Children’s views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Lessons from the process evaluation for teachers and policymakers

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Contributions and acknowledgements

Author contributions
Dr Aisling McElearney was the lead evaluator on this process evaluation and project managed all elements. She secured funding, recruited schools, led on the collection of data and first order analysis of data with and by children in mainstream primary schools. She completed the final overview analysis and wrote the majority of the report. Dr Christina Murphy designed the evaluation approach and all data collection procedures, secured approval from the NSPCC Research Ethics Committee, and completed the second order analysis of the data from mainstream primary schools. She contributed to drafting the methods and findings sections of the report. Louise Craig led on the adaptation of the research approach in special schools, managed the collection and first order analysis of data with and by children in special schools, and the processing of this data in preparation for analysis. Lauren Palmer completed the second order analysis of data from special schools and contributed to drafting the findings section of the report. Martina Monaghan managed the collection and processing of all data in mainstream schools. She also contributed to the collection and first order analysis of data with and by children in all mainstream and special schools and drafting the methods section of the report. Caroline Cunningham undertook a review of research evidence and contributed to drafting the background and rationale section of the report.

Contributions from other members of the research team
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Executive summary

Keeping Safe is an innovative multi-component whole-school programme that aims to teach children aged 4–11 years to recognise abusive behaviours and tell. The programme places the responsibility for keeping children safe with the adults in children’s lives, and has components targeted at parents/carers, teachers and other whole-school staff, as well as a component targeted at children. These components for parents/carers and school staff as key adults in children’s lives seek to ensure children can recognise abusive behaviours, are facilitated to tell a trusted adult, and receive an appropriate and effective response, and the support they need to recover.

This evaluation presents the views of children and young people in mainstream and special schools on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe programme. Learning from this evaluation is timely in view of the Gillen Review in Northern Ireland (Gillen, 2019) and developments in the provision of statutory relationships and sex/sexuality education (RSE) across the UK.

Limited evidence of children’s meaningful involvement in the development of services and programmes

There are benefits for children and young people in being involved in developing services and programmes (Brady & Preston; 2020; Crane & Broome, 2017), and for the services themselves, by ensuring that the experience and perspectives of children and young people are responsibly represented and that the services are relevant to their lives (Sellars et al, 2020; Brady & Preston, 2020; Keating, Morgan & Collins, 2018; Pound, Langford & Campbell, 2016). However, there exists limited evidence of good practice in involving children and young people in developing services and programmes and this remains a challenge for governments and organisations across the UK (Children’s Rights Alliance for England [CRAE], 2019). This is particularly so for very young children (Keenan et al, 2018a) and children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children1 (Bailey et al, 2015; Liddiard et al, 2019; Taylor et al, 2014).

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**Children’s involvement in the development of school-based programmes that teach about abuse**

To date, a relatively small number of research studies have sought to involve children and young people in the development and evaluation of school-based programmes that teach about abuse (Hollis & Churchill, 2018; Stanley et al, 2015; Tutty, 2014; Fox, Hale & Gadd, 2013; McNeish & Scott, 2012; McElearney et al, 2011a; Turtle, McElearney & Scott, 2010; Bell & Stanley, 2006). This has included needs assessment research and scoping reviews to inform programme development (Stanley et al, 2015; McElearney et al, 2011a), design of evaluation tools and processes (Turtle, McElearney & Scott, 2010), co-production of resources (Reynold, 2016), as well as evaluation of services and programmes (McElearney et al, 2021a; Hollis & Churchill, 2018; Tutty, 2014; Fox, Hale & Gadd, 2013).

**The process of evaluating schools’ experiences of implementing and delivering Keeping Safe**

This process evaluation used creative art-based participative approaches to engage children and young people as key whole-school stakeholders in evaluating the Keeping Safe programme. The evaluation was carried out over two academic years between September 2016 and June 2018 in 31 mainstream primary and five special schools in Northern Ireland. A Cluster Randomised Trial evaluation of Keeping Safe was also carried out in the mainstream primary schools between September 2016 and June 2018.

A total of 157 children aged 4–11 years who had been taught Keeping Safe from a small sub-sample of six mainstream schools were selected to take part in art-based evaluation activities, alongside 69 children and young people aged 4–13 years from five special schools. These activities were designed to explore children and young people’s response to the Keeping Safe programme. The evaluation activities were tailored to children’s age and stage of development:

- A total of 72 younger children in mainstream primary schools and 28 young people in special schools were invited to participate in circle time, a child-friendly-focus group and subsequently create ‘Keeping Safe trees’ through their own pictures about Keeping Safe.
- A total of 85 older children in mainstream primary schools and 41 young people in special schools were invited to create paper ‘Keeping Safe cakes’.

These art-based activities were designed to engage the children and young people in generating and categorising ideas about what they recalled, liked and disliked, and their wishes for the Keeping Safe programme. Inviting the children and young people to write or draw promoted their free expression and provided a visual representation of their ideas.

This evaluation had the following key objectives:

- To engage children and young people in mainstream and special schools in sharing their experience and views of the Keeping Safe programme and how it was taught in school.
- To identify from the perspective of children and young people in mainstream and special schools what they recall and have learned from the Keeping Safe programme.
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- To document and describe children and young people in mainstream and special schools’ response to the programme, such as what they liked and disliked about Keeping Safe.
- To find out what children and young people in mainstream and special schools’ wish and recommend for the Keeping Safe programme and how it is used in school.
- To capture the views of children and young people in mainstream and special schools on their experience of taking part in the process evaluation and creative art-based activities.

Findings

Key findings and learning for the development of programmes that teach children and young people about abuse and relationships and sex/sexuality education (RSE) include:

- **Young children respond positively to being taught about abuse and learn key concepts when messaging is appropriate for their age and stage of development.** Children from as young as four years, and children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children in mainstream primary and special schools learned key programme concepts when they were taught using a range of engaging visual and interactive resources, stories and activities embedded in the Keeping Safe programme.

- **Despite feeling uncomfortable when sensitive messages and concepts about sexual abuse are first introduced and taught, children and young people understand it is important they are taught to recognise abusive behaviours and tell, and they also say that being taught these messages makes them feel safer.** They wish all adults and all children in schools could be taught these messages so that children would be safer.

- **Using a wide range of resources, activities and communication media supports the teaching and learning of sensitive abstract concepts and messages.** Using songs, rhymes, stories, videos, interactive games and art-based activities helped make learning concrete and enjoyable for children and young people. Characters that grow up and progress with children through their school years helped engage younger children in their learning while videos and interactive games helped engage children and young people in special schools. Using a range of activities and media to communicate messages is important to meet the varied and distinct learning styles and needs of children and young people and promote inclusivity. Any adaptation of resources for use in special schools should ensure they are age-appropriate for older children and young people.
While key concepts and messages about consent, recognising abusive behaviours and telling a trusted adult were understood clearly by children, there was some ambiguity in other key concepts that needs to be addressed in teaching children about abuse. These include children’s understanding and learning about the fact that abuse is never a child’s fault, strangers and risk posed by those known to children and young people, and in conveying honestly to children what happens when they tell and report abuse. Embedding programmes that teach children about abuse in the life of the school will provide opportunities for repetition, clarification, extension and consolidation of children’s learning, incrementally, year-on-year, appropriate to their stage of development as they progress through their years of primary school education. Moreover, it appears that children and young people are not being taught the correct names for private parts of the body and this should be addressed to ensure that when telling and reporting abuse, children use language that is understood and heard by trusted adults. Programme messaging should be reviewed routinely to ensure it reflects the latest best practice evidence on teaching children about abuse. The teaching of programme messages should also be monitored routinely in school to ensure children and young people are being taught all key concepts.

Children and young people enjoy having the opportunity to contribute their views and experiences through activities that are inclusive, age-appropriate and facilitate their voice to be heard. Activities enjoyed by children included art-based goal-directed tasks related to the curriculum, talking and discussing their ideas, drawing, colouring and sticking pictures to represent their ideas. Engaging children and young people as key stakeholders in developing and evaluating programmes they will be taught should be prioritised.
Introduction

This report presents findings and learning from a process evaluation of the experience of children taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe whole-school education programme across two academic years between 2016 and 2018. Creative art-based approaches were used to facilitate the engagement of 226 children and young people, aged 4–13 years, across 11 mainstream and special schools in Northern Ireland.

Importantly, this evaluation has enabled children and young people, as key stakeholders, to share their views and experience of the Keeping Safe programme (Brady & Preston, 2020; Crane & Broome, 2017). It has also identified learning for the development and teaching of school-based programmes and relationships and sex/sexuality education that aim to teach children to recognise abusive behaviours and tell a trusted adult. This will help ensure programme teaching is relevant to children and young people’s lives and is considered authentic, credible and accessible to them (Sellars et al, 2020; Bovarnick et al, 2018; Pound, Langford & Campbell, 2016).

This learning includes that children and young people, including those as young as four years and those with special educational needs and disabled children, respond positively to being taught about abuse in an age-appropriate way. They have learned key programme concepts and messages, and their learning has been facilitated by a broad range of interactive resources and activities. However, after two years of Keeping Safe being taught in school, some ambiguity exists in some children’s understanding of the fact that abuse is never a child’s fault, and in relation to the risks posed by strangers and adults known to children. Embedding the programme, or other programmes of this nature, in the life of the school will provide opportunities for repetition, clarification, extension and consolidation of learning, year-on-year in an age-appropriate way, as a child progresses through their years of primary school education. Moreover, it will provide time to achieve consistency in the messages taught to children in school and at home, and across the range of programmes and resources that are used in schools.

A Cluster Randomised Trial evaluation of programme effectiveness in mainstream schools was also carried out and confirmed positive outcomes for children, teachers and parents/carers after one and two years of programme teaching (McElearney et al, 2021a, 2021b; McElearney et al, 2018). Children taught the Keeping Safe programme for two academic years showed significantly higher levels of knowledge and understanding of abuse concepts, and no difference in self-reported anxiety compared with children in the waitlist control schools where Keeping Safe was not taught.

The learning presented in this report and that emerging from the process evaluation findings of the experience of school staff and parents/carers in mainstream and special schools (McElearney et al, 2021c, 2021d) provides context to understand and interpret the results of the Cluster Randomised Trial (Lynas & Hawkins, 2017; Boelje, Drabble & O’Cathain, 2015). This learning is timely in view of policy and practice developments including the Gillen Review in Northern Ireland (Gillen, 2019) and developments in statutory relationships and
sex/sexuality education in England and across the devolved nations of the UK (Education and Training Inspectorate, 2016; Department for Education, 2019; Education Wales, 2019; Education Scotland, 2018).

This report is aimed at teachers, school staff and policymakers engaged in developing and evaluating school-based programmes that teach children about abuse. Published reports on the results of the Cluster Randomised Trial, and process evaluation findings of the experience of school staff and parents/carers in mainstream and special schools are also available.
Background evidence and rationale

While involving children and young people in the process of developing programmes and services is important in realising their rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), their involvement is also important for ensuring programmes and services are relevant, credible and accessible to children and young people. Despite this, there exists gaps in evidence of good practice where children and young people have been meaningfully involved in safeguarding and child protection and in the development and evaluation of school-based programmes that aim to teach children about abuse.

This process evaluation of the Keeping Safe programme was designed to address identified gaps and involve children and young people in evaluating the programme. This aimed to build on their prior involvement at earlier stages of programme development, which included the following:

- Needs assessment research undertaken to identify gaps in children's knowledge and understanding of abuse to establish need and inform programme content. This engaged 236 children across 15 primary schools in Northern Ireland using a photography project (McElearney et al, 2011a).
- The design of research instruments and data collection procedures for use in the needs assessment research. This included 19 children via the school councils in a primary and a special school in three key tasks of critiquing the format and content validity of the Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire, devising guidelines for being safe while collecting photographic data, and devising a procedure for matching child and parent questionnaire data (Turtle, McElearney & Scott, 2010).

Children and young people have a right to participate meaningfully in matters affecting their lives

Facilitating children and young people’s meaningful participation in the design, development and evaluation of services and programmes that teach them about abuse is an important step towards the realisation of their rights. This includes their Article 12 and Article 19 rights set out in the UNCRC (1989). Article 12 concerns their right to express and have their views taken seriously in matters affecting them, while Article 19 concerns their right to protection from all forms of abuse. Moreover, the meaningful participation and involvement of children and young people constitutes a legal directive under international, UK, and Northern Ireland legislation (Lundy, 2007; Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2008; Keenan, 2014; Ross, Kerridge & Woodhouse, 2018; York Consulting, 2010; Burke, 2010; Davey, Shaw & Burke, 2010).

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2 Article 12 states “Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”. Article 19 states “Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child”. 

