

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 43: 26th 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 3rd July 2020

DSL Locality Briefings are back... Virtually



The Schools' Safeguarding Team are happy to announce that we will be holding DSL locality briefings this term. These will be virtual briefings where you will have the opportunity to hear local updates, discuss some of the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 and ask the team any safeguarding questions you may have.

The briefings will also be an opportunity to speak to DSLs in other schools in your area and find out what has been working well for them during the school closure period.

The dates of the briefings are as follows:

- **South east locality briefing - Tuesday 7th July - 3.45 - 4.45 pm**
- **North locality briefing - Wednesday 8th July - 3.45 - 4.45 pm**
- **West locality briefing - Thursday 9th July - 3.45 - 4.45 pm**

To book your place at your preferred briefing, please contact Victoria Kinneavy via email: victoria.kinneavy@northumberland.gov.uk and you will be sent an invitation/link to join the briefing.

What meeting am I attending

The Schools' Safeguarding team has published a helpful resource for DSLs and all school staff to clarify the different meetings you might be invited to attend to help and protect children, with details of what you need to prepare for each one and what you can expect when you are there. Please share widely with the staff in your school:

[What meeting am I attending?](#)

Kooth: A new online mental wellbeing community for children and young people in Northumberland



Further details of this service were provided in issue 40 of Safe To Learn, but since that time; Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group has announced that [Kooth](#) was launched on 22nd June 2020.

Kooth is a free, safe and anonymous online mental health and emotional wellbeing support service for children and young people aged between 11-25 years. Young people can access the service at www.kooth.com and can use its features as soon as they register. It can be accessed via computer, smartphone or tablet device so increases the options available to young people.

Normally Kooth has Integration and Participation workers who would visit schools to talk with staff and young people regarding Kooth. Due to current circumstances this is not possible so Lisa Locke and Malcolm Connelly from Xenzone, the provider of Kooth, are currently offering *An Introduction to Kooth presentations* on:

Tuesday 30th June, 11:30am - 1pm

Thursday 2nd July, 2pm - 3:30pm

These presentations will provide a full overview of the different elements of the service, including details on how to signpost. If you would like to attend either of these dates please email Malcolm at mconnelly@xenzone.com to confirm your attendance.

There may be lots of questions about this service, therefore if you could submit any questions when you confirm your attendance the Kooth team would be very grateful. Hopefully questions will be answered in the presentation but after the introduction you will also have the opportunity to ask further questions.

Further dates will also be scheduled and you can see the Professionals Kooth introduction letter in the DSL Folder - [here](#)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020



As we mentioned in last week's Safe To Learn (issue 42) the government published the update *Keeping Children Safe in Education* for September 2020. The main changes to the 2020 version include **managing allegations against supply teachers**, and the **explicit inclusion of mental health**.

All schools will need to ensure that safeguarding and child protection policies, and other related policies, have been updated. In some cases, schools will need to create new procedures, for example, what to do if there are allegations about supply teachers.

There will be a model Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy made available to all schools via the Virtual School webpage very soon. We will let you know when this is available so look out for further information in future editions of Safe To Learn.

The update comes into force in September 2020, so the current (2019) version remains in use until then.

Summary of changes

This summary is also available in the DSL folder [here](#)

Key changes in part 1:

- The proposal in the draft for some staff to have a shortened version of the guidance has been dropped – the same requirements as 2019 apply (Part 1 and Annex A).
- There is rewording of the guidance (paragraph 21) around extra-familial harm, removing the links to contextual safeguarding but emphasising that “children may be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.”
- Paragraph 28 goes on to add emphasis on Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation.
- Children’s mental health is added to the guidance, ensuring that staff should consider when this might become a safeguarding concern.
- Concerns about staff are widened to include supply staff, reflecting changes in Part 4 that schools hold a responsibility to fully explore concerns about supply staff.
- Where a head teacher is also the sole proprietor of an independent school it is now mandatory to report to the LADO.

Key Changes in Part 2:

- There is a link to the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) guidance on when to call the police to ensure calls are appropriate and timely.
- The guidance refers to the Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education and Health Education guidance and the safeguarding implications of this. We’ll be sharing more information on this shortly.
- The emphasis has shifted from simply “allegations” to thinking about “safeguarding concerns and allegations”. Settings should have an approach that recognises that concerns tend to grow and may be apparent before someone makes an allegation.
- The particular vulnerability of children who need to have a social worker is recognised. This relates to the research on “[What Works in Education for Children who have social workers](#)”.
- Findings from the Children in Need review, ‘[Improving the educational outcomes of Children in Need of help and protection](#)’ contains further information; the conclusion of the review, ‘[Help, Protection, Education](#)’ sets out action Government is taking to support this.
- The guidance notes (paragraph 113) “Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and well being of their pupils” and asks that settings have in place clear systems and processes to identify these needs, and to consider when they become a safeguarding concern.” There is now a greater emphasis on schools’ role in supporting the mental health of children and young people.
- Much was removed from the draft 2020 guidance as the DfE recognises the immense pressures on schools in the summer of 2020. The changes had been informed by the [Review of children in need](#) last summer and no doubt will be coming on the horizon once life settles down. It is worth referring to the original draft 2020 guidance (February 2020) to see what is coming. More information can be found in the [mental health and behaviour in schools guidance](#). There is funding for senior mental health leads and the roll out of the [Link Programme](#).

