

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 27: December 2019

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

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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.

DSLs should share Safe to Learn with their governing bodies

Safeguarding children placed in Alternative Provision

All education providers, regardless of whether or not they are registered as schools, are required to comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Alternative education providers in Northumberland who are on the procurement framework or who have separate contracts with the local authority all:

- provide re-assurance at the tender stage that they understand the requirements to be compliant with KCSIE. (Accepting that spot purchases/off framework providers do not participate in a tender)
- have an annual visit from a School Improvement Partner when safeguarding checks are carried out, including the compliance of the single central record
- if there is a safeguarding concern after this visit then Carol Leckie follows through appropriately and involves the LADO if necessary
- it is a requirement of the NSSP (formerly NSCB) that all alternative providers maintain an S175 Safeguarding Standards Audit, which has oversight from the Schools' Safeguarding Team Manager Carol Leckie

- it is a requirement of the NSSP that all alternative providers on the framework identify a member of staff as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and that this person attends the single agency training delivered on behalf of the NSSP by Carol Leckie
- all providers both on and off the framework have contract compliance visits from the children's commissioning team when compliance with key safeguarding requirements are scrutinised (these visits now take place at the same time as the annual SIP visit). This includes reviewing a sample of staff files to check that safe recruitment processes are followed but does not include checking the SCR.
- alternative providers on the framework and with contracts with the local authority attend termly provider network meetings. The last one in September was well attended and the two agenda items were safeguarding training and register compliance with independent school regulations
- responsibility for meeting the requirements of KCSIE lies entirely with the provider, just as it does with a school or academy
- the local authority does not check the SCR of schools/academies, or of alternative providers and is not required to do so. The local authority quality assurance process is carried out on behalf of the local authority ie to ensure that as direct commissioners of places in AP for permanently excluded and SEND pupils that the providers meet our expectations (for safeguarding and quality of teaching)
- if schools directly commission places with providers then they should risk assess them before the child is placed and attends. Guidance about this is shared with schools regularly at DSL training, on the e-courier, at Behaviour & Attendance collaborative meetings and through the half termly bulletin Safe to Learn
- schools are responsible for the safeguarding and academic progress of these children if they remain on their school roll and they should visit and remain in contact with the provider and child regularly
- since September the children missing education (CME) monthly return now asks schools to tell us if a child is in AP how many times they have been visited by a member of staff from the school since the last monthly return was submitted.

Meet the Schools' Safeguarding Team

Carol Leckie

Schools' Safeguarding Team Manager

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Since joining the local authority as the Drugs Advisory Teacher in 2001 I have had a number of roles in the Education Service, most recently leading the EOTAS (health needs) team and developing the role supporting and challenging all schools and providers to ensure they fulfil their statutory safeguarding duties. In this role I have had to develop a strong relationship with the agencies who form the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Committee (previously known as the Safeguarding Board) and I represent education on a number of sub groups, ensuring school views are reflected and also contributing to the delivery of each sub group's delivery plan. My favourite role is delivering safeguarding training to DSLs and school staff but this is only a small part of my day job and keeping myself up to date with local and national safeguarding information and priorities keeps me busy.

Justine Clephane

Schools' Safeguarding Consultant

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I joined the school's safeguarding team in September and have been enjoying my new role supporting

schools with safeguarding issues and delivering training to colleagues since then. Although I'm new to the team, I have been working for NCC since 2002 when I left my teaching role to start delivering drug and health education messages to school staff and pupils. In the past I have also been involved in supporting schools to develop good quality PSHE and relationship and sex education curriculum which are relevant for their students. This experience has given me a good grounding in safeguarding work as I firmly believe that safeguarding is most effective when it is supported by a robust, and well taught PSHE curriculum.

Since joining the Schools' Safeguarding team I have enjoyed catching up with colleagues involved in safeguarding across the county to ensure that we do our best to keep our young people safe.

