School Safeguarding Audit 2019-20 – Analysis Report

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Methodology

Governing Bodies and Headteachers need to ensure that their safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with sections 157 + 175 of the Education Act 2002 are met. *'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020)* sets out the responsibilities of schools and further education colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) is required to ensure that all schools and colleges are meeting these duties effectively. One of the mechanisms by which Norfolk County Council, in partnership with the NSCP establishes this assurance is through individual schools self-evaluating their performance under an agreed framework and then sharing these results and any improvements required with the NSCP.

The self-review tool was last revised in July 2019 to reflect changes in local and national guidance including the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). New and revised fields are highlighted throughout the tool. The tool forms the evidential basis for the Local Authority audit of school practice. It seeks to ensure that schools are supported in the process of safeguarding and have access to relevant and valid information regarding their statutory safeguarding functions. The tool assists schools to examine the current safeguarding arrangements in place and to identify areas which may require further development.

A completed audit tool with evidence of actions undertaken in response to the review is a valuable source of evidence to demonstrate to the Governing Body and for the purpose of Ofsted inspection how the school is meeting statutory requirements for safeguarding children.

Two similar audits of Norfolk schools' safeguarding procedures have been completed. An audit of school safeguarding procedures was completed in 2015 with a total of 90% of schools that were contacted provided the information. The last audit in 2017-2018 also had a 90% return rate. The findings of this audit activity identified gaps in knowledge across the wider school workforce and training and guidance was tailored to meet these needs accordingly.

Methodology

The findings are based on schools' self-evaluation scores using Ofsted grades 1 – 4. Schools are asked to document the evidence used to inform the conclusions that they have reached and develop an action plan to address any weaknesses identified in the process of completing the self-review.

For the purposes of this self review maintained schools, academies and independent schools were asked to submit a completed self-review tool for analysis during 2019-20:

Group 1: 16 September – 18 December 2019
Group 2: 6 January – 1 April 2020

The plan was to ask Group 3 (which included colleges and Independent Schools) to submit in the Summer Term 2020 but due to Covid-19 and the impact on schools and colleges a decision was made to delay that request and review the process in line with the situation in the autumn. In Autumn Term 2020, the situation was reviewed and it was decided to cease the self-evaluation process and undertake an analysis using the data which had already been gathered from over 50% of schools.

The audit does not explore practice in response to the Covid-19 pandemic but will highlight some of the ways we have adapted practice to support education providers.

The findings of this report will be made available to all schools, shared with relevant teams within Norfolk County Council and reported to the NSCP. Where individual practice issues are identified, contact will be made with the school to offer support and guidance and to ensure any weaknesses have been remedied.

Outcome & Purpose

The purpose of this review is to enable individual schools in Norfolk and the Local Authority in partnership with the NSCP to scrutinise safeguarding practice to ensure that there are effective safeguarding systems in place. The areas for consideration in the tool are:

1. DSL and Named Governor Roles
2. School Ethos
3. Safeguarding Policy (Revised 2019)
4. Child Protection Procedures
5. Child Protection Record Keeping and Monitoring
6. Use of External Providers
7. Training & Induction
8. Safer selection and recruitment
9. Safer working practices
10. Understanding of child abuse, signs, symptoms and categories (Revised 2019)

In-depth findings

Where possible, the data has been analysed to understand any trends developing from the completed audits. The following slides best represent this data. The results provide the Local Authority with an overall picture of safeguarding practice in Norfolk schools in line with statutory guidance with an emphasis on the following areas:

•Are schools up to date with current national guidance and local priorities?

•Are schools meeting statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures?

•Do school's implement robust procedures to ensure safer recruitment into the school workforce in Norfolk?

•Are staff at all levels appropriately trained?

•How confident are staff in schools to identify causes for concern about a child's safety and welfare and know what to do when they have a concern?

•How confident are staff and managers in promoting good safeguarding practice and challenging poor practice?

•Do schools in Norfolk have robust procedures for safer working practice and the management of allegations against staff?

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Validation of the evidence

This audit provides important evidence of how the LA is monitoring schools' compliance with statutory requirements for safeguarding. The methodology for obtaining this evidence via self-assessment is valid, in accordance with other LA practice and understandable given the resources available to carry out the audit. It can be argued however that the evidence from the audit will not, on its own, provide independent evaluation and assurance regarding the quality of day-to-day practice in accordance with school policy and procedures. We have therefore triangulated this information with spot-checks and Ofsted inspection outcomes.

Safeguarding Compliance Checks

To validate the self-review process, the Adviser – Education Safeguarding, undertook a series of safeguarding compliance checks with schools during the Summer Term 2018. These checks were unannounced focusing on statutory compliance in line with the Safeguarding Compliance Checklist. The checks were used to test and validate the information provided by schools via the self-review process 2017-2018. The full report can be found here; the findings indicated that the Self Assessment process gave a valid picture of the safeguarding practice in schools across Norfolk. A further series of safeguarding compliance checks with be undertaken when it is possible to resume audits within schools.

Is the evidence supported by data from Ofsted Inspections?

56 Norfolk Schools were inspected during Academic Year 2019-2020. In the 50 schools that were judged to be 'Outstanding', 'Good' or 'Requires Improvement', safeguarding arrangements were judged to be effective. This equates to 89% of the schools inspected during this period. Inspection outcomes support the findings of this audit that indicates most schools feel that they not only meet, but exceed, statutory requirements for safeguarding in line with Ofsted expectations and best practice guidance.

Of the 56 schools inspected during this period, 6 were judged as 'Inadequate' (4 – serious weaknesses and 2 were placed in special measures). The inspection reports for these 6 schools were reviewed in order to identify those instances where the safeguarding arrangements in place had contributed to the inadequate judgement.