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Research suggests there are benefits for children and young people involved in service development (Brady & Preston; 2020; Crane & Broome, 2017), and for services and programmes developed in terms of ensuring that the experience and perspectives of children and young people are responsibly represented, and that services and programmes are relevant to children and young people’s lives (Sellars et al, 2020; Brady & Preston, 2020; Keating, Morgan & Collins, 2018; Pound, Langford & Campbell, 2016), and are viewed as authentic, credible and accessible to children and young people (Scott et al, 2020; Bovarnick et al, 2018; Bovarnick & Scott, 2016). Despite this, and a growing emphasis on patient and public involvement (PPI), involving children and young people in service development and research to inform such development is not standard practice (Sellars et al, 2020; Bovarnick et al, 2018) and there are calls for more to be done to collate and understand the nature, extent and impact of children’s and young people’s involvement in such research (Brady & Preston, 2020).

**Limited evidence of children’s meaningful involvement in the development of services and programmes that teach children about abuse**

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2009) describes participation as “ongoing processes, which include information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and in which children can learn how their views and those of adults are taken into account and shape the outcome of such processes” (p5).

A range of good practice models (Hart’s [1992] Ladder of Participation; Shier’s [2001] five-level approach, Sinclair’s [2004] four key dimensions, and Lundy’s [2007] four factor model) operationalise the concept and enable organisations to assess how well their practice enables the meaningful participation of children and young people (Turtle, McElearney & Scott, 2010). Building on earlier models, Lundy (2007) suggests there are four distinct yet interrelated factors, and emphasises the importance of having an influence on decision-making as core to a truly child rights-compliant approach:

- **space** (ensuring an opportunity for children to express their views)
- **voice** (ensuring children are facilitated to give their views)
- **audience** (the view must be listened to)
- **influence** (the view must be acted upon, as appropriate).

Yet, evidence of good practice is limited and remains a challenge for governments and organisations across the UK (Children’s Rights Alliance for England [CRAE], 2019). In its most recent reporting on UK implementation and compliance with the UNCRC, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child’s ‘Concluding Observations’ were highly critical of children and young people’s lack of influence on how they should be protected from violence, sexual abuse and harm. The Committee recommended that governments across the UK should:

> “Establish structures for the active and meaningful participation of children and give due weight to their views in designing laws, policies, programmes and services at the local and national level, including in relation to discrimination, violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, harmful practices, alternative care, sexual and reproductive education, leisure and play. Particular attention should be paid to involving younger children and children in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities.” [emphasis added] (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016, p6).
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The Committee’s emphasis on both a lack of involvement in policymaking or service design in respect of sensitive child protection and safeguarding matters is not new. Research and child protection reviews, including serious case reviews, have highlighted the lack of involvement of children and young people in the development of policy and practice relating to child welfare (Brady et al, 2019; Kennan, Brady & Forkan, 2018a; Sidebotham et al, 2016; van Bijleveld, Dedding & Bunders-Aelen, 2014; Munro, 2011).

This is exacerbated for very young children (Keenan, Brady & Forkan 2018a) and children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children (Bailey et al, 2015; Liddiard et al, 2019; Taylor et al, 2014) who often consider they are only asked “about disability-related issues and too seldom asked about the broader range of issues that affect them” (Tisdall, 2017, p64). With respect to age, many participatory structures, events or exercises tend to focus on young people only, or children at the upper end of primary school (Davey, Shaw & Burke, 2010; McElearney et al, 2011a; Gray & Winter, 2011; Lundy, McEvoy & Byrne, 2011).

While growing efforts in recent years to establish a robust evidence base concerning the effectiveness of school-based programmes that teach children about abuse are to be welcomed, there remains a lack of focus on the experience and response of children and young people as programme participants (O’Farrelly, 2020; Lynas & Hawkins, 2017). The views of children and young people offer important contextual information against which to understand evaluation results concerning programme effectiveness, as well as informing programme refinement in line with the voice and recommendations of primary recipients.

To date, a relatively small number of research studies have sought to involve children and young people in the development and evaluation of school-based programmes that teach about abuse (Hollis & Churchill, 2018; Stanley et al, 2015; Tutty, 2014; Fox, Hale & Gadd, 2013; McNeish & Scott, 2012; McElearney et al, 2011a; Turtle, McElearney & Scott, 2010; Bell & Stanley, 2006). This has included needs assessment research and scoping reviews to inform programme development (Quayle & Cariola, 2019; Stanley et al, 2015; McElearney et al, 2011a), design of evaluation tools and processes (Turtle, McElearney & Scott, 2010), co-production of resources (Reynold, 2017), as well as evaluation of services and programmes (McElearney et al, 2021a; Hollis & Churchill, 2018; Tutty, 2014; Fox, Hale & Gadd, 2013). For example, Renold (2017) engaged six 15-year-old girls in a school-based participatory art activity project, which has informed development of AGENDA: a young people’s guide to making positive relationships matter. This online resource provides young people aged 11–18 years with the tools and guidance to explore these ideas, run campaigns and raise awareness. It was created in consultation with young people by Cardiff University, the NSPCC, Welsh Women’s Aid, the Children’s Commissioner for Wales and the Welsh Government. In 2019, the NSPCC published Primary AGENDA to help practitioners empower younger children (aged 7–11 years) to make positive relationships matter in their schools and communities.
Existing evaluation evidence shows children and young people have responded positively to school-based programmes that teach about abuse

Tutty (2014) found that 6–12-year-old Canadian children (n=116) remembered the Who Do You Tell programme and its core concepts, and very few children reported holding any pre-existing information about sexual abuse. Children also demonstrated a range of learning from the programme, such as appropriate touches, private parts and techniques used by perpetrators. A key area of learning was that someone they knew could touch them inappropriately. A number of children across grades cited feeling uncomfortable or embarrassed in discussing and recalling some of the programme content – older children more so than younger children. Despite this, they emphasised the need to hear the programme content. Pupils across grades said that they enjoyed most aspects of the programme; however, the song used for the programme received a mixed response. Younger children liked it, whereas older children did not.

Primary school children, aged 5–11 years (n=77), in 10 English schools, who had received the NSPCC Speak out Stay safe programme in school reported learning new information about bullying, abuse and neglect from the programme. They also learnt more about who their trusted adults were, about Childline, and the importance of speaking out if something was wrong. Children had some prior knowledge about these subjects from other sources, including from parents/carers and school (Hollis & Churchill, 2015). Stanley et al (2015) reported from a scoping review of domestic abuse prevention programmes that the majority of young people viewed their participation in programmes as positive and worthwhile. Two of the six studies reported that young people who had experience of domestic abuse felt uncomfortable and disengaged with the programme. On the whole, young people considered the programmes had increased their learning and understanding of the concepts of domestic and dating abuse and help-seeking, including who they could go to for help. Children and young people did not often suggest any changes to the programme, and when they did this often related to making the programme longer. Young people also reported responding positively to the use of creative methods in programme delivery including drama, role-play and games.

Children and young people have also been engaged in sharing their views on relationships and sex/sexuality education and their experiences and response to being taught these programmes (Jorgensen et al, 2019; Pound et al, 2017; Newby & Mathieu-Chartier, 2018). In evaluating implementation of the Spring Fever RSE programme within one English primary school with a Roman Catholic management ethos, Newby and Mathieu-Chartier (2018) included feedback from 24 children aged 4–11 years. Children reported being uncomfortable or embarrassed by the more sensitive topics and activities, such as lovemaking, having babies and learning about the bits we do not like being touched.
Lessons from existing research on children’s participation in designing, developing and evaluating services and programmes

Participation activities and research to engage children and young people should:

- Use quality scientific designs and methods that make it easy for children and young people to express their opinions, views and experiences, and these views are sought, and experiences explored in a way that protects children and young people from harm (Beazley et al, 2009).

- Recognise that consent is complex and multifaceted, and secure, as a minimum, children and young people’s active consent to participate. This should include adults providing guidance and direction to help children and young people understand the issues involved and providing access to child-friendly documentation and information to build their capacity about the proposed participation/research activity (Maguire et al, 2018; Hammersley, 2015).

- Consider children and young people’s rights and wellbeing through ongoing engagement with ethical principles before, during, and after their involvement in research/participation activity. This includes, but is not limited to, demonstrating compliance with ethical review processes (Powel, Graham & Truscott, 2016).

- Recognise that while there exists a range of participatory research approaches and techniques that include those entirely child-led, involvement in research structures, such as advisory groups and in co-production, can provide a more flexible approach to participation, which may be more appropriate. This offers different levels of involvement at different times and for different groups (Kara, 2015).

- Be inclusive of the voice and experience of children and young people across a range of ages and experiences, including gender identity, religion and those with special educational needs and disabled children (Scott et al, 2020). Using and adapting designs and methods that facilitate inclusion and help overcome barriers to communication and engagement is important.

- Use inclusive and varied methods and media that will facilitate all children and young people to engage and express themselves (Davey, Shaw & Burke, 2010). For those with special educational needs and disabled children, this should include adequate and appropriate resources, staff skills and training that provides multiple means of representation and options for comprehension and communication, such as graphics, icons, visual organisers, and varied response formats to promote engagement (Bailey et al, 2015; Grove et al, 2018). Staff who work with children and young people are best placed to know the options and choices that promote their communication and engagement, and staff should accept responsibility to initiate communication about matters that concern them (Franklin & Goff, 2019).
Keeping Safe: an evidence-based whole-school programme

Keeping Safe is an innovative multi-component whole-school programme that aims to teach children aged 4–11 years to recognise abusive behaviours and tell. Programme content includes all forms of maltreatment and abusive behaviour, including sexual and domestic abuse, sexual abuse facilitated online and that perpetrated by other children, neglect and bullying. Premised on international evidence about what works in education programmes in this area (Walsh et al, 2015; Stanley et al, 2015; Fryda & Hulme 2015), it has been designed to meet the needs of mainstream primary schools in Northern Ireland. Keeping Safe was developed by the NSPCC following a comprehensive needs assessment and consultation with children, parents/carers, schools and partner agencies in Northern Ireland (McElearney et al, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d; Stephenson et al, 2011).

Programme components for children, teachers and parents/carers

Keeping Safe teaches children to recognise abusive behaviours and how to identify a safe adult and tell. It also teaches children that they have a right to be safe and that abuse is never their fault. The programme places the responsibility for keeping children safe with the adults in children’s lives, and has components targeted at parents/carers, teachers and other whole-school staff, as well as a component targeted at children (see Appendix 1 for Keeping Safe Theory of Change). These components for parents/carers and school staff as key adults in children’s lives seek to ensure children will receive an appropriate and effective response from a safe adult and the support they need from external agencies to recover.

The rationale and assumptions underpinning the programme are that building children’s knowledge, understanding and skills may increase their ability to recognise abusive behaviours and tell. Classroom teaching and learning resources seek to build the capacity of school staff to teach and reinforce messages through the formal and informal curriculum, seamlessly integrating with the existing ‘Personal Development & Mutual Understanding’ (PD&MU) statutory component of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and to the wider life of the school. The classroom-based resources targeted at children are based on three themes: Healthy Relationships, My Body, and Being Safe, and include a wide range of materials including 63 lesson plans (nine for each class group per year) designed to teach key messages incrementally as the children progress through the seven years of their primary school education. Classroom resources include a range of multi-media and interactive activities.

Parents/carers are engaged in directed homework activities with their children and are encouraged to attend a structured information session and expert workshops (hosted in school, also available online). This seeks to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of parents/carers to reinforce their children’s learning from school. This component of the programme is premised on the assumption that parents/carers with this knowledge,

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3 Classroom teaching resources include seven worksheet activities, 24 interactivities, 10 Keeping Safe kids’ animations, eight audio-stories, 12 scripted whole-school/year/class assemblies, eight posters, four video stories, five books, two Pantosaurus clips and printable resources (cue cards, door sign, certificate, telling chart).
increased confidence and skills will use opportunities, including those created by the
programme resources, such as homework, to communicate with their children about
keeping safe. In the longer term, parents/carers will manage risk in relation to protecting
their children, will respond appropriately to children telling and reporting abuse and will seek
appropriate professional support.

Training and support for teachers and whole-school staff is also an important component
of the Keeping Safe programme. A blended package of professional development and
support aims to build the capacity of school leaders, as well as teaching and non-teaching
staff, to teach and embed the programme in all aspects of school life. This includes
teacher communities of practice, such as online learning available on the Virtual Learning
Environment [VLE] provided by the Department of Education; Programme Lead Cluster
Groups; and face-to-face Facilitated Leadership training for the team leading the programme
in schools. This package seeks to provide staff with multiple opportunities over time to work
collaboratively with their colleagues, reflecting on children’s learning and their teaching
practice within the context of a supportive school environment. This assumes that having
developed their knowledge, confidence and skills to teach and embed the programme
across the school, that staff will, as appropriate for their role, embed the programme within
strategic school planning and policy development processes, teach programme content
confidently through the formal and informal curricula, while engaging parents/carers as
key partners. In the longer term, school staff will respond appropriately to children telling
and reporting of abuse and bullying and will seek appropriate professional support and take
appropriate action.
Objectives of the evaluation

The key objectives of this evaluation were:

- To engage children and young people in mainstream and special schools in sharing their experiences and views of the Keeping Safe programme and how it was taught in school.
- To identify from the perspective of children and young people in mainstream and special schools what they recall and have learned from the Keeping Safe programme.
- To document and describe children and young people in mainstream and special schools’ response to the programme, such as what they liked and disliked about Keeping Safe.
- To find out what children and young people in mainstream and special schools’ wish and recommend for the Keeping Safe programme and how it is used in school.
- To capture the views of children and young people in mainstream and special schools on their experience of taking part in the process evaluation and creative art-based activities.
Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Methods

This process evaluation used creative art-based approaches to facilitate the engagement of 226 children and young people, aged 4–13 years, across 11 mainstream and special schools in Northern Ireland.

Design

A range of creative art-based participative approaches were used to engage children as key whole-school stakeholders in evaluating the Keeping Safe programme, implemented over two academic years between September 2016 and June 2018 in 31 mainstream primary and five special schools in Northern Ireland.

Children from a small sub-sample of six mainstream schools were selected to take part in art-based evaluation activities alongside children and young people from the five special schools. These activities were designed to explore children and young people’s responses to the Keeping Safe programme. The evaluation activities were tailored to children’s age and stage of development.

Younger children in mainstream primary schools and some of the young people in special schools were invited to participate in circle time, a child-friendly-focus group and subsequently create ‘Keeping Safe trees’ through their own pictures about Keeping Safe.

Older children in mainstream primary schools and some of the young people in special schools were invited to create paper ‘Keeping Safe cakes’.

These art-based activities were designed to engage the children and young people in generating and categorising ideas about what they recalled, liked and disliked, and their wishes for the Keeping Safe programme. Inviting the children and young people to write or draw promoted their free expression and provided a visual representation of their ideas.

Participants

The six mainstream primary schools represented the range of school management types4 in Northern Ireland as well as schools of different size, and from rural and urban areas.

The five special schools meet the needs of children and young people with a range of special educational needs and disabilities. According to the most recent Review of Special School Provision in Northern Ireland (Department of Education, 2015), one school is categorised as

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4 The education system in Northern Ireland consists of different types of schools under the control of management committees who are also the employers of teachers. These include Controlled schools, Roman Catholic Maintained schools, Grant Maintained Integrated schools and Irish-medium schools Information on school types in Northern Ireland | Department of Education (education-ni.gov.uk)
Severe Learning Difficulties\(^5\) (SLD), one as Moderate Learning Difficulties\(^6\) (MLD) and the other three are categorised as ‘Other’, educating children and young people with a variety of needs, including physical and medical conditions/syndromes, communication and interaction, cognitive and learning, and social, emotional and behavioural.

A total of 226 children and young people aged 4–13 years took part in the art-based evaluation activities. Further detail on the schools and children who took part is presented in Table 1, and later in Appendix 3.

Table 1: Summary of participants and schools who took part in art-based evaluation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School sector</th>
<th>Number of schools who took part</th>
<th>Number and age of children who took part</th>
<th>Art-based activity</th>
<th>Number of Keeping Safe trees/cakes created</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream primary schools</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>157 children aged 4–11 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
<td>72 children created 10 trees with 88 leaves across 5 schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
<td>85 children created 16 cakes with 64 slices across 5 schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special schools</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>69 children and young people aged 4–13 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
<td>28 children and young people created 8 trees with 57 leaves across 4 schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
<td>41 children and young people created 12 cakes with 38 slices across 5 schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods and procedures

Data collection took place in February and March 2018, the second term of year two of programme implementation. A data collection activities plan was shared with all class teachers in advance and further consultation was undertaken with teachers in special schools to select class groups for whom the activities could be appropriately pitched and to enable the researchers to tailor the activities to meet the needs of the children and young people taking part. This included:

- providing a clear structure of the activities with a picture schedule
- using visual aids during the icebreaker games
- using pre-prepared prompt pictures for children to stick rather than writing

\(^5\) SLD: Pupils have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments that have a major effect on their ability to participate in the school curriculum without support (Department of Education [DENI], 2015, p17).

\(^6\) MLD: Pupils have attainments significantly below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions and where their needs will not be met by normal differentiation and the flexibilities of the curriculum (Department of Education [DENI], 2015, p17).
using school whiteboards to write down children and young people’s comments and then providing them with time to copy the text onto the cake/tree

keeping activities brief and breaking each task into individual steps

the use of pausing to allow children and young people to process information.

In the mainstream primary schools, 72 younger children in Foundation and Key Stage 1 (Primary 1, 2 and 3; aged 4–7 years) created Keeping Safe trees, an art-based activity, adapted from the draw and write technique (Williams et al, 1989), which involved the children generating and categorising their ideas and then creating a visual representation of them. In the special schools, 28 children in Foundation and Key Stage 2 (Primary 1 and 4; aged 4–8 years) created Keeping Safe trees. Circle time, a child-friendly focus group was also used in the mainstream and special schools to explore the children and young people’s views of the lessons through guided discussions using visual prompts from the programme.

At total of 85 older children from the mainstream primary schools (Primary 4, 5, 6 and 7; aged 7–11 years) and 41 from the special schools (Primary 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and Year 9 children and young people; aged 6–13 years) took part in creating paper Keeping Safe cakes, an activity based on curriculum development work with children carried out by Souza (2013). This engaged the children and young people in an in-depth exploration of the programme using brainstorming, art, and group discussion to create paper cakes that represent the children’s ideas about the programme. The children and young people were engaged in six stages of the activity:

1. making a cake slice (recall of the Keeping Safe programme)
2. discussing cake slices (comparing ideas with other children)
3. adding cake toppings (adding their likes/dislikes within the programme)
4. decorating the cakes (identifying what learning objectives were achieved through the programme)
5. adding the candles (wishes for the programme, recommended changes)
6. cake talk (reviewing the cakes, comparing and contrasting, identifying themes across cake data).

**Ethical issues**

The NSPCC Research Ethics Committee granted approval for this evaluation. All data collection, processing and analysis adhered to NSPCC data compliance procedures. The participation of children and young people was voluntary and based on process informed consent, from parents/carers in the first instance and also from children. Nine children with parental consent opted not to take part in the activities. Department of Education Northern Ireland (2017) procedures for dealing with child protection and safeguarding were followed. Children were made aware that the NSPCC works to keep children safe and that meant that if they said, wrote or drew something that made the researchers think they or another child were not safe, then the researchers would take steps to make sure they were kept safe. This might include talking to them about why they were worried and talking to someone
who could help further, like the Designated Teacher in school. Evaluation activities were adapted and tailored to meet the needs of children and young people in special schools to promote their involvement in the evaluation. All children who took part were awarded with a certificate of participation – ‘Keeping Safe Research Champion Award’ – at the end of the evaluation activities.

**Strengths and limitations of the evaluation**

The engagement of children, including young children and children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children, in evaluating the Keeping Safe programme they are taught in school is a strength of this evaluation. Moreover, the adoption and tailoring of creative, age-appropriate methods that facilitated children and young people to take part by speaking, drawing, writing or sticking and gluing that promoted inclusivity is also a strength. However, the choice of group-based methods in circle time and focus group discussions may have inhibited some children and young people from sharing their views in a group school-based context for fear of being wrong, due to shyness or the sensitive nature of the content. In addition, children engaged in focus group discussions to identify programme likes and dislikes may have been influenced by ‘groupthink’. Time did not allow all children to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories and this must be recognised as a limitation in that the categorisation and analysis of data created by younger children and children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children was carried out primarily by adults. This evaluation was completed by researchers in the same team as those who developed and implemented Keeping Safe, thus creating the potential for bias.
Findings

Key findings from this process evaluation include that children as young as four years and those with special educational needs and disabled children respond positively to being taught about abuse in an age-appropriate way. They have learned key programme concepts and messages, and their learning has been facilitated by a broad range of interactive resources and activities. However, after two years of Keeping Safe being taught in school, some ambiguity exists in some children’s understanding of the fact that abuse is never a child’s fault, and in relation to the risks posed by strangers and adults known to children. Embedding this programme in the life of the school will provide opportunities for repetition, clarification, extension and consolidation of children’s learning, incrementally, year-on-year, appropriate to their stage of development as they progress through their years of primary school education.

What children remembered and learned from the Keeping Safe programme

Children and young people could recall a range of programme messages appropriate to their age and stage of development

Analysis of the range of art, text and spoken data created by children and young people through the Keeping Safe Trees and Cakes activities indicates that children and young people of all ages, across all class groups in both mainstream primary and special schools could recall learning a range of Keeping Safe programme messages. Children and young people’s recall and the learning they reported varied across individuals and classes, as well as across schools in line with how the programme was implemented in their school and taught in their classroom. Further detail on programme implementation in schools is available in the reports of the process evaluation in mainstream (McElearney et al, 2021c) and special schools (McElearney et al, 2021d).

The key messages recalled by younger children included recognising bullying, bribes and threats, and inappropriate sexual behaviours, as well as identifying and telling trusted adults, recognising and labelling feelings and identifying how our bodies respond when we are feeling unsafe. For example, children’s learning about telling a safe and trusted adult was evident in the following circle time discussion among Primary 3 children:

Researcher:  “What do we remember about safe adults?”
Child 1: If there is anything wrong you just tell them.
Child 2: Don’t keep any secrets.
Child 3: Tell them if someone is hurting you or uncomfortable secrets.
Child 4: Tell someone if something bad is going to happen.
Child 5: It’s OK to keep secrets as long as they’re good the bad ones must be told.”

Primary 3 children, Mainstream, School 5

The key messages recalled by older children and young people included how to stay safe online, identifying and telling trusted adults, abuse is never a child’s fault, recognising
inappropriate sexual behaviours and cyberbullying. This is demonstrated in the following text that two Primary 6 children (Mainstream, School 4) had written on their cake slices as part of creating a Keeping Safe cake activity:

“Stuff that you shouldn’t do. Everything I’ve learnt. Never show your privats [sic]. Never keep it a secret unless it’s good. Never ask people to show you there privats [sic]. Things I’ve picked up during the lessons. It’s not your fault! Don’t share your private parts. No means No. TELL A SAFE ADULT. Bad bribes and threats are not OK”.

(Primary 6 children, Mainstream, School 4)

In decorating their Keeping Safe Cakes, the older children and young people were asked to identify the programme objectives that they felt they had learned from being taught Keeping Safe. When ranked according to the number of times objectives were identified by children and young people, the top five objectives within mainstream schools included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5 programme objectives identified by children in mainstream schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. That abuse is never my fault and that I have the right to say no to touches that I don’t like or want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Talk about feelings and emotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Know who to tell, when to tell, and how to tell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have the right not to be harmed physically or emotionally by anyone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, the proper names for private parts was ranked 14th, at the very bottom of the list of objectives these children and young people felt they had learned from the Keeping Safe programme. Despite having been taught Keeping Safe for two years, none of the children and young people who took part in the evaluation activities used the words ‘penis’ and ‘vagina’, the correct names for body parts taught within the programme. Yet, the data does suggest that children and young people understood and used the phrase ‘private parts’.

Further detail is presented in Appendix 5 and this highlights variation in the objectives children and young people feel were taught in school. It is notable that in a small minority of schools, some key programme objectives/messages, such as ‘bribes and threats’, were not identified by any of the children or young people as having been taught. While only children and young people from one special school (School E) decorated their cakes with objectives, in the other four special schools, children and young people discussed the objectives and identified the following top five objectives/messages that they had learned from the programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5 programme objectives identified by children in special schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Abuse in never my fault.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have a right not to be harmed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My body belongs to me, and my privates are private.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I know what a healthy relationship is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I know when touching is not appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, the range of data across activities and schools indicates that children and young people had knowledge and awareness of key Keeping Safe programme concepts at the time this process evaluation data was being collected.

**Programme resources and teaching methods helped convey abstract concepts and sensitive messages in an age-appropriate way**

The data also indicates children and young people’s knowledge and awareness of these concepts and messages were closely linked to and associated with programme characters, resources and teaching methods/format. This included programme animations and stories where children and young people learned about bullying and being safe online from the stories of *Ziggy and his bike*, Lotso in *Toy Story* and the animation about Lucy arranging to meet up with a new online friend, all abstract and sensitive concepts:

Child: “Friends are different from the ones online because you don’t know who they are because there is a girl called Lucy and she sent a picture of her in her pyjamas, and they arranged to meet each other and then it was actually a man who had a van, but her mum went to pick her up before that happened and the mum doesn’t know.

