

The logo features the word 'forum' in a stylized font where the letters are arranged to form a heart shape. The 'f' is pink, 'o' is yellow, 'r' is red, 'u' is blue, and 'm' is green.


forum
for SEND
School DSLs


Share challenges, solutions and
good practice related to
safeguarding children with SEND

LGfL 
SafeguardED
IncludED

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This forum

The logo consists of a red square with the text 'LGfL' in white, a small white heart icon to the right, and the text 'SafeguardED' in black below it.

LGfL 
SafeguardED

- ✓ NOT training. This is about networking & sharing.
- ✓ The quality of the session depends on you – please have cameras and audio on and participate
- ✓ Thematic
- ✓ Half termly
- ✓ Please look after yourselves
- ✓ Notes/Slides – <https://sendforum.lgfl.net>

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SafeguardED


SEND DSL Forum

Meeting each half term, this forum is for any DSL who works with SEND pupils either in specialist or mainstream education provision. It offers an opportunity for DSLs to come together, discuss challenges relating to safeguarding children with SEND, share good practice and solutions and to offer peer support.

Each meeting of the SEND DSL Forum will have a theme, so that colleagues can decide if they wish to attend or not.

And the best bit? It's completely free!

[Book now >](#)



Watch on YouTube

Next Forum dates:


28th January 2026 - Preventing children with SEND from Radicalisation

19th March 2026 - Improving the recognition and response to neglect of children with SEND

13th May 2026 - TBC

16th June 2026 - TBC

[Book now >](#)




- ✓ Tackling extremism
- ✓ Having courageous conversations with parents
- ✓ DSL Wellbeing
- ✓ Bruising & Injuries
- ✓ Exploitation
- ✓ Bereavement
- ✓ Self Injurious Behaviour
- ✓ Sexualised Behaviour
- ✓ Personal & Intimate Care
- ✓ Online Safety
- ✓ Child on Child abuse

<https://sendforum.lgf.net>

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Disabled Children & Neglect



3.4 times more likely to be abused.

3.8 times more likely to be neglected.

(Sullivan and Knutson 2000)

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Why do SEND children experience neglect more?



“The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.”

(Working Together to Safeguard Children)

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What does Neglect of disabled children look like?



Medical neglect

Nutritional neglect

Emotional neglect

Educational neglect

Physical neglect

Lack of supervision and guidance

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Over to you!



1. How do we distinguish between the inherent challenges of a child's impairment (e.g., poor muscle tone, weight loss or regulation issues) and indicators of neglect?
2. To what extent have you provided training on this to staff to increase their curiosity, and subsequently recognition?
3. If you search your current Safeguarding Policy for the word "disability," is there specific, actionable guidance on how neglect manifests differently for these pupils?
4. If a child with a profound communication impairment wanted to tell you they were hungry, cold, or worried, do your systems in school allow them to do that (i.e. are they accessible to all pupils)?

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Links shared by delegate



- <https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/HSCP-Neglect-Toolkit-What-a-child-needs-Visual-Guide-Jan-2021.pdf> - this comes with a template of questions to ask - on the website there are questionnaires for all ages
<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/professionals/toolkits/neglect-toolkit/practical-tools/day-in-my-life-tools/>
- **Graded Care Profile 2** (NSPCC neglect assessment tool) – CHECK IF YOUR LCSP has purchased, as you will require training to use it - <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/services-children-families/implementation-support-for-nspcc-services/graded-care-profile-2-gcp2>

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How do we distinguish between the inherent challenges of a child's impairment and indicators of neglect?



- Being aware of and avoiding **confirmation bias** – this is highly prevalent, whereby SEND children can be over medicalised, and concerns are only interpreted in the context of their impairment/condition.
- Being familiar with learners so you can indicators outside of their 'normal' presentation.
- Documenting clearly what normal looks like for SEND pupils and how their care needs should be met.
- Having a good relationship with parents – having the same clothes every day, is this from neglect, or because a child refuses to change. Being supportive rather than accusatory.
- Being open minded about a child's presentation. Finding the cause for weight loss. Bereavement in the family leading to poor diet.
- Family link worker – support for grants etc, supporting parents SEND. Clarifying acronyms to make it easier. Ensuring parents understand the needs to their child. Helping develop strategies and scaffolding for how to approach the needs for their needs.
- Working with other professionals as well as the family, to share information and agree a view.

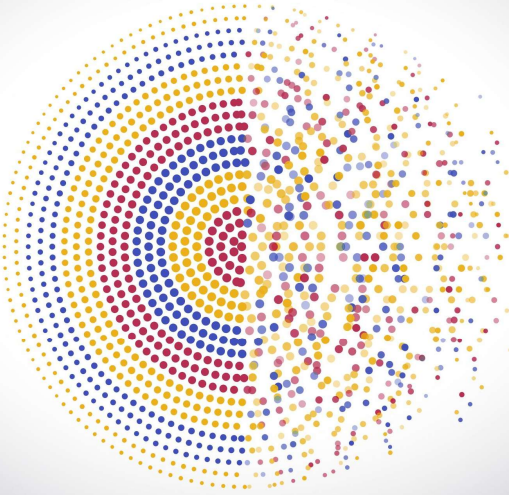
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Do your systems in school allow ALL children to communicate that they are not OK?