Weaknesses in the safeguarding arrangements contributed to an inadequate judgement in 1 of the 6 schools; this equates to 1.8% of the schools inspected during this period. In this case the failure was related to a lack of evidence that appropriate action had been taken in response to concerns about pupil welfare and that leaders had not effectively checked and monitored the safeguarding systems in place. The Education Safeguarding Team undertook an audit following the inspection and supported the school to fully review their safeguarding arrangements.

In the other 5 cases where schools had been judged to be 'Inadequate', the inspection reports clearly stated that the school's safeguarding arrangements were deemed to be 'effective'.

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Findings

- 289 Norfolk schools were contacted in Groups 1 and 2 via MI Sheet <u>138/19</u> and <u>3/20</u>.

- Group 3 schools were not contacted however 31 schools still submitted during the Summer Term 2020.

- In total **236** schools completed an assessment.

- The audit report captures data from 197 primary schools, 24 secondary, 9 special schools, 1 college, 1 nursery school and 4 independent schools. 118 were LA maintained schools and 112 were academies. Overall, this equates to 56% of all primary schools, 47% of all secondaries and 69% of all special schools. **56%** of all schools in Norfolk.

- The Covid-19 pandemic and partial school closures starting on 23 March 2020 has had an impact on this audit activity; given the pressures on education settings, the third group of schools were not formally asked to submit their Self Evaluation. It therefore has to be acknowledged that the data from the previous round of submissions in 2017-2018 cannot be compared easily to the current data.

- Whilst there has been a disruption to the audit activity, it does provide us with a sufficient dataset to be able to draw conclusions about practice across the sector and identify areas for development.

- The majority of schools provided comprehensive evidence in the commentary section of the self-assessment tool to demonstrate and support the associated grades that they have submitted. The areas of good practice identified by schools are included in the commentary on the subsequent pages of this report.

- A small minority of schools provided very limited information to support the self-assessment grades submitted; this is of concern and highlights the importance of strengthening the findings through spot checks of compliance. These schools were contacted at the beginning of the Spring Term 2020 and were asked to add further details to their submission.

What does the evidence tell us about school practice?

- The evidence demonstrates a positive view of schools' confidence in the safeguarding arrangements that they have in place. The evidence provided indicates that the vast majority of schools feel that they not only meet but exceed statutory requirements for safeguarding in line with Ofsted expectations and best practice guidance.

- The commentary supplied in the majority of the self-reviews tools demonstrates that schools have taken a robust approach to reviewing their safeguarding procedures and have reached thoughtful conclusions in relation to their assessments. It provides evidence of the variety of ways schools seek to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust and understood by all members of the school community. In the best examples, schools provided specific dates for events e.g. training and/or policy review and provided the location of evidence within the school.

- There were no responses that indicated that existing arrangements were inadequate; this is change from previous audit activity but may be as a consequence of the reduction in numbers of self-assessments used to inform this report.

- 15% of all responses identifying requires improvement related to staff knowledge and understanding of private fostering and 13% in respect of tackling Child Criminal Exploitation. Others area related to having an online safety policy and appropriate procedures in place (12%), the Governing Board having appropriate training (8%) and monitoring of the Single Central Record (7%).

- In the best examples, schools identified specific actions required to get to good or better along with the person(s) responsible and clear time scales. Schools are supported with many of the areas for development identified above through training and the guidance available in the 'Safeguarding Section' of the Norfolk Schools' website. These themes have however identified actions that the LA should take to support schools further; these are included within the 'identified actions' section in this report

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Key themes

The following themes for development were common in the action plans of the submissions received:

DSL and Named Governor Roles

• Time is made available for both roles to work together.

• The school/college has systems in place to monitor and quality assure implementation and compliance with safeguarding requirements and procedures.

• Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements brought to the attention of the governing body and senior managers are remedied without delay.

Ethos

• Helps children by devising a curriculum map to review and demonstrate how the school teaches children to identify and respond appropriately to risk.

Safeguarding Policy

• The school has online safety policy and procedures that are reviewed annually.

Child Protection Procedures

• Has appropriate safeguarding responses to children who are persistently absent from school, go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Training & Induction

• In addition to training, all staff should receive regular safeguarding updates to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

• The Governing Body has received suitable safeguarding training.

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Key Themes

Safer Recruitment

- There are robust procedures in place for monitoring the Single Central Record.

Understanding Child Abuse: signs, symptoms and categories

- Provide further training and guidance for staff on the following areas:
    - Child Criminal Exploitation
    - Private Fostering

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Identified Actions

1. In order to support schools to address areas commonly identified for development, it is recommended that:

1.1 The Advisers, Education Safeguarding review and where necessary re-issue LA guidance for schools in relation to private fostering and child criminal exploitation.

1.2 The Advisers, Education Safeguarding liaise with colleagues from Educator Solutions in respect of online safety to fully understand what training and support materials are being offered to schools.

1.3 The Safeguarding Training Officer works with relevant agencies to produce modules of training on Neglect and Honour Based Abuse.

1.4 The Advisers, Education Safeguarding work with colleagues from Norfolk Governor Services to lead webinars for DSLs and governors on how to work effectively together to monitor and evaluate the safeguarding function within educational settings.

1.5 The Advisers, Education Safeguarding work with the Safeguarding Intelligence & Performance Co-ordinator from the NSCP and Local Safeguarding Children Group (LSCG) Chairs to review and increase education representation on LSCGs.