Researcher: And how did that make everybody feel?

Child: Eh, quite worried that she was going to be, like, kidnapped but then her mum came and then she went home.

Researcher: And what did you learn from that?

Child: Well, not to arrange to meet up with strangers.”

(Primary 6 children, Mainstream, School 6)

And while some children, such as the following Primary 5 child attending a special school for children with Severe Learning Difficulties, had not accurately recalled the character names, they shared an accurate recollection of the message from the animation about Lucy:

“Superboy has lied to Amy about his age; Superboy is around 40.”

(Primary 5 child, Special school, School E)

An animation about Alex taking and sharing an inappropriate picture also provided a concrete basis for learning sensitive messages about private parts and being safe online:

Child: “Here’s what actually happened – they were playing a game of dares and one of them said would be fun if we took a picture of your willy and send to one of our friends, so they sent it on to everyone and then everyone knew about it and then it was even on the news saying breaking news everyone saw.

Researcher: And what was the message about that?

Child: Don’t show your privates unless you are with the doctor or your mummy or daddy.”

(Primary 5–7 children, Mainstream, School 5)

The stories of *Hansel and Gretel* and *King Alfred and Henry* provided concrete examples from which to teach children of different ages about the abstract concept of bribes and threats and in the case of King Alfred in relation to sexual abuse. Similarly, the *Pantosaurus* animation, learning songs and rhymes and dancing, as well as drawing and colouring activities engaged
the children and young people across all ages and class groups, and also facilitated their learning about sexual abuse. The vast majority of children recalled the messages from the PANTS lessons, and some were able to recite the Keeping Safe poem created as part of the programme:

“P: Privates are private.  
A: Always remember your body belongs to you.  
N: No means no!  
T: Talk about secrets that upset you.  
S: Speak up someone can help.” (Primary 3 child, Mainstream, School 5)

“As privates are private, that I am sure, what is mine is mine and what’s yours is yours, if I ever need help I know who to ask, my body is mine and I’m the boss.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

Key programme messages recalled about consent and recognising inappropriate sexual behaviours

The range of data created by children as part of this process evaluation confirms that children have learned about sexual abuse via a range of teaching resources and methods. Children and young people of all ages and class groups, across mainstream and special schools, could recall key messages about consent, bribes and threats used to coerce children, appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviours, and telling a trusted adult. These messages about privates are private, no means no, and the PANTS rule were the most commonly recalled messages by children across all mainstream and special schools. This included where and what your privates are, what is inappropriate behaviour in relation to touching/taking and sharing pictures of other people’s private parts as well as other people touching/taking and sharing pictures of their private parts, and to tell if someone engages in inappropriate behaviour.

Key learning of these messages was evident within circle time discussions with younger children in mainstream primary schools:

“You can’t touch anyone else’s privates they are all for yourself”.  
(Primary 2 child, Mainstream, School 6)

“Your body belongs to you”. (Primary 1 child, Mainstream, School 3)

It was also evident in the text and drawing on the leaves and cake slices created by children and young people in both mainstream and special schools as part of the Keeping Safe Trees and Cakes activities. Examples of text and drawings include:

- A picture of a hand touching underwear drawn on the leaf for the Keeping Safe Tree with the explanatory text: “About not touching someone else’s underwear.” (Primary 2 child, Mainstream, School 6)

- Text written onto a cake slice: “Homework picture of Jack, 4 Keeping Safe character names, list of where you need privacy: shower, changing room, bathroom, bedroom.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1).
These messages also featured prominently in children and young people’s focus group discussions about the artwork created:

Researcher: “What is it you’ve written, (child name)?
Child: Saying no.
Researcher: You liked learning about saying no? When would you say no?
Child: When people ask to see your privates.
Child 1: Privates are private.
Researcher: And where do you remember that from?
Child 1: From the video.
Child 2: I think the most important one for me would be privates are private.
Researcher: What does that mean?
Child 1: Like, if someone was going to touch you where you didn’t want them to then you should tell someone.”

Primary 2 children, Mainstream, School 4

For younger children, the ability to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch began with lessons that taught them to tune into, and label their feelings, and recognise how their body responds in situations that are unsafe. Children in three mainstream primary schools and three special schools recalled and discussed the range of emotions the Keeping Safe characters had experienced, including feeling sad, happy, anxious, shy, scared, frightened and nervous. When prompted about the interactive game First day at school during circle time discussions, some Primary 1 children in one school demonstrated their learning by outlining the specific body responses in relation to feeling nervous:

Researcher: “And what happened to the toes when you were feeling nervous?
Child: They scrunched.
Researcher: And what about the tummy when you were feeling nervous?
Child: Butterflies.
Researcher: And what about your hands?
Child: Wrinkles.
Child: Curl up.
Researcher: And what about your heart, was there anything about your heart?
Child: It beats fast.”

Primary 1 children, Mainstream, School 6

Furthermore, some older children and young people demonstrated programme learning about tuning into their body’s response when labelling and describing their feelings about being taught sensitive messages about sexual abuse. When describing their response to when this content was introduced to them, they stated it had “made me hold my stomach” and “kind of shiver”.


Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

**Children know to tell a trusted adult and who their trusted adults are**

Children and young people of all ages, across all class groups in both mainstream primary and special schools talked about when to tell a trusted adult and could identify who their trusted adults were. Not keeping secrets and telling emerged within all the types of data created by children and young people as part of this process evaluation:

“Speak out, someone can help.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 3)

“If you feel scared or anxious, tell a safe adult.” (Primary 4–7 child, Mainstream, School 5)

“Tell a safe adult if you get hurt.” (Primary 1 child, Mainstream, School 3)

“Tell a trusted adult about what’s worried you. Don’t be embarrassed to tell.” (Primary 4–7 child, Mainstream, School 5)

Trusted adults identified by children and young people in special schools included mum or dad, uncles, grandparents, teachers, classroom assistants, coaches, siblings and the police:

Researcher:  “If you ever felt afraid or unhappy, who would you tell?
Child:  Mum or dad.”  
Year 9 pupil, Special school, School C

Researcher:  “What about if you weren’t at home? If you were in school, who would you tell?
Child:  A classroom assistant or the teacher.”  
(Primary 3–5 child, Special school, School B)

Child:  “A police [sic] is a trusted adult”.  
(Primary 7 child, Special school, School D)

**Adults are responsible for keeping children safe – abuse is never a child’s fault**

While children and young people reported having learned the core message that abuse is never their fault, comments made by a small minority during focus group discussions indicate the need for this message to be repeated, clarified, emphasised and generalised across contexts. The incremental nature of the programme that teaches and provides opportunities for repetition, extension and consolidation of children’s learning year-on-year as they progress through their primary school education will facilitate and support this clarification. In relation to online safety, some spoke about children making the wrong choices and this may have been associated with the animation about Alex sharing pictures of his willy:

“They put themselves at risk because they could have got injured or something.”  
(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)

This animation is no longer used by the NSPCC due to any possible connotation that children are responsible for keeping themselves safe – it is adults who are responsible for keeping children safe.
Most children are sexually abused by adults they know – be careful to contextualise any messaging about strangers alongside risks presented by known adults, and as appropriate to online or offline situations

Stranger danger emerged as a theme in the data created by children of different ages and across class groups in the mainstream primary schools and in older class groups in two of the special schools (D, C).

For example, Primary 6 children had represented the following in their drawing and text on their Keeping Safe cake slices:

- Picture of two mobile phones with one text asking, “want to meet up” and the other texting “o.k.” with accompanying text “Don’t Talk to people you don’t know”.
- Picture of a man saying, “come into my car” in a red circle with a red line through with accompanying text “Don’t talk to strangers”.
- Text written on cake slice, “Remember; people might not be what they seem to be’ Remember don’t get in a car with a stranger, stay safe online, remember do not bully or cyberbully or blackmail anyone, remember never give out info to strangers.”

(Primary 6 children, Mainstream, School 4).

For some, this related to lessons about online safety where children need to be aware of risk presented by strangers/people they do not know in person. However, for other children, their mention of strangers related to the stories about Hansel and Gretel and Ziggy and his bike, and it is important that children are equally aware of the risk posed by people they do know.

During the circle time activity, younger children in two schools identified learning about stranger danger:

“Don’t go with someone you don’t know.” (Primary 2 child, Mainstream, School 6)

“Don’t go anywhere without an adult or don’t go anywhere with someone you don’t know or you don’t trust.” (Primary 1 and 2 children, Mainstream, School 2)

Being safe online

Being safe online was the most common theme on the cake slices created within mainstream schools, and a common theme alongside cyberbullying on cakes created by children and older young people within special schools. This included general keeping safe messages as well as specific messages about not talking to or meeting up with strangers or people they do not know online, and not giving any of their personal information out online, including their email address and pictures, as well as reference to particular apps and associated age restrictions. For example, the following text was written onto a cake slice by a Primary 6 child:

“Stay safe on the internet, don’t meet up with people you meet online, never give out personal information to people you don’t know.” (Primary 6 child, School 4)

“A fake Google…phone…Xbox…be careful... NSPCC.”
(Primary 7 child, Special school, School D)
Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Take opportunities to consolidate children’s learning across NSPCC programmes and other teaching in school

Older children in two mainstream primary schools made reference to the NSPCC ‘Speak out Stay safe’ programme and its character Buddy during the Keeping Safe Cakes activity, in their drawing and in their discussion.

“Picture of Buddy...speech bubble...stay safe speak out...08001111111 – about Buddy how he reminds us to speak out and stay safe- Assembly.” (Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

“Keeping safe online...NSPCC...Be aware...Buddy.” (Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

“We had loads of fun homework. We made posters, the pants rule, don’t arrange to meet someone, privates are private, speak out stay safe, Buddy.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)

This highlights the opportunity to cross-reference messages across NSPCC programmes to consolidate children’s learning in school. In addition, children in one special school (School E) demonstrated how programme messages about trusted adults had been taught alongside trusted adults in other contexts of their lives, such as fire, accidents, when worried – again, maximising children’s learning.
What children liked about the Keeping Safe programme and how it was taught in school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 3 likes for younger children</th>
<th>Top 3 likes for older children and young people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Keeping Safe characters</td>
<td>1. Videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Programme messages</td>
<td>2. Programme messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Stories and activities</td>
<td>3. Stories and activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The programme messages, stories and activities emerged as what more of the children and young people across mainstream primary and special schools liked about the Keeping Safe programme.

While similar, there were some differences in the top likes expressed by older children across these schools through the drawings and cakes slices they created to represent their ideas, as well as in focus group discussions about their artwork at each stage of creating their paper Keeping Safe cakes. While videos were ranked as the number one ‘like’ among older children and young people in special schools, those in mainstream primary schools identified the range of programme activities as their number one ‘like’, including art, games, role-play, worksheets, rhymes, discussions and poems, and ranked programme videos as their number two ‘like’. By comparison, the Keeping Safe characters were ranked as the number one ‘like’ among the younger children in both the mainstream primary and special schools. These characters – Jack, Amy, Ziggy and Cara – were introduced in Primary 1 and then grew up as the children progressed through to Primary 7 lessons.

There was little difference evident between the ‘likes’ identified by younger children across mainstream primary and special schools through the circle time discussions, drawing on the leaves and slices created to represent their ideas on Keeping Safe trees and cakes, as well as in focus group discussions about their artwork. The children in mainstream primary schools also identified liking other resources presented in various formats including videos, games and activities on the classroom whiteboard, which in some, but not all, cases were used by teachers to facilitate children and young people’s active participation in lessons. Further detail on what children and young people across schools liked about the Keeping Safe programme is presented in Appendix 5, while detail of how the programme was taught to children and implemented in their school is available in the published reports of the process evaluation in mainstream (McElearney et al, 2021c) and special schools (McElearney et al, 2021d).

Being taught Keeping Safe messages helped children feel safer

Older children and young people in the mainstream and special schools identified liking specific messages taught by the Keeping Safe programme, as well as how this made them feel safe.

In the special schools, children and young people’s discussion across all class groups focused on online safety:

“Learning about online stuff.” (Primary 5 child, Special school, School E)
“I liked learning about keeping safe on the computer.”
(Primary 3–5 child, Special school, School B)

These children and young people also identified liking the general messages, such as saying no, privates are private and telling safe adults:

“Telling parents, folks and teachers.” (Primary 5 child, Special school, School E)

“I like remembering all about our underpants rule and the people that we met and our private parts, and our emotions. I remember we learned about our smart bodies and our bodies can tell us how we’re feeling.” (Primary 4 child, Special school, School A)

Older children, across five mainstream primary schools, identified liking the programme messages because of how they made them feel safer and taught them to know what to do in different situations:

“I liked the important messages.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)

“I liked learning about being safe.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 4)

“I like learning about different situations.” (Primary 5–7 child, Mainstream, School 5)

“I just liked learning that everything is private, and I also liked the video stuff we saw.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

This is also conveyed in the following excerpt from a focus group discussion with Primary 7 children in a mainstream Catholic Maintained rural primary school:

Child 1: “I liked the way it sort of tells you what to be aware of and what to not do and what to do if something like this happens, different bits like that.

