



Support to schools and colleges in their response to child sexual abuse

Context

Ofsted published its [‘Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges’](#) on 10 June 2021.

This was followed up by a letter from Ministers at the Department for Education, Home Office and Department of Health and Social Care, which called for safeguarding partners to review work to improve engagement with schools and tailoring their approach to what the analysis indicates are the risks to children and young people in the local area. The letter also called for safeguarding partners to set out what the local offer to schools and colleges was.

Support to schools and colleges

In North Lincolnshire, we have established mechanisms in place as part of our local arrangements to support schools, including academies, colleges and alternative provision, which has also been further strengthened as part of our local response to the Ofsted report.

Key features include:

- **Annual safeguarding audit:** This is an annual audit process which enables schools and colleges to demonstrate they are meeting their statutory duties under Section 11, 157 and 175 of the Education Act 2002, giving the local authority assurance. It also provides an opportunity for schools and colleges to evidence their good practice and identify any areas for development. The outcomes of annual audits are shared with schools and colleges for information and action, and key messages are fed into the Children’s Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board as appropriate
- **Sexual abuse in schools audit tool:** This specific audit tool has been developed based on the recommendations in the Ofsted report and distributed to all schools and colleges as a mechanism for self-evaluation and to deepen understanding of the implications of the report in the context of their individual settings and communities. Moving forward, the scope of this specific audit tool will be captured in the annual safeguarding audit (as described above). The outcomes of audits are shared with schools for information and action, and key messages are fed into the Children’s MARS Board as appropriate
- **Communications:** Specific communications are disseminated to schools and colleges to share information regarding relevant resources, tools and points of contact in order provide advice and support. The Designated Safeguarding Leads briefing meeting is held

termly and is an opportunity to share information on safeguarding themes. Key information associated with briefing meetings is available on the [Children's MARS website](#)

- **Training and education:** The [Children's MARS training and education programme](#) includes specific multi agency training in relation to child sexual abuse, including harmful sexual behaviour (awareness), Brook traffic light tool (intermediate), AIM2 and Good Lives model (specialist) training. This training empowers staff across the partnership and further enhances their skills, knowledge and awareness in relation to emerging need and to ensure they know how to respond. Wider training to governors and leaders is provided to enable assurance and challenge
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education:** New iterations of the document are disseminated as appropriate, and a link is available on the [Children's MARS website](#), along with a [continuing professional development PowerPoint](#). This additional resource clearly articulates the revisions, which helps to specifically shape and influence policy and procedure in individual schools and colleges, as well as supporting training and education functions
- **Policy development and local approach:** Children's MARS policies and procedures ([statutory and supplementary](#)) are regularly refreshed to take account of emerging national and local policy. The North Lincolnshire [risk outside the home approach](#) has been developed and is comprised of three elements including practice principles, providing help and managing risk. The approach is built on local learning and experiences of what works, as well as being shaped by the views and experiences of children, young people and families. A [risk outside the home awareness PowerPoint](#) is available on the Children's MARS website and a toolkit is in development

As at end October 2021