1.6 The Advisers, Education Safeguarding work with established chairs of DSL Networks to ascertain the quality of these groups and to give appropriate guidance to ensure DSLs are working together effectively with other agencies to support children and families in their local area.

2. In order to ensure that the conclusions of this audit are meaningful and accurate, the LA should consider further actions as follows:

2.1 Undertaking a programme of safeguarding spot checks in schools to test and validate the returns when it is possible to resume audits within schools.

2.2 Resume the audit cycle in September 2021.

What work has already been undertaken

- The Safeguarding Adviser has worked to identify where existing DSL networks were operating and where the gaps are across Norfolk. The development of networks is ongoing and there are currently 22 DSL networks running and a further 2 in the early stages of being set up.

- Education representation on Local Safeguarding Children Groups (LSCGs) is currently being reviewed by the Education Safeguarding Team. The aim is for those DSLs who lead networks to secure positive representation on LSCGs. In turn this will mean key messages are able to be disseminated to local safeguarding networks. The Education Safeguarding Team plan to hold an event in spring 2021 for those in existing networks to promote the work of the LSCGs and ask for representatives from each locality.

- In conjunction with the Norfolk Fostering Team an MI sheet was published on 16 October 2020 to reiterate key guidance and procedures in relation to Private Fostering.

- There has been ongoing work with the St Giles Trust regarding the SoS+ Project to encourage educational settings to sign up for the input. The Education Safeguarding Team have promoted the webinars for professionals and parents and carers. We are contributing to the training for professionals being developed as part of the Pathfinder Project.

The Education Safeguarding Team's response to Covid- 19

- The Advisers produced specific guidance and a model addendum policy for schools and colleges in response to the publication of documentation from the DfE related to safeguarding. These documents were available from April 2020. In the third national lockdown both of these documents were updated and published in January 2021. The purpose of this guidance is to support DSLs in their safeguarding response to Covid-19. A Checklist for Practice sits at the beginning of the guidance. It is advised that schools complete this in order to check that they have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place. Appendix 1 provides schools and colleges with websites and organisations which students and parents can be signposted to for support during this time. Appendix 2 offers advice and guidance on making welfare calls to students and their families. It is important that schools and colleges speak directly to children during this time to ascertain how they are feeling.

- From March to June 2020 all DSL training was ceased. As it became clear that restrictions would continue to be in place the Team worked to amend the training packages for the 2-day and update DSL courses for virtual delivery. This method of training began in July 2020. More courses that usual were advertised and members of the Team supported the Training Officer to deliver as many dates as possible, this included some dates in the summer holidays. There have been no further disruptions to the training offer.

- Audit work was ceased during the first national lockdown and again since January 2021. In the Autumn Term 2020 a limited number of audits were undertaken, specifically for schools causing concern. The Education Safeguarding Advisers have continued to offer advice and guidance remotely.

- Since March 2020 there has been twenty-three thematic webinars held for DSLs. Webinars have been delivered by a range of professionals from Children's Services, Police, Health and voluntary organisations. The numbers of DSLs attending has varied but this academic year there has been as many as 295 DSLs taking part. Themes have included mental health and wellbeing, honour-based abuse, exploitation, welfare checks for children and families and young carers. The webinars have given DSLs a time to reflect upon their practice, update their knowledge and skills, understand the support on offer across Norfolk and gain key contacts from a variety of different agencies which they can refer to in order to support the children in their settings.

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1) DSL and Named Governor Roles

The table below shows the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 - Requires improvement %	4 - Inadequate %
Has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	54	45	0	0
Has a deputy DSL	62	37	1	0
Has a named governor for safeguarding	39	57	4	0
The roles are established	42	56	2	0
Time is made available for both roles to work together	24	63	13	0
Cover for the DSL role	54	45	1	0
The school/college has systems in place to monitor and quality assure implementation and compliance with safeguarding requirements and procedures	25	68	6	0
Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements brought to the attention of the governing body and senior managers are remedied without delay.	24	70	6	0

Commentary:

All schools that provided a rating in this section indicated that they meet the statutory requirements in respect of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role and have multiple staff trained to ensure that this is always cover for the role. DSLs come from a variety of roles in school from senior leaders to pastoral workers and administrative staff. Schools stated that having DSLs who were non-teaching meant that they were more available to pupils when required. The training records held by the Education Safeguarding Team validate these findings.

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1) DSL and Named Governor Roles

Some schools have Parent Support Advisers or Family Support Workers to provide early help and intervention to prevent concerns escalating. Submissions indicate that awareness of those holding this role was made clear to staff and visitors through the use of posters and leaflets displaying photographs of DSLs. Submissions made clear that the contact details of DSLs were available for staff and, when children were on school trips, there were nominated senior leaders/DSLs to be contacted for advice and support. A number of schools talked of having DSLs they could seek advice from in other schools within their Trust or federation or in a neighbouring school in the rare event that no trained DSL was available to staff.

In many submissions it was recorded that DSLs had established a cycle of regular meetings to discuss cases of concern, audit case files and discuss safeguarding practice more broadly in school. In the absence of formal mechanisms for supervision, the establishment of such meetings is strongly recommended to ensure that DSLs receive peer support in managing risk and ensuring the support the school is giving to children and families is appropriate. The submissions rated good and outstanding made clear that minutes were being taken.

Section 175 Education Act 2002 and the related statutory guidance makes explicit the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that the functions of the schools are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and to remedy any weaknesses that are brought to their attention in this respect. In a significant number of submissions it was recorded that the safeguarding governor meets with the DSL(s) regularly in order to monitor safeguarding practice.

