

Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership with Northumberland Virtual school

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

Issue 40: 5th June 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 12th June 2020.

DfE Updates



School exclusion - Statutory guidance on the exclusion of pupils from local-authority-maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units.

Additional guidance has been added on changes to school exclusions during the COVID-19 outbreak. The temporary changes to the exclusion process include:

- Making specific provision for governing board meetings and independent reviews to take place via audio or video link, if not reasonably practicable in person due to COVID-19;
- Time extensions for governing board meetings and independent review panel (IRP) meetings, if necessary;
- An extension to the time limit for application for an independent review.

The changes will apply to exclusions occurring between 1 June and 24 September (inclusive of those dates) as well as to exclusions that occur before 1 June which are still 'live'. The DfE guidance describing the new arrangements can be found [here](#). **This is purely about processes – it does not change the power to exclude.** When taking the decision to exclude a student, we ask all schools to consider the increased risk to exploitation of any student that has been excluded from school. We also ask, that with this in mind, you give serious consideration to alternative sanctions.

All other links to DfE updates are organised in the [Information for DSLs folder](#)

Safeguarding from Harmful Influences Online



A document produced by Northumbria Police to support families to protect their children from harmful influences online, is available in the [Information for DSLs folder](#). The information is directed at families but is also helpful to safeguarding leads in school.

Wider opening of Schools from 1st June - Unexpected 'One Site' Issues



Information taken from Dean Jackson's Headteachers's Update (Monday 1st June)

'Schools are doing their very best to minimise the mixing of groups of children to reduce risks to staff, children and families. This includes keeping children on one site 'whenever possible'. This strategy is, however, throwing up some unexpected further issues for some of our key worker families who rely on other settings to support wrap around care. Rigidly sticking to a single site policy means that some of those key workers cannot now attend work, which creates risk to the wider community.

Could I ask that headteachers take the individual circumstances of key worker families into account and consider allowing childminder pick-ups where they are unavoidable. This is permissible within the guidance. Childminders will also be operating under best practice with regard to safe working so the additional risk of accessing such wrap around care should be minimal'.

Analysis of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) for the Education Sector 2020 (Social Care Institute for Excellence)



The Social Care Institute for Excellence has just published a new resource for schools. The document is a digest of the government's periodic analysis of Serious Case Reviews (SCR)(2020), specifically drawing out the pertinent learning for schools, school leaders and DSLs.

This analysis brings together key trends and emerging themes arising from reviews that were conducted following the death of a child, or instance of a child coming to serious harm, as a result of abuse or neglect. Researchers reviewed 368 SCRs, involving a total of 404 children, from the period between April 2014 and March 2017.

The report aimed to:

- identify common themes and trends across all SCR reports;
- sample reviews to better understand systemic strengths and vulnerabilities of practice;
- investigate the impact of policy changes and initiatives; and
- assessing the extent to which recommendations from reviews have been implemented and any impact on practice of these changes.

The Serious Case Review analysis for the education sector can be found [here](#).

Schools' Safeguarding Team - DSL refresher training



The Northumberland Schools' Safeguarding Team has recently been developing virtual training to support DSLs whilst it is not possible to deliver or attend face to face training. During the Covid-19 pandemic the necessity to update your DSL training within a 2 year cycle has been removed. Some schools may prefer to wait until face to face training is available again, but for those of you who would like to receive refresher training as soon as possible, there will be a virtual version of the DSL refresher training for you to book onto as soon as possible. Please keep checking future Safe To Learn Briefings for more information and availability. We will also contact individual DSLs via email.

In the meantime, we would like you to complete a questionnaire to support us to assess your training needs. If you haven't already completed this questionnaire, please access it via this [link](#)

Schools: Online Safety Considerations for Reopening (SWGfL)



As schools plan to reopen, SWGfL has drawn together the following guidance as helpful pointers to reopening your school, including issues to think about when welcoming your children back from lockdown. The guidance sheet can be accessed [here](#).

NSPCC - Online safety during coronavirus

NSPCC
Learning

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and lockdown, people are relying even more on online technology. With schools only open for some children, most are at home, away from their friends, peers and teachers. And social distancing means that they may not have seen extended family in some time. This makes being online extra important for children and young people.

Many children are spending more time online – and expanding the ways they use the internet. They may join online communities or start using new video-calling platforms. Children who receive support from services may go online to contact social workers, counsellors and others in their support network.

Whilst all this can bring benefits to children's mental health and wellbeing, children can be exposed to risk online.

When children spend time online they may be exposed to:

online abuse, cyberbullying, sexual exploitation, sexting, the sharing of inappropriate materials, grooming and radicalisation

The NSPCC have a number of resources providing information and advice about these subjects and they can be found [here](#)

During the coronavirus pandemic, children may be at increased risk as they are online more often. Europol has reported an increase in some countries in offenders attempting to contact young people via social media since the outbreak of the virus (Europol, 2020).

