Safe to Learn

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 26: July 2019

Advice and guidance is available from the Education and Skills Service and the Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NSSP):

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All schools/academies/alternative providers need to know about safeguarding is on the Safeguarding and Schools section of the *Virtual School* webpage.

The minimum safeguarding requirements you should have in place by law can be found in the DfE's statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019.

Please remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that safeguarding practice in your own organisation is compliant and meets required standards.

Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership

Both *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the Ofsted safeguarding guidance are clear that schools should have an understanding of the new local arrangements which replace safeguarding boards.
In Northumberland the new strategic body is called the Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NSSP). The role of the NSSP is to:

- Provide strategic leadership, direction and governance for the delivery of safeguarding arrangements in Northumberland through equal and joint responsibility;
- Agree on ways to coordinate their safeguarding services;
- Act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including serious child safeguarding incidents.

As part of the transition from a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to the NSSP the three Safeguarding Partners have to publish Northumberland Safeguarding Partnership Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, which are available at this **link**.

Engagement with schools remains a key priority within the new structure and schools are now known as a **relevant agency.** Relevant agencies in Northumberland are those that have been identified as organisations with key responsibilities for partnership working to support the effective safeguarding of children and young people and who will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All relevant agencies will form the **Northumberland Safeguarding Children Committee (NSCC)** and will meet regularly to discuss local priorities and to guide the work of the various sub groups.

Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2019

You will all be aware that keeping Children Safe in Education was refreshed this year and by now you will have shared Part One and Annex A with all staff. Remember, it is important that you keep a record to show that all staff have read and understood the guidance and that you check throughout the year that they are clear about the processes in your school that they should use when they have concerns.

Ofsted will want reassurance that staff awareness is not only evidenced through a signing sheet but that they have a day to day working knowledge of safeguarding, the signs and indicators, the vulnerabilities of certain groups of young people and a sound understanding of your school process for reporting safeguarding.

The DfE made minor changes to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* on 1st October 2019 relating to section three which focuses on safer recruitment. The changes do not need to be shared with all staff but are relevant to the management team and the DSL. The updated paragraphs are numbers 164 and 165.

Website update – Safeguarding and Schools

All of the information and guidance we provide for you is available on the Safeguarding and Schools section of the Virtual School webpage.

We have updated a number of our *10 things* documents:

- **10 things you should know about safeguarding in schools**
- **10 things you should know about Operation Encompass**
- **10 things you should know about Operation Endeavour**
- **10 things you should know about child exploitation**
- **10 things you should know about Prevent**
- **10 things you should know about modern slavery**
- **10 things you should know about children with health needs**

The NSSP's Schools' Engagement sub-group has developed the following guides to support Designated Safeguarding Leads through the referral process to Early Help and Social Care services:

- **the Referral Process- flowchart**
- **First Contact - what happens to your referral**
- **10 top tips when making a referral**
- **examples of application of thresholds to referrals at different levels**

- **making a good referral**

JTAI update

In June the local authority and partner agencies had a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of our multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children from child exploitation. The outcomes letter was received on 2nd August 2019 and an action plan has been drafted in response to the 19 recommendations for improvement made by the inspectors. Thank you to all of our colleagues in schools, who either met with inspectors or provided feedback to enquiries and also thank you to everyone who sent us positive messages of support!

Key extracts from from the inspection feedback include:

- co-location in the MASH of relevant safeguarding agencies, including health, **education** and the youth offending service (YOS), facilitates the consideration of the needs of the whole family
- schools in Northumberland routinely receive information through Operation Endeavour, an initiative about children who are missing. This initiative strengthens information-sharing about children and families of concern
- the appointment of a specialist MASH education worker further supports information-sharing with schools, appropriately informing analysis of risk and planning for children
- harm reduction work has been proactive as a result of the shared approach of partners recognising the vulnerability of children and underlying concerns. Inspectors saw examples where schools had passed intelligence to the police as a result of their vigilant observation of who children were associating with outside of the school
- schools display a good understanding of risks to children of criminal exploitation. They have access to regular and up-to-date training, and can apply this effectively. School staff are proactive in ensuring the risks to children are mitigated while children are in school.

In response to the plan there will be ongoing developments and training from our team. We have already taken action:

- we started implementation of a refreshed CME (children missing education) process and updated guidance to schools. As well as schools, all alternative providers are now also required to submit monthly CME returns. These are scrutinised at a multi agency panel, which includes colleagues from the SEND team, the Admissions and Inclusion team, children's services team managers and school representatives. The key role of this panel is to scrutinise the monthly returns, provide support and challenge to settings where concerns about individual children are identified and ensure that children and young people are referred to the correct support services as required
- an updated drug policy is available on our website, ensuring links are made to the vulnerabilities of young people who may be misusing substances and all forms of exploitation
- a new protocol to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers has been launched
- work has been initiated to address the fact that although the NSSP receives a comprehensive suite of performance data (including data on children missing education, children who are electively home educated and exclusions) there has been no challenge to agencies to further understand the links between increased risk to children permanently excluded and their vulnerability to exploitation. This work will be led by Jane Walker, the Virtual School Headteacher, and will be part of the School Engagement Group work plan for the coming year

Schools may wish to consider their behaviour policies to ensure that any sanctions which result in either fixed or permanent exclusion are appropriate and that the vulnerability of children missing education are a key consideration before exclusions are issued.

