

Report of the Assistant Director, Education and Skills

## **Safeguarding in schools update**

### **Summary**

1. This report is provided in order to update members on the ongoing work in supporting schools in the city with their role in safeguarding children and young people. The report is for information only and no decisions are sought from members

### **Background**

2. The report has been provided at the request of members.
3. The School Safeguarding Advisor provides advice and support to all schools in York, including academies, independent schools and colleges. This support includes:
  - Advice to Headteachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads on safeguarding policy, practice and specific safeguarding issues.
  - Working with schools to promote and develop effective safeguarding policies and practices
  - Linking closely with multi- agency partners within the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership (CYSCP) to develop city wide approaches to safeguarding with the involvement of schools.
  - Advice on specific safeguarding issues relating to individual children or families, and signposting to appropriate services/agencies.
  - Providing bespoke safeguarding training for staff in schools
  - Responding to parental complaints referred to the Local Authority by Ofsted, and supporting schools to address any issues arising.

- Acting as the PREVENT Education Lead and ensuring schools are engaged in this work.

#### **4. Working with schools over the past year**

In the past year the situation with Covid 19 has been immensely challenging for schools and has obviously impacted on the ability to undertake work on site in schools, meaning that certain functions have been delivered virtually. Regular contact and communication has still been taking place with schools and support provided as needed, from both the School Safeguarding Advisor and the wider Effectiveness and Achievement Team. Regular briefings are sent to all Designated Safeguarding Leads on new national and local guidance and training opportunities.

5. Safeguarding training for staff delivered by the CYSCP has been available for schools, and has moved to virtual delivery. The School Safeguarding Advisor has also delivered virtual training and some face to face training has also been delivered when this has been possible.
6. The School Safeguarding Advisor has continued to support schools in reviewing their policies and procedures, in line with updated guidance and responding to the challenging circumstances created by the pandemic. This has also included, in particular, providing advice around new situations e.g. safe working practice in delivering remote education and safeguarding young people while they are not attending school.

#### **Working with multi agency partners**

7. The School Safeguarding Advisor, and colleagues from schools have been closely linked into the work of the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership over the past year. This includes:
  - Schools participating in an NSPCC Audit focussing on Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB). The School Safeguarding Advisor is a member of a multi-agency task group which has developed a new HSB procedure and pathway. This is an important piece of work which has provided a clear process to enable practitioners to safeguard and access support for young people and to respond appropriately to incidents of peer on peer abuse.

- A young People's Social Media Project working with young people across the city in collaboration with safeguarding partners, and the University of York St John to develop a Young People's Guide to Safe Social Media Use. A set of teaching resources has also been developed which can be used in schools to form part of their on-line safety and relationships education provision. These resources were launched during Safeguarding Week in June.
- The development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and multi-agency audits.
- A briefing on the multi-agency response to Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges which was held towards the end of term in order to support them in responding to the recommendations contained in the Ofsted report. The briefing outlined the support offered by multi-agency partners and gave details of training available for practitioners.

## **8. Working with schools into the new academic year**

- The School Safeguarding Advisor has resumed face to face safeguarding training for school staff this term. Two update sessions for Designated Safeguarding Leads have also been delivered virtually, and have been well attended.
- On site safeguarding reviews are also being resumed this term, and a quarterly reporting process to the CYSCP is in place for assurance purposes. This provides an opportunity to monitor safeguarding arrangements in schools across the city and to highlight any areas where further support is needed for schools from the partnership.

## Recommendations

9. No recommendations – for information only

## Contact Details

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### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Maxine Squire  
Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Report  
Approved

Date 21  
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## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

## Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

## Background Papers:

None

## Annexes

None

## Abbreviations

CYSCP – City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership  
HSB – Harmful Sexual Behaviour  
NSPCC- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children  
MASH – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub