# Laura Bates warns of daily rapes in UK schools amid rise of deepfake porn threats



Laura Bates, a prominent activist and founder of the Everyday Sexism Project, recently expressed grave concerns about the alarming rates of sexual violence in UK schools, describing the situation as a public health crisis. In a discussion with journalist Samira Ahmed at the Hay Festival, Bates highlighted the staggering statistic that one in three teenage girls experience sexual assault while attending school. Based on data obtained through a BBC Freedom of Information request, she revealed that over the past three years, law enforcement reported approximately 5,500 sexual offences in schools, including 600 rapes—a disquieting average of one reported rape per school day.

Bates has been vocal in advocating for comprehensive reform, asserting that the current response from authorities is grossly inadequate. She calls for statutory guidance that empowers schools to effectively tackle these issues, framing the conversation around sexual violence in educational institutions as one that requires urgent national prioritisation. “If this isn’t a national emergency – one rape per day in schools – then I don’t know what is,” she asserted during her interview.

Moreover, Bates warned of the rising threat posed by deepfake pornography, which she identifies as the next significant challenge facing schools nationwide. These AI-generated images can lead to severe emotional and reputational damage for victims, with cases like the recent scandal in Almendralejo, Spain, where young girls discovered explicit images of themselves circulating online, serving as a cautionary tale. Bates observed a disturbing trend of similar incidents occurring in UK schools, underscoring that these issues, while still under-discussed, have profound implications for the safety and wellbeing of students.

In this context, Bates emphasized the necessity for a comprehensive approach to addressing these complex issues. She pointed out that current educational practices often shift responsibility onto girls, such as strict dress codes aimed at preventing harassment, rather than confronting the root causes of misogyny. Bates advocates for a curriculum that involves not only young women but male teachers as well, to foster a collective responsibility and awareness surrounding these issues.

The ramifications of deepfake technology and online harassment extend beyond individual cases; they reflect broader societal issues related to misogyny and sexism. As deepfake porn becomes more prevalent, Bates contends that the ease with which malicious content can be created and disseminated denotes a pressing need for stronger legal protections. Calls for enhanced legislation to combat technology-facilitated abuse have gained traction, with experts like Professor Julia Hörnle advocating for a more robust legal framework to protect victims and deter offenders.

Interestingly, the rising concerns over deepfake technology parallel ongoing debates about digital privacy, consent, and the responsibilities of social media platforms. As Bates’ activism continues to shed light on these conversations, the urgency of addressing sexual violence in schools and the implications of advancing technology become ever clearer. There is an essential need for dialogue, education, and policy reform to combat the increasingly sophisticated forms of misogyny that are putting young people at risk.

In conclusion, the combination of Bates’ warnings about deepfake pornography and the stark realities of sexual violence in UK schools presents a critical moment for educational institutions, policymakers, and society as a whole. Without immediate action and a shift in cultural attitudes, the future for young people could remain perilous.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/schools-sexual-violence-deepfake-porn-laura-bates-hay-b2757933.html), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/29/epidemic-sexual-assaults-schools-groped-pornographic-images-slags)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/schools-sexual-violence-deepfake-porn-laura-bates-hay-b2757933.html), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/29/epidemic-sexual-assaults-schools-groped-pornographic-images-slags)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/mar/07/laura-bates-for-teenage-girls-escaping-harassment-revenge-porn-and-deepfake-porn-is-impossible), [[5]](https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/rise-deepfake-porn-devastating-women-go-crack-technology), [[6]](https://www.qmul.ac.uk/law/news/2025/items/deepfakes-and-the-law-why-britain-needs-stronger-protections-against-technology-facilitated-abuse.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.laurabates.co.uk/activist), [[5]](https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/rise-deepfake-porn-devastating-women-go-crack-technology)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.qmul.ac.uk/law/news/2025/items/deepfakes-and-the-law-why-britain-needs-stronger-protections-against-technology-facilitated-abuse.html), [[7]](https://incidentdatabase.ai/reports/3684/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/schools-sexual-violence-deepfake-porn-laura-bates-hay-b2757933.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/29/epidemic-sexual-assaults-schools-groped-pornographic-images-slags> - In this article, Laura Bates highlights the widespread issue of sexual violence in UK schools, describing it as an epidemic. She references a report revealing that 5,500 alleged sexual offences, including 600 rapes, were reported to police over three years. Bates criticises the government's inadequate response and calls for comprehensive sex education and clear national guidance to tackle the problem effectively.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/mar/07/laura-bates-for-teenage-girls-escaping-harassment-revenge-porn-and-deepfake-porn-is-impossible> - Laura Bates discusses the challenges teenage girls face in escaping harassment, revenge porn, and deepfake pornography. She emphasises the need for schools to address these issues comprehensively, involving male teachers and integrating discussions into various subjects. Bates also critiques the focus on dress codes, suggesting it shifts responsibility onto girls rather than addressing the root causes of harassment.
4. <https://www.laurabates.co.uk/activist> - This page details Laura Bates's activism, including founding the Everyday Sexism Project in 2012, which has gathered over 200,000 testimonies of gender inequality. The project has sparked international conversations and led to campaigns like #HopeUnited, aiming to combat sexist abuse and promote gender equality.
5. <https://www.politicshome.com/thehouse/article/rise-deepfake-porn-devastating-women-go-crack-technology> - Laura Bates discusses the rise of deepfake pornography and its devastating impact on women. She highlights the ease with which users can create fake explicit images, leading to harassment and reputational damage. Bates calls for stronger measures to combat this technology-facilitated abuse.
6. <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/law/news/2025/items/deepfakes-and-the-law-why-britain-needs-stronger-protections-against-technology-facilitated-abuse.html> - Professor Julia Hörnle examines the need for stronger legal protections against technology-facilitated abuse, particularly focusing on deepfakes. She discusses the UK's plans to criminalise the creation of sexually explicit deepfakes and advocates for a more comprehensive legal framework to address this rising threat.
7. <https://incidentdatabase.ai/reports/3684/> - This report discusses the impact of deepfake pornography on women, featuring insights from Laura Bates. It highlights the challenges victims face in combating such abuse and the need for effective legal and technological solutions to address the issue.