This included use of this self-review process, using the checklists for monitoring the Single Central Record and safeguarding compliance more broadly as well as annually reporting to the governors with a full and thorough safeguarding report. In examples of best practice, the meetings between governors and DSLs followed a standardised agenda and minutes were produced. These systems will help to ensure rigorous oversight and management of the safeguarding function.

In a number of submissions, schools described how their Academy Trust provided a further level of scrutiny and challenge through checks, audits and reports required to be written about safeguarding practice in school.

2) School ethos – providing a safe environment for pupils to learn in

The table and graph below shows the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 - Requires improvement %	4 - Inadequate %
The school ethos is inclusive of child protection issues.	32	64	4	0
Children feel safe and listened to at school.	34	62	3	0
Helps children through the curriculum	28	65	6	0
Actively seeks advice on how to develop a child protection ethos	37	59	4	0

Commentary:

The evidence provided by schools in this section of the audit demonstrates ethos in school that recognises the central importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. This is vital if schools are to ensure that their safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented in practice and provide opportunities for reflection on issues of safety for all members of the school community.

The new curriculum for Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education is mandatory from September 2020. The DfE have encouraged schools to adopt the new curriculum early from September 2019. Schools need to have a planned programme for this area integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum accessible for all pupils. All schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE including all stakeholders in the consultation of this.

Submissions routinely talked about using perception surveys to gain the views from pupils, staff and parents and carers regarding safety, wellbeing and the school environment.

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2) School ethos – providing a safe environment for pupils to learn in

In response to the partial school closures, some DSLs and senior staff identified the need for additional training for staff to support the work of DSLs to gain the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people. The Education Safeguarding Team developed a training session entitled 'Understanding the lived experience of the child'. This training is designed for pastoral workers and other support staff who may be required to support the work of trained DSLs and gives these staff an understanding of why gaining the views of pupils is so important and the tools and strategies that could be used to undertake sessions with children.

Curriculum maps were identified by a number of schools as a way of demonstrating what different year groups are taught when and how the learning follows on. Schools identified a number of tools they have adopted to support children to identify and respond appropriately to risk through the curriculum. Schools recorded a broad range of topics covered such as road and fire safety, drugs awareness, 'stranger danger', cycling proficiency, seatbelt safety, healthy relationships and the use of NSPCC PANTS resources.

Teaching children to identify risk and develop resilience appeared to be taught in a wide ranging number of lessons, particularly ICT, in addition to dedicated PSHE sessions. Schools named a ranges of programmes/interventions including PATHS, Thrive, ELSA, JONK, Forest Schools. Many schools indicated that they have also utilised the support of external agencies such as Safer Schools Officers, Crucial Crew events and teams from the LA such as road safety.

Schools identified a number of different ways in which they provide children with the opportunity to talk and raise concerns on both a collective and individual basis including:

School council	Circle times
Peer mentoring	Playground buddies
Digital Leaders	Worry boxes
Nurture groups	Childline number

External agencies were also referred to for gaining support for individual pupils such as The Matthew Project and Nelsons Journey.

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2) School ethos – providing a safe environment for pupils to learn in

The returns identified a number of places that DSLs went to when seeking advice and guidance about a 'child protection' ethos. These included:

NSCP website	Local Headteachers
Norfolk Schools website	Members of the Academy Trust
NSPCC website	MI sheets
LA Safeguarding Advisers	DSL Twitter feed
Early Help Hubs	

It was extremely positive to note that a number of schools talked about the DSL Networks that they are part of that give opportunities to share good practice, train together and liaise with colleagues from other agencies such as the police, Children's Social Care and Early Help Family Focus.

The Safeguarding Adviser has identified where existing networks were operating, which schools were attending and established communication links to share and receive information. Where gaps have been identified, the Safeguarding Adviser has worked with DSLs in those areas to support with the development of a network. There are currently 22 networks running and a further 2 in the early stages of being set up.

Thirteen thematic webinars were held during the period of partial school closures in the first national lockdown. These were well attended by DSLs and much positive feedback was received. Webinars were delivered by a range of professionals from Children's Services, Police, Health and voluntary organisations. Due to the level of engagement from DSLs the webinars are continuing in academic year 2020-2021. The numbers of DSLs attending has varied but this academic year there has been as many as 295 DSLs taking part. Themes have included mental health and wellbeing, honour-based abuse, exploitation, welfare checks for children and families and young carers. The webinars have given DSLs a time to reflect upon their practice, update their knowledge and skills, understand the support on offer across Norfolk and gain key contacts from a variety of different agencies which they can refer to in order to support the children in their settings.

In order to strength the presence of education settings within the NSCP, education representation on Local Safeguarding Children Groups (LSCGs) is currently being reviewed by the Education Safeguarding Team and has been identified as an area for the development. The aim is for those DSLs who lead networks to secure positive representative on LSCGs. In turn this will mean key messages are able to be disseminated to local safeguarding networks. Representatives from the NSCP have been asked to contribute to the Education Safeguarding Team's termly newsletter and this is another method of ensuring dissemination of information and the work of the Partnership as a whole.

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3) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Revised 2019)

The table and graph below show the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 - Requires improvement %	4 - Inadequate %
The school will have a safeguarding and child protection policy.	45	54	0	0
The school policy has been devised with consideration to LA model policy and the most up to date guidance.	51	49	0	0
Other school policies have been revised in line with the safeguarding policy.	31	64	5	0
The safeguarding and child protection policy is available publicly via the school's website or other means.	36	62	2	0
Ensure that every member of staff, volunteer, visitor and parent will know the procedures.	33	64	3	0
The school has online safety policy and procedures that are reviewed annually.	14	74	12	0

Commentary:

The existence of a safeguarding policy that is updated annually is a statutory requirement. In addition, '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' makes clear the expectation that this policy is provided to staff at induction and should be available publicly via the school's website. The data indicates that all schools are compliant with statutory requirements in this area. Schools explained that the policy is available on the school website, in the school brochure and can be made available in hardcopy if requested.

