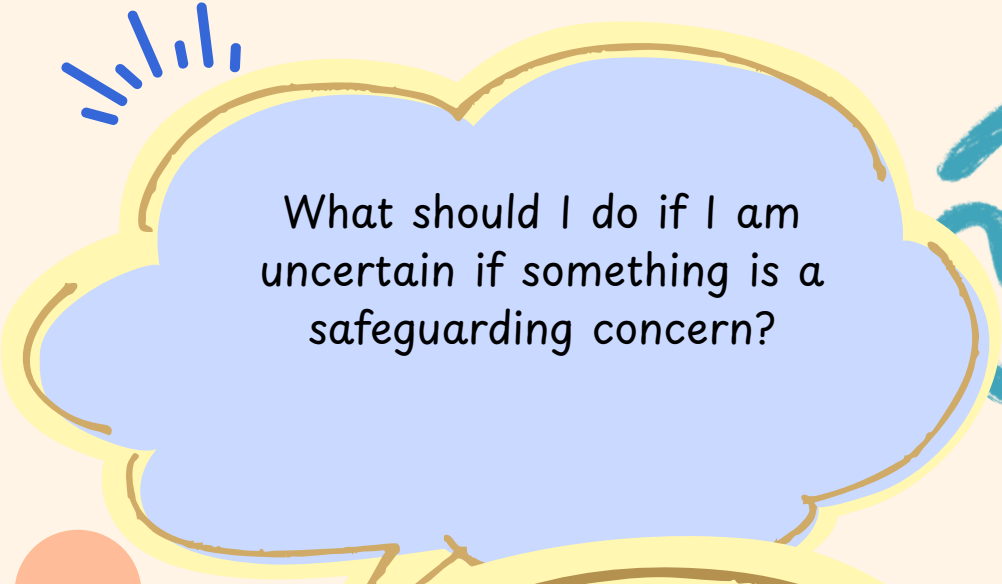
What training do you recommend for safeguarding or becoming a Designated Lead?



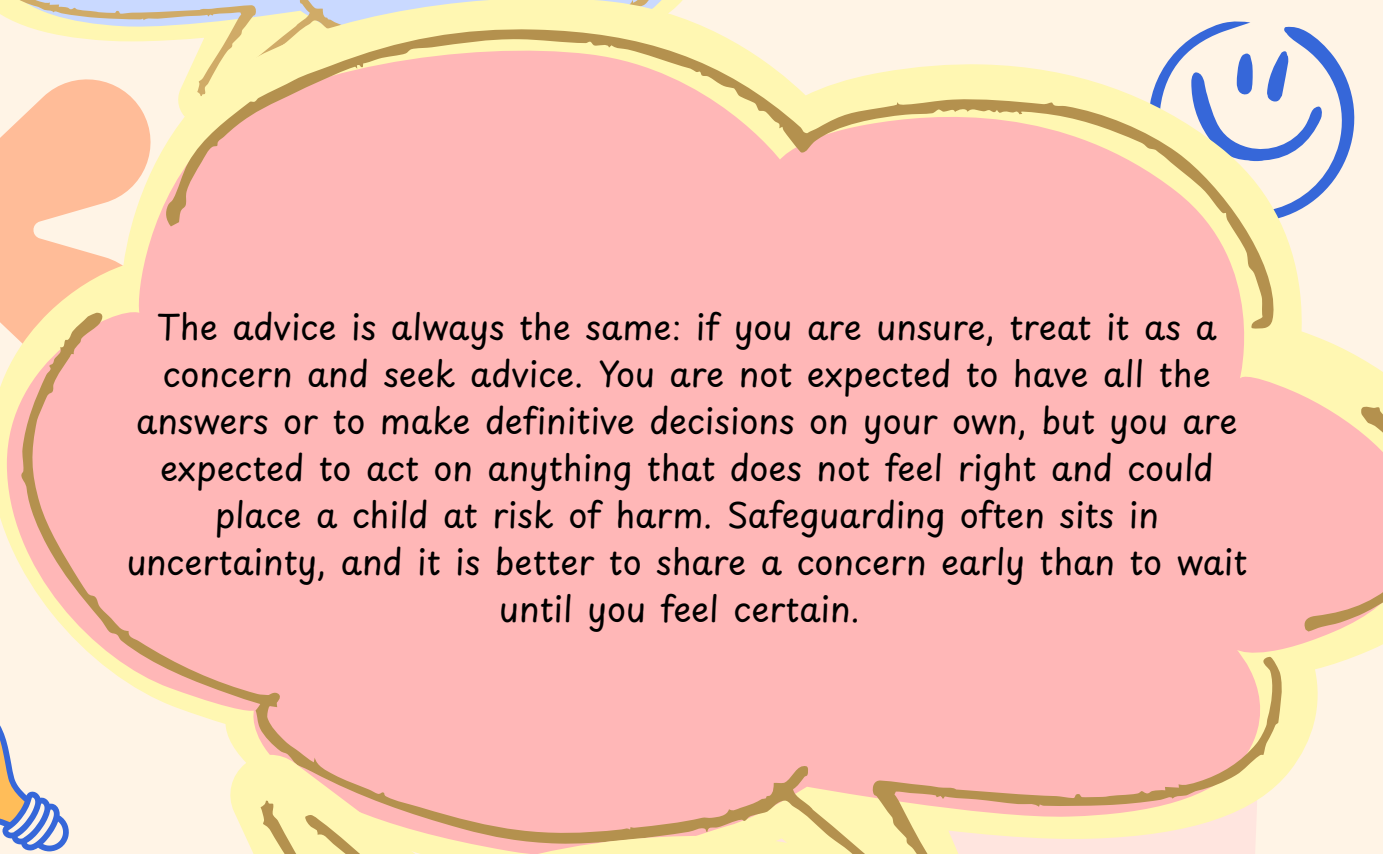
The right training really depends on your role and the level of responsibility you hold. There isn't one single course that fits everyone. Organisations like NSPCC and Barnardo's offer well-recognised safeguarding training across the UK and Play Therapy UK currently provides a Level 2 equivalent course, a good starting point or refresher for those working directly with children.



