

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 56 9th July 2021

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021



The 2021 version of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) was published on 6th July 2021. We shared a summary of the changes at the locality briefings and will make it available to all DSLs. We will also be producing a set of slides which you can adapt to use in your September training. **Please let us know if you would like these.** They will be available from Tuesday 13th September. We will also update our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy before the summer holidays.

New duty for Virtual School Headteachers to promote the education of children with a social worker



From September 2021, the role of the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) will be extended to promote the education of children with a social worker.

This new duty aims to use the experience and expertise of VSHs, giving them strategic leadership responsibility. VSHs are not being asked to provide support to individual children and their families.

The government's [Children in Need review](#) in 2019 found that children with a social worker do worse than their peers at every stage of their education and poor outcomes persist, even after social worker involvement ends. Experiences of adversity and trauma can create barriers to education that affect attendance, learning, behaviour and wellbeing. However, with the right support in place, children can overcome these barriers to reach their potential.

Virtual School Heads, who have statutory responsibilities for looked-after and previously looked-after children, are well positioned to enhance partnerships between agencies and raise aspirations for this cohort of children. The impact should be the closing of the attainment gap so that children can achieve their potential.

In Northumberland we have a strong starting point, with support services for school attendance, children missing education and schools' safeguarding already working together in the Virtual School. Planning is underway so that we can begin implementation of the duty from September, and professionals will receive further information in due course. The planning will focus on the training and resources needed to:

- enhance partnerships between education settings and the local authority so agencies can work together
- identify the needs of the cohort and address barriers to poor educational outcomes and ensure pupils make educational progress

- offer advice and support to key professionals to help children make progress, including through increasing their confidence in using evidence-based interventions
- promote practice that supports children's engagement in education, recognising that attending an education setting can be an important factor in helping to keep children safe from harm.

DSLs will have a role in fulfilling the duty and this is now referred to in the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, page 100:

[DSLs will] help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children, including children with a social worker, are experiencing, or have experienced, with teachers and school and college leadership staff. Their role could include ensuring that the school or college, and their staff, know who these children are, understand their academic progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; supporting teaching staff to identify the challenges that children in this group might face and the additional academic support and adjustments that they could make to best support these children. (page 100)

DfE research into improving educational outcomes for children with a social worker will continue, and all VSHs will contribute to this as they fulfil their new duty from September.

This new duty is explained in more detail in DfE guidance [Promoting the education of children with a social worker \(June 2021\)](#).

**Northumberland's Virtual School Headteacher is Jane Walker, 01670 622734,
Jane.Walker@northumberland.gov.uk**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges: Advice for governing bodies, proprietors, headteachers, principals, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads – September 2021

The above named guidance has been updated, 7th July 2021. This guidance reflects the recent Ofsted review and the latest version of Keeping Children Safe In Education 2021. The document can be accessed by following this [link](#)

DfE Remote Education Guidance

The Department for Education (DfE) has updated the guidance on safeguarding and remote education in England during the coronavirus pandemic with additional information on keeping children and young people safe online, and advice on live streaming lessons. The DfE has also updated guidance on remote education in England to include a new section on safeguarding and online safety.

Read the guidance: [Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Read the guidance: [Remote education good practice](#)

Prevent Training

The Home Office training packages, for anyone wishing to refresh their Prevent training, are easily accessible and the training is quick and easy to complete. Follow the link below to access the training - [Prevent training](#)

Ofsted review of sexual abuse



The Government have recently requested Ofsted to look at whether schools and colleges have appropriate processes in place to allow pupils to report sexual abuse concerns freely, knowing these will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly and appropriately. The link to the complete report can be found [here](#).

The key recommendations from the report were:

Recommendations for school and college leaders

School and college leaders should create a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated, and where they identify issues and intervene early to better protect children and young people. In order to do this, they should assume that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are happening in their setting, even when there are no specific reports, and put in place a whole-school approach to address them. This should include:

- a carefully sequenced RSHE curriculum, based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance, that specifically includes sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online. This should include time for open discussion of topics that children and young people tell us they find particularly difficult, such as consent and the sending of 'nudes'
 - high-quality training for teachers delivering RSHE
 - routine record-keeping and analysis of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online, to identify patterns and intervene early to prevent abuse
 - a behavioural approach, including sanctions when appropriate, to reinforce a culture where sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated
 - working closely with LSPs in the area where the school or college is located so they are aware of the range of support available to children and young people who are victims or who perpetrate harmful sexual behaviour
 - support for designated safeguarding leads (DSLs), such as protected time in timetables to engage with LSPs
 - training to ensure that all staff (and governors, where relevant) are able to:
 - better understand the definitions of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including online sexual abuse
 - identify early signs of peer-on-peer sexual abuse
 - consistently uphold standards in their responses to sexual harassment and online sexual abuse
- Following the publication of the report Ofsted published an updated handbook for inspection