Submissions routinely stated that the LA Model Safeguarding Policy is used in the development of and is referenced in a range of policies including, Attendance, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Health and Safety and Online Safety. Submissions identified clear systems in place to ensure that every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor is provided with information to support them to understand the school's procedures. A variety of communication strategies were identified, examples included:

- Use of leaflets for visitors, parents and volunteers that summarise the procedures;

- Safeguarding information such as leaflets and posters clearly visible in reception areas;

- Safeguarding information provided to visitors and summarised on visitor badges;

- DSL information posters around the school;

- Annual provision of the policy to all staff;

- Policy given to all staff at induction;

- Quick reference guides/summaries of the policy provided to volunteers and agency staff.

Although a direct comparison to the previous years data cannot be done it does appear that online safety, remains an area that many schools identified as requiring further development. Submissions gave details of how online safety concerns were logged and then dealt with however improvements were recorded specifically in relation to having a dedicated policy and auditing practice in this area.

4) Child Protection Procedures

The table and graph show the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 – RI %	4 - Inadequate %
The School has systems in place to identify children who would benefit from early help or additional services at the earliest opportunity in order to prevent issues escalating.	33	64	2	0
There are effective and prompt systems for referring safeguarding concerns about children to the DSL and to relevant agencies.	41	58	1	0
The school plays an active role in multi-agency working to safeguard children.	37	61	2	0
School staff carry out the actions attributed to them in any Child Protection, Child in Need and /or Family Support Plans.	32	66	2	0
Has appropriate safeguarding responses to children who are persistently absent from school, go missing from education.	34	61	5	0
In line with learning from NSCP serious case reviews, DSLs know what action to when there is professional disagreement about how to safeguard a child.	25	72	3	0

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4) Child Protection Procedures

Commentary:

Submissions were able to state that at least one DSL had accessed FSP training and for some schools multiple DSLs were trained. Pastoral support is offered early in order to support children before concerns escalate.

Best practice demonstrated that members of the senior leadership reviewed cases regularly to check that the support in place is appropriate. Some submissions discussed linking in with other schools, early years providers and had staff trained in specific areas such as bereavement, domestic abuse and mental health to support pupils and families.

An action for a number of schools was that they needed to gather case studies so they could demonstrate the early help and intervention given to children and families. Case studies are one way of demonstrating this, however a pupil's safeguarding record should clearly evidence the concerns raised and the steps taken by the school to offer support and/or referrals to other appropriate agencies at an early stage to avoid escalation.

Submissions stated that contact details for the Children's Advice and Duty Service are available to staff in a variety of places including toilets, staff room and offices. A few submissions also said this number was included in staff handbooks.

Schools with paper-based recording systems stated that Cause for Concern forms were available to staff in numerous places such as offices, the staffroom and classrooms. A significant number of schools stated they now use electronic systems to record concerns and staff had undergone training in order to have confidence in how to raise a concern to DSLs.

During audit work, concerns have been raised about schools using two or more systems at the same time such as continuing to add information into a paper file when using an electronic system. This has led to a fragmentation of records and makes it difficult to audit the information and for schools to see the entire lived experience of the child. It has also been noted in audit activity that electronic systems are not always fully utilised for analysing concerns. This practice issue is being addressed in DSL training.

Submissions noted that DSLs attend strategy discussions, conferences and multi-agency meetings. DSLs have an understanding of the Signs of Safety approach through their DSL training but more specifically through the NSCP multi-agency 2-day training course.

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4) Child Protection Procedures

Commentary:

Submissions described how children are spoken with prior to meetings or conferences to ensure their voice is heard. Schools named the Signs of Safety Three Houses approach as the most common tool used but many submissions stated they use other resources such as 'All About Me,' 'likes and dislikes' and wishes and feelings to gain pupil views. Best practice identified a 'caseload' of pupils who are regularly seen for 1:1 work whether they are subject to a multi-agency plan or not.

Submissions stated that reports are submitted to the governing board and/or Trust on at least an annual basis with some schools submitting reports once a term to evidence activity such as the number of pupils under multi-agency plans, number of meetings attended and the calls made to CADS.

Schools stated that DSLs are made aware of the contents of multi-agency plans either through attending the specific meetings or shared through DSL meetings. Other staff such as teachers and pastoral workers are told about specific elements that need to be undertaken by school staff. Plans are then held on the individual's paper file or scanned and uploaded to the electronic system.

Schools made clear that they follow the Local Authority CME procedures when taking a pupil off roll. Data from the School Census in October 2019 demonstrated a 71% compliance rate which increased to 83% in January 2020; practice in this area will be further strengthened by the live attendance data feed.

It was stated that attendance of pupils is reviewed regularly, the frequency determined by the school from weekly to half termly. Schools outlined a number of strategies in place to tackle pupil absence including first day calling, support panel meetings, fast track meetings and Fixed Penalty Notices. During the time of partial school closures the LA Attendance Team worked with schools and allocated social workers to track the attendance of vulnerable children receiving the support of a social worker to ensure they were attending education setting wherever possible.

Submissions indicated that DSLs were aware of the NSCP Resolving Professional Disagreements Policy but very few have had to use it in practice. From scrutinising the Advice Log kept by the Education Safeguarding Team it was evident that there were 12 cases where schools were advised to use or had used the Resolving Professional Disagreements Policy during Academic Year 2019-2020.

