

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 44: 3rd July 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 10th July 2020.

DfE Updates



The DfE has published its safety plan to fully re-open schools in England in September - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

As it is a 'safety' plan, then DSLs should all be familiar with the content and play an active role in ensuring that their own school has taken into account all of the safety measures required before the school re-opens.

The DfE has also published [Advice to Parents and Carers on Keeping their Children Safe from Harm](#). This guidance brings together sources of information about the main risks children may be particularly vulnerable to during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and signposts parents and carers to the help and support available.

This guidance includes information for parents and carers on which support providers can help them have effective conversations with a young person, especially if there are concerns for their safety. The guidance also contains information on;

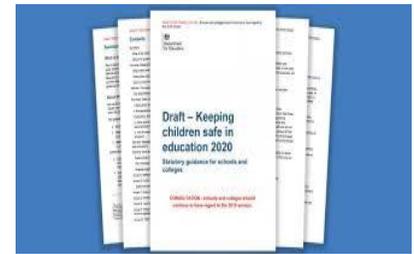
- Protecting children from domestic abuse
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation
- Criminal exploitation and county lines

Although the guidance is designed for use by parents and carers, it will also be helpful to professionals working with children and young people, and also as a source of information to signpost parents and carers to.

A link to this guidance is in the [Information for DSLs folder](#)

Draft Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

Following on from last week's Safe to Learn, we just wanted to remind you that the draft KCSiE 2020 has been published. Please make sure you familiarise yourself with the changes as this will help to make the process of implementing them as smooth as possible. Key changes include:



- There is now a greater emphasis on schools' role in supporting the mental health of children and young people: "Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the **mental health** and wellbeing 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. **As we return to schools this will be a priority for all and working with your mental health champion is essential.**
- 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.
- 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](#)"
- Changes to statutory guidance on [private fostering](#)
- 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.
- 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.
- Peer on peer abuse is amended to Peer on peer / child on child abuse, recognising that sometimes this abuse is not between peers.

A full summary of the changes is available in the [DSL information folder](#)

The update does not come into force until September 2020, the 2019 guidance should be followed until then.

Reminders from the Schools Safeguarding Team



We will shortly be sending you the link to the refreshed S175 safeguarding standards audit ready for it to be submitted before the end of term. Please remember if you cannot access the form on google let us know and we will send a different version. A model policy will be produced by the team and will be available on the Virtual School webpage. We will let all DSLs know when the model policy is available. There will also be a checklist, so schools who do not wish to use the NCC template are clear on what should be included

DSL Locality Briefings

Just a reminder that the DSL locality briefings will be held next week using Google Meetings. 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 and find out what has been working well for them during lockdown. We realise these clash with a SENCo event that was published at around the same time, but hope that DSLs who are often the SENCo too can attend at least one virtual session - even if it is not specifically in their locality:

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.

Early Help in Northumberland

A briefing from Emma Walker, Early Help Manager:



We wanted to reassure schools and other education providers that the Local Authority's Early Help offer in Northumberland is still active with the current restrictions.

Early Help Hub referrals - these are still being processed as normal so please do refer if you feel there is a child/young person or family that needs additional support.

Early Help Assessments - these can still be initiated, where you feel you need to understand the situation more and feel that more than one other service might be needed to support a family. There has been a little delay with the new form but this will be launched soon.

TAF meetings - can be done virtually or in a more creative way if needed. Please call the Early Help First Contact team if you need advice about this.

Early Help Locality Teams - The face to face programmes are being reviewed to look at how these can be delivered in the current climate. Virtual resources have been developed to support families at home. Early Help Family Workers continue to support families using a mix of virtual tools and also appropriate social distance visits. Early Help Family Workers are also offering parenting drop in's over the phone in each locality.

We are looking at a few things in September; how schools access support for children struggling to return and the new Early Help Assessment form. More details will follow.

Any questions please contact us on 01670 536400 or email me on emma.walker@northumberland.gov.uk

Young Minds Survey

YOUNGMINDS

YoungMinds carried out a survey with young people with lived experience of mental health problems to investigate what effect the pandemic and response to the pandemic is having on them. They also wanted to find out what their concerns are, what support they are still able to access, and what can be done to support them over the coming months.

2,111 young people with a history of mental health needs responded between Friday 20th March (the day schools closed to most children) and Wednesday 25th March (when there had been further tightening of restrictions). Respondents were aged between 13 to 25-years old and answered 'yes' to the question 'Have you ever looked for support for your mental health?' and who lived in the UK.

The average age was 13-years old. 1,294 had received mental health support in the last three months. The top three concerns about coping were:

- 1) Isolation/loneliness
- 2) Not having enough food/supplies
- 3) Managing mental health/mental health deteriorating

The report makes interesting reading and will help schools to think about what support needs to be in place for children and young people returning to school next academic year. The full report can be downloaded here

https://youngminds.org.uk/media/3708/coronavirus-report_march2020.pdf

School Staff Wellbeing Support During Covid-19



As well as supporting the mental health needs of young people as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, it is important to recognise that the mental health of many school staff has been significantly affected.

Kirklees Educational Psychology Service has published guidelines for supporting staff in school during and following the coronavirus pandemic. The guidance will help schools to think about the many different ways in

which staff may have been affected, including staff being isolated, suffering from stress and anxiety, shielding family members, and those who have been bereaved.

This guidance is available in the information for DSLs folder [Information for DSLs folder](#)

Kirklees Education Psychology Service has also published **Advice and guidance for schools during covid-19 Transition and Returning to School**. This guidance will help schools support our children and young people to experience successful transitions back to school, recognising that transition is a process and not a single event.