County Lines

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to tackle serious and violent crime, the Home Office has relaunched its County Lines awareness-raising campaign. With the right knowledge, staff will know how to spot potential victims and report concerns to either the Police, anonymously to CrimeStoppers, or safeguard in line with their organisation's safeguarding policy.

This campaign pack and other resources contain recommended messaging, promotional social media images and posters. Other resources can also be located on the NCC Safeguarding Children - Information for Professionals page.

Additional dates have now been added for the excellent half day workshop on County Lines and can be booked through Learning Together. Places are still available for the sessions on 15/1/2020 and 13/2/2020.

Protocol to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers

Please find below documentation regarding *Northumberland's protocol for reducing the unnecessary criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers.*

The protocol follows a national model (from the DfE, Ministry of Justice and Home Office) and has been developed in Northumberland during the last 12 months with relevant multi-agency partners including the local authority, Police, Probation service, representation from the magistrates' bench, and Crown Prosecution Service, and volunteers from education/training/employment providers in Northumberland.

Implementation of the protocol will involve a training offer which education settings can all access, details of which will follow shortly.

- **Northumberland Protocol for Reducing the Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked After Children and Care Leavers**
- **Flowchart - dealing with incidents involving a looked after child or care leaver**
- **10 things you should know about the protocol for reducing the unneccessary criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers**

PSHE and RSE

With health as a topic area being integrated into the Relationships and Sex Education agenda, the Public Health Team at NCC will be working closely with the Education & Skills Service to ensure that we share knowledge, guidance and resources effectively.

Gill Finch (Schools' Equalities Co-ordinator) has created a padlet dedicated to **PSHE and RSHE** and it is populated with key resources. Gill is also your point of contact for RSHE support and enquiries **gill.finch@northumberland.gov.uk**

To kick this off the local health services that are commissioned on behalf of schools have produced short video briefings - An introduction to Public Health School Nursing-the NCMP Programme, An Introduction to your local sexual health clinic and How to properly put on a condom.

These resources are available on the padlet and can be used to:

1. inform you about the support we can offer locally
2. teach the more challenging aspects of SRHE.

Schools are asked to familiarise themselves with the padlet and feedback on these particular resources via **publichealth@northumberland.gov.uk**

Private Fostering

Over the last couple of years we have been raising awareness of Private Fostering in all training sessions. A useful e-learning package has been added on Learning Together and we would recommend this to schools. DSLs and pastoral staff - Private Fostering resources

Brexit and Safer recruitment

The government has published advice to schools which says that in the event of a no-deal Brexit 'the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) will no longer automatically receive or maintain details of those teachers who have been sanctioned, post exit, in EEA member states'.

If the UK leaves with a deal, the existing system for checking EEA sanctions will remain in place until at least 31 December 2020.

Peer on Peer Abuse

A section on Peer on Peer Abuse was introduced to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* in September 2018. It covers managing reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools and colleges. Ofsted recently sent a reminder to the Director of Children's Services about the importance of this subject and the need for schools and other settings to be fully aware of the key messages, which includes the following:

- Nothing is more important than safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- Children can sexually abuse other children and it doesn't only happen in secondary schools; it can take place in primary schools too.
- Child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment exists in many forms, from calling someone sexualised names, flicking bra straps, lifting up skirts, grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia to sexual assault and rape.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment can happen online and offline (and in many cases there will be an element of both).
- Schools and colleges need to know how to identify it, manage reports and support all parties involved.
- It is essential that all victims are reassured that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, should never be tolerated and should never be seen as an inevitable part of growing up.
- Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in protecting them.

Detailed advice from the DfE to support schools and colleges to understand, prevent and respond to reports of child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment and how and when to refer cases is available here. This guidance, Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges, was published in 2017.

Ofsted's Sean Harford, (National Director for Education) and Yvette Stanley (National Director for Social Care) have written a useful article about Peer-on-peer abuse.

Reducing Parental Conflict

Helen Lancaster, our Supporting Families Operations Co-ordinator, attended the recent DSL refresher sessions to provide information Specialist Parenting Programmes. Key points were that:

- the Department for Work and Pensions has contracted Relate to deliver 4 programmes for parents across Northumberland. Any practitioner working with children and families across services / organisations can refer in to access this support
- the programme will deliver evidence-based interventions which reduce parental conflict and improve outcomes for children

Training for DSLs and termly locality briefings

Booking for training for Northumberland DSLs for 2019-20 is now open. Follow this link to view details of the programme and to book your place(s).