Key Changes in Part 3

- The only change in this section is the reference to statutory guidance on [private fostering](#).

Key changes to part 4

- The responsibility to manage allegations about supply teachers is made clear; schools must ensure allegations are dealt with appropriately when they are not the employer. Schools cannot simply cease to use the supply teacher. Processes should be developed to manage this akin to the disciplinary procedure and the school should advise supply agencies of its process for managing allegations.
- A fourth bullet point has been added to the criteria for the LADO so schools must work with other agencies to investigate when anyone who has worked at the school has **“behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children”**. This now includes supply teachers as well as volunteers

Key changes to Annex A

- The potential for children to be exploited when missing education is emphasised. Staff need to be aware of the school’s unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.
- Child criminal exploitation is defined and included, together with some of the indicators. Child sexual exploitation is very much seen through the lens of child criminal exploitation. A link is added to [Child sexual exploitation: guide for practitioners](#).
- The wording around County Lines has been revised and improved.
- Wording around domestic abuse has been revised and improved. There is reference to [Operation Encompass](#) and the National Domestic Abuse Helpline with other references to the NSPCC, Refuge and SafeLives also added.
- Honour-based violence is better termed Honour-based abuse.
- A definition of terrorism has been added, a sentence amended to clarify radicalisation and a link made to the [Channel guidance](#). There is a link to the Prevent elearning and additional guidance.
- Peer on peer abuse is amended to Peer on peer / child on child abuse, recognising that sometimes this abuse is not between peers.
- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act came into force on 12 April 2019 and so has now been referenced in the definition of ‘upskirting’.

Key changes to Annex B:

- DSLs should work closely with senior mental health leads.
- “Training should provide designated safeguarding leads with a good understanding of their own role, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children’s social care” and the status has been enhanced – it was previously referred to as ‘informal training’.
- DSLs should help promote educational outcomes of vulnerable children and those children with Social Workers, by working closely with their teachers and sharing information about their welfare, safeguarding and child protection concerns. We will be writing more on this area soon – it is good news and long overdue. The new guidance does not make DSLs the lead for this work, but their role is to ‘help promote’ this alongside SENCo, Designated teacher for LAC (where appropriate) as well as working alongside other agencies.
- The transfer of child protection files rules apply to in-year transfers.
- One other crucial area dropped from the guidance is Safeguarding Supervision for DSLs. Supervision, however, is still a requirement in the inspection framework and so schools should look to implement this.

School Exclusion Risks after Covid-19 - Excluded Lives: Harry Daniels, Ian Thompson, Jill Porter, Alice Tawell and Hilary Emery



The *Excluded Lives* report looks at potential new and heightened risks for school exclusions caused by the recent Covid-19 pandemic. The report states that exclusions have risen sharply in England in the last few years. Over-represented groups include children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), from particular ethnic backgrounds and those living in areas of high deprivation.

The report goes on to describe how the impact of Covid-19 on schools is substantial for practitioners and students. The social and emotional disruption caused by the pandemic and the subsequent school closures is highly likely to have increased or exacerbated student anxiety and other mental health issues. There is also a concern with school connectedness for some vulnerable students whose patterns of school attendance have been disrupted. These concerns raise issues around transitions back into school settings. Members of the Excluded Lives Research Team talked to practitioners, policy makers and professionals in different parts of England to glean an understanding of their perceptions of the situation, how at-risk students might be identified and what return to school support and guidance exists or can be developed to support practitioners (including implications for integrated, cross-professional working) as well as children and families.

The overall themes of this research include:

- (Re)integration and re-engagement
- Access to learning
- Importance of communication
- Implications of policy and legislation changes (behaviour, SEND, and school exclusion)
- The need for multi-agency working and contextual safeguarding
- Preparing the school community
- Flexibility and new ways of working

The report also looks at the issues of children and young people who have been much happier working at home during the pandemic and who have been making good progress through online learning. These are the children who find school a place of high anxiety, where they struggle to cope with the routines of the school day. Many of these children may choose to 'self-exclude' as they are dreading the time when they must return to school

As we already know, children who are excluded from school are much more vulnerable to criminal and sexual exploitation than their peers in school. The *Excluded Lives* report sets out how schools and partner agencies can identify and support young people most at risk of exclusion. The full report is available in the DSL folder

Resources for Children



With the new KCSiE emphasis on DSLs and all school staff safeguarding the mental health and wellbeing of children, we will continue to share resources that you may find useful to support you to do this.

['My Hero is You'](#) is a story book that aims to help children understand and come to terms with COVID-19. The book explains how children can protect

themselves, their families and friends from coronavirus and how to manage difficult emotions when confronted with a new and rapidly changing reality.

A reminder that the [returning to school padlet](#) has a vast range of resources available to enable you to effectively support the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people in your school. The resources available are not only for returning children, but those that have been in school throughout the pandemic. This group will also benefit from support as their school environment is changing all the time. They have gone from working alongside teachers and peers in an informal way, to suddenly having new groups of children accessing the school who they are not allowed to play with or be near, due to social distancing measures.

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.