Tri.X Review

Tri.X is the online procedures manual for Northumberland Children's Social Care and should be the go-to place for staff www.proceduresonline.com/northumberlandcs

As part of a review of the site children's services would like to gather your views in this short survey, so the site can be developed to help you in your role. You can access the survey here:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=3qkTu5CC8EKpgNw73-cPQE44euyFRaREkVGwLXQ3oLZUQkpITUhrWVU1STdMSVY0MIINU1k4QjhPVy4u>



Northumberland Children's Services
Procedures Manual

Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF)

Children's Services has been reviewing all systems to ensure they are aligned with the Signs of Safety framework. Earlier this year we shared a draft referral form with you, the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) and all feedback from you was shared with Children's Services. Two significant actions have now taken place:

1. The new form has gone live, meaning there is now one referral form for both Early Help and Children's services. The link to the form is here:

https://form.northumberland.gov.uk/form/auto/multi_agency_ref_form

The link to the MARF guidance is here:

<https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms/media/6472/marf-top-tips.pdf>

2. In terms of Early Help the following information from Emma Walker provides an update:

"The Northumberland (Multi Agency Referral Form) MARF is now up and running, this is now also our new Early Help referral pathway (replacing the Hub referral).

I thought it would be useful to just mention some tweaks in terminology, the term Hub has been somewhat confusing as the "hubs" have grown so much over the years, we also now have the Community Hub and hub is being used in the discussion around the new Supporting Families in terms of Family Hubs.

The use of the Early Help Pathway by GPs is so important, so I wanted to email to make sure we avoid any confusion, to try and make things clearer we are changing some terminology so that:

*A Hub referral - is now **Early Help Support Request***

*Rather than referring to the Hub - you refer to **Early Help First Contact**. The email address is now: earlyhelp@northumberland.gov.uk*

*If we cannot find a solution to a situation those families may be discussed at the - **Early Help Virtual Hub Meeting***

In practice this makes very little difference, the MARF (with Early Help Support request ticked) still comes to us and we will look to find the best support for the young people and families you refer.

If you have any questions please do contact me emma.walker@northumberland.gov.uk'

At this time a copy of the MARF will not be sent back to you therefore you need to continually copy and save your entries as you are typing them in. This issue is being addressed by the company who have developed the system.

We will shortly be sharing a quick survey with you to gauge initial feedback on the MARF.

Early Years Framework 2021



The new framework, effective on 1st September, was published recently.

The main changes are in learning and child development - the safeguarding changes this year are minor clarifications or the addition of links to guidance published since the last time the framework was updated in 2017. These include online safety, information sharing and criminal record checks.

Collection of information for MASH enquiries



As you know members of the Schools' Safeguarding Team will contact DSLs when we require intelligence for MASH. The electronic system used by children's services (liquid logic/ICS) has been refreshed to ensure the information collected from all agencies follows the S-o-S model, therefore the information we will request will cover three main headings; **Worries, Strengths & Safety and Safety Planning**. We will be asking you

the following questions in relation to MASH intelligence gathering:

Worries

What are your worries about the child, please include attendance, presentation, behaviour, parental engagement with the school and between parent and child if known? Have there been any specific incidents which occurred outside of school that have impacted on the young person's school life? If yes, please describe them.

Strengths and Safety

What is going well in school and what is going well in relation to the family? Please include in this section examples of positive support that has been provided to the young person and any positive relationships you have identified in school or with the families.

Safety Planning

If you have any thoughts on any actions that could be put in place to support the young person please advise us of them.

Positions of Trust Law

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has announced the Positions of Trust law, which currently applies in England and Wales to roles like teachers and social workers, will be extended as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill to protect teenagers from abuse by making it illegal for sports coaches and religious leaders to engage in sexual activity with 16 and 17-year-olds in their care. The new legislation follows the long standing 'Close the Loophole' campaign by the NSPCC. Separately, the Home Office has published a series of factsheets giving details of the measures contained in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021 including a factsheet on the extension of the positions of trust provisions to include individuals who lead activities in sporting and religious settings. In Northern Ireland the Justice Minister has announced plans to widen the current abuse of trust legislation to strengthen the law protecting vulnerable children through an amendment to the Justice (Miscellaneous) Provisions Bill later in 2021.