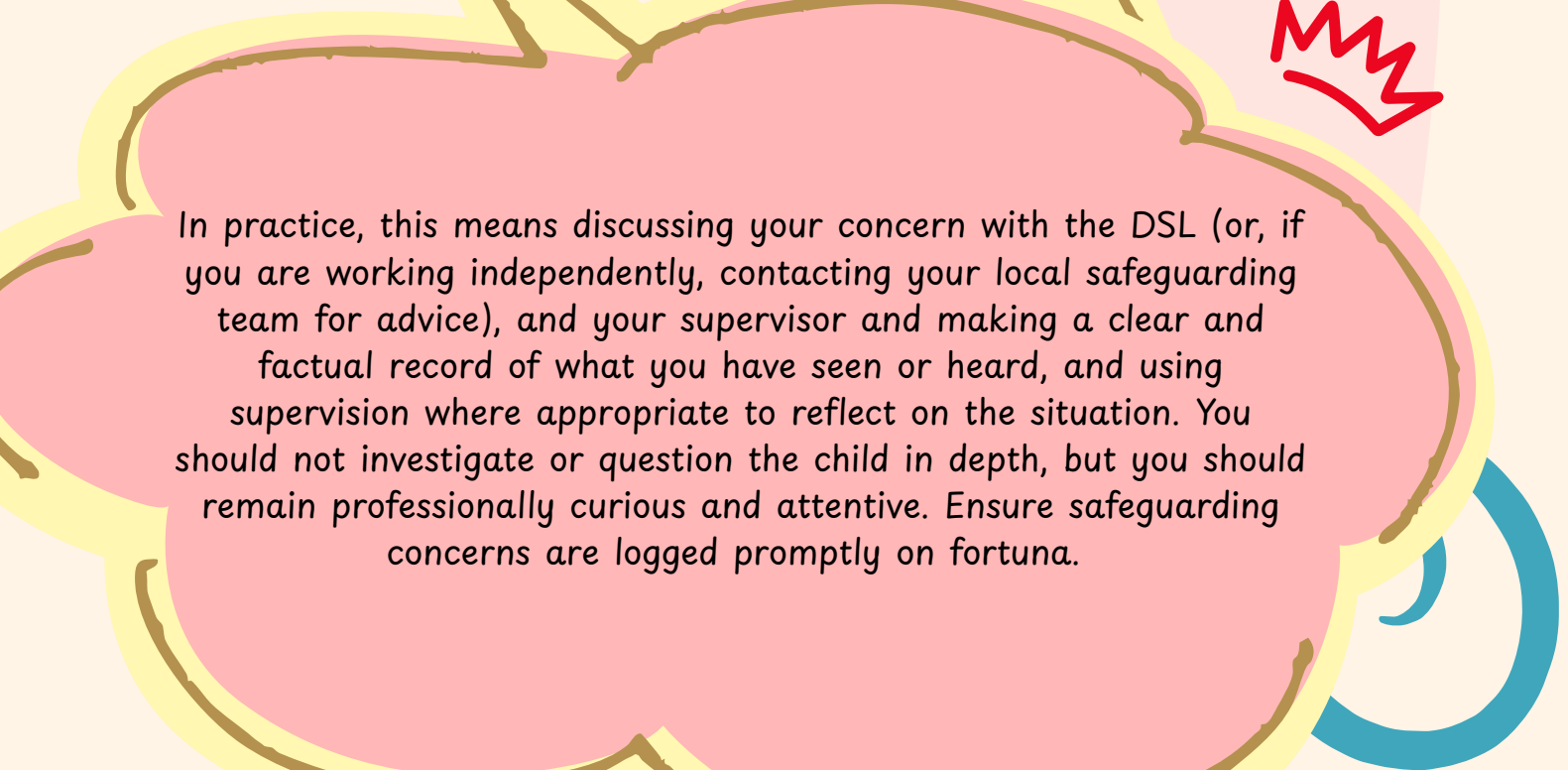
If you are practising independently outside of an organisation that has a DSL (or equivalent), you will need training that goes beyond the basics, including understanding referral processes, multi-agency working, and your legal responsibilities. The most important thing is to choose training that genuinely helps you feel confident in practice. It's often helpful to build this through a mix of formal courses, local safeguarding training, and ongoing CPD, rather than relying on a single course alone. There are a number of DSL or equivalent for your jurisdiction (England,



