

Types of abuse



Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves any action that causes physical harm to a child, including fabricating the symptoms or deliberately inducing illness.



Possible signs:

- Bruising
- Bite marks
- Fractures
- Burns



Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child.



Possible signs:

- Development delay
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of confidence
- Uncontrollable emotions
- Extreme behaviour



Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including non-contact.



Possible signs:

- Self-harming
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- Sexual drawings
- Reluctance to remove clothing for P.E.



Child-on-child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied or harmed by another child. This can occur online or face-to-face.



Possible signs:

- Cyberbullying
- Racist and religious bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Becoming withdrawn
- Mental/emotional issues



Neglect

Neglect is the failure to meet a child's physical or psychological needs.



Possible signs:

- Poor appearance
- Poor hygiene
- Development problems
- Changes in moods
- Malnutrition

High risk factors

- Families with complex needs
- Parental substance use
- Poor parental mental health
- Parents with learning difficulties
- Children with disabilities
- Families with a past history of child abuse

Further Information

The statutory guidance for schools is set out in the following documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018