Victoria Kinneavy

Education Safeguarding Liaison Officer

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Having spent several years in Lancashire as a teacher and DSL, I moved to Northumberland in 2018 and joined the School's Safeguarding team as the MASH Education Liaison Officer. My role mainly involves working as part of the MASH team and contacting schools when child protection concerns come in. I also enjoy going out to work with schools and delivering whole school safeguarding training. I coordinate Operation Encompass and Endeavour for schools and work alongside colleagues from a number of agencies involved with safeguarding young people. Although I am still fairly new to Northumberland and the MASH team I feel that my background in teaching and being a DSL allows me to understand the demands of working in a school and is helping to develop the links between education and children's services. Since moving to Northumberland I have enjoyed exploring the county and making the most of all it has to offer.

JTAI update – a reminder

This item also appeared in our last issue of Safe to Learn. Some of you might have missed it so please familiarise yourself and your school about actions we are taking to tackle exploitation in Northumberland.

In June the local authority and partner agencies had a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of our multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children from child exploitation. The outcomes letter was received on 2nd August 2019 and an action plan has been drafted in response to the 19 recommendations for improvement made by the inspectors. Thank you to all of our colleagues in schools, who either met with inspectors or provided feedback to enquiries and also thank you to everyone who sent us positive messages of support!

Key extracts from from the inspection feedback include:

- co-location in the MASH of relevant safeguarding agencies, including health, **education** and the youth offending service (YOS), facilitates the consideration of the needs of the whole family
- schools in Northumberland routinely receive information through Operation Endeavour, an initiative about children who are missing. This initiative strengthens information-sharing about children and families of concern
- the appointment of a specialist MASH education worker further supports information-sharing with schools, appropriately informing analysis of risk and planning for children
- harm reduction work has been proactive as a result of the shared approach of partners recognising the vulnerability of children and underlying concerns. Inspectors saw examples where schools had passed intelligence to the police as a result of their vigilant observation of who children were

associating with outside of the school

- schools display a good understanding of risks to children of criminal exploitation. They have access to regular and up-to-date training, and can apply this effectively. School staff are proactive in ensuring the risks to children are mitigated while children are in school.

In response to the plan there will be ongoing developments and training from our team. We have already taken action:

- we started implementation of a refreshed CME (children missing education) process and updated guidance to schools. As well as schools, all alternative providers are now also required to submit monthly CME returns. These are scrutinised at a multi agency panel, which includes colleagues from the SEND team, the Admissions and Inclusion team, children's services team managers and school representatives. The key role of this panel is to scrutinise the monthly returns, provide support and challenge to settings where concerns about individual children are identified and ensure that children and young people are referred to the correct support services as required
- an updated drug policy is available on our website, ensuring links are made to the vulnerabilities of young people who may be misusing substances and all forms of exploitation
- a new protocol to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers has been launched
- work has been initiated to address the fact that although the NSSP receives a comprehensive suite of performance data (including data on children missing education, children who are electively home educated and exclusions) there has been no challenge to agencies to further understand the links between increased risk to children permanently excluded and their vulnerability to exploitation. This work will be led by Jane Walker, the Virtual School Headteacher, and will be part of the School Engagement Group work plan for the coming year

Schools may wish to consider their behaviour policies to ensure that any sanctions which result in either fixed or permanent exclusion are appropriate and that the vulnerability of children missing education are a key consideration before exclusions are issued.

Updates from school Ofsted inspections

We are grateful to schools who have fed back to us after their inspections this term as it is helpful to know what the inspection of safeguarding looks like at the chalk face. We would also like to thank those head teachers who have contacted us to thank us for the contribution we have made to ensure they are inspection ready.

Areas we have been informed about include:

- Staff in a first school were asked what they knew about county lines. The headteacher from the school reported back to the Schools' Safeguarding Team that the inspectors were wanting to establish that staff had the **'it could happen here'** understanding of criminal exploitation generally and county lines specifically.
- Ofsted inspectors asked a school's governing body about the JTAI last year, and the findings regarding exploitation, and how this had impacted on the school's staff training.
- In another school the inspector was impressed when shown the October Safe to Learn bulletin, which included an update on the JTAI action plan amongst other things.
- Inspectors continue to thoroughly review all child protection files with a specific focus on

chronologies/timelines. It is important that you make sure that there are records from the point the concern was raised to a referral being made. Your records should also have notes from meetings and details of any action plans and actions taken. Inspectors want to be assured that things happen in a timely manner.

