



Guidance for professionals on reporting to CEOP

On average CEOP safeguards 100 children and young people per month through our online Safety Centre (at www.ceop.police.uk), or via the Click CEOP reporting button. The Safety Centre is an online reporting tool where children, young people, parents, carers and professionals can report concerns to the CEOP Child Protection Team related to grooming, sexual abuse and online sexual exploitation.

The children and young people we safeguard are experiencing online sexual exploitation and the majority are unable to tell anyone else. By reporting to CEOP, they are able to get advice, be supported and receive appropriate safeguarding and if required a referral to other local services.

We are always grateful to our professional network for working with us to help make children and young people aware that they can report to us if they are concerned about online sexual exploitation and are unable to tell a trusted adult in order to seek help and support.

This guide is to help our professional network know when to report to CEOP using the online Safety Centre, as well as understand the concerns that we can advise on and the detail to include in a report. We hope you find it helpful in supporting your ongoing work towards tackling online child sexual exploitation.

For further information about a range of online safety topics please visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals.

Reporting to CEOP

All professionals working with children and young people have a duty of care towards them. Part of that role is ensuring that child protection and safeguarding concerns are dealt with appropriately and the appropriate policy and procedures are followed. Taking steps to safeguard a child or young person can include a referral to statutory agencies such as Children's Social Care and the Police. CEOP is the National Crime Agency's child protection command, where professionals, parents and young people can directly report concerns regarding online child sexual exploitation and abuse to the Child Protection Team.

CEOP's role is to keep children safe from online grooming and online sexual abuse.

If a child is at risk of immediate harm, please call 999.

What kind of concerns can CEOP advise on?

- Concerns that a child is being contacted online and spoken to in a sexual way online.
- Concerns that a child has shared, or is being blackmailed to share an indecent image/s of themselves online.
- Concerns that a child is arranging to meet someone they have met online.
- Concerns that a child is being groomed online.

Concerns outside CEOP's remit:

- Concerns related to cyberbullying.
- Concerns that a child's account online has been hacked.
- Concerns that a child has been added by someone they don't know - where no inappropriate or sexual communication has taken place.
- Concerns around adolescents sharing self-generated sexual imagery with each other, where there is no indication of coercion or blackmail.

If you are worried about a child or young person experiencing the above issues we would advise that you do not report to CEOP. We fully acknowledge that such situations can be harmful to a child or young person and require action/support. Often this can be in the form of agreeing safeguarding plans, conversations with parents and carers, and the provision of additional online safety education. We would advise that you follow your organisation's safeguarding procedures to help you determine the most appropriate course of action to best support that child or young person.

Helpful resources and information:

Childline - www.childline.org.uk

Internet Matters - www.internetmatters.org

ChildNet - www.childnet.com

Professionals Online Safety Helpline - www.saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline

Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People (UK Council for Child Internet Safety) - downloadable from www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals.

Need advice from CEOP about child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA)?

Child Protection Advisors at CEOP are able to offer specific advice relating to online child abuse and exploitation. This is most likely to be helpful when:

- A child has additional vulnerabilities.
- Engagement with parents may be difficult.
- It is known that a child has experienced or been at risk of sexual abuse previously.
- Sexual images of the child are in circulation online / being sent to others by offenders.

Things to include when making a report to us:

- If there are multiple children involved in an incident, only **one** report is required. All children's names can be included on the report in the "summary of concerns" section.
- Please complete as much of the form as possible. This includes suspect's username (if known), victim's name, and your organisation's name and contact details.
- Include the professionals already involved with the family.
- Reports do not need to be duplicated by multiple agencies or members of a family. For example if the child's school Safeguarding Lead has already submitted a report, the parent does not also need to report too.

Children reporting to CEOP

We encourage children and young people to report directly to us, especially if they do not feel they have a trusted adult whom they can ask for help.

Please do not ask a child to report to us if they have already disclosed to you or another professional.

Please listen and take their concerns seriously and inform them that you will make a report on their behalf, should you need to.

What happens next

Each report received is risk assessed by a Child Protection Advisor and prioritised accordingly. Reports from children who may be at risk receive an urgent child protection response and reports from professionals will be responded to within 5 working days.

Further support and guidance

[Thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals) is our website dedicated to supporting professionals to protect children and young people from sexual abuse and exploitation. On it you will find resources, guidance, training opportunities and expert information and advice on safeguarding children online.

At [Thinkuknow.co.uk](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) you will also find websites offering targeted advice and support to children and young people, as well as for their parents and carers.