- Eye gaze equipment
- Symbols on devices and teaching pupils how to interpret their biological sensations and feelings
- ACC boards – choices
- Zones of regulation continually taught to children
- Sensory rooms to allow them to self-regulate and understand that the emotional needs changing
- Working with other professionals to discuss how children are and recognise issues
- <https://www.kelly-mahler.com/product/the-interoception-curriculum-a-step-bystep-guide-to-developing-mindful-self-regulation/>
- <https://www.autism.org.uk/learn/knowledge-hub/professional-practice/interoception-wellbeing>

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Practice Principles



1. **Policy clarity**
2. **Staff training** – reflects your pupils and community, explore **bias**, rights-based approach and developing curiosity skills
3. **Look** for neglect and **name** it (may not be a binary situation)
4. **Holistic assessments** of need & clear individual plans
5. **Attendance** – robust links to safeguarding response
6. **Context** is critical – what do we know about the child and family?
7. **Empowering** pupils – especially communication skills
8. **Multi-agency working**
9. Child's **lived experience** at center
10. Consider the **support** that families need and build local **networks**
11. **Strengths based practice** with families –consider the language used around neglect as most parents do not 'understand' this term. Most adults think about neglect in very narrow terms, and so this term can be unhelpful.
12. Support to have **courageous conversations** with parents

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Why are disabled children more likely to experience neglect?





WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Activate **professional curiosity** and be alert to neglect.
- **Align safeguarding and attendance monitoring.**
- Talk to partners and **familiarise yourself with children's care plans.**
- Build positive relationships with **parents.**

See neglect.lgfl.net for more info

1. **Complex care needs** = increased likelihood of omissions
2. More likely to be experiencing **inequalities** e.g. poverty
3. **Medicalisation:** Observed changes more likely to be attributed to the child's medical condition/s.



<https://lgfl.net/sites/default/files/LgflNet/images/online-safety/disabled%20children%20and%20neglect%20A3.jpg>

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What does neglect look like?

Neglect is often characterised in a particular way, but it is important to remember that there are very distinct forms of neglect. It could be:

- A young child who is not bathed or fed enough, living in cramped housing and sharing a bed with two other siblings
- A 14-year-old with everything they could wish for materially and physically, but given little love, warmth or interaction from parents
- A disabled child whose parent/carer doesn't follow prescribed medical advice to meet their dietary requirements or who is very negative towards and about their child
- A 9-year-old who is morbidly obese due to high calorie intake, where parent/carers do not follow the dietician's advice to reduce the child's weight

1 in 10 children experience NEGLECT

Would you spot the signs?

Report ANY concerns about neglect to your DSL team

How can I better identify and respond to neglect in a school setting?

<https://neglect.lgfl.net>

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SAFEGUARDING SHORTS: ADOLESCENT NEGLECT

30Min

SAFEGUARDING SHORTS: NEGLECT & DISABLED CHILDREN

30Min

SAFEGUARDING SHORTS: AFFLUENT NEGLECT

30Min

SAFEGUARDING SHORTS: NEGLECT & CUMULATIVE HARM

30Min

FAILING TO CARE?

The relationship between neglect and poverty

<https://safetraining.lgfl.net>

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Next Session



forum for SEND School DSLs
13th May 2026

AI in the Classroom - improving teaching and learning with SEND pupils

Share challenges, solutions and good practice related to safeguarding children with SEND

<https://sendforum> / <https://safetraining.lgfl.net>

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Keep in touch



Social Media: @lgflsafeguarded
Newsletter: safenewsletter.lgfl.net
Main portal: safeguarding.lgfl.net
SEND Forum site: sendforum.lgfl.net
IncludED site: included.lgfl.net
Resources: saferesources.lgfl.net
Training: safetraining.lgfl.net
Email: safeguarding@lgfl.net

A grid of nine resource thumbnails with captions:

- AUP in symbols for pupils with SEND (Updated for Sept 2023)**: Symbols AUP Template, SEND
- Know your friends with Josh and Sue - for moderate to severe learning needs**: Josh & Sue animation for pupils with learning difficulties on staying safe online
- Why are disabled children more likely to experience neglect?**: Poster: Neglect and disabled children
- STAR SEND Toolkit**: STAR SEND Toolkit, Children's International
- Anti-Bullying Alliance SEN & Disability**: Anti-Bullying Alliance SEND guidance page
- Know it All for SEND**: Know it All for SEND
- How to support children with SEND when talking to people online**: NSPCC, How to support children with SEND when talking to people online
- Online Safety Guidance for Adults and Young People with Learning Disabilities**: Online Safety Guidance for Adults and Young People with Learning Disabilities, Green Craft Trust
- Relationships, the Internet and you booklet for 11-16s with SEND**: Relationships, the Internet and you booklet for 11-16s with SEND

<https://sendsafe.lgfl.net>

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