- It's important to keep copies of the content of the training you have received as schools have been asked to provide evidence to inspectors. The slides we share with you (at training or locality briefings) can support you to disseminate up to date information with your colleagues in school and illustrate that you are keeping your own knowledge current.
- Please ensure that your annual safeguarding briefing to all staff included all the updates in September's *Keeping Children Safe in Education* statutory guidance. You must also keep a record of the declaration from all staff in school, that they have read and understood Part One and Annex A.
- As you know, one of the first things inspectors will do on arrival is review the single central record. There should not be any gaps under the headings in your single central record. The Ofsted Handbook for safeguarding has information on the headings you need in your single central record to be compliant. The information is available in [annex 3, page 29](#).
- Check that your school's policy is up to date and reflects all the changes outlined in KCSiE 2019. Inspectors will check your website prior to their visit and will inform you if they are not satisfied with the policy they find on line. It is not the local authority's role to provide you with an updated policy each year and many schools will use their own policy. However, as in previous years we have provided a template and a checklist and this years available on the Virtual School safeguarding page [here](#).
- It is a good time to check and review all policies related to safeguarding to ensure that they reflect the recommendations from the JTAI that schools have an awareness of the risks of exploitation of any pupil. These include behaviour, bullying and drug policies, as well as the child protection and safeguarding policy. A new whole school drug policy template will be made available on the Virtual School webpage soon. This updated policy reflects awareness of the particular vulnerability of students to exploitation when they are on a fixed term exclusion due to their involvement in a drug related incident.
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* recommends that DSLs engage in safeguarding training every year. In Northumberland the recommendation is that DSLs attend a face to face refresher training every 2 years and another appropriate safeguarding training during the intervening year. This can include online training on a particular issue that is relevant to your school community. Training for new DSLs is held every term and there is a DSL refresher course every month, both are provided by the Northumberland schools safeguarding team and can be booked [here](#).
- We provide you with a half termly Safe to Learn bulletin and based on feedback at inspections this is seen as an excellent resource. However, it does seem that governors are not always aware of this resource so we would like to remind you that it is important that governors are kept up to date on all safeguarding issues and one of the easiest and most effective ways of doing this is to share the Safe to Learn bulletin with them.

Criminal exploitation

The Children's Society works closely with victims of criminal exploitation, giving them the support they need and tries to keep them safe from gangs. The Children's Society has an [easy to read and understand guide](#) on exploitation for parents and carers. The guide contains advice for parents on what they can do to help keep their children safe from exploitation. Please feel free to share this with parents and staff at your school.

There is also a short film clip available on Youtube called [Alfie's Story](#) which has been produced by Not in our Community which shows how easy it is for vulnerable young people to be exploited by gangs. Please share this with your staff as it will help to maintain the 'it could happen here' attitude, understanding and vigilance we want to promote.

Children Missing Education

Ready for September the Virtual School refreshed the statutory Children Missing Education (CME) returns process and updated guidance to schools. All schools and alternative providers are required to submit monthly CME returns. These are scrutinised at a monthly multi agency tracking panel meeting which includes colleagues from the SEND team, the admissions and inclusion team, children's services team managers and school representatives. The key role of this group is to prevent children from going missing from education by scrutinising these returns, providing support and challenge to settings where concerns about individual children are identified and ensuring that children and young people are referred to the correct support services as required. **It is important for the DSL at each school to go through the return before submission. This is to allow the DSL to identify any young people who they may know have additional vulnerabilities and to act upon this information.**

Training

Signs of Safety - Online training available through Learning Together

This is an evidence based, questioning approach, that keeps the child at the centre of the work we do with them and their family and has been adopted by Northumberland Children's Services. This introductory module gives an overview of the Signs of Safety approach to help all practitioners.

