

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 29: March 2020

Responding to the Coronavirus Covid 19 outbreak

On Thursday 18th March 2020 the government announced that schools would close from Friday 20th March 2020 until further notice, except for the children of key workers (such as delivery men, Police, health workers) and vulnerable children (such as those with EHCPs).

We know that arrangements will be made for children eligible for free schools meals and that there will be no Year 11 exams in May and June. But we don't know the detail of the arrangements as yet or the DfE's advice about safeguarding the many children will no longer be at school during the hours of a normal school day.

During the following weeks we will continue to communicate with DSLs through regular Safe to Learn bulletins about the emerging situation. We have therefore brought forward the publication of this half term's Safe to Learn bulletin in the hope that you will receive it before your school might close and be able to act on important initial advice and guidance about staying safe in unprecedented times.

Children Open to Children's Services

Now that your school is closing, please contact the child's named social worker by email confirming the contact details for the named Designated Safeguarding Lead. Designated Safeguarding Leads may be invited to care team meetings during this period and continued involvement will ensure that we maintain the best possible outcomes for children and families.

It is likely that at this time there will be a reduced service from Children's Services with the children at the highest level of risk being prioritised. To ensure we protect children at this time good communication will be essential so if schools continue to have any concerns the named social worker should be updated. The Schools' Safeguarding team will continue to provide a service to DSLs and will also be available to respond to schools requiring advice and support.

In the case of any new referrals normal procedures should be followed, which is making a referral to **One Call 01670 536400**.

Safeguarding during the school closure

School Designated Safeguarding Leads still have an active role to play during an unplanned school closure. The following template is a suggestion for you to send to parents/carers to re-assure them that you are still available and that safeguarding remains a priority.

Your school logo and address/contact details

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

Safeguarding during the school closure

I am writing to you in my capacity as the safeguarding lead for the school, to outline how I aim to continue supporting families and children through the school closure due to the COVID 19 outbreak. Even though the school has closed I am available to support and safeguard all young people and to offer advice and support where needed. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or need advice on protecting or safeguarding a young person.

Whilst this is a generic letter, please be assured I will also make personal contact as soon as I am able with specific parent/carers to hold conversations on how best to support individual circumstances during the closure. Here are the steps the school is taking to support:

- During the closure - I can be reached on the following emergency mobile contact number: xxx or via my email xxx. This will be checked daily and is to report safeguarding concerns.
- Our pastoral team will continue to check emails and respond to concerns, as well as alert the DSL to any issues.
- Pupils can continue to use the school phone number to report any concerns to the school and we will do what we can to support and help.
- In the case of parent/carers currently involved in an EHA process, although we may not be able to meet in person I am exploring the possibility of using email and phone contact to continue to review progress and to support you as best as I am able. I will ring individual parent/carers to make these arrangements.
- If you need to report an urgent concern and for some reason you are not able to contact me - speak to Northumberland's front door to safeguarding services at One Call on 01670 536400.

Yours faithfully,

xxxx

DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Information for children and young people about coronavirus

The BBC has produced some helpful advice for talking to children and young people about the coronavirus. Children and young people are being bombarded with a range of information that they are often not entirely sure how to process. Much of the information is being circulated by the press, or via social media and some through playground conversations. Many of our students are struggling to make sense of this and are being given fragments of information which can then be easily misinterpreted. This inevitably causes stress and

anxiety for lots of young people. The advice produced by the BBC has been designed for parents to use, but it would also be helpful for teachers in schools. Access to the site is via this [link](#).



There is also coronavirus information for young people via Newsround which includes a video by doctors Chris and Xand Van Tullenken, whom lots of students will be familiar with. The Newsround information is available via this [link](#).

Keeping children and young people safe online

As many children and young people are having to remain in isolation due to underlying health conditions, the likelihood is that they will be spending more time online, both for learning and to socialise. This obviously increases the risk of vulnerability to producing inappropriate images of themselves, as well as the risks of exploitation and online abuse.



The South West Grid for learning (SWGfl) has produced award winning resources to help schools keep young people [safe online](#) as well as resources for young people.

The following sites are helpful for families, professionals and young people:

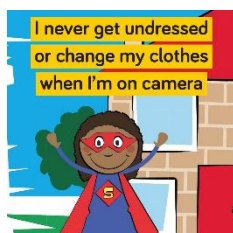
[So you got naked online](#) - this site has recently been updated for the 2020 audience and provides lots of very helpful information for students in KS3 and KS4. The new resources include:

- What is sexting?
- Can it happen accidentally?
- Trust and friendship
- How images or videos are shared online
- What are the first things to do
- Will you get into trouble?
- How to ask your parents/carers for help
- Will this affect your online reputation and your future?

[How to handle sexting incidents as a parent or teacher.](#) The definition of sexting used by SWGfl is: *taking a nude or sexually explicit image of yourself and sending it to another person*. The article from SWGfl explains sexting for families and professionals, including how the numbers of sexually explicit, self-generated images of children and young people online continue to increase. The article explains the many legal, ethical and personal challenges that sexting brings, and supports parents and teachers to manage sexting incidents involving young people.