Child 2: I think it’s good because if we didn’t have it we would be like, ‘should I tell my mum? Should I not? Oh, what do I do?’ And then get really, really panicked and maybe have a panic attack.

Child 3: I feel safe now.

Child 4: It made me be safer.”

Primary 7 Children’s focus group, Mainstream, School 2

This was evident to a much lesser extent by the comments and focus group discussion among children and young people in special schools, some of whom linked programme teaching with being safer:

“It was keeping us safe online.” (Year 9, Special school, School C)

“Keeping you safe in public.” (Year 9 child, Special school, School C)

“I like watching Xbox when I am safe.” (Primary 7 child, Special school, School A)
A broad range of programme activities engaged children in learning

Children and young people across all class groups and schools identified liking the range of activities included in the Keeping Safe programme. While the younger children seemed to place more emphasis on stories, older children mentioned the stories but also the full range of programme activities including art, games, role-play, worksheets, books, quizzes, poems and posters. Children and young people in special schools placed most emphasis on liking the videos. Children reported liking making posters and the drawing and colouring activities. A number of children and young people across class groups and schools spoke of enjoying the opportunity to talk, chat and discuss during the lessons. Many children also reported enjoying doing the Keeping Safe homework:

“It’s really good because you have to do it with an adult and my mummy found it really serious.” (Primary 5–7 child, Mainstream, School 5)

Stories conveyed key messages about telling and consent to children of all ages and learning ability

Children across all class groups and schools identified a range of stories from the programme and spoke about the associated activities they had enjoyed and the learning they had taken from the stories. Some mentioned enjoying hearing stories about other people and having a story read to them:

“I liked the books a lot and very interesting.” (Primary 5–7 child, Mainstream, School 5)

Younger children reported liking the *Hansel and Gretel* story, referring to the happy parts of the story, such as the house made of sweets, and the colouring and cutting out activities they had undertaken. They also reported liking the story about Ziggy and his bicycle. Most children linked these stories to learning about not going somewhere without your parents knowing or without their permission, and not going with someone you do not know (Mainstream schools 6, 2, 1). These children also reported liking the *Bag of Worries* story and *No Means No*:

Child:  “I love *No means no*.
Researcher:  What’s the story about? Who can tell me what the story, *No means no* is about, or what does it mean?
Child:  It explains that it’s OK to say no.”
(Primary 4 child, Special school, School A)

Older children in mainstream primary and young people in special schools liked learning about bullying through *Toy Story*. However, the story about the King and Henry, teaching about bribes and threats in relation to sexual abuse, was the one mentioned by more children across class groups and schools. This included younger children and young people in special schools, and older children in mainstream primary schools. Children across all these groups reported learning key messages about not keeping secrets and telling a trusted adult:

“I was happy that I learnt about if someone was telling me to do something and they told you not to do it, go tell someone, like, straight away and not keep it a secret”
(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

“If someone is doing it you need to, like, tell someone.”
(Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)
“I liked some secrets should never be kept and some of the videos as well.”
(Year 9 child, Special school, School C)

**Interactive activities and videos – engaging and visual way to learn sensitive messages**

Children and young people across all class groups and schools spoke very positively about the range of interactive activities included in the Keeping Safe programme.

The older children across special and mainstream schools enjoyed the videos, many making special reference to learning about online safety through NSPCC animations about Lucy who was befriended by an unknown adult posing as a child online and about Alex sharing pictures of his willy. One young person in a special school spoke about how the videos being funny helped them to feel comfortable about a topic that might otherwise have been embarrassing (Primary 5 child, Special school, School E).

“I have done that you feel safer after you hear the stories and then the [Lucy] panda onesie story so, like, so you know not to add people that you don’t know.”
(Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

When asked, some children said they would prefer watching something like a video to reading a story. The programme videos were rated as the number one ‘like’ by older children and young people in special schools.

Younger children in both mainstream primary and special schools talked about liking Pantosaurus, the NSPCC dinosaur character that teaches children about the PANTS rule. They spoke about really enjoying and laughing a lot at the animation, as well as enjoying the song and dancing, with one child demonstrating the actions (Primary 1 child, Mainstream, School 3):

“Me, I loved Pantosaurus.” (Primary 3 child, Mainstream, School 5)

“I like the whole thing, it’s funny.” (Primary 4 child, Special school, School C)

Some children directly linked their like for the dinosaur to the message being taught:

“Well, I liked the Pantosaurus because it tells you no one is allowed to touch your private parts except your mummy or daddy or a doctor.” (Primary 3 child, Mainstream, School 5)

“If somebody touches your private parts, just say no.” (Primary 3–5 child, Special School, School B)

**Keeping Safe characters help teach programme messages to younger children**

During circle time, when prompted with flashcards and images, younger children in three of the mainstream primary and three of the special schools explained that they liked the four Keeping Safe characters. The children in mainstream schools explained why they liked the characters and in most cases linked it to programme teaching and messages. One child explained the need for the characters just like in a movie (Primary 3 child, Mainstream, School 5), while others liked that “well, they are learning new things” (Primary 2 child, Mainstream,
School 6) and identified that the characters “We seen [sic] them, they have been teaching us how to keep safe” (Primary 2 child, Mainstream, School 1), for example about “privates are private”, “don’t be touching” and “remember the PANTS rule” and about friendships:

Child: “I like the one with glasses.
Researcher: ...and what is it about Ziggy that you like?
Child: ...because he’s shy in the first bit.
Researcher: He’s shy at the beginning. And what makes him become less shy?
Child: Friends.”
(Primary 4 child, Special school, School C)

Children in special schools did this to a lesser extent, and in three schools (A, E, C) drew the ones they liked most on their leaves:

Researcher: “And can you remember anything about them?
Child: I like all the girls’ characters.” (Primary 4 child, Special school, School C)
Child: I’m drawing Cara, I liked Cara.” (Primary 1 child, Special school, School E)

One child spoke of liking all of the characters used, and particularly Amy, because “She’s always happy” (Primary 4, Special school, School C).

While children liked a happy ending, does the programme reflect what happens when children tell?

Children and young people across class groups and schools identified liking the stories and videos and feeling happy because of the happy ending.

Child: “I liked seeing that everyone got their problems solved.
Researcher: Why did you like that?
Child: Because they would suffer from maybe something bad and then I did like seeing that they were happy again because they were safe now because they had talked to someone, and all their problems had been solved.
Researcher: Because they had followed the messages?
Child: Yes.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)

This theme emerged across most stories and activities targeted at children across different age groups including Hansel and Gretel where “The goodies always win” (Primary 1–2 child, Mainstream, School 2), stories of bullying where “The bullies stopped bullying or they were friendly bullies” (Primary 3–5 child, Special school, School B) to Jack’s story of experiencing domestic abuse in Primary 7:

Child: “I liked that Jack’s parents are kind again...well the first bit was very bad because Jack’s parents cause arguments all the time and Jack heard all the crashing and banging.
Researcher: And then what happened?
Child: The next day Jack came to tell the teacher what happened then, see, in the end Jack’s parents were kind again.
Researcher: So you liked the end of the story then?
Child: Yeah”.
(Primary 7, Special school, School D)
What children disliked about the Keeping Safe programme and how it was taught in school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 3 dislikes for younger children</th>
<th>Top 3 dislikes for older children and young people</th>
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Many children identified nothing they disliked about the programme

Many of the children and young people across class groups and schools reported that there was nothing about the Keeping Safe programme that they disliked. This was evident in the drawings and writing on leaves and cake slices they created to represent their ideas on the Keeping Safe Trees and Keeping Safe Cakes, as well as in the focus group discussions about their artwork. When asked to identify what they disliked about the programme, many children stated that they disliked “nothing” about the programme or “liked everything”. “I loved everything” (Primary 4–7 children, Mainstream, School 5):

“I liked the videos, I liked the characters, I liked the homework.”
(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 4).

The older children and young people, engaged in making Keeping Safe cakes, expressed more views regarding programme dislikes than the younger children. While this may be explained by their stage of cognitive development and ability to critically reflect on more abstract concepts, it may also be explained in some part by the nature of the activity: in contrast to the Keeping Safe trees, making the Keeping Safe Cakes has a discrete stage for programme likes and dislikes and engaged older children in reflecting on what they didn’t like about the programme.

Learning about sexual abuse made children and young people feel uncomfortable

The older children in all five mainstream schools and in three special schools who took part in the Keeping Safe Cakes activity mentioned feelings of discomfort or embarrassment with the programme teaching about sexual abuse. Many of the children and young people spoke about how this content made them feel “awkward”, “weird” and “uncomfortable”:

Researcher: “So this one [cake slice] says you didn’t like the characters getting touched inappropriately. Can you tell me about that?
Child: Because it was sexual abuse, and you are not meant to do that.”
(Primary 7 child, Special school, School A)

One or two of the children and young people both in mainstream and special schools were tuned into their body’s physical response in labelling their feelings; one young person described how the sensitive content made “me hold my stomach” (Year 9 pupil, Special school, School C):
Children’s views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Child 1: “I didn’t like some videos, there were some sexual ones that I didn’t really like.

Child 2: Yeah cause it was a bit awkward.

Researcher: It felt awkward to see the ones on sexual topics?

Child 1: Yes.

Researcher: Do you think there are things that should not be talked about at all or just that they are hard to talk about? 

Child 1: It’s just, like, I know they need to be talked about and everything but it’s just a wee bit weird.

Child 2: You get, like, a shiver or something.”

(Primary 7 children, Mainstream, School 2)

One Primary 6 child in a mainstream school and one Primary 7 child in a special school used the word ‘disgusting’ to describe programme messaging about sexual abuse:

Researcher: “Did you like that?

Child: No, to be honest I found it disgusting...he was taking a picture of a private area.

Researcher: And what did he do with the picture?

Child: I don’t think you want to know about it.

Researcher: Did it make you feel uncomfortable?

Child: No, it didn’t make me feel uncomfortable, but it was disgusting”.

(Primary 7 child, Special school, School A)

This emerged in relation to the story about the King, PANTS and in particular, the animation about Alex’s willy.

Researcher: “You’ve got some red things [red stickers for dislikes on the cakes] so you did not like the way it said weird... like what?

Child: Like willies.

Researcher: Was that in Alex’s willy? How did that make you feel?

Child: Weird.

Researcher: You don’t use that word?

Child: And it gave me a thing in my tummy.”

(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

Some of the older children, in Primary 7, reflected that their feelings were linked to not being exposed to these messages before – “Just not used to it” (Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2) – and despite their discomfort, some of these children were able to reflect and identify the importance of learning about the messages for keeping them safe:

“Yeah I just didn’t like the way they were talking about people’s private parts, but it still helped me not to share.” (Primary 7 children, Mainstream, School 2)
Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Children did not like bad things happening to the characters or other children

Children across all class groups and schools reported not liking when other children or the characters faced adversity. Among the younger children, a small number of them identified not liking negative parts of the *Hansel and Gretel* story because of “the witch...because she tried to eat Hansel” (Primary 2 child, Mainstream, School 6). Others in three special schools mentioned being uncomfortable with the shouting and bullying in *Toy Story*.

Researcher: “You didn’t like the bad stuff?
Child: The bad stuff that happened to the kids, like, they are being bullied, like, everybody is saying ‘I saw your willy’ and all, like, being mean.”
(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)

Two children in one special school also made specific reference to not liking the NSPCC adverts because the children are not safe. Some of the older children in two of the mainstream primary schools demonstrated awareness of the importance of the content.

Child: “It was kind of scary listening to other people’s stories and stuff but it kind of opens your eyes to what’s really out there and stuff.
Child: And also I didn’t like some of the videos about neglect – you just feel sad for the children and you would be afraid if it happens to you.
Researcher: Why do you think we show those videos?
Child: So you would know what to do.”
(Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

They also demonstrated empathy with other children’s experiences:

Researcher: “What else have you got [on Keeping Safe cake]...’I felt sad when I heard what happened to the characters.’ And did it make you feel very sad or was it OK?
Child 1: Well not very sad but it was just like...
Child 2: Sympathetic.
Child 1: Yeah.
Child 2: You felt bad for what they were going through.
Researcher: Exactly and you know what the word for that is called?
Child 2: Having a lot of empathy.
Researcher: You are amazing. That’s exactly the word I was going to say – empathy, because that’s when you can actually...
Child 2: Put yourself in other people’s shoes.”

