# Safe to

Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership

Northumberland County Council

## Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership

### with Northumberland Education and Skills Service

Half termly bulletin for Governors, Headteachers/Principals and Designated Safeguarding Leads in Schools, Academies and Alternative Providers

Issue 37: 15th May 2020

## DSL support during the Coronavirus Covid 19 outbreak

During the school closure period we are going to publish a Safe to Learn bulletin every Friday. Please remember to share with all staff and your governing body.

The next issue will be shared with you on Friday 22nd May 2020.

## DfE Guidance and Information




The Government Press release: Details on phased wider opening of schools, colleges and nurseries is available here.

Guidance from the DfE on Actions for educational and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020, next steps for the phased wider opening of educational and childcare settings, which was published on 11th May is available here.

Links to both the press release and the guidance are available in the Information for DSLs folder.

## Virtual School Staff Working in Schools

At the moment most of our Virtual School Staff are supporting schools through working at home and engaging in meetings with schools and Children's Services using Google Hangouts or Microsoft Teams. As circumstances change and the government eases the lockdown restrictions, more of this support has started to be delivered in settings with the children again. We want our staff to feel safe to work in your setting so they will make contact with you before they visit so that you can explain to them what social distancing and hygiene measures are in place. Our staff will then know what to expect when they arrive at school. If they do have any concerns then staff have been asked to discuss those with you in a supportive way before contacting their own managers for advice and guidance.

## Supporting Young Carers during Covid-19



Schools are the front line of support for all children and play a particularly important role in the lives of young carers. It is vital that this extremely vulnerable group of young people are offered the help and support they need during this challenging time.

**Young carers isolating at home need you to:**

- Ensure that they are on your 'vulnerable student' list
- Risk assess how often they will need to be contacted and ensure there is a rota in place for contacting them.
- Record all contact in a central location (SIMS, CPOMs - whichever system works best in your school) so that if someone else calls them in your absence they are aware of what contact has previously been made.
- Ensure you have contact details for the child in the event that the person they care for becomes ill, incapacitated or passes away. All children must have two emergency contacts already, but it is important to check that they are both operational.
- Ensure the child knows what to do if they need to seek emergency help. Do this in conjunction with parents/carers.
- Ensure that the child knows how to effectively socially distance and discuss the risks in a measured way with the young person. They may be feeling the weight of responsibility for shielding a vulnerable adult in their home.
- Consider if they are in receipt of Free School Meals and if they are not, consider how you might support them in getting enough food (if necessary).
- Discuss with parents/carers how they will meet the child's needs if the child is ill. Enquire as to how the parent will cope if the child becomes ill.
- Review outside agency involvement. If the young person usually attends networking or support groups for young carers, discuss how this has been adapted to adhere to social distancing guidance, or what could be put in place instead if events have been cancelled.
- Make contact with the DSL in the schools that the child's siblings attend. Work together to share good practice and discuss how you are supporting the family.
- Consider if it is appropriate to start work with a support network for the child in the event of a bereavement.

## On Track for Statutory RSHE




Following the inevitable disruption caused by the current Covid-19 crisis, the Sex Education Forum explained, during a webinar with Northumberland schools, that it is likely that some Ofsted expectations of schools 'may be softened' when term begins in September.

There have been no communications to suggest that the implementation of the new curriculum will not go ahead as planned but it is expected that Ofsted will not inspect in the autumn with 'harsh expectations' of RSHE. It is expected that every element of the new curriculum (for example, evidence that schools have consulted widely with parents) will be inspected from April 2021. The advice given was, 'if you haven't yet consulted with parents, don't rush to do it before September, but wait and **do it well** in the autumn'. Schools that cannot evidence consultation with parents could be open to legal challenge, so it is very important to do this and to do it well.

The slides from the recent webinar are now on the Northumberland Education PSHE Padlet. You can access them.

## Learning Disability Matters Website

Learning Disability Matters for Families

The Learning Disability Matters for Families website was launched earlier this year to support families and carers of children and young people with a learning disability; offering advice and guidance, support, useful tips and contacts.

The website has been updated to include some information around Covid-19 specifically relating to resilience and health and wellbeing of families. A range of

resources are available from short guides, films and useful websites / contacts. These include:

- Sleep tips
- 5 ways to wellbeing
- Mindfulness
- Strategies to support parents during isolation
- Managing stress
- Useful contacts

The website can be viewed here.

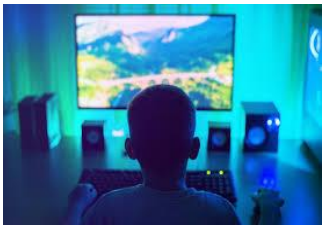
## NSPCC resources

The NSPCC has produced a number of resources to support families during the pandemic. These include

- Coronavirus (Covid-19) advice and support for parents and carers
- Talking to children worried about the coronavirus
- Supporting SEND children
- Lockdown and separated parents
- Arguments, conflict and family tension

The link to these resources is available here

## Online gaming



During lockdown, there has been a significant rise in the amount of time people are playing games online. Weekly games sales have increased by 40-60% during lockdown. One of the largest PC-gaming platforms reported hitting a new record with nearly 20.7 million players actively gaming or chatting at the same time. The range of in-app purchases and the variety of games young people play can make it confusing for parents to keep on top of safety controls.

