

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 47: 02/09/2020

Welcome Back

Welcome back to the new normal that we now find ourselves in post lockdown. The team hope everyone in school has managed to have a break and have some downtime with family and friends before the new term starts.

Safe to Learn will return to half termly editions but we wanted to start the term off with a few key safeguarding messages as you open the doors to all students this week.

DfE Updates



The DfE have continued to provide all settings with regular updates and these have also been shared with you in the regular briefings from the Director of Education throughout the summer. All guidance relating to schools opening, including safeguarding guidance can be found on the DfE website [here](#)

The main guidance makes reference to safeguarding in the widest sense, looking at health and safety, risk assessments, behaviour, pastoral support, school transport and recruitment to name just a few points. Specific reference to safeguarding states:

Schools must have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and should refer to the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Safeguarding in Schools, Colleges and Other Providers Guidance](#).

The guidance on schools reopening stresses that Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputies) should be provided with more time, especially in the first few weeks of term, to help them provide support to staff and children regarding any new safeguarding and welfare concerns and the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate, and agencies and services should prepare to work together to actively look for signs of harm.

Communication with school nurses is important for safeguarding and supporting wellbeing, as they have continued virtual support to pupils who have not been in school.

Managing COVID-19 in Northumberland Educational Settings

Flowchart

Karen Herne in the Public Health team has produced a 'Managing COVID-19 In Northumberland Educational Settings' flowchart poster, which can be found [here](#)

Virtual School Training Programme

The latest training programme from the Virtual School is now open and ready to take your bookings! Using the link below you can book on your DSL refresher, training for new DSLs and also training for Designated Teacher's for Looked after Children. All training will take place 'virtually' until we are notified that we can deliver face to face. You will receive a confirmation and log in details when your booking is confirmed.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1g1vCDVINjDiYmAVvtMjJpZo_a9yOjxPhfKLq9CmMJrg/edit?ts=5f106caf

Preventing Radicalisation

Whilst there have been no changes to the school's Prevent Duty, an updated definition of counter terrorism was included in the 2020 version of Keeping Children Safe.

It is not statutory to have a preventing radicalisation policy but many schools chose to have one. Please contact us for our updated Preventing Radicalisation policy template.

Prevent Series of Videos

The Home Office yesterday released a new short film showing the work of Prevent. At a time when increased time spent online and feelings of stress and isolation have left more individuals vulnerable to exploitation by groomers, coupled with a fall in Prevent referrals due to the effects of Covid-19 on Education and Health institutions, it is vital that we maximise awareness and understanding of the support that Prevent offers.

The YouTube film, provides an introduction to Prevent. The videos feature a range of independent voices giving their own unique perspectives on the programme, including the mother of a teenager killed fighting for Daesh, a head of a civil society organisation working with those at risk of radicalisation and the mother of a child whose life was 'saved' after receiving support through Prevent.

Speaking about the film, Cathryn Ellsmore, Head of Prevent, said:

"Unfortunately, a large number of myths and misconceptions exist around Prevent, and though some will have their roots in genuine concerns, many are the result of misinformation.

"This is an issue for us because due to its voluntary nature, without the trust of local communities and the wider public, individuals will be reluctant to participate in local Prevent-funded projects or make referrals and Prevent staff in local areas will find it more difficult to do their jobs.

"Recent surveying suggests that as people's knowledge of Prevent increases, so too does their favourability towards the programme which is why we have created these videos to help bust the myths around Prevent."

The first of the videos is available now via the links below ;

[Youtube](#) (full video)

[Twitter](#) (Home Office)

[Facebook](#) (Home Office)

Prevent Training

In addition to the prevent training available on Learning Together the following courses can be accessed through the Home Office Website

[Prevent Awareness](#)

[Channel Awareness](#)

[Prevent referrals \(notice, check, share\)](#)

Self Harm And Suicide

The outbreak of COVID-19, lockdown and self-isolation has created a lot of additional pressures on parents and their children. Like adults, children and young people might feel concerned or upset by the news, or by things they hear or read about COVID-19. They might feel isolated, lonely, angry or depressed about the future. Some may express these feelings by engaging in self-destructive behaviours, such as self-harm.

If you are worried that a child might start to self-harm or is already self-harming, or that they seem upset, withdrawn or irritable, it is important to know that you can still get the right support and help during. We know that, with the right support, many young people can be helped to stop self-harming.

You can find more [information for parents and carers on self-harm in young people](#) in a resource available on the Royal College of Psychiatrist's website. This explains what self-harm is and contains advice for carers on how to support children and adolescents who are self-harming. It also lists coping techniques.

The Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership has recently consulted on a refreshed multi agency Suicide and Self Harm Pathway and once this has been fully ratified with the all partner agencies we will ensure schools receive an update.

Attendance

Advice from DfE, August 2020

DfE have now updated their guidance on how schools should use pupil registers and attendance codes in the academic year 2020-21. The full guidance is available [here](#).