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-factsheets/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-positions-of-trust-factsheet>

NSPCC Visitors in Schools Guidance



NSPCC Learning has created content providing safeguarding guidance for schools receiving visitors - including unplanned visitors - as well as for people and organisations visiting schools. The content covers: policies and procedures; vetting, disclosure and barring checks; a code of behaviour; and a check list for visitors.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/school-visitors>

Suicide and Self-Harm Pathway

The most recent version of the NSSP's suicide and self-harm pathway can be found in the procedures manual using the following link

https://www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion/p_self_harm.html

Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

As of Monday 3rd May, EDT have changed the way they work, this will provide a higher staffing level at the beginning of their shift, with 2 social workers now available from 16:30. EDT will no longer work nightshift and instead have moved to standby which ensures greater capacity to cover the 24/7 365 days per year cover we are legally required to fulfil. There will be no changes to the function of EDT, they will still only take referrals for urgent/crisis work that cannot be safely managed till the next working day. All requests for support from EDT must be made via telephone in the first instance to ensure staff have an understanding of what it is you are requesting. We will not accept email referrals only. Staff will be on call from midnight only to facilitate: CP work, adult safeguarding and Mental Health Act Assessments, all other queries outside of our statutory remit will be passed to daytime colleagues for follow up, this includes anything for 'information sharing' only.

A little bit of background. EDT are a small team of 7 social workers including a team manager, they also have a part time admin officer. The team have responsibility for all statutory functions under the Social Care Act, these include Child Protection, Adult Safeguarding and Mental Health Act Assessments for the county of Northumberland. We are based in Bedlington and cover Northumberland out to Cumbria in the west and Scottish borders in the north. There are 2 staff on shift during the week, we prioritise work that meets our statutory function, wherever possible we will try and support our daytime colleagues, but this will depend on the work that comes via our 'front door' from 5:00pm.

Please contact Carly Maddison, Team Manager carly.maddison@northumbria-healthcare.nhs.uk or Andrea Cross, Operations Manager andrea.cross@northumbria-healthcare.nhs.uk for further information.

Grace Northumberland Rape Crisis

Grace Northumberland rape crisis are now offering face to face counselling from a new central base in Blyth. They take referrals from professionals and self-referrals from women and girls aged 13 plus who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any point in lives.

Online and phone counselling is also available.

An online referral form is available on our website www.rctn.org.uk



Join Us and Pledge to End Violence Against Women and Girls

Join us in becoming White Ribbon Ambassadors or Champions and pledging to end violence against women and girls. The White Ribbon Organisation is a charity that works to encourage everyone, and especially men and boys, to make the White Ribbon Promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women and girls.



The council is working towards the White Ribbon accreditation, since it was agreed by the Executive Team, and our network of Ambassadors and Champions will have a key role to play.

- White Ribbon Ambassadors are men who engage with other men and boys in their day to day lives to call out abusive and sexist behaviour among their friends, colleagues and communities to promote a culture of equality and respect.
- White Ribbon Champions are women who play an essential role by encouraging men to get involved and in finding opportunities to inspire and inform others through presentations, conversations and social media.

How can you get involved?

- Make the [White Ribbon Promise](#)
- We would like to hear from colleagues who are interested in finding out more about joining our White Ribbon Ambassador and Champions Network. Please email Lesley.Pyle@northumberland.gov.uk

Training on Parental Relationships and the Impact on Children



The supporting Families Team are offering training for school staff on Parental Relationships and the Impact on Children. The aim of the course is to help any member of staff working in a school to identify and respond to parental conflict. It can also be used in PHSE lessons when talking about family relationships and dynamics.

Learning Outcomes are:

To understand the evidence base for the impact of parental conflict and its impact on children;

To understand the differences between domestic abuse and parental conflict;

To have effective conversations with children and young people and / or parents and carers about relationships in the family home

To be able to effectively signpost or refer parents / carers to appropriate services and online resources.

Schools Twilight Sessions 4 – 6pm

- Wednesday 15th September
- Monday 18th October
- Tuesday 16th November
- Monday 17th January
- Thursday 3rd March

Bookings can be made through Learning Together, if you have any queries please contact Jan Blake (janice.blake@northumberland.gov.uk).

And finally



We will be sharing a list of all next year's safeguarding training as a separate document to this. Please remember all bookings for DSL, governors and whole school training should come to the team and not through Learning Together. You can email Carol, Justine or Aly Webb (Alyson.Webb@northumberland.gov.uk)

Contact us

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
- **Justine Clephane, Schools' Safeguarding Consultant, 07879 874168**
justine.clephane@northumberland.gov.uk

If you cannot make contact with a member of staff directly then please use the following 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
- If you are worried about the safety of a child please call **OneCall 01670 536 400**