



Reminder of Statutory Obligations to Transfer Safeguarding Files on Pupil Transition

Summary

In 2023, Ella tragically took her own life after returning home from her placement at a Gloucestershire residential setting. The subsequent Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review identified that her safeguarding file had not been transferred by her previous education provider to the college, commending the college's diligent efforts to pursue and eventually obtain it. The LCSPR therefore recommended that the safeguarding partnership issue a clear reminder to all settings of their statutory duties under *Keeping Children Safe in Education* to transfer safeguarding files promptly and securely at every transition. This briefing aims to fulfil that purpose.



Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership



GSCP BRIEFING TO ALL SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION SETTINGS

Reminder of Statutory Obligations to Transfer Safeguarding Files on Transition
(Issue: In response to LCSPR – Child Ella, 2026)

1. Purpose of this briefing

This briefing reinforces the statutory duties placed on all schools and education providers to transfer safeguarding / child protection files promptly, securely, and in full whenever a pupil moves to another education setting. These duties are set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025* and form part of the GSCP response to the Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) concerning Child Ella, who tragically died by suicide in 2023.

It also includes updated expectations around:

- Elective Home Education (EHE)
- Post-16 transitions, including notification to the Gloucestershire Youth Support Team

2. Statutory expectations under KCSIE 2025

KCSIE 2025 makes clear that when a child leaves a school or college—including in-year transfers—the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must ensure that the child protection file is transferred to the new setting as soon as possible.

Guidance referenced in external policy summaries states that:

- Child protection files must be transferred separately from the main pupil file, using secure transit, and receipt must be confirmed.
- Transfers should normally occur within 5 days for in-year moves or within the first 5 days of the new term.
- Receiving schools must ensure the DSL, SENCO or named SEND lead is aware of the child's safeguarding history as appropriate.

KCSIE further emphasises the DSL's responsibility to ensure safeguarding records are up-to-date, accurate, securely stored, and transferred appropriately, as reinforced in Annex C summaries.

When a pupil moves to a new school, the sending school must inform the receiving school regardless of whether any safeguarding concerns exist or a child protection file is held. A brief transfer notification (with pupil details, transfer date, and key safeguarding/pastoral contacts) helps maintain oversight and avoids gaps in information-sharing.

3. GSCP actions already taken (2025-2026)

- This requirement will form part of the S175 Safeguarding Audit undertaken by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding in Education Traded Service.
- A shared understanding has been established that Elective Home Education (EHE) is treated as an education setting for safeguarding purposes; therefore, safeguarding files must also be shared with the EHE team.

4. GSCP follow-up actions (Summer Term 2026)

In line with the LCSPR recommendations, the GSCP will in Summer 2026 issue further reminders to all schools that:

4.1 Duty to share safeguarding files remains mandatory

All safeguarding files must be transferred on any transition, including:

- Moves to other Gloucestershire schools
- Moves out of county
- In-year transitions
- Managed moves
- Reintegration programmes
- Elective Home Education
- Post-16 destinations

4.2 When the destination school is unknown

Where a school does not have details of the receiving education setting, they must contact:

- GCC Education Department to discuss and clarify appropriate next steps.

4.3 When a child is leaving mainstream education (Post-16)

Where the destination is unknown Schools must notify the:

- Gloucestershire Youth Support Team (YST)
so that YST holds any relevant safeguarding information when undertaking the September Guarantee and supporting the young person moving into post-16 pathways.

4.4 When safeguarding files are not received

Where a school expects a safeguarding file from a previous setting and has not received it, they must:

- Chase the originating school, following best practice
- Escalate the concern where necessary using the GSCP Escalation Policy
- Notify the GCC Education Safeguarding Lead

This applies equally to schools receiving pupils from out-of-county or independent schools.

5. Expectations for all schools and educational settings

All schools, colleges, alternative provisions, special schools, and post-16 providers must ensure:

School or Setting Administration

School staff do not always notify the DSL when pupils join mid-term or at the start of term, which can delay necessary checks and information-sharing. Each school must operate a clear new-joiner protocol requiring same-day notification to the DSL (or DDSL) for every new pupil, including those with no known safeguarding concerns, so the DSL can complete initial checks and request any safeguarding records as needed.

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- Maintain complete and accurate safeguarding records
- Ensure secure and timely transfer of files
- Confirm receipt with the receiving setting
- Share relevant information in advance where it will support the child's welfare (e.g., children with a social worker, victims of abuse, children supported through Channel), as recommended in safeguarding transition practice.

Governing bodies / proprietors / trusts:

- Ensure policies reflect statutory requirements
- Monitor compliance with file transfer expectations
- Ensure systems are in place for prompt transition communication

1. Good practice information sharing rules (pre-offer vs post-enrolment)

Schools must not use safeguarding information as a pre-admissions 'screening' tool. As a rule, confirm the offer (or place) before sharing child-specific safeguarding information or files.

- Limited information may be shared pre-offer only where necessary and proportionate to protect a child from risk of harm or to put essential support in place.
- Full safeguarding files are transferred once the child is on roll, using secure methods, with confirmation of receipt.

2. Issuing this briefing

This briefing will be:

- Sent to all Gloucestershire education settings (early years, schools, colleges, AP, special schools, post-16 providers)
- Held on the GSCP Website and included in the GSCP Newsletter
- Provided to the GSCP Education Subgroup
- Formally recorded as part of the GSCP response to the LCSPR regarding Child Ella (2023)

7. Key Contacts

Elective Home Education Team- EHE@Gloucestershire.gov.uk

Education Safeguarding Team- Education safeguarding@gloucestershire.gov.uk

GSCP Safeguarding in Education Team (Traded)- GloucestershireSafeg@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Gloucestershire Youth Support Team (YST)- YSTDuty@gloucestershire.gov.uk