Primary 7 children, Mainstream, School 5
Not enough activities, and too childish for older young people in special schools

While the children and young people across class groups and schools varied in their experience of and dislikes expressed for particular activities in the Keeping Safe programme, those attending special schools shared a stronger dislike of writing and reading activities compared with children in mainstream schools. They considered there was not enough games and videos in the programme:

“Child: There was only one thing that we didn’t like and that was too much writing.”
Child: Yeah definitely.” (Year 9 Children, Special school, School C).

Moreover, young people in these special schools also felt that the content was not appropriate for their age. In adapting and tailoring the programme to meet the varied and distinct needs of children and young people in special schools, some schools taught lessons designed for younger mainstream class groups to older class groups in special schools (see published report of the process evaluation in special schools [McElearney et al, 2021d] for more detail):

“I thought it was a wee bit childish, like, if I’m honest”
(Primary 5 child, Special school, School E)

Researcher: “You don’t like the films? No?
Child 1: No, because it’s babyish.
Child 2: I don’t like childish videos – Toy Story.”
(Year 9 pupils, Special school, School C)

In addition, some children and young people in special schools also shared that they found the Pantosaurus animation irritating and silly, while some did not like singing and some books were too long. While the programme homework was less frequently used in special schools, some of the younger children found it boring. This view was shared by some children in three of the mainstream primary schools. These children also reported disliking some repetition in lessons and considered some assemblies too long. Moreover, a small number of children mentioned disliking the teaching methods used in lessons, such as role-playing and class discussions.
**Children’s wishes for the Keeping Safe programme**

Only the older children and young people who completed the Keeping Safe Cakes activity were engaged in exploring changes they would recommend for Keeping Safe. As part of the activity, they were provided with candle stickers on which they were asked to write their wishes for the programme.

**Top 3 wishes and changes recommended by children and young people**

1. More interactive games, activities and lessons
2. More and longer videos
3. More learning about keeping safe for more people

**More videos, interactive games, activities and lessons will improve programme accessibility for more children**

The most common theme emerging from children and young people’s candles on the Keeping Safe Cakes and in their discussions, were about changes to activities within the Keeping Safe programme, mostly adding in more interactive games and videos as well as songs and stories.

Suggestions for games included a board game as well as a range of interactive games:

- “More games for iPhones.” (Primary 5 child, Special school, School E)
- “Games I have to respond to, like something for the Xbox.” (Primary 5 child, Special school, School E)
- “I would like video games because they are challenging.” (Year 9 pupil, Special school, School C)
- “An app for Keeping Safe.” (Primary 3–5 child, Special school, School B)
- “Games, like, so you could design a game for a certain lesson so that groups could work together.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)
- “Use the Keeping Safe characters in the game – video games.” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 6)
- “A keeping Safe club on the Xbox and games you can play with friends online” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

Children and young people in special schools expressed a wish for more interactive activities and stated a preference for interactive games and animations over stories and videos. Some also expressed a wish for less writing and colouring work. By comparison, the children attending mainstream primary schools expressed wishes for more art-based activities, an NSPCC colouring book for children, dancing, a Keeping Safe rap/dance, singing and role-play, alongside more interactive “stuff” (Primary 4–7 child, Mainstream, School 5).
Additional related activities suggested by children across two mainstream schools included having a worry box in school, and face-to-face delivery by the NSPCC to children in schools:

Child: “I think the NSPCC people should sometimes more often go into people’s classes and teach them that way instead of through a wee video.
Researcher: You prefer it face to face?
Child: Yes.”
(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

A small number of children and young people in both mainstream and special schools noted the additional benefits of interactive activities; animations, cartoons and videos for meeting the learning needs of some children:

“More animations for people who can’t read.”
(Primary 7 child, Special school, School A)

“More videos because some children might not listen.”
(Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

Young people in special schools also suggested more content on the interactive whiteboard to help younger children learn.

“Maybe more on the board because little ones like stuff on the board.”
(Year 9 pupil, Special school, School C)

**Teach the programme to more children of all ages, and all adults**

Children and young people across all mainstream and some special schools recommended the programme be made available to more people, so that more children and adults would learn the programme messages. One young person felt that every adult should know about it “because then they’ll say ‘Oh we should stop abusing kids’” (Primary 7 child, Special school, School A).

“NSPCC should be world-wide for all other kids other than me.”
(Primary 7 child, Special school, school A)

“I think they should really be telling more secondary schools and maybe P7 primary.”
(Year 9 child, Special school, School C)

Children in mainstream schools also identified the benefit of beginning to learn about keeping safe early in primary school:

“Like in primary school so they can help children when they grow up.”
(Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1)

Child: “Because you wouldn’t be so uncomfortable and it wouldn’t be so new to you.
Researcher: You’d be used to it?
Child: Yeah and you wouldn’t laugh.”
(Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)
More content on bullying and less homework

Children and young people in mainstream and special schools spoke about bullying:

“I wish I could play games without bullies.” (Primary 7, Special school, School D)

“I wish people would stop bullying so they won’t be worried for school the next day.”
(Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 5)

These young people wished the programme included more content “about bullying” as well as “more content on internet safety”, and “more grown-up content” (Primary 7 child, Special school, School D)

Children in mainstream schools and to a much lesser extent in special schools wished for less homework, and if NSPCC programme homework is being given, that schools do not give children additional homework with it.
Children’s feedback on the process of taking part in the evaluation

Overall, children and young people across class groups, and mainstream and special schools reported enjoying taking part in the process evaluation activities:

“Loved it.” (Primary 2 child, Mainstream, School 6)

“I liked today because it was really fun.” (Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

“That they [the activities] were very, very fun.” (Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2)

Children in special schools described the activities as “amazing”, “good”, “such good fun”, “pure awesome”. However, one child (Special school E) reported feeling tired and hungry and this influenced their ability to take part and enjoy the activities. Across schools, children identified liking the art where they got to colour and create pictures and make cakes, learning more about the NSPCC, recalling and talking about the different parts of the Keeping Safe programme, as well as being able to get out of the usual class and do something new:

Child: “I enjoyed it; it was very good...like drawing pictures.
Child: I liked talking.
Child: I liked whenever we were thinking about our ideas and then we drew them.
Child: I liked the drawing.
Child: I liked the part where you had to pretend you were an animal [icebreaker activity].
Child: I would definitely like to come back.
Child: I liked everything.
Child: I liked doing the cake.
Child: I liked talking about the cake.”

In one mainstream school, children admired and expressed pride in their Keeping Safe Cake:

Child: “It looks very colourful and looks good.
Child: It’s big.
Child: Full of worries and good things.
Researcher: And does it tell you how to deal with those worries?
Child: Tell a trusted adult.”

Primary 7 children, Mainstream, School 2

Some of the changes recommended by the younger children in mainstream schools included keeping their own pictures (Primary 1 and 2, Mainstream, School 3), playing the “stuck in the mud” game as an icebreaker (Primary 7 child, Mainstream, School 2) and being able to “paint as well as colour in” (Primary 6 child, Mainstream, School 1).
Discussion and conclusions

Engaging children and young people in this process evaluation to share their views and experience about being taught to recognise abusive behaviours and tell has helped realise their Article 12 Rights under the UNCRC, to express and have their views taken seriously in matters affecting them (CRAE, 2019; UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2016; Keenan et al, 2018a; Taylor et al, 2014; UNCRC, 1989; Lundy, 2007). Moreover, this evaluation provides new learning about the views of children and young people as key stakeholders; in particular, young children, children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children, to inform the development of school-based education programmes that teach children about abuse (Hollis & Churchill, 2018; Lynas & Hawkins, 2017; Stanley et al, 2015; Tutty, 2014; McElearney et al, 2011a).

Discussion

Children and young people have responded positively to being taught about abuse in an age-appropriate way

Overall, children and young people across age and class groups in both mainstream primary and special schools reported enjoying and liking the Keeping Safe programme lessons, homeworks, assemblies, as well as the characters, and range of resources and activities used to teach key messages and concepts. Like children elsewhere taught about abuse and sensitive RSE topics (Newby & Mathieu-Chartier, 2018; Tutty, 2014), some of these children felt uncomfortable when first introduced to lessons and messages about sexual abuse through Keeping Safe. Some of the older children were able to attribute their discomfort with never having been exposed to this type of content before, and the majority considered it was important for them to learn and be aware of keeping safe. Many children and young people, in particular those in older class groups in mainstream and special schools, considered that being taught Keeping Safe messages made them feel safer.

Children have learned key programme concepts and messages

Through the range of creative evaluation activities that included drawing, colouring, sticking, and talking/discussing, children and young people recalled and conveyed that they had learned about a range of key programme concepts in a way that was appropriate to their age and stage of development. These included about consent, recognising inappropriate sexual behaviours, how to be safe online, that abuse is never their fault, to tell a trusted adult if worried and who their trusted adults are. Children taught other school-based programmes about abuse (Hollis & Churchill, 2018; Stanley et al, 2015; Tutty, 2014) have also reported learning these core messages and concepts.

However, this evaluation has also identified the need to clarify messaging taught to children and young people in relation to the fact that abuse is never a child’s fault and that adults are responsible for keeping children safe, not children themselves. Embedding the programme, or other programmes of this nature in school life will provide opportunities for repetition and consolidation of learning, year-on-year in an age-appropriate way, as a child progresses through their years of primary school education. Moreover, it will provide time to achieve consistency in the messages taught to children in school and at home, and across the range
of programmes and resources that are used in schools. Further refinement of messaging needed in relation to strangers, and that fact that most sexual abuse is perpetrated by people that children know and often trust rather than strangers, should seek to ensure children are equally aware of the risks presented by people they know and do not know, across both online and offline contexts.

Few children report being taught the correct names for private parts of the body and this needs to be addressed to ensure children are heard when they tell and report inappropriate sexual behaviour. Lastly, the evaluation also highlighted how children dislike when adverse/bad things happen to children and like a happy ending. However, telling and reporting abuse does not always lead to a happy ending and children need to be provided with honest and accurate information about what may happen when you tell. This information is needed to promote telling and reporting as children will use it in weighing up the consequences in their decision making around whether to tell or not. However, it is important that this is done in a way that does not frighten children or retraumatise any children or young people who have had these experiences.

**Children and young people’s learning about sensitive and abstract concepts and messages was facilitated by a broad range of interactive resources and activities**

Children and young people across all age groups and schools reported liking the varied range of programme resources and activities including videos, animations, interactive games and books, as well as colouring and drawing activities. All of these programme resources supported the teaching of sensitive and abstract concepts and messages, engaged the children and young people, and facilitated their learning in an age-appropriate way. These children learned about sensitive sexual abuse concepts, such as bribes and threats, and inappropriate touching of private parts through stories about *King Alfred and Henry*, and the *Pantosaurus* song, rhyme and dance that made learning fun and not scary. The younger children really liked the four Keeping Safe characters who grew up with them as they progressed through school from Primary 1 to 7, while children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children preferred learning visually through videos with less focus on reading and writing.

The broad range of programme resources and activities using a range of communication media suits the varied and distinct learning needs of children and young people across mainstream primary and special schools.

**Conclusions**

While this process evaluation has provided an opportunity for children and young people to express their views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe programme and has used methods to ensure they were facilitated to give their views, it is critical that these views are listened to and are acted upon to influence the way children in schools are taught about abuse (Lundy, 2007). This will help ensure programmes that teach about abuse and RSE responsibly represent the experience and perspectives of children and young people, are relevant to their lives (Sellars et al, 2020; Brady & Preston, 2020; Keating, Morgan & Collins, 2018; Pound, Langford & Campbell, 2016), and are authentic, credible and accessible to
Children and young people (Scott et al, 2020; Bovarnick et al, 2018; Bovarnick & Scott, 2016). This evaluation is timely in view of recommendations from the Gillen Review in Northern Ireland (Gillen, 2019) and the ongoing development of RSE programmes across the UK (Ofsted, 2021; Department for Education, 2019; Education Wales, 2019; Education Scotland, 2018; Education and Training Inspectorate, 2016).

**Key findings and learning for the development of programmes that teach children and young people about abuse and RSE include:**

- **Young children respond positively to being taught about abuse and learn key concepts when messaging is appropriate for their age and stage of development.** Children from as young as four years, and children and young people with special educational needs and disabled children in mainstream primary and special schools learned key programme concepts when they were taught using a range of engaging visual and interactive resources, stories and activities embedded in the Keeping Safe programme.

- **Despite feeling uncomfortable when sensitive messages and concepts about sexual abuse are first introduced and taught, children and young people understand it is important they are taught to recognise abusive behaviours and tell, and say that being taught these messages makes them feel safer.** They wish all adults and all children in schools could be taught these messages so that children would be safer.