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5) Child Protection Record Keeping and Monitoring

The table and graph below show the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice

SEF measure name	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 - Requires improvement %	4 - Inadequate %
Have systems in place for recording concerns about the welfare, safety or behaviour of a child.	45	54	1	0
Stores records of child protection concerns appropriately.	47	52	1	0
Child protection concerns are monitored and followed-up in a timely manner.	32	65	3	0
There is a named child protection file for each child there is a cause for a concern for.	34	63	3	0
File will have an up to date chronology of significant events and documents included on the file.	39	59	2	0
Hand written notes are signed and dated to include year, position of author and person the information is being passed to.	39	60	1	0
All records including reports and referrals will be valid, useful and factual.	35	63	2	0
Will pass all child protection and safeguarding information on to the subsequent school.	37	61	2	0

5) Child Protection Record Keeping and Monitoring

Commentary:

Overall schools have reported positively in this area. It appears that the adoption of electronic systems has supported practice as it provides the facility for all DSLs to be made aware of concerns when they are raised and supports communication to identify actions and follow-up. An electronic system also means oversight of cases can happen more easily, including when DSLs are not on school site. This was a particular benefit during the period of full and partial school closures due to Coivd-19.

The importance of accurate record keeping, monitoring concerns and passing on relevant information are key themes in both whole-school and DSL training. Submissions recorded that files or electronic logs included all relevant information including contemporaneous notes, e-mail, logs of telephone calls and all relevant reports and minutes.

On analysis of the submissions of the four schools who identified storing records of child protection concerns as an area requiring improvement, it was clear this is in relation to work being undertaken on the filing system or about the transition period when schools move from a paper to an electronic system.

Since the last self-evaluation there has been a significant increase in the use of electronic systems for recording safeguarding concerns. This highlights the importance of how to introduce a new system in an appropriate way so a fragmentation of records does not occur. 54% of submissions indicated the use of an electronic system, these included: CPOMS, My Concern, Class chart, and School Pod. It was explained that paper copies of recording forms were still available for volunteers, visitors or in the event of there being a temporary issue with the electronic system.

Those schools still indicating that they use paper forms (46%), utilise the LA templates for recording to support their practice. In examples of best practice, the requirements for recording concerns are communicated through induction and training is given in using the electronic recording system. Some schools also explained that the forms are coloured to give them a high profile within the school and to make them easily recognisable and accessible. The submissions indicate that paper files are held securely, whether this is the current system or the archived files prior to using the electronic system.

The other submissions stating 'requires improvement' across a number of the measures in this area came from four schools. All of these schools had a full audit by an Education Safeguarding Adviser and there has been ongoing support offered. For 3 schools this has been through an Intervention Adviser from the Education Quality Assurance, Intervention and Regulation Service and for the 4th (which was audited just before academisation) the Safeguarding Adviser has worked with the Trust to ensure they are able to continue to support and monitor the safeguarding practice.

Further areas of good practice included:

- Clear messages through training and induction that safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of staff and volunteers and the processes for reporting concerns.

- Encouragement to pass on any concern - no concern is too small to be considered.

- Feedback is routinely given to staff who report a concern and encouragement to re-report if any further concerns arise.

The majority of schools said an overview of cases is kept and that there are DSL meetings held to review cases of concern. These meetings take place at different timeframes depending on the school with many meeting weekly. Some schools stated that external scrutiny of practice is also in place from the Academy Trust. There was some evidence that schools are actively challenging responses from other agencies. Submissions stated that they would follow up on concerns raised by speaking with parents or carers, undertaking wishes and feelings with the child and informing other staff as appropriate.

In line with statutory guidance it is the responsibility of a school to pass on safeguarding information to the receiving school when a child moves. Submissions have details of the transfer of files when using an electronic as opposed to a paper system. If the same electronic system is used this transfer can happen electronically between schools. If electronic systems are not compatible or the receiving school does not record concerns electronically then schools explained that recorded are printed and sent with the LA transfer template. The pupil can then be archived on the electronic system.

Schools stated that telephone conversations will take place with the receiving school, particularly if the safeguarding information is due to be sent via post.

The graph below shows the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 – Outstanding %	2 – Good %	3 – Requires Improvement %	4- Inadequate %
The school seeks assurance from all providers of work-based placements, alternative provision placements, after-school services or activities, if they are provided separately by another body, that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection; there are arrangements to liaise with the provider on these matters where appropriate.	25	72	3	0
When commissioning a service e.g. when contracting out catering, cleaning or maintenance, there are robust mechanisms in place to ensure that these organisations have appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection.	25	73	2	0

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6) Use of External Providers

Commentary:

Submissions demonstrated that schools understood what information they should gain in respect of supply staff and contractors.

Schools stated that supply agencies provide information regarding safer recruitment checks undertaken on their staff. In relation to students and those on work experience, liaison with school, college or university takes place in relation to appropriate checks.

Where contractors are used for cleaning and catering staff, schools stated that these staff attend safeguarding training. For other contractors such as those coming to undertake work on site, submissions stated that where possible this work is completed outside of school hours. Schools stated that written confirmation is sought from the employer that all relevant safer recruitment checks have been undertaken and that identification is checked on arrival. All contractors have to sign in, some schools stated that contractors are given a different colour badge or lanyard to ensure these people are identified easily by staff and children.

Those schools part of multi-academy trusts often stated that the Trust is responsible for sourcing contractors and/or the Trust have an approved list of contractors that the schools use.