There have been a number of news stories of children and young people running up high bills on their parents' credit cards through in-app purchasing, often without their parents knowing until the bill comes through. To help prevent this from happening, **The Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust (YGAM)** have provided some tips to monitor purchasing and establish a healthy outlook to purchasing which can be shared with parents. The link to the YGAM advice to parents is available here.

Children and young people playing games that are not age appropriate is a safeguarding issue, so it's important to remind parents that they must ensure their children are only accessing age appropriate content. The **PEGI rating system** for games is explained on the **Internet Matters** website here.

## Learning about online safety at home and school

ThinkUKnow have created a page to support parents and young people online. The site includes home activity packs with two simple 15 minute activities to support children's understanding of online safety at a time when they may be spending more time online. These activities can be recommended for parents to use at home with their children, but they can also be used by teachers with the children who are currently attending school.

There is also parent support information for primary and secondary age groups.

The resources can be found here.

## Launch of a new Contextual Safeguarding Programme Website

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online, can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Therefore, children's social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships

need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors.

The **Contextual Safeguarding Website** provides an overview of all the research projects, practice support and strategic engagement in the Contextual Safeguarding programme – as well as documenting the history, mission, vision and principles of contextual safeguarding. The website doesn't replace the practitioners network site which still hosts all their briefings, toolkits, animations and other materials for network members on.

Contextual Safeguarding recently published an updated briefing by Carlene Firmin and Jenny Lloyd on the Contextual Safeguarding Framework – providing an overview of developments in its use since 2017 through to 2020. The briefing contains practice examples from test sites and emphasises the values that underpin the framework and its use.

## Childline resources

This information may be helpful to the families, children and young people you are working with. The Childline website has a number of resources to support young people including:

- Bullying and abuse
- You and your body
- Your feelings
- Friends, relationships and sex
- Home and families
- School, college and work
- Managing anxiety
- Domestic abuse

childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

## Online Training available for teachers



It may be a helpful time for school staff to catch up with some online training. In response to DSL requests for free online learning which colleagues can complete during lock down, we have selected some packages which you may want to complete as DSL and then, where appropriate you can share with your staff. Some of the packages may also be helpful to share with appropriate parents and carers.

- **Anti Bullying Alliance** - For schools and teachers
- **ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)** - Introduction to ACES early trauma online learning
- **SEND** - Disability matters learning packages for schools and further education settings
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** - This 20/30 minute e-learning course is for parents and professionals who work alongside children and young people
- **Prevent** - Home Office Online Prevent Training. This course must be completed before Home Office prevent referrals training and Home Office channel training
- **Home Office Prevent Referrals Training** - The Online Prevent training (above) must be completed before accessing this course
- **Home Office Channel Training** -The Online Prevent training (above) must be completed before accessing this course
- **Home Office Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Awareness Training** - Home Office training provided by the Virtual College
- **Forced Marriage Awareness Training** - This online course has been developed with the Forced Marriage Unit of the Foreign Office and is delivered through the Virtual College

- **Self Harm and Suicide -** resources included in response to requests from schools where self harm and suicide are issues for some students
    - https://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/445676 - self harm and risky behaviour, MindEd learning package
    - http://www.nwyhelearning.nhs.uk/elearning/HEE/SuicidePrevention/ - NHS Education England 'We need to talk about suicide' learning package
    - https://www.relias.co.uk/hubfs/ZSACourse3/story_html5.html?%0Dutm_source=Relias&utm_campaign=Training-Landing-Page&lms=1b - Mersey Care NHS trust

## Education Welfare Service - Feedback from Schools



Over the past few weeks Education Welfare Officers (EWO) have been proactive to support all schools in addressing issues relating to the welfare of 'vulnerable' students. The EWOs have also been supporting schools to make welfare checks. The feedback from Designated Safeguarding Leads has been extremely positive and a huge thank you to everyone who has taken the time to let us know that this support has been appreciated. Here are just a few of the comments received:

"This has been great and hugely helpful from our point of view - above and beyond as ever with team NCC!"

"We have had twice weekly calls from our EWO and she has been doing a great job for us, chasing up students we have been concerned about… We now have a good system established and EW has been brilliant!"

"Although I haven't had any particular issues, it is reassuring to have weekly contact with my EWO at the moment. It has also been helpful for me to be able to talk through strategies that I am using with some of our vulnerable families during these strange times."

"Our EWO has been a great help. We have contacted her a few times when we have struggled to get in touch with families and she has chased this up and resolved it very quickly. This has enabled us to get on with all the other jobs we need to do as often chasing families is very time consuming. I cannot thank her enough for the support and just knowing she is there when needed is a huge help!"

"We have had excellent support from our EWO over the last 7 weeks. She has maintained contact with me through phone calls and e-mails and supported our vulnerable families whom she was also involved with. She has had a 100% success record with 6 families we were unable to make contact with. Many thanks to her and your team for this."

## Contact us

Whether your school is open or closed during the next few months, please contact us with any queries you might have by phone or by email.

**Carol Leckie, Schools' Safeguarding Team Manager, 01670 622720**

**Carol.Leckie@northumberland.gov.uk**

If you cannot make contact with a member of staff directly then please use these generic details. Your query will be logged and you will receive a response by the end of the working day or within 24 hours.

- If you have a query for the Education Welfare team please email - educationwelfare@northumberland.gov.uk
- If you have a query for the looked after children's team please email - eslac.info@northumberland.gov.uk
- If you have a query for the Safeguarding team or children educated other than at school team please email - eotashealth@northumberland.gov.uk
- If you have a more urgent query or request please telephone 01670 622787.