This should be read in conjunction with the Addendum which sets out changes made to the regulations governing school attendance registers in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19), and which replaces temporary guidance on recording attendance during the outbreak. The Addendum is available [here](#)

Key points set out in the Addendum are as follows:

- From the start of the autumn term 2020, pupil attendance will be mandatory and usual rules on attendance will apply.
- Schools should return to using the attendance and absence codes in use prior to the outbreak, as set out on page 9 of the attendance guidance.
- A new category has been added: 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' and examples provided of when this category could apply.

Pupils that fit this criteria should be recorded using code X, unless they test positive in which case they should be recorded as code I until they are able to return to school.

- Annex A provides further guidance on the use of Coronavirus related absence coding (credit for development to Mr Grimes, Assistant Head at MEA Central Academy in South Manchester).

Sarah Wintringam, the Principal Education Welfare Officer, has produced local guidance to support schools and this can be found on the Virtual School webpage -

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Virtual.aspx#virtualschoolforlookedafterandpreviouslylookedafterchildren>

NSPCC - How Safe Are Our Children Report

For the first time, the NSPCC '[How safe are our Children? 2020](#)' has revealed the scale of abuse against teenagers, and highlights their heightened risk of experiencing physical and sexual abuse offences compared to younger children.

The report also reveals that the NSPCC Helpline received an average of 1,066 contacts a month from April to July from adults with concerns that a child or young person was being physically abused - up 53% on the pre-lockdown average. The wide-ranging report explains that, compared to younger children, available data from the UK nations shows rates of police-recorded offences against teenagers across the UK are:

- 4 times as high for physical abuse offences
- 9 times as high for online grooming offences
- 6 times as high for sexual abuse offences.

Despite the extent of serious abuse against older children in crime statistics, studies have shown the ability of teenagers to look after themselves is often overestimated and there can be a tendency for professionals to focus on teenager's behaviour rather than the causes behind it.

Many of the risk factors associated with abuse and neglect have been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, while the support services that would traditionally identify and respond to these concerns have been unable to see many of the children and families they work with face-to-face.

The report also includes expert insight on adolescent brain development, harmful sexual behaviour, sexting, and the importance of relationship and sex education.



DSLs can access useful resources in relation to harmful sexual behaviour and sexting in the Information for DSL folder, including

- Sexual Violence and Sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE 2018)
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools (DfE 2019)
- Sexting in schools and college. Guidance for schools and colleges on responding in instances of 'sexting' (UK Council for Child Internet Safety 2016)
- Look At Me – Teens, Sexting and Risks Report (Internet Matters 2020)

CYPS Trailblazer Wave 3

We are delighted to announce that Northumberland has been successful in the 20/21 bid of Wave 3 monies for the CYPS mental health support team (MHST) in schools trailblazer initiative, one of only four areas in the region to gain additional funding. This will allow us to build on the excellent work that has been developed and implemented across our existing trailblazer sites of Blyth and Hexham. Unfortunately due to a reduced centralised budget, the financial envelope released for Wave 3 will only be sufficient for the development of one additional mental health support team (MHST) in Northumberland and not the three new areas we had hoped for.

Whilst disappointing, we are still pleased to have gained some funding when not all areas have and, will continue to look at expansion into new areas via future funding waves. Feedback on our current trailblazer and the expression of interest we submitted from NHS England was very positive and the panel have stated

that they would welcome and be keen to support us in further expansion moving forward.

In order to ensure that this additional resource is directed most appropriately, collaborative work with stakeholders across health, education and social care has taken place around analysis of need. This has included data around levels of deprivation, open referrals for early help and child and family assessments completed over the last year where mental health issues have been specifically flagged for the child, as well as intelligence and referral numbers into our core mental health teams. On the basis of this intelligence, it has been agreed that the new mental health support team will be focused on the Ashington and Bedlington areas. The work undertaken by the MHST provides C&YP with tools to develop healthy mental health habits. They teach young people to use a combination of self-help techniques, building self-esteem and resilience to overcome difficult challenges, now and in later life and offer guidance at an early stage to prevent problems escalating. The MHSTs work closely with all stakeholders across the Northumberland system including our primary mental health workers, social services, voluntary sector, and secondary care services. The teams link into schools offering group work for C & YP which includes:

- Understanding emotions
- Managing anger
- Falling in and out of friendships
- Managing school issues

The teams also offer whole school lesson plans which include:

- Assembly talks
- Resilience training
- Promotion of national health and wellbeing campaigns in conjunction with Public Health

Watch out for more news on the weekly e-courier from the Education and Skills team.

And Finally

Remember your main safeguarding guidance from September 1st 2020 will be [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020](#).

Please ensure all previous versions are removed from staff noticeboards and websites. Part 1 and Annexe A must be read by all staff and remember Ofsted will often ask you to evidence how you know your staff and governors have read and understood the document.

Prior to the summer break we provided you with a set of slides, showing all of the key changes in Keeping Children Safe and notes to support you deliver this update to your staff.

Your Child Protection and Safeguarding policy must be updated, to reflect the changes in KCSiE and you can find our template on the Virtual School webpages along with a checklist which you can use to check your school/trust/ academy policy.

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

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.