



Briefing Note:
The Children's Plan
Implications for Safeguarding Practice
9 September 2025



**HELEN HOGAN:
SAFEGUARDING
MATTERS**

Overview

The Children's Commissioner for England has published The Children's Plan, the first national school census using statutory powers. It captures how schools are supporting children's wider needs beyond education and highlights systemic gaps in safeguarding, inclusion, and multi-agency collaboration.

Key Safeguarding Insights

- Schools acting as Safeguarding Hubs.
- Many schools are stepping in to fill gaps left by overstretched children's services.
- Staff are managing complex safeguarding needs with limited external support.
- Inconsistent Multi-Agency Support.
- Provision varies widely across regions.
- Lack of statutory frameworks for collaboration leads to fragmented responses.
- Unmet Needs and Hidden Harm..
- Children face barriers including poverty, SEND, mental health, housing instability, and exposure to violence.
- These issues often go unrecorded or unsupported due to data gaps and resource constraints.

Children's Perspectives

- While younger children feel safe and supported, older pupils report disengagement and emotional strain.
- Trust in teachers is high, but many feel school that schools don't meets their broader needs.

Strategic Recommendations

- Reframe language from "Special" as "Additional" Needs (Reduces stigma and acknowledges that most children require support at some point).
- Encourages inclusive safeguarding practices.

Design for Inclusion

- Schools should be equipped to meet diverse needs by default—not as exceptions.
- Training and resources must reflect this shift.

Embed Multi-Agency Working

- A statutory framework is needed to formalise collaboration between education, health, and social care.
- Localised, accessible services should be prioritised.

Safeguarding Culture

- Governors and senior leaders must champion safeguarding as a strategic priority.
- Whole-school approaches should be embedded, not bolted on.

At Helen Hogan: Safeguarding Matters much of our training and delivery encompasses these vital discussions. Helen Hogan: Safeguarding Matters schools are already investing in culture changes that engage all stakeholders in positive change for the outcomes of ALL children.