

7 point briefing

Safeguarding Practice Review

School Safeguarding Audit 2018/19

November 2019

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Summary

NYSCP carried out its biennial audit in 2018/19 of school's safeguarding arrangements across primary and secondary phases of education up to the age of 18. The audit is carried out in order to seek assurance regarding the level of safeguarding arrangements within all schools including maintained primary and secondary schools, special schools, academies and independent schools within North Yorkshire.

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Responses and level of compliance

379 schools responded to the audit, which was the highest response rate received to date of 98.7%, an increase of just under 9% on 2016/17 exercise. The audit continued to receive a very good response from maintained schools and saw a significantly improved response rate from academies and independent schools.

The level of compliance with safeguarding requirements remained high, with all schools reporting they were fully compliant with the majority of safeguarding controls. On average maintained primary, academy and maintained special schools reported the highest level of compliance at 87%. Maintained secondary schools reported the lowest level of being fully compliant at 83%. Independent schools reported to have the highest number of action plans in place to implement safeguarding arrangements at 6%, with maintained secondary schools reporting the lowest at 4%. Across all educational establishments the number of schools reporting identified concerns, unidentified safeguarding concerns was negligible at <1%.

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What did the audit find?

Record Keeping: General record keeping particularly the requirement in relation to a Single Central Record has seen improved compliance since 2016/17, although particular controls in instances again have been identified as an issue across all schools. There remains some concern that a limited number of schools did not keep a register of cases escalated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) which would indicate that these schools could not appropriately monitor concerns or patterns of behaviour. A minority schools reported that it was not applicable to maintain a welfare file for all children known to Children Social Care, Looked After Children, in receipt of Early Help support or for whom there are welfare concerns.

Managing Emergency Situations: This safeguarding control sought the least responses of the control being fully implemented and the most concerns without a current action plan in place and previously unidentified concerns. Most schools who identified this control as a concern, referenced the need to review their procedures in line with the Run, Hide and Tell Guidance and Action Counter Terrorism (ACT) Awareness Training. This guidance and training can be accessed within the School Sample Child Protection Policy 2019-20.

Looked After Children (LAC): Schools responses to having arrangements in place for LAC and previously LAC was an area which did not receive the level of compliance that would be expected. Across each establishment, barring maintained secondary schools, there were a number of schools who either reported they did not have an action in place to address the requirement, the control was previously unidentified, or noted to be not applicable.

E-Safety: There does still remain areas for development for some schools in relation to e-safety, most notably for Independent Schools to ensure they report incidents which take place via technology such as hate crime, bullying, harassment or extremist behaviour are reported to the Local Authority.

Relationships & Sex Education: Most schools either have Relationships and Sex Education policy fully implemented or have identified actions in place to address this ahead the new curriculum being mandatory for 2020. However, there were a number of schools (15) who either reported this control as a concern without an action in place to address, as an unidentified concern, not applicable or did not provide an answer.

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What will NYSCP do with these findings?

NYSCP has produced a detailed School Safeguarding Audit report and presented this to the NYSCP Learning & Improvement Subgroup (LIS). The recommendations detailed within the report have been adopted onto an action plan to support schools where areas of development have been identified. In addition the findings of the audit have been presented at the Headteacher and DSL Network and NYSCP Education Focus Group meetings. The report and presentation can be found [here](#).

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What should schools do with these findings?

All Headteachers and Governing Bodies should take note of the thematic findings and use the results of their audits to identify areas for improvement and this should be included as part of the school development plan.

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Next Steps

The NYSCP audit tool will be reviewed and updated taking into account the feedback received from schools who were asked after completing the exercise, to complete a short survey based on their experiences of the audit. The next School Safeguarding Audit will commence in November 2020 and all schools will be required to respond by the end of March 2021.

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Resources

There is a range of national and local guidance which can support schools in relation to their safeguarding arrangements. These guidances can be accessed from the NYSCP [School Sample Child Protection Policy 2019-20](#). In addition, hosted on the [NYSCP website](#) is a range of training courses, procedures, practice guidances and one minute guides. All schools are encourage to sign up to the free monthly [NYSCP e-Bulletin](#) to stay up to date with the latest safeguarding developments in North Yorkshire.