- **Using a wide range of resources, activities and communication media supports the teaching and learning of sensitive abstract concepts and messages.** Using songs, rhymes, stories, videos, interactive games and art-based activities helped make learning concrete and enjoyable for children and young people. Characters that grow up and progress with children through their school years helped engage younger children in their learning while videos and interactive games helped engage children and young people in special schools. Using a range of activities and media to communicate messages is important to meet the varied and distinct learning styles and needs of children and young people and promote inclusivity. Any adaptation of resources for use in special schools should ensure they are age-appropriate for older young people.

- **While key concepts and messages about consent, recognising abusive behaviours and telling a trusted adult were understood clearly by children, there was some ambiguity in other key concepts that needs to be addressed in teaching children about abuse.** These include children's understanding and learning about the fact that abuse is never a child's fault, strangers and risk posed by those known to children and young people, and in conveying honestly to children what happens when they tell and report abuse. Embedding programmes that teach children about abuse in the life of the school will provide opportunities for repetition, clarification, extension and consolidation of children's learning, incrementally, year-on-year, appropriate to their stage of development as they progress through their years of primary school education. Moreover, it appears that children and young people are not being taught the correct names for private parts of the body and this should be addressed to ensure that when telling and reporting abuse, children use language that is understood and heard by trusted adults. Programme messaging should be reviewed routinely to ensure it reflects the latest best practice evidence on teaching children about abuse. The teaching of programme messages should also be monitored routinely in school to ensure children and young people are being taught all key concepts.
Children and young people enjoy having the opportunity to contribute their views and experiences through activities that are inclusive, age appropriate and facilitate their voice to be heard. Activities enjoyed by children included art-based goal-directed tasks related to the curriculum, talking and discussing their ideas, drawing, colouring and sticking pictures to represent their ideas. Engaging children and young people as key stakeholders in developing and evaluating programmes they will be taught should be prioritised.
References


Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme


Education Wales (2019) Education in Wales is Changing (PDF). Cardiff: Education Wales. Available at: https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/hwb-live-storage/3d/cc/d1/0a/1b56436a8c02e0474f8030d4/190621-a-brief-summary-of-the-changes-planned-for-education-in-wales.pdf


Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme


McElearney, A., Craig, L., Fullerton, D., Morris, S. & Murphy, C. (2021d) Teaching children and young people in special schools to recognise abusive behaviours and tell: findings from the process evaluation of Keeping Safe, a whole-school education programme. London: NSPCC.

McElearney, A., Murphy, C., Fullerton, D., Hyde-Dryden, G., Cosette, A. & Morris, S (2021c) School staff, parents and carers’ views and experience of the Keeping Safe whole-school education programme: Lessons from the process evaluation for teaching children to recognise abusive behaviours and tell. London: NSPCC.


Appendix 1: Theory of change: Keeping Safe programme – children’s outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Immediate outcomes</th>
<th>Intermediate outcome</th>
<th>Long-term outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>At School</td>
<td>Children will recognise abusive behaviour.</td>
<td>Children will identify abusive behaviour as inappropriate.</td>
<td>Children are safer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD programme for whole-school staff</td>
<td>Forma...</td>
<td>Children will know:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children receive an effective response from a safe adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-school staff</td>
<td>curriculum teaching:</td>
<td>- The difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children get an appropriate response from external agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom resources</td>
<td>At least 9 class lessons/year with associated homework activities</td>
<td>- That their body belongs to them, privates are private.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children get supported appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training resources for parents</td>
<td>Informal curriculum teaching:</td>
<td>- They have the right not to be harmed physically or emotionally.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children have access to therapeutic support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Keeping safe messages taught and reinforced through conversations, daily interactions, language modelled, rules followed, observations, play, and peer interactions.</td>
<td>- They have the right to feel loved, looked after and secure at home and school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ resources</td>
<td>At Home: Keeping safe messages are taught and reinforced using Keeping Safe project resources and through daily family interactions and other opportunities that arise.</td>
<td>- What a healthy relationship looks like at home or with friends online and/or offline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The effects of bullying, how to deal with it online and/or offline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children will have strategies and skills to deal with abusive behaviour</td>
<td>Children will tell a safe adult: - when they identify abusive behaviour - if they have already been impacted by abuse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children will understand:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- They have the right to say no.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Talk about secrets that worry or confuse them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Abuse is never their fault.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- That bribes, threats and manipulation are strategies used by others to get what they want.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The effects of bullying, how to deal with it online and/or offline.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Sample lesson plan, homework and assembly from the Keeping Safe programme

Figure 1: Sample lesson plan: Primary 1, theme 1, lesson 1

---

**Keeping Safe**

### Theme 1 Healthy Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Primary One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning Outcomes**

Children will know the names of feelings such as worried, excited, confused and scared.

We want children to develop their emotional language and become familiar with a variety of terms other than just happy or sad.

**Resources**

- Interactive whiteboard, computer and internet connection.
- Homework pages

**Introduction**

**Teacher:** Today we are going to meet 'The Keeping Safe Kids.' These kids are the same age as you and have just started P1 as well. How do you think they might be feeling? Encourage responses.

**Watch:** Keeping Safe Kids Animations

**Theme 1 Lesson 1**

**Content**

**Teacher:** The kids in the animation all felt differently on their first day of school, and that's normal. Everyone feels differently about things.

**Play:** Interactive Whiteboard Activities

Theme 1 lesson 1a: How did you feel on your first day of school?

Theme 1 lesson 1b: Who do you feel safe with?
Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Keeping Safe

**Activity a. How did you feel on your first day of school?**
Children can take turns to come up and click on the feeling which best describes how they felt when they first started school.

As children come up they could be encouraged to say how they felt and why.
E.g.: “I felt sad when I had to leave my mum, I was scared without her.”

**Activity b. How would you feel?**
Children should listen to each scenario and decide how they would feel if this happened to them. Children can take turns to come up and have a go.

Children could be encouraged to show body language in response to their feelings and explain this.

**Discussion activity:**

Teacher: We can see that not everyone in our class felt the same way. That’s good; it’s ok to have different feelings. We are all different so we will all feel differently about things.

If we are nervous, worried or scared it is important that we tell someone. It’s not good to keep those feelings inside. These are not safe feelings.

**If you got lost in the supermarket, how would you feel?**
(Afraid, scared, worried, frightened).

Would you feel safe?

What should you do?

You need to go to someone who works there, with a uniform on and they will help. When you find your mum or whoever you were there with, you will feel happy and safe.

**If an older child was annoying you all the time, how would you feel?**
(Worried, scared, frightened, hurt, annoyed, frightened).

Safe or not safe?

What should you do?

You need to tell someone at home or school so they can help you.

What would you say? (Teacher prompts or gives examples).

**If someone does something to you that you don’t like but they tell you not to tell. How would you feel?**
(Confused, frightened, worried, sad).

Safe or not safe?

What should you do?

You need to tell someone about what happened, don’t keep secrets.

What would you say? (Teacher prompts or gives examples).
Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

Keeping Safe

Conclusion

We all want to be happy and feel safe. We need to talk to people about how we feel, don’t keep feelings to yourself. Talk about how you are feeling with a safe adult.

Who do you feel safe with?
(Allow children to tell who their safe adults are. These can include a teacher/member of staff.)

Song
To the tune of ‘If your happy and you know it’.

If you feel safe and know it clap your hands
If you feel safe and know it clap your hands
If you feel safe and know it and you really want to show it
If you feel safe and know it clap your hands.

If you feel sad or worried tell someone
If you feel sad or worried tell someone
If you feel sad or worried then you really need to show it
If you feel sad or worried tell someone.

If you feel all excited shout hooray!
If you feel all excited shout hooray!
If you feel all excited then you really need to show it
If you feel all excited shout hooray!

Homework

Worksheet: Theme 1 lesson1.

Teacher’s evaluations

Write some notes about how the lesson went here....
Figure 2: Sample homework: Primary 1, theme 1, lesson 1

Keeping Safe

Homework P1 Theme 1 Lesson 1

Help your child to think of times when they had these feelings; **Scared, nervous, excited, worried or safe**. Write their examples under each picture.

Choose 2 feelings and draw a picture for each one.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My child said they felt ________ when...

My child said they felt ________ when...

It is very important that we encourage our children to express their feelings. Encourage them to use terms other than happy and sad to express how they feel.

Parent/Carers signature:

```
NSPCC
EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR
```
Figure 3: Sample assembly: The Underwear rule – theme 2: my body

- **P**rivates are private
- **A**ways remember your body belongs to you
- **T**alk about secrets that upset you
- **S**peak up, someone can help
- **N**o means no

Extra notes:
- If you feel a strange feeling and don’t know what to do, close your eyes, think back, and tell someone now.
- Only follow the PANTS rule if it makes you feel safe.
- You’re right. If someone does it to you, it’s not your fault.
Appendix 3: Additional data on schools and participants

Table 2: Key characteristics of sub-sample of mainstream primary schools implementing Keeping Safe who took part in children’s art-based evaluation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>School Management Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>School Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>Integrated school</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>Catholic Maintained school</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>Controlled school</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4</td>
<td>Catholic Maintained school</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 5</td>
<td>Irish Medium school</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 6</td>
<td>Integrated school</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Profile of participants from sub-sample of mainstream primary schools implementing Keeping Safe who took part in children’s art-based evaluation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Class group</th>
<th>Number of pupils who took part</th>
<th>Pupil age</th>
<th>Research activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>Primary 2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5–6 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9–10 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>Primary 1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4–5 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5–6 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10–11 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>Primary 1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4–5 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4</td>
<td>Primary 6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9–10 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 5</td>
<td>Primary 3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6–7 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7–8 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8–9 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9–10 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10–11 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 6</td>
<td>Primary 2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5–6 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary 6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9–10 years</td>
<td>Keeping Safe cakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Department of Education Schools plus website [https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/services/schools-plus](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/services/schools-plus). These have been categorised as small <105 pupils, medium 106-299 pupils, large>300 pupils to protect school anonymity.
Table 4: Key characteristics of special schools implementing Keeping Safe who took part in children’s art-based evaluation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Special school profile&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Age range of pupils</th>
<th>School Size&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4–19 years</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation to Key Stage 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>3–19 years</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-school to Key Stage 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>Moderate Learning Difficulties</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>4–16 years</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation to Key Stage 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4–16 years</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation to Key Stage 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>Severe Learning Difficulties</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>3–19 years</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-school to Key Stage 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Profile of participants from special schools implementing Keeping Safe who took part in children’s art-based evaluation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Class group</th>
<th>Number of pupils who took part</th>
<th>Pupil age</th>
<th>Research activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| School A | Primary 4  
Primary 7 | 9  
8 | 7–8 years  
10–11 years | Keeping Safe trees  
Keeping Safe cakes |
| School B | Primary 3  
Primary 4  
Primary 5 | 3  
7  
3 | 6–7 years  
7–8 years  
8–9 years | Keeping Safe cakes  
Keeping Safe cakes  
Keeping Safe cakes |
| School C | Primary 4 Year 9 | 6  
6 | 7–8 years  
12–13 years | Keeping Safe trees  
Keeping Safe cakes |
| School D | Primary 4  
Primary 7 | 7  
6 | 7–8 years  
10–11 years | Keeping Safe trees  
Keeping Safe cakes |
| School E | Primary 1  
Primary 5 | 6  
8 | 4–5 years  
8–9 years | Keeping Safe trees  
Keeping Safe cakes |

<sup>8</sup> All special schools in Northern Ireland are classified as Controlled schools

<sup>9</sup> These have been categorised as small <105 pupils, medium 106-299 pupils, large>300 pupils to protect school anonymity
Appendix 4: Additional information on research methods and procedures

Securing the informed consent of parents/carers and children to take part in evaluation activities

In the first instance, parents/carers provided written informed consent for their children to take part. The research team then talked to these children about the evaluation and explained that while their parents/carers had provided permission for them to take part, they could decide whether or not they wished to. Children were provided with an age-appropriate consent form to record their decision. Eight children with parental consent (five in mainstream schools and three in special schools) did not provide consent to take part. Those who did consent to take part were also advised that they could change their minds at any stage during the evaluation activities. One Primary 2 child decided during the activities that they no longer wished to take part. At the beginning of the activities, the researchers also explained to the children that the NSPCC works to keep children safe, and that means that if they said/wrote or drew something that made the researchers think they, or another child, were not safe, then the researchers would take steps to make sure they were kept safe. This might include talking to them about why they were worried and talking to someone who could help further, like the Designated Teacher in school. The research team had completed the NSPCC mandatory safeguarding training and were following Department of Education procedures for dealing with child protection and safeguarding in schools in Northern Ireland.
Appendix 5: Additional information on analysis of children’s data