We know that an individual's experiences during this time may have a powerful and long-lasting effect not just on academic outcomes as well as impacting on their self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. The guidance offers advice on re-establishing routines and expectations as well as considering the differences in learning that children and young people have experienced during their time away from school, or during the lockdown, when they may have been accessing school in a very different way.

Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership

The Northumberland Domestic Violence and Abuse & Sexual Violence Business Group reflected on **Covid 19 and its impact for victims and children and service delivery** - information includes:

- During the first three weeks of the Covid 19 lockdown restrictions there were 16 suspected domestic abuse murders in the UK. This is far higher than the average rate for the time of year, with normally two women a week killed by a male partner or ex-partner.

- National organisations have noted that the current conditions exacerbate triggers that increase risk and restrict a victim's access to support or escape.

- The commissioned integrated DA support service (DASSN - Refuge, Outreach and IDVA provision) continues to offer support (via phone and on-line) and continues to accept referrals. There has been a 54% increase in standard/medium risk referrals for outreach support and there is now a waiting list of 40.



- Acorns (counselling and therapeutic support for children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse) are continuing to have weekly phone contact with the young people and parents. Any new referrals are being contacted and added to the waiting list. Acorns are in discussions with local venues to develop risk assessments to plan to reinstate face to face sessions when government guidance allows.
- Grace Northumberland Rape Crisis are offering support by phone and still accepting referrals. They are in discussions with local venues to develop risk assessments to plan to reinstate face to face sessions when government guidance allows.
- NDAS continue to offer support (via phone and on-line) and are still accepting referrals. Live Chat has been launched on the [NDAS website](#)

Message from RNLI Water Safety Team



The following message is from Nichola Evans who works in the RNLI education department to improve safety on and beside the water.

This summer, our Lifeguards can't be on every beach, meaning a heightened water safety risk to beach goers. We are asking you to help us share some important messages to children and their families.

It is anticipated that as restrictions are eased and the summer weather is here, people will head to the beaches and coastline to enjoy the sun, sea and time with friends and family. In a normal year, the RNLI helps thousands of people who end up getting into difficulty in or close to the water when doing these types of activities.

Throughout the summer term, our local team of trained volunteers and Lifeguards do their best to visit as many of the schools, colleges and youth groups in our region as possible. However, due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak we have not been able to engage with school communities as we normally would.

Below, you will find out ways in which you can help at this time.

- **Download** and use our [Education Resource Pack](#). Educating young people about how to keep safe, in, on and around water is fundamental to saving lives at sea and a core part of the RNLI's water safety activity. This term we have put together two downloadable packs of resources focusing on **keeping safe this Summer**. This will help your teams engage young people with essential – and lifesaving – water safety lessons in schools and as part of home school packs.
- **Share** a link to our [water safety from home resources](#) - If you're a parent or teacher looking for ways to engage, educate and entertain your children at home, play our Water Safety Wednesday series – perfect for primary school-aged children.
- Please help by **sharing** the RNLI & MCA's [beach safety campaign](#) with parents, guardians and your wider network. Beach lifeguards cannot be everywhere this summer – it is vital every one of us takes responsibility for our own, and our families', safety.

Introducing the new Prevention through Education Team at Northumbria Police



The following message is from Miriam Harper from Northumbria Police, whom many of you may know through your work with Operation Encompass the Next Steps. Miriam is now also a member of the NSSP's Schools' Engagement sub-group.



I'm one of two Safeguarding Schools Coordinators based at Gateshead police station, and I'm responsible for contact with schools in Northumberland, North Tyneside and South Tyneside. My colleague Ian Wilkinson serves Sunderland, Newcastle and Gateshead schools. Our team also includes two Community Support Advisors who can develop and deliver educational materials; they specialise in the prevention of exploitation.

You are no doubt familiar with Operation Encompass: The Next Steps for which I was a coordinator; we delivered healthy relationship sessions to approximately 65,000 pupils in 98% of schools in our Force area (100% in Northumberland – thank you!). Hopefully your experience of this was positive and we certainly developed some great relationships with schools during the project.

Now that the project is at an end, our aim is to make it easier for schools to interact with us when they want support in delivering safeguarding messages to their pupils. Some schools will already have a great relationship with their local Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) and we encourage you to keep this going! We will support NPTs by providing them with up-to-date information they can use when delivering messages to pupils. By doing this we can ensure that all Northumbria Police NPTs have access to the same information. We are aware that schools regularly request inputs from police personnel about road safety, stranger danger, drug and alcohol misuse, and child criminal/sexual exploitation amongst other things. In addition to our NPTs, we have staff who can talk about cybercrime and hate crime, and we also have links with the Violence Reduction Unit who offer educational support.

I'd encourage anyone who would like to discuss things further with me to send an email to school.liaison@northumbria.pnn.police.uk and I'll do my very best to support you.

Exploitation: County Lines during lockdown

Evidence nationally continues to suggest that the drug dealers have not been in complete lockdown and the movement of drugs across the country to meet demand has continued. Activity has increased as lockdown has eased and as we would expect the dealers have altered their ways of working to ensure they elude capture. There is a lot of evidence suggesting that as the older teenagers who were being used to move drugs are often known to the police and when there were fewer people out and about they were less conspicuous. The dealers then turned their attention to younger children, who seem to draw less attention to themselves. There has also been evidence to show that dealers are now using derelict and abandoned buildings and empty caravans as their deal houses. If you are concerned about a young person's activities or vulnerability it is important that you complete the MSET stage 1 screening tool (located [here](#)) as it is essential that we gather as much intelligence as possible to disrupt gang activity .

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.