Some children may also have limited access to the internet at home. This may impact their level and quality of education, their contact with friends and wider family, and potentially affect their mental health.

To help you understand and tackle the risks all children face online, the NSPCC have pulled together some resources, including updated information on communicating with children via social media, running online services, tips for parents and carers and advice to share with children.

School Registers



New advice to schools has been issued by the DfE to support schools in completing registers, now that schools have opened to specific year groups as well as those children already eligible to attend school. Following the publication of this DfE guidance on attendance, Northumberland's Education Welfare Team has published the following advice: [Advice to schools on completing registers from 01.06.20](#)

This document is also stored in the [Information for DSLs folder](#).

Recruitment, control, exploitation: Spotting the signs of child exploitation

It is important to recognise that there are several different forms of child exploitation.

While sexual exploitation is often in the headlines, the term child exploitation essentially refers to a form of child abuse that involves a child or young person being used for the gain of someone else.

Dawn Jotham has written an article for SecEd, published on 27th May which explains the process of child exploitation and supports schools to recognise many of the signs that a young person is being exploited.

The article is available [here](#)



Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation - Know, Look, Act Poster



Simon Bailey, the NPCC lead for the Child Protection and Abuse Investigations Working Group, has written the following message regarding the **Know, Look, Act poster** aimed at key workers and neighbours, which he would like you to circulate amongst colleagues. This message was featured in the Headteachers' update on 2nd June.

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing in my capacity as the NPCC lead for the Child Protection and Abuse Investigations Working Group. We have been working with The Children's Society through our Prevention Programme to develop a number of materials for Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation during COVID-19.

*The attached poster (link below) builds on this work and is designed for **neighbours and key workers visiting premises** during the crisis. It outlines signs to be mindful of and how to report any concerns. I would be grateful if you could circulate the poster through as many of your channels as possible including social media, HomeWatch, Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Key Individual Networks.*

Simon Bailey QPM, Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary

<http://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CSAE-poster-external.pdf>

Please also remember that local resources can be found on the NCC Safeguarding Children - Information for Professionals page - [located here](#).

Domestic Abuse in Rural Communities - Northumberland Domestic Abuse Services (NDAS) Survey

Just a reminder to colleagues that the NDAS survey, to consult with residents and professionals about domestic abuse issues and services within rural communities, is **open until 30th June**. The survey will enable NDAS to identify the levels of support needed in rural Northumberland. The feedback will allow them to provide support services to those living with abuse in the rural areas of our county which can be tailor-made to suit each community.

It would be very helpful to NDAS if you could share the questionnaire with your colleagues in rural schools, or those who live in rural communities, and encourage them to take the time to complete the survey. The survey can be accessed by following this [link](#).



NDAS website: <https://www.nda.services/>

Update from Sorted



Sorted - [Northumberland's Young People's Substance Misuse Service](#) - is still able to offer support to any young people with substance misuse issues. They now have a team of 5 substance misuse workers and team manager Darran Hope.

Sorted is able to provide information and practical and theoretical advice on the risks and concerns associated with substance and alcohol misuse, along with individualised reduction plans for young people. The team is also able to offer information and advice to young people on reduced tolerance, as many won't have been able to access substances as easily during lockdown. This support will be alongside activities to prevent them from relapsing back into use when lockdown eases more.

Sorted has been developing a Google Form for submissions which will be available soon from the website or on request. They are also, where time allows, able to take phone referrals if you are having problems with the form. In the meantime, the [current PDF](#) is still available.

Please contact Sorted if you have concerns around a young person's substance misuse.

Email Sorted@northumberland.gov.uk or telephone on 01670 536400.

Kooth



Further information has been provided for schools in relation to Kooth from the Northumberland CCG.

[Introducing Kooth](#): A new online mental wellbeing community for children and young people in Northumberland.

As the UK lockdown measures are easing, now more than ever, we need to be alert to signs that our children may be experiencing anxiety, depression or low mood. Many pupils across the UK are returning to school this week after months of being away from the classroom. At the same time, many children are remaining at home, isolated from their friends and potentially feeling left out.

In response to this, NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is introducing a new digital package of mental health support for Children and Young people (C&YP) in Northumberland called Kooth.

In approximately five weeks' time, professionals can refer children and young people into Kooth's free, confidential and anonymous online support and counselling service which includes self- help resources, magazine articles, links to crisis support, safeguarded and monitored live drop-in sessions and also 1-1 scheduled counselling with qualified professionals. CY&P can receive up to six sessions of counselling support from Kooth before either moving on, or in some cases being escalated to the CNTW CYPS service where needed. CY&P can also self-refer into the service.

Kooth will be accessible through any device with internet access, including; laptop, smart phone, or tablet.

Jonny Cardwell, consultant community paediatrician and child health lead for NHS Northumberland CCG talks more about what we can expect to see from Kooth in this [YouTube](#) clip.

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.