What should I do if I am uncertain if something is a safeguarding concern?



The advice is always the same: if you are unsure, treat it as a concern and seek advice. You are not expected to have all the answers or to make definitive decisions on your own, but you are expected to act on anything that does not feel right and could place a child at risk of harm. Safeguarding often sits in uncertainty, and it is better to share a concern early than to wait until you feel certain.



In practice, this means discussing your concern with the DSL (or, if you are working independently, contacting your local safeguarding team for advice), and your supervisor and making a clear and factual record of what you have seen or heard, and using supervision where appropriate to reflect on the situation. You should not investigate or question the child in depth, but you should remain professionally curious and attentive. Ensure safeguarding concerns are logged promptly on fortuna.



Top Ten Tips

1. **Always prioritise the child's welfare**

The child's safety and wellbeing must come before confidentiality, therapeutic goals, or relationships with parents/carers. Make this clear from the first contact with parents and children to support transparency and honesty.

2. **Act on concern, not certainty**

You do not need proof of abuse. If something feels wrong, share concerns promptly with the appropriate safeguarding lead or local authority.

3. **Know your local safeguarding procedures**

Be familiar with referral pathways, thresholds, and contact details for your local safeguarding partnership, especially if you work independently.

4. **Maintain clear, factual, and timely records**

Record what you see and hear using the child's own words where possible. Avoid interpretation and ensure records are stored securely.

5. **Understand information sharing responsibilities**

Sharing information appropriately is essential for safeguarding. Lack of consent should not prevent a referral if a child is at risk. But where possible (and safe) inform parents/carers.

6. **Work within your role, do not investigate**

Your role is to observe, listen, and report concerns, not to question the child in depth or attempt to gather evidence.

7. **Use supervision and seek advice early**

Regular safeguarding supervision is essential. When in doubt, consult a DSL (if you are in a school or equivalent), a safeguarding team, or an experienced colleague. Contact your supervisor. Do not delay until they have responded your local authority or safeguarding agency will need to know as soon as possible.
Stay professionally curious

8. **Notice patterns, changes in behaviour, and inconsistencies.**

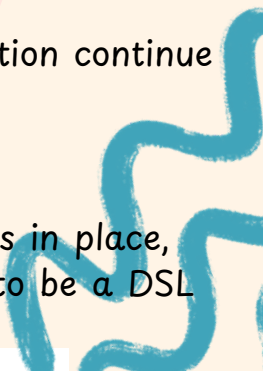
Gently explore within your role, but avoid leading or suggestive questioning.

9. **Keep safeguarding knowledge current**

Engage in regular CPD, as risks (e.g. online harm, exploitation) and legislation continue to evolve rapidly.

10. **Be aware of your lone practitioner responsibilities**

If working independently, ensure you have clear safeguarding arrangements in place, including escalation routes, insurance, and access to advice. You will need to be a DSL or equivalent



FURTHER INFORMATION

England

Keeping children safe in education

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Working together to safeguard children 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>

Scotland

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021, updated 2023)

Getting it right for every child <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

Wales

Working Together to Safeguard People (Wales) (updated guidance series) <https://socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/information-and-learning-hub/sswbact/statutory-guidance>

Northern Ireland

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools (2024 guidance)

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People (policy framework)

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/protecting-and-safeguarding-our-children>

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