

1 Summary

Between November 2020 and June 2021 the NYSCP completed its biennial audit of the safeguarding arrangements within primary and secondary phases of education for children and young people up to the age of 18. The purpose of the audit is to seek assurance of the level of safeguarding arrangements within all schools and identify areas for development.

2 Responses and level of compliance

North Yorkshire is England's largest geographic county. At the time of the audit there were 213 maintained primary schools, 17 maintained secondary schools, 11 special schools, 5 Pupil Referral Services, 93 primary academies, 26 secondary academies and 19 independent schools. The response rate from the audit was the highest received to date with 99.7% of schools replying to the audit.

The general level of compliance within schools remained high with all schools reporting that they had the majority of arrangements in place or that they were delivering plans to implement or improve arrangements.

3 What did the audit find?

The 2018/2019 audit identified several themes including Record Keeping, Managing Emergency Situations, Looked After Children, E-Safety and Relationships and Sex Education. It was of note that schools had made improvements since the last audit, with Managing Emergency Situations specifically highlighted as one of the areas.

The audit was separated into eight key areas and findings were as follows:

Safer recruitment

This highlighted issues such as ensuring staff on interview panels are trained in safe recruitment practice and management/recording of the single central record, (the latter also linking to weaknesses highlighted in the 2018/2019 audit).

Management of Safeguarding

Key areas for development in some schools included the need for tightening of arrangements around Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), the need to ensure policies for issues such as behaviour and social media are in place, improvement in governance, general

awareness of safeguarding issues, and recording of key information regarding safeguarding concerns.

Inclusion

A general area of development for a minority of schools was in relation to the recording and reporting of hate crimes. Not all schools had in place systems to make sure all pupils knew who they could talk to if they had specific concerns. There were some schools which needed to develop their processes in relation to deregistering students and ensuring these were being reported to the local authority, especially with the increased number of children being electively home educated.

Managing Risk

The audit noted that many schools were implementing plans relating to Relationships, Sex Education, Substance Misuse and Smoke Free Policies for pupils.

Early Years

Early years arrangements generally were good and schools were continuing to develop policies and procedures regarding the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. There was an imbalance between

the how many schools reported certain requirements being applicable suggesting that some schools may have confusion regarding what is expected of them.

Learning Beyond the Classroom

A small number of secondary schools reported an unaddressed risk of not recording evidence of staff ability to lead educational visit/outdoor learning/adventurous activities. Another theme which emerged related to safeguarding arrangements in alternative provision, with a number of schools either not responding to the question or stating it was not applicable.

Premises Security

Most schools had good arrangements for managing the security of premises but this was an issue for a minority of schools. Themes for some schools included the management of pedestrians and vehicles, including buses and coaches, as well as the receiving and collection of pupils.

Premises Health and Safety

General arrangements for health and safety were in place but there were issues with some schools needing to develop policies and procedures, as well as prioritised risk assessments and maintenance schedules.

4 What will NYSCP do with these findings?

The 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 developed into an action plan to support schools. In addition the findings of the audit will be shared with all schools across North Yorkshire via a feedback virtual session and NYSCP Education Focus Group

5 What should schools do with these findings?

All Headteachers and Governing Bodies should take note of the findings and use the results of their local audits to identify areas for improvement. These should be included as part of the school development plan and implementation monitored through their local governance arrangements.

6 Next Steps

The NYSCP audit tool will be reviewed and updated taking into account the feedback received from schools. The next School Safeguarding Audit will commence in November 2022 and all schools will be required to respond by the end of March 2023.

7 Resources

There is a range of national and local guidance which can support schools in relation to their safeguarding arrangements. The NYSCP website has many resources for schools including the North Yorkshire multi-agency safeguarding procedures, practice guidance, one minute guides and links to training courses.

The NYSCP has also continued to develop the model safeguarding policy for schools which has been updated to meet the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021.

The model policy can be accessed from:

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/practice-guidance/sample-template-school-child-protection-policy/>

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.

To sign up to the e-bulletin: <https://mailchi.mp/9a88b9818a6d/nyscpe-bulletin>

To see previous e-bulletins: <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/nyscp-e-bulletin/>