The London Grid for Learning (LGfl) has produced the [Undressed](#) resources to support teachers and families to teach young people about not getting undressed online. There are many resources (including the ones outlined in this issue of Safe to Learn) which aim to inform and protect older children and young people around not getting naked online, but law enforcement agencies such as NCA and CEOP have repeatedly warned about sexual predators tricking very young children into getting changed or undressed on camera.



Reports include predators issuing a challenge to young children to see how fast they can get changed into different clothes such as a swimming costume. This 'game' or 'challenge' may take place over video chat or live streaming apps and children often don't even know this has happened. Videos can then be taken and circulated. The Undressed resource for teachers to use with primary school children includes a video and song for children to learn.

NCC IT team advice for staff on remote teaching and learning

It seems likely that staff will be asked to teach remotely in the coming weeks and months. The advice below is meant to complement, and **not replace or overrule, the Local Authority and school, or academy, policies and guidance** regarding remote teaching and learning / remote working - if you are not familiar with these, please ask for copies. This guidance can be accessed using this link

<https://www.smores.com/mkf3g-online-safety-update?ref=email>

DSL Locality Briefings

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend the DSL locality briefings that took place last week. The presentations shared at the briefings will be included in the **Information for DSLs folder** which can be accessed via this [link](#).

The final DSL Locality Briefings for this academic year are planned to take place at the following times and venues. Please book a place and we will contact you nearer the time if the sessions can no longer go ahead:

- [West Locality](#)
Tuesday 30th June 2020 (Twilight 3:30 - 5:30 pm Fuse Media Centre Prudhoe- science lab)
- [North Locality](#)
Wednesday 1st July 2020 (Twilight 3:30 - 5:30pm Bell View Resource Centre, Belford)
- [Central Locality](#)
Thursday 2nd July 2020 (Twilight 3:30 - 5:30pm Choppington Social Welfare Centre)

Remember to share this edition of Safe to Learn with your governors.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2020 Consultation

The DfE launched two consultations recently and it might be an appropriate time if your school closes to take the time to read and consider the proposed changes to KCSiE 2020. There are significant changes under consultation that will impact on the role of the DSL in school.

You can find the consultation here:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-in-schools-team/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2020/>

You can download the draft KCSiE here: https://consult.education.gov.uk/safeguarding-in-schools-team/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2020/supporting_documents/KCSiE%202020%20consultation.pdf

Carol Leckie, Schools' Safeguarding Team Manager, has produced a document which has outlined many of the changes, as well as explaining the impact these will have on DSLs. This document will be included in the **Information for DSLs folder** which was shared with you recently. You can also access the folder via this [link](#).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - consultation

As well as the proposed changes to KCSiE 2020, the DfE has started a consultation for the guidance: *Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges*. The changes have been designed to support the new Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education curriculum which will be implemented in September 2020. The changes include the emphasis of supporting the mental health and

wellbeing of victims of abuse and to support them, and future victims, 'by not undermining their confidence to report or come forward'.

There is also a key paragraph which reminds schools that they should be vigilant to any barriers to reporting sexual violence and sexual harassment, including 'disability, gender, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation'.

The draft version of this document can be downloaded [here](#).

New stalking protection orders in place to protect victims of stalking

The new civil **Stalking Protection Orders** came into force on 20th January 2020. It is important to remember that both staff and students in your school may become, or have been, victims of stalking.

There is no specific legal definition of stalking. However, the police and Crime Prosecution Service have adopted the following description: '**a pattern of unwanted, fixated and obsessive behaviour which is intrusive. It can include harassment that amounts to stalking or stalking that causes fear of violence or serious alarm or distress in the victim**'.

Stalking was made a specific criminal offence in England in 2012.

There is no such thing as a 'typical' stalking perpetrator or a 'typical' stalking victim. This crime disproportionately affects women and girls; however, it is important to recognise that men and boys may be victims too. Stalking affects people of all ages, and victims come from a wide range of backgrounds - stalking is not restricted to public figures and celebrities. We are also aware that people with a longstanding illness or disability are disproportionately likely to be victims of stalking.

The new **Stalking Protection Orders (SPO)** give police the power to act at the earliest opportunity to protect victims of stalking. Perpetrators breaching the order could be given a prison sentence of up to 5 years.

As of Monday 20th January, the police will be able to apply to magistrates for a **SPO** to provide immediate protection for victims while a decision is being made regarding further action to be taken.

The orders will also be able to force perpetrators of stalking to seek professional help. Breaching an SPO will be a criminal offence.

For further information on the impact of stalking; please have a look at the [Alice Ruggles Trust website](#)



What meeting am I attending?

There is a new resource on our webpage for Designated Safeguarding Leads and school staff called [What meeting am I attending?](#) It has been developed through the Schools' Engagement sub-group of the NSSP (previously NSCB) and tells you the reason for the meeting, who will be there, what happens next and what you need to prepare to make a valuable contribution.

Contacting the Virtual School

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. Your query will be logged and you will receive a response by the end of the working day or within 24 hours. If you can not make contact with a member of staff directly then please use these generic details and someone will respond to your query as soon as possible:

- 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.

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

Carol Leckie, Schools' Safeguarding Team Manager, 01670 622720
Carol.Leckie@northumberland.gov.uk

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.