



Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

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Dear Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead

The three lead safeguarding partners for Norfolk wanted to take this opportunity to contact you following the concerns raised by testimonies shared on the 'Everyone's Invited' website.

We acknowledge that this site has rightly raised questions for all of us involved in safeguarding and put our schools and educational settings at the forefront of media, political and public pressure. We would like to assure you of our continued support, while recognising that you and your colleagues involved in education will be doing all you can to ensure that children feel safe and confident to raise issues that amount to sexual assault or harassment. It is important that our children know that if they do disclose matters to us, we will protect them and take appropriate action.

We appreciate that the recently commissioned Ofsted review of safeguarding policies in state and independent schools may offer some additional learning for us all when it concludes at the end of May 2021. We wanted to remind education settings that the key reference documents for handling these cases must be the DfE guidance;

- i) [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) (May 2018)
- ii) Part 5 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) Whilst this guidance is currently in the process of revision, it remains a helpful framework for practice

The terms of reference for the review have just been published
[Ofsted review into sexual abuse in schools: terms of reference - GOV.UK](#)
(www.gov.uk)

Given the magnitude of the allegations being made, we would like to offer some support and advice to you in your role. This advice is aimed at helping you ensure your school or college is doing all it can to support children and families. We would ask that you consider the following points, if you have not already done so, and assure yourself that you are satisfied;

- You have reviewed your safeguarding procedures, ensuring they are up to date and advise staff on how they should deal with allegations; the Local Authority [Model Policy](#) provides a framework for this.
- That children know how to make complaints and feel confident to do so. Have you created a safe space where pupils feel enabled to come forward in a timely fashion and share their experiences? A new NSPCC helpline commissioned by the DfE is now live and will provide children and adults who are victims of sexual abuse in schools with appropriate support and advice. *The Report Abuse in Education helpline can be reached on 0800 136 663, on Monday to Friday 8am - 10pm, or 9am - 6pm at weekends. It can also be contacted by email at help@nspcc.org.uk*

The NSPCC will forward any details of criminal activity to a national centralised police team, who will also undertake a continual social media trawl to ensure relevant information is collated, analysed and disseminated.

Similarly, where a pupil discloses a rape, an attempted rape or a serious sexual assault, whether this has happened recently or in the past, then (with their consent) you can make a referral to The Harbour Centre (Sexual Assault Referral Centre). Alternatively, you can signpost them if they would rather make a self-referral. Please note, however, if the young person is under 18years old, the police MASH team will be informed for safeguarding purposes. *The Harbour Centre can be contacted on their 24/7 support line, 01603 276381, for advice and guidance.*

- This message is communicated to staff and children, making sure everyone is aware of behaviour that constitutes sexual violence or harassment and do not minimise or dismiss concerns.
- That all staff including the Designated Safeguarding Leads are confident about how your establishment will deal with any concerns raised and referral pathways if allegations are made. Where you are worried about developmentally inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour this could include;

- 1) Referral to Norfolk County Council's front door Children's Advice and Duty Service 0344 800 8021 **if you and have safeguarding concerns about an individual child**
 - 2) Specialist consultation with the Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) Team who are contactable on hsbproject@norfolk.gov.uk
- That the sex and relationships curriculum is reviewed, and that it deals sufficiently with the prevailing issues.
 - That you have considered how you communicate with parents regarding safe behaviours, use of the internet, social media and accessing inappropriate material. The Harmful Sexual Behaviour Toolkit developed by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation in 2020 with funding from the Home Office is designed for parents, carers, family members and professionals, to help everyone play their part in keeping children safe. It has links to useful information, resources, and support as well as practical tips to prevent harmful sexual behaviour and provide safe environments for families.

This is not an exhaustive list and as always, we know you will have some of your own innovative thoughts on how best we can deal with this issue. To share these ideas with us, or general advice on managing this situation you can contact our Education Quality Assurance & Intervention Service via e-mail at cs.pdcsafeguardingadministration@norfolk.gov.uk or by telephone on 01603 307729

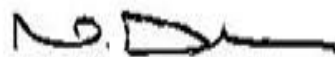
We would like to stress again that we are here to support you and everything you do to safeguard Norfolk's children.

Kind Regards

Sara Tough



Nick Davison



Rebecca Hulme