Please not that an additional session has been added on 5/11/2019. This will be held at The Fuse, Prudhoe at the request of schools in the west of the county.

Suicide Awareness

A concerning number of suicides are being referred to the NSCC, Community Safety Partnership and Adult Safeguarding Board. The NSCC encourages you to view this suicide prevention training which will take about 20 minutes. It may give you the skills and knowledge to help someone contemplating suicide. The video can be viewed as a group in case anyone watching needs support and this also allows for discussion.

The Zero Suicide Alliance is a collaborative of National Health Service trusts, businesses and individuals who are all committed to suicide prevention in the UK and beyond. The alliance is ultimately concerned with improving support for people contemplating suicide by raising awareness of and promoting free suicide prevention training which is accessible to all. The aims of this training are to: enable people to identify when someone is presenting with suicidal thoughts/behaviour, to be able to speak out in a supportive manner, and to empower them to signpost the individual to the correct services or support.

Useful Resources

Guidance for Safer Working Practices UPDATED VERSION

In May 2019, a new version of the non-statutory *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education* was published. The latest version of the Safer Working Practices document is now version 2 and was republished in August 2019, albeit with the front cover date of May 2019.
This document is a useful guidance document for schools wishing to refresh their staff code of conduct

If You Don't Know, Don't Go (West Yorkshire Police and Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership)

West Yorkshire Police and Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership have launched a campaign warning young people to be wary of invites to free parties from older people who they know little about.

A tactic used by perpetrators of child sexual exploitation is to lure children to parties through social media and word of mouth, where they then ply them with drinks and drugs before pressuring them into having sex. They may also bribe them into doing things they aren't comfortable with in return for a lift home, as the 'party' is often held in an area that the young person is unfamiliar with.

Advice to Young people
If you do accept an invitation to a party or gathering there are things that you need to do to keep yourself safe:

- Make sure you know the location of where you're going and whose party it is.
- Read the road signs if you accept a lift.
- Tell a trusted adult where you are going and who you're going with.
- Tell someone what time you're expected back.
- Make sure you have credit on your phone.
- Make sure your mobile battery is fully charged.
- Take enough money with you to get you home

Read more here, and download a poster to communicate the safe messages here.

Home to school travel and transport: statutory guidance (CONSULTATION)

The government is seeking views on revised statutory guidance for local authorities on home to school travel and transport for children of compulsory school age. The consultation closes on 31st October 2019.

Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts

Updated guidance has been issued by the government on the policies and documents that governing bodies and proprietors of schools must have, many of which should inform your safeguarding policy.

Ofsted research document

Ofsed recently published a research document, *Exploring Moving to Home Education in Secondary Schools*. The research aims to understand more fully how moves to home education are made rather than about home education in general and does not look at the content or quality of what is being taught at home. The research pays particular attention to children moving to home education as a means to resolve issues at school.

Whole School Approaches to Promoting Emotional Health and Wellbeing – A Good Practice Guide

A suite of 3 documents, which have been co-produced with Designated Mental Health Leads from across the county, designed to support Northumberland Schools with developing and sustaining a 'thriving' school in the broadest sense, was published on the ecourier on 17th September. Included is a good practice guide framed around the eight principles which underpin a good whole school approach as described in the government guidance produced by NHS England in 2015, *Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing.*

Prevent

A number of documents have been provided for education settings by colleagues in the NE terrorism unit. These are for staff reference only.

 2019 Signs and Symbols Aid Poster.pc	 2019 Signs and Symbols Guidance.pd	 Police Pagan Association Extremism
CTP NOC Signs and Symbols Guidance Document	CTP NOC Signs and Symbols Aid Posters	Police Pagan Association Extremism and Paganism Guidance

The Lets Talk About It website is also useful.

Earlier this summer the Home Office announced changes to the terrorism threat level system. The changes mean that the system will now reflect the threat posed by all forms of terrorism, irrespective of ideology.This means, for the first time, the threat from extreme right and left-wing terrorism will be reflected in the published threat level.

There will now be a single national threat level describing the threat to the UK. The threat from Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Northern Ireland will remain separate.

The definitions of the LOW, SUBSTANTIAL and CRITICAL threat levels will change meaning the new definitions are as follows:

- CRITICAL – an attack is highly likely in the near future
- SEVERE – an attack is highly likely
- SUBSTANTIAL – an attack is likely
- MODERATE – an attack is possible but not likely
- LOW – an attack is highly unlikely

The level of threat has not changed from SEVERE, meaning an attack is highly likely. Individuals can check the current threat level using the here - Current Threat Level