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The table and graph below shows the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 - Requires improvement %	4 - Inadequate %
All staff receive a safeguarding induction.	29	69	1	0
The DSL and deputy DSLs have received suitable training in line with national and local requirements.	32	63	5	0
In addition to formal training, DSL knowledge and skills are updated at regular intervals, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.	25	69	5	0
All members of staff receive regular training in line with national and local requirements.	29	69	2	0
In addition to training, all staff should receive regular safeguarding updates to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.	24	70	6	0
The Governing Body has received suitable safeguarding training.	22	70	8	0
Inform the Governing Body of updated training.	27	67	6	0

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7) Training & Induction

Commentary:

It is a statutory requirement that safeguarding training is accessed by the DSL every two years and provided to all staff annually. The LA provides whole-school training materials and an on-going programme of training for DSLs; the evidence from submissions and LA training records indicate that schools continue to make use of these resources.

It is essential that schools can evidence the safeguarding training received by staff and that safeguarding information is regularly shared with volunteers, parents and pupils. The submissions indicate that schools have sought to do so through creating a central body of evidence (this could be held electronically or on paper) including the use of training logs and of certification for external courses. Many submissions included a table of training requirements for DSLs. Schools described keeping a training log to ensure that dates and review dates are recorded. In a number of submissions, regular updates were given to all staff through discussions at briefings or meetings, dissemination of a newsletter or bulletins, or through emailing information to staff.

During Covid-19, the training for DSLs ceased temporarily but in July 2020 the 2-day and update course began again virtually. More courses that usual were advertised and members of the Education Safeguarding Team supported the Training Officer to deliver as many dates as possible, this included some dates in the summer holidays.

The importance of face-to-face training cannot be underestimated and although online training does have a place, i.e. to increase knowledge on a specific area, it is advised that this is not the default option for staff as a) online courses do not give information about the local context and procedures in Norfolk, b) staff can not discuss or ask questions and the course leader cannot pick up on any staff who may need extra input or support.

Submissions recorded that visitors are given key safeguarding information on arrival to the school, often through a leaflet or poster. Information related to safeguarding and specifically the DSLs could also be found on the back of lanyards. Submissions indicated that a safeguarding induction is being provided in accordance with the requirements of KCSiE and schools described how they had developed an induction pack for staff with evidence being retained by DSLs or in individual staff personnel file to demonstrate that appropriate information had been given.

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7) Training & Induction

Commentary:

Information given to contractors, supply staff and volunteers varied. Some schools give a full induction (as per a staff member) to volunteers and long term supply. Others stated they gave the leaflet and a DSL had a brief conversation regarding procedures for recording and reporting concerns. It is crucial that the different groups are given an induction appropriate to their role and the level of contact with children. Best practice would be that long term supply staff and volunteers are given a similar safeguarding induction to staff to ensure that the safeguarding procedures and code of conduct are fully understood.

Some submissions talked about a plan for training throughout the academic year which could be using the Norfolk modules. There was limited commentary related to the impact the training had on safeguarding practice. Analysis of evaluations and following up with staff (through a questionnaire or potentially face-to-face questions) some time after the training sessions is key to assess knowledge and understanding the impact on practice. It is also important that DSLs use this information to inform future opportunities for safeguarding CPD.

DSLs update their knowledge through attendance at:

• DSL Network meetings;

• Safeguarding Team's Twitter feed;

• Safeguarding Team's newsletter;

• MI sheets;

• Subscribe to NSPCC weekly bulletin;

• Information received from their Academy Trust.

Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring they receive training that is appropriate to the role and supports them to fulfil their safeguarding functions; relevant training is available from Norfolk Governor Services and should be utilised by those schools identifying this an area for development.

Submissions talked of Governors attending annual training that is provided to staff in addition to attending specific training for the governance role. Details of training undertaken by staff is provided via the Headteacher's Report to the Governing Board. Some submissions documented that training is discussed as part of visits by the Safeguarding Governor.

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8) Safer Selection and Recruitment

The table below shows the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)
The School has a written recruitment and selection policy that comply with local and national guidance.	35	62	3	0
The Headteacher and at least one governor have completed accredited Safer Recruitment Training.	36	64	0	0
Will expect a completed application form to be returned for every available position in school.	45	55	0	0
Shortlists against agreed criteria.	36	63	1	0
Will always request references and ensure at least one is a current or most recent employer.	40	59	1	0
Will not accept testimonials brought to interview.	52	48	0	0
Requests that professional and/or academic qualifications are brought to interview.	36	62	2	0
Will always question gaps in employment history	40	60	0	0
All candidates will be made aware prior to short listed that a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check with Barred List check will be required.	47	53	0	0
All relevant adults are included on the SCR.	43	55	2	0
All required checks are evidenced on the SCR.	42	57	1	0
Supporting evidence has been retained by the school.	34	64	2	0
The school has obtained relevant information from staff working in childcare in line with Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.	42	57	1	0
There are robust procedures in place for monitoring the SCR	30	63	7	0

Commentary:

Statutory guidance and research highlights the necessity for schools to establish robust safer recruitment practices to deter, reject and identify people who might pose a risk to children or are unsuitable to working with them. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children must be an integral part of all recruitment and selection processes in Norfolk Schools. The Local Authority provides both training, advice and information to schools to support practice in this area and it is evident from the commentary provided by schools in this audit that they are utilising this. Schools stated that they either used the LA model Recruitment and Selection policy or a version written by their Academy Trust.

The majority of schools considered they were good or better at accessing appropriate safer recruitment training with a significant number going beyond the requirements by having DSLs, senior leaders and administrative staff trained and more than one governor.