Figure 7: Sample Keeping Safe tree and leaves created by children from a mainstream primary school

(Mainstream school 6)
Figure 8: Sample Keeping Safe tree and leaves created by children from a special school

(Special school E)
Figure 9: Sample Keeping Safe cake and slices created by children from a mainstream primary school

(Mainstream school 4)
Figure 10: Sample Keeping Safe cake and slices created by children from a special school

(Special school D)
Table 6: Content analysis: what older children in mainstream schools liked about the Keeping Safe programme, ranked in order from most to least frequently mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Art; games; role-play; worksheets; books; quizzes; rhymes; discussions; poems; football; posters/ cyber-bullying posters</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>I liked the acting about bullying and standing up for yourself; Drawing the cyberbullying posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I liked the books a lot and very interesting; I liked the decisions [discussions]; Talking about our stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>General; online safety</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>I liked when I saw the videos because they keep the children safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons/messages</td>
<td>Learning/info on staying safe; online safety; respect; bullying; problems resolved; privates/private/pants</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>I liked that the lessons show posting pictures can be dangerous. I liked the important messages – they make you seem safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I enjoyed the homeworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning/more aware</td>
<td>Feeling safer; learning to deal with difficult situations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I like to learn about online safety...I feel very safe now; I felt more safe and know what to do in a situation if you don’t like it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I liked the assembly about the pants rule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking part in research</td>
<td>The cakes; questionnaires</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I liked doing the art and the cake; The questionnaire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots/everything</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I liked everything about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive feelings</td>
<td>Fun; relaxing; good; helpful</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>How fun it was; They help us learn about things that we need to know; Having some fun; I liked it because it was helpful to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping Safe characters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I liked the characters too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
<td>Knight; panda; hearing others’ stories</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The knight story; I liked the story about the king.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not doing work/Getting out of class</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Not doing work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I liked seeing Buddy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory(^{11}) as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I like the staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSPCC visits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I liked how NSPCC come to our school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I liked when we were talking about the rules.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{11}\) Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
Table 7: Content analysis: what older young people in special schools liked about the Keeping Safe programme, ranked in order from most to least frequently mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>I liked the videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons/messages</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Telling parents folks and teachers; I liked learning about keeping safe on the computer; Researcher: “What is it you’ve written (child name)?” Child: “Saying no” Researcher: “You liked learning about saying no? when would you say no?” Child: “when people ask to see your privates.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Toy Story; I liked some secrets should never be kept and some of the videos as well; I liked the books; I like stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Games; I like talking; chatting; I like colouring in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Child: “I liked that Jack’s parents are kind again… well the first bit was very bad because Jack’s parents cause arguments all the time and Jack heard all the crashing and banging” Researcher: “And then what happened?” Child: “The next day Jack came to tell the teacher what happened then see in the end Jack’s parents were kind again” Researcher: “So you liked the end of the story then?” Child: “Yeah.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I liked the homework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Keeping Safe programme</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>All of it; Researcher: “And you like it, you’re giving us a thumb up? You like the Keeping Safe Programme?” Child: “It’s cool.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The NSPCC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NSPCC is important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving information</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Child: “I liked when giving information” Researcher: “You liked getting the information. Did you think it was important?” Child: “Yes it was very important.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive feeling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I like to be happy; Good friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning more</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Like the cyberbullying videos because he got help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
Table 8: Content analysis: what older children in mainstream schools disliked about the Keeping Safe programme, ranked in order from most to least frequently mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No dislikes</td>
<td>General; Inappropriate; Scary; Specific 'I saw your Willy'; Sexual abuse; Fear of becoming a victim; Neglect; Sad; Weird; Disturbing; Too short</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>I liked everything; I loved everything; Nothing; I liked the videos, I liked the characters, I liked the homework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>The videos about sexual abuse…it felt uncomfortable; Some of the videos were disturbing; The videos are too short.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort from programme content</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I felt uncomfortable in some subjects; I did not like the way it said weird words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of the characters</td>
<td>Unlikeable characters (bad/mean)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I disliked bullies being mean; I didn’t like how cruel the bullies [sic] were.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I didn’t like the way you got homework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upsetting/distressing programme posters and pictures</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I didn’t like seeing some posters of people; Inappropriate pictures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters experiencing adversity</td>
<td>Dislike of how the characters were treated; characters making the wrong choices; characters being sad; characters in distress</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I didn’t like seeing people sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too long/too short</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I didn’t like it because it was a bit boring because the assembly was too long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bad stuff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I didn’t like the bad stuff; I hate people showing bad things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I don’t like speaking in front of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I didn’t like the acting parts; Too much talking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme repetition</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Don’t like doing the same thing over again.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
Children's views on being taught about abuse through the Keeping Safe education programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory(^{14}) as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boring</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I didn't like it because it was a bit boring because the assembly was too long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I didn't like the knight story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Some of the adverts before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being teased during class discussions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>When we took [talk] about the NSPCC (when people laugh).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{14}\) Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children's age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
Table 9: Content analysis: what older young people in special schools disliked about the Keeping Safe programme, ranked in order from most to least frequently mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory(^{15}) as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort from the programme content</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Talking about people touching other’s private parts; Bullying; I don’t like bullies; I do not like private parts; I do not like anything violent; Bullying; Thinking about private parts; I don’t like the privates shown online. Researcher: “Did you enjoy it (Keeping Safe) or do you feel awkward, do you feel strange? Because sometimes some of the things you’re talking about would be a bit odd.” Child: “It could be a bit awkward, odd. Makes me hold my stomach a bit.” Researcher: “And you’ve written here something you didn’t like, so what was that?” Child: “What it said in the video about him sharing pictures.” Researcher: “Taking a photo of his privates?” Child: “Yeah, that wasn’t right.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Researcher: What did you not like? Child: Reading books Researcher: Are you not a fan of reading books? What about if somebody reads the story to you? Child: It’s still boring Researcher: Was there anything else you didn’t like about it? Child: The writing Child: but I only have one complaint, there was not enough games</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{15}\) Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The underpants story: Didn’t like the story – some secrets should never be kept. Researcher: “[Child’s name] What didn’t you like about Keeping Safe? Is there anything you didn’t like when [teacher’s name] was talking about it?” Child: “Yeah.” Researcher: “What was it?” Child: “Shouting.” Researcher: “Who was shouting (child name)... was there shouting in the videos?” Child: “Yeah.” Researcher: “Who was shouting...?” Child: “Buzz and Woody and Lotso were shouting.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters facing adversity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Didn’t like the characters getting touched inappropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not age appropriate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I don’t like childish videos – toy story; It’s childish. Child: “I thought it was a wee bit childish, like, if I’m honest.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tell an adult: <em>Pantosaurus</em> Child 1: “We watched some type of music video or something.” Child 2: “It was about private parts, like.” Researcher: “OK what did you think about that?” Child: “We through it was a bit silly, like.” Child: “No I think the songs are a wee bit irritating.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The NSPCC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NSPCC is not worldwide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upsetting/distressing programme posters and pictures</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I do not like the advertisement because the children are not safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Homework...I do work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
### Table 10: Content analysis: what older children in mainstream primary schools wished to be changed about the Keeping Safe programme, ranked in order from most to least frequently mentioned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes to lessons</td>
<td>More activities; Active lessons; Use computers for lessons; More posters; More art (NSPCC colouring book, more colouring); Worry book; Informative plays; More lessons; More dancing; More/fun/different games; Story-writing about the KS characters; Stickers; Ideal Programme format; Positive/happy lessons</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>I would like active lessons; I wish we could have a book where you could put worries; being able to do more of the keeping safe activities; I wish that there would be a NSPCC colouring book for children; More art based lessons...an idea and worry box...more child friendly topic to make more fun things but still serious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>More; More interesting; For children who can't read; Less inappropriate/sad videos; More videos vs ppts; Longer videos</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>I wish that there is [sic] more videos for children who can't read; Add more interesting videos; Less inappropriate videos; More videos because some younger kids might not understand; the videos be longer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More learning</td>
<td>Incentives to learn; More work; Homework</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>More books about Keeping Safe and make loads of copies [sic] and that will make more people want to learn more about it; I wish we did more about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less work/homework</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Less homework; Have no homework; If you do NSPCC homework you don't need more...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put an end to bullying</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I wish that bully would stop so that people could enjoy school; I wish people would stop bullying so they won't be worried for school the next day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruism/help kids in all schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I wish I could help people that don’t enjoy work or school or get abused by building a place where they could talk about their feeling and that I could improve that; To help more children about it; I think you should help the kids that are in poverty or neglect; All the schools get it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change to characters</td>
<td>Different characters; More characters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Different characters and more characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More research participation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>More things like the Keeping Safe cake; I would like more surveys; More art lessons like the cake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People start listening/know more about it</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>I wish people would know more about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less/more personal questions by NSPCC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I wish that NSPCC could ask less personal questions to some people; I wish NSPCC would ask more questions like have you ever been bullied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More assemblies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>More assemblies too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More NSPCC visits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I would like if they could go out with you for a day and talk to let out all the worried stuff out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More technological safety</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I wish people would not send inappropriate pics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More books</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>More books about Keeping Safe and make loads of copy[sic].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make an app/game</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Make an app for other kids to play and watch videos to help them understand better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I wish people would tell there [sic] parents about NSPCC/I wish people would tell there [sic] parents about it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had experienced the lessons at the start of school</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I wish we start this in P1/I wish we started this in P1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I wish there was football.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS after-school clubs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>After-school clubs about keeping safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have a compition [sic] for keeping safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying-free week</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Have a bullying-free week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I would like if we went on some trips with them about keeping safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweets!</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A lorry full of sweets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>If someone is talking, send them to a different table on there [sic] own.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category identified by researcher across all 5 schools</th>
<th>Subcategory as identified by children about individual cakes</th>
<th>Number of mentions by children ranked in order from most to least frequent</th>
<th>Illustrative quotes made by children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More games/create games</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Games I have to respond to like something for the Xbox; an app of Keeping Safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>More songs, less colouring; more stories; Maybe a few more books. Researcher: “And less work... what do you mean by less work?” Child: “Like writing work.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More songs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Keeping Safe should have more songs. Researcher: “To make the Keeping Safe lessons even better, you’ve said that you wish there were more songs. Is that because you like singing or do you think that songs help you learn better?” Child: “Learn better, I like learning the songs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping Safe be available to more people</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NSPCC should be world-wide for all other kids other than me; Every adult knowing about this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More videos</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>More Videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to lesson content</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>More exciting; More about bullying; More content on internet safety; More grown-up content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Keeping Safe is delivered</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>And more stuff on the board for younger kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying would stop</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I wish that I could play games without bullies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More characters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>More characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSPCC related</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NSPCC to get more subscribers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More accessible</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>More animations for people who can’t read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positives</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I like Keeping Safe Programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less homework</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Less homework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20 Not all children were able to sufficiently engage with comparing and contrasting data to create categories/subcategories. This was due to children’s age and stage of development, and limited time (see strengths and limitations p20).
Table 12: Content analysis of programme objectives older children in mainstream primary schools thought they learned from the Keeping Safe programme, ranked from most to least frequently selected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>School 1</th>
<th>School 2</th>
<th>School 3</th>
<th>School 5</th>
<th>School 6</th>
<th>Total objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That abuse is never my fault and that I have the right to say no to touches that I don’t like or want</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk about feelings and emotions</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know who to tell, when to tell, and how to tell</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the right not to be harmed physically or emotionally by anyone</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That my body belongs to me, and privates are private</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That I need to talk about secrets that worry or confuse me</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the right to feel loved, looked after and secure at home and school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What a healthy relationship looks like at home, or with friends, online and/or offline</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That bribes, threats and manipulations are strategies used by others to get what they want</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How my body reacts when I don’t feel safe</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know who my safe and trusted adults are</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know to keep telling until I get help</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proper names for private parts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13: Content analysis of programme objectives older young people in special schools thought they learned from the Keeping Safe programme, ranked from most to least frequently selected\textsuperscript{21}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>School A</th>
<th>Total objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have the right not to be harmed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what a healthy relationship is</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know when touching is not appropriate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know who my trusted adult is</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse is never my fault</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My body belongs to me, and my privates are private</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribes and threats are never right</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{21} The data on programme objectives reported in Table 13 were provided by one special school who engaged with the objectives part of the Keeping Safe Cakes activity.
NSPCC Learning is here to provide you with all the tools, training and resources you need to protect the children you work or volunteer with.

We keep you up-to-date with the latest child protection policy, practice and research. We deliver expert elearning courses and face-to-face training for your organisation. And we provide bespoke consultancy, sharing our knowledge of what works to help you deliver services for children and families.

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