

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026



Supporting schools to implement the statutory safeguarding changes introduced in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

About this workbook.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 came into force on 1 September 2026.

This workbook has been developed by The Athena Programme to help safeguarding leaders, designated safeguarding leads, school leaders, governors and trustees review their arrangements against the latest statutory requirements.

The checklist provides a practical framework for reviewing policies, procedures, training, governance and safeguarding practice. It can be used as part of a school's safeguarding review cycle and retained as evidence for inspection, governance assurance and safeguarding audits.

Organisation Details

School/Organisation:

Completed By:

Role:

Date Completed:

Review Date:

DSL:

Safeguarding Governor:

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
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Section 1: Governance

Purpose: To assure governors, trustees and senior leaders that arrangements are in place to implement KCSIE 2026 requirements.

Action	Complete	Evidence
Governing body has received a briefing on KCSIE 2026 changes		
Safeguarding governor has reviewed implementation plan		
Board has challenged leaders on implementation		
Governors have completed annual safeguarding training		
Safeguarding policy review scheduled		

Notes

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 2: Child Protection Policy

Review the Child Protection Policy to ensure it reflects:

Requirement	Complete
Changes to definitions of emotional and sexual abuse	☐
Additions relating to racism, faith-based prejudice, faith-targeted abuse and discriminatory behaviour	☐
New terminology: "making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes"	☐
Updated police referral wording	☐
Updated references to Working Together	☐
Updated contextual safeguarding wording	☐
Updated Family Help terminology	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 3: Staff Code of Conduct

Review staff guidance to ensure it reflects:

Requirement	Complete
Professional curiosity	☐
Immediate action where DSL unavailable	☐
Escalation procedures	☐
Low-level concerns	☐
Updated online safeguarding terminology	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 4: DSL Arrangements

Confirm:

Requirement	Complete
DSL job description reviewed	☐
Deputy DSL arrangements reviewed	☐
DSL availability arrangements tested	☐
Referral pathways updated	☐
Family Help contacts updated	☐
Contextual safeguarding embedded	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 5: DSL Safeguarding Procedures

Review Procedures for:

Procedure	Complete
Immediate referrals	☐
Recording rationale for decisions	☐
Multi-agency working	☐
Escalation procedures	☐
Professional challenge	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 6: DSL Record Keeping

Check that Safeguarding records include:

Requirement	Complete
Chronology	☐
Decision-making rationale	☐
Outcomes	☐
Review dates	☐
Actions taken	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 7: Online Safety

Review:

Requirement	Complete
Online Safety Policy	☐
Acceptable Use Policy	☐
Filtering and monitoring review	☐
Governor oversight of filtering	☐
AI-related safeguarding awareness	☐
Updated image-sharing terminology	

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 8: Child on Child Abuse

Ensure policies refer to:

Requirement	Complete
Child-on-child abuse	☐
Technology-facilitated abuse	☐
Victim-centred practice	☐
Dynamic risk assessments	☐
Trauma-informed response	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK



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Final Statutory Guidance
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Section 9 - Attendance

Review safeguarding links with:

Requirement	Complete
Persistent absence	☐
Missing education	☐
Early intervention	☐
Multi-agency referrals	☐

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KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 10- Safer Recruitment

Confirm:

Requirement	Complete
Recruitment policy reviewed	☐
Interview questions updated	☐
Online searches undertaken appropriately	☐
SCR audited	☐
Recruitment templates updated	☐

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KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 11- Allegations and Low - Level Concerns

Review:

Requirement	Complete
Allegations policy	☐
Low-level concerns policy	☐
LADO contact details	☐
Record keeping arrangements	☐
Recruitment templates updated	☐

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KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 12- Staff Training

Ensure all staff receive updated training covering:

Topic	Complete
KCSIE 2026 changes	☐
Child-to-parent/carers abuse	☐
Contextual safeguarding	☐
Child criminal exploitation	☐
Updated terminology for image-based abuse	☐
Immediate referral expectations	☐
Online safety developments	☐
Professional curiosity	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 13- Governor Training

Governors should receive updates on:

Topic	Complete
KCSIE 2026 changes	☐
Child-to-parent/carers abuse	☐
Contextual safeguarding	☐
Child criminal exploitation	☐
Updated terminology for image-based abuse	☐
Immediate referral expectations	☐
Online safety developments	☐
Professional curiosity	☐

Actions Required

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 14 - Policies Requiring Review

Review and republish where necessary:

Policy	Complete
Child Protection	☐
Safeguarding	☐
Behaviour	☐
Staff Code of Conduct	☐
Online Safety	☐
Low-Level Concerns	☐
Allegations Against Staff	☐
Attendance	☐
Relationships & Sex Education	☐
Anti-Bullying	☐

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KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 15 - Single- Sex Provision and Social Transition

Where relevant to the setting, review:

Requirement	Complete
Toilets	☐
Changing rooms	☐
Residential Visits	☐
Physical education	☐
Competitive sport	☐
Low-Level Concerns	☐
Individual risk assessment processes	☐
Equality impact assessments	☐

KCSIE 2026 IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST & GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE WORKBOOK

Final Statutory Guidance
Issued 1 September 2026

Section 16 - Assurance Questions for Governors

Governors should seek assurance that leaders can demonstrate:

Requirement	Complete
Staff understand the principal changes in KCSIE 2026.	☐
The September 1 changes have been embedded.	☐
Safeguarding policies have been updated and approved.	☐
Staff training has been completed and recorded.	☐
The Single Central Record has been audited.	☐
Filtering and monitoring systems have been reviewed.	☐
Referral pathways are current and understood.	☐
Low-level concerns are recorded, reviewed and acted upon.	☐
Child-on-child abuse procedures remain effective.	☐
Safeguarding records evidence clear decision-making.	☐
Lessons learned from safeguarding incidents are formally reviewed	☐

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Final Statutory Guidance
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Priority Implementation Actions

Immediate	Within the First Term
Update safeguarding and child protection policies.	Audit safeguarding records.
Brief governors, trustees and senior leaders.	Review governor safeguarding assurance.
Deliver whole-staff KCSIE 2026 update.	Evaluate implementation through safeguarding monitoring.
Update DSL procedures and referral guidance.	Sample staff understanding.
Review online safety documentation.	Update induction materials for new staff and volunteers.
Update child-on-child abuse procedures	
Review low-level concerns processes	
Child-on-child abuse procedures remain effective.	

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Final Statutory Guidance
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RAG Self- Assessment

Area	RAG	NOTES
Governance	  	
Policies	  	
Staff Training.	  	
DSL Arrangements.	  	
Online Safety	  	
Safer Recruitment	  	
Child on Child Abuse	  	
Allegations and Low Level Concerns	  	
Record Keeping	  	
Governor Oversight	  	

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Final Statutory Guidance
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About The Athena Programme



The Athena Programme provides safeguarding training, consultancy, governance support and school improvement services to education settings across the UK.

For more information visit:

www.theathenaprogramme.co.uk

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This checklist can be incorporated into a school's annual safeguarding review cycle and retained as evidence for governors, trustees, inspectors and safeguarding audits. It also provides a clear audit trail demonstrating how the school has considered and implemented the changes introduced in the final KCSIE 2026 guidance.