Schools made clear in submissions that they follow shortlisting against an agreed criteria, requesting refences and not accepting testimonials. Evidence of qualifications are brought to interview and for successful candidates this information is retained on personnel file. Job adverts make clear that posts will be subject to DBS and barred list checks.

The maintenance of a single central record (SCR) of all safer recruitment checks is a statutory requirement for all schools. A LA template SCR and associated guidance is available on the Norfolk Schools website. It was stated that personnel files are held securely with a number of submissions stating that these had been audited either by school staff or the academy trust. However, an action for some schools was to undertake this audit process.

With regards to monitoring the SCR, all of the schools that provided a rating for this area indicated that the practice was good or better with best practice examples highlighting that the record is checked at regular intervals by the Headteacher and/or named governor and compliance in this area is reported to the Governing Board. This does not concur fully with the findings from audit work where monitoring has not been regular, particularly by a member of the governing board.

9) Safer Working Practice for all Staff for the Protection of Children

The table and graph below show the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	1 - Outstanding %	2 - Good %	3 - Requires improvement %	4 - Inadequate %
Will have regard to 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' (May 2019)	24	69	6	0
Will have guidance for managing allegations against staff members including the Headteacher in line with national and local requirements.	31	69	0	0
All staff are aware of the school's Whistle Blowing policy and are given a copy upon appointment.	32	67	1	0
All allegations of abuse are reported and responded to appropriately.	35	65	0	0

9. Safer working practice for all staff for the protection of children

Commentary:

Beyond the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers, it is essential that schools embed and, where necessary, enforce a culture of safer working practice by clearly communicating expectations about staff behaviour and procedures for reporting concerns in induction and training.

In accordance with '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*', governing bodies should ensure that a staff behaviour policy (code of conduct) is in place and provided to all staff at induction. The vast majority of schools issue a copy of 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' (2019) to staff at induction and then annually as part of safeguarding training. Many schools adopt this guidance in its entirety as the staff Code of Conduct. Some schools identified the need to improve practice by asking staff to sign and acknowledge receipt of the document. This is an important development to assist schools to challenge poor and unsafe practice as it arises. Good practice was identified in submissions where schools also issued the document to volunteers as part of their induction.

During the period of partial school closures the DfE recommended that schools add an addendum to their code of conduct to make clear for staff, parents and children what was acceptable practice, particularly in light of remote learning and teaching. In April 2020, the Safer Recruitment Consortium produced an addendum for the Guidance for Safer Working Practice document which the Education Safeguarding Team brought to the attention of schools and colleges.

In addition to communicating procedures for whistle-blowing and managing allegations against staff in training, the majority of schools provided evidence to indicate that this advice is easily accessible for staff at all times e.g. on display in staff rooms and/or available electronically so that staff can access this information in a confidential manner (this included the NSPCC Whistleblowing number). A number of schools submitted evidence to suggest that they have responded to concerns in line with procedures by contacting the LA Duty Line for advice and support.

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10. Understanding child abuse, signs, symptoms and categories

The table below shows the overall % ratings provided for this area of practice:

SEF measure name	Outstanding %	Good %	R.I %	Inadequate %
All staff can describe and explain the categories of abuse.	32	67	1	0
Staff can identify the signs and symptoms of the abuse.	29	69	2	0
Are aware that parental misuse of substances and domestic violence are a cause for concern.	32	68	0	0
Are aware of child on child abuse.	32	67	1	0
Can describe and explain what Child Sexual Exploitation is and know what to do.	22	72	6	0
Are aware of female genital mutilation and understand the mandatory reporting requirements for teaching staff.	23	73	4	0
Staff know that forced marriage is an abuse of human rights and can identify indicators of concern.	22	74	4	0
Staff are alert to the possibility of fabricated or induced illness	28	69	3	0
Staff will consider whether children who are young carers have a right to additional support services	24	70	6	0
Staff can describe and explain what constitutes a private fostering arrangement	17	68	15	0
Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation	27	69	4	0
NSCP Priority: Tackling Child Sexual Abuse	23	69	8	0
NSCP Priority: Tackling Neglect	20	73	7	0
Child Criminal Exploitation	16	71	13	0

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Commentary:

All staff in education settings play a vital role in helping to identify concerns about child abuse and neglect at an early stage. It is evident that this knowledge is being developed by schools through appropriate and regular staff training and access to LA guidance.

It is positive to note that the majority of schools graded themselves good or better for recognising the signs of abuse and understanding the categories of abuse. Some schools in the audit had accessed LA guidance and modules of training covering specific areas of abuse but it appears that a number of schools felt less confident about staff recognition of some types of abuse such as child criminal exploitation and also private fostering (which was also recognised as an area in the last audit). However, the picture is complex as some of these areas indicate a significant increase in confidence compared to the last audit.

The LA in conjunction with the NSCP and Norfolk Constabulary have sought to raise awareness of issues such as child sexual abuse and more recently Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) through the provision of specific input within DSL training and Educate Norfolk Leaders sessions. The LA has worked with the St Giles Trust and Mancroft Advice Project (as part of the Early Intervention Youth Fund) to offer support for schools in the form of a presentation to pupils related to CCE and then individual pupils identified for targeted 1:1 support. Further work to raise awareness and support practice in this area will be undertaken through the Pathfinder Project and County Lines Strategy Group.

Submissions made reference to support from NSPCC leading assemblies and workshop for children, including the NSPCC PANTS resources. There were also references to DSLs and staff using the Brook Traffic Light tool when reviewing cases and identifying next steps.

Further thematic modules of training are being developed in relation to Harmful Sexual Behaviour, neglect and vulnerable adolescents. Further work is still required to increase schools' knowledge of private fostering and this will be included in all DSL training and the whole school training package.