Target Group: Anyone working with children

What you will achieve:

- ✓ Outlining the Signs of Safety approach and purpose
- ✓ Identifying some of the terms, tools and techniques used in practice
- ✓ Identifying what is happening now
- ✓ Identify what this means to you in practice

Contextual Safeguarding - Face to face training available through Learning Together

An approach to understanding and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and on-line can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. The same risks are evident for vulnerable adults who can often fall victim to exploitation, harm and abuse. Therefore children's and adult social care practitioners need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra familial contexts, and recognises that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore expands the objectives of child and adult protections systems in recognition that young people and vulnerable adults are susceptible to abuse in a range of social contexts.

Target Group: Professionals from education, children's services, adult social care, housing, sexual health

professionals, primary health care and those with a role in adult and children's safeguarding.

What you will achieve:

- ✓ Consider the social contexts that increases vulnerability
- ✓ Develop assessment and intervention plans that include extra familial contexts.
- ✓ Consider barriers to practice
- ✓ Recognise the importance of working with a wide range of agencies/sectors
- ✓ Expand on existing knowledge and skills.

Prevent update

Please find here a link to advice for the HEFE sector which has been circulated on behalf of the DfE following the [London Bridge attack](#), primarily for the Further and Higher Education sectors but which can be saved as useful guidance documents in your school or setting. There is also a useful leaflet about [Victims of Terrorism](#).

If any institutions have had students or staff affected by this event please contact Carol Leckie who can direct you to local police advisers who are able to provide further support/advice if required.

The specific documents give advice as to how support can be sought and links to useful agencies and websites.

We have received a new [Prevent National Referral form](#) for potential Channel Panel cases which replaces the current national form. It is, however, important to note one local amendment - all Northumberland referrals should be emailed to the local prevent email box (prevent@northumberland.gov.uk) not to the special branch email as shown on the form.

For concerns about radicalisation your first port of call is to contact One Call.

Please find here a link to an [update from Counter Terrorism Policing NE](#) about protecting crowded spaces during the festive period. Please display this in your staff room and other public areas to ensure that clear messages are shared across the area.

Updated Prevention and Intervention Pathway and referral form for Children's Centre Services

You will find the updated referral process and pathway for Children's Centre services (for children under 5 and their families) on the NCC website under 'Children's Centres' but for ease, please refer to the links below:

- [Updated Prevention and Intervention Pathway](#)
- [Request form for Children's Centre Services](#)

Safer Internet Day 11th February 2020

To support educators for Safer Internet Day 2020, the UK Safer Internet Centre has created a range of new educational resources.

Safer Internet Day 2020 will be celebrated globally on Tuesday 11 February 2020 with the slogan 'Together for a better internet', with a specific focus in the UK on how young people manage their identity online.

Free to download and view, the brand new resources are tailor made by educational experts to be engaging and adaptable for different age groups from 3 to 18 years. There is also guidance for educators, as well as resources for parents and carers:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy – Amendment (December 2019)

The above policy was reviewed and issued to schools via the e-courier in July this year. Since this date, the NHS North of England Commissioning Support Unit have issued new guidance to Local Authorities in relation to the administration of non-prescription (over the counter) medication within schools, which has necessitated a further review of the policy. Further information can be found **here** in this health and safety bulletin which has been prepared by the Corporate Health and Safety Team and which includes a link to the revised policy.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass the Next Steps started in April 2019 and we now have 100% of schools in Northumberland signed up for a session with their SSLO and a number of schools have held a drop in session. Thank you for your support with this, we have been more successful than any other local authority in the area for the number of schools engaged with the project.

The new DAWSA website is now live so please check it out <http://www.dawsa.org.uk/operation-encompass>

All our KS1-KS4 resources are available to download.

The PSHE Association has provided some feedback and we are hoping to get the material accredited in the New Year.

A number of newsletters have also been distributed as part of this work, however it is not clear if all schools are receiving these. Please find here links to newsletters in relation to Domestic Abuse from the Police and Crime Commissioners office. September's issue looked at [Coercive Control](#) and Perpetrator Behaviour October's issue addressed [Harassment and Stalking](#), providing important information, useful contacts and advice. Included within the newsletter is a feature on 'digitally assisted stalking'.

November's issue talked about '**Why Victims Don't leave**'. December's issue will look at Living with Domestic Abuse as an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience).