

## Representation of Education within the Local Safeguarding Arrangements

We know that the role of education is vital in keeping our children and families safe and we wanted to provide you with an update about how this is being recognised in Norfolk. Revisions made to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' in 2023 expect that safeguarding partners locally will name schools and colleges as relevant agencies. Locally, partnership work between a group of education leaders from across phases, the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Business Unit and the Education Safeguarding Team has been happening since the beginning of the Summer Term 2024 to try to realise this aim. Initially, we looked at how to ensure the voice of education is represented in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements by building on feedback from DSL networks. We also sought advice from Jon Le Fevre, the National Safeguarding Facilitator for Education who has been commissioned by the DfE to work with safeguarding partnerships to develop effective engagement and include education in their safeguarding arrangements.

As a result, a small group of school leaders has agreed to represent their sectors within the local safeguarding partnership arrangements to find a way making sure the voices and opinions are represented when the Partnership is making strategic safeguarding decisions. We wanted to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and summarises the work so far:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Sector Representative</b>
Amanda Fewkes, Headteacher – Fen Rivers	Norfolk Association of Special Schools Headteachers (NASSH)
Helen Richardson-Hulme, Assistant Principal Student Services – City College Norwich	Further Education Sector
Jessica Balado, Headteacher – Thurlton Primary	Norfolk School Leaders' Association & Primary Sector
Jon Ford, Principal – Open Academy	Secondary Sector
Matt Tuckwood, Headteacher – Whitefriars C of E Primary Academy	Primary Sector
Abigail McGarry	NSCP Business Unit
Kelly Waters, Senior Safeguarding Adviser	Education Safeguarding Team - Children's Services

This is as you will realise, a complex challenge however we are convinced that with the help of education settings across the County we can improve communication to ensure the voice of education is represented within Norfolk's Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA) as the fourth safeguarding partner. In order to do this over the next few months we will find ways to:

- Communicate effectively with DSLs to gather their views on key topics and share representative views of the education sector to support decision-making.
- Raise the profile of the work of the NSCP with all schools and colleges by providing key updates from the NSCP to education settings via existing networks and forums and seeking settings' views on relevant safeguarding issues as required.
- Identify and discuss strategic issues being raised by educational establishments and, where required, make suitable recommendations to the Partnership Group for action.
- Feedback to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners (Norfolk County Council, Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board) and/or the NSCP Partnership Group on the implications of decisions and policy changes relating to safeguarding children in and out of education establishments.

In December and January we had the pleasure of attending our first meetings of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership Group as a starting point for this work. As highlighted above, we now want to find ways to communicate some of the key messages with busy school leaders. The agendas were very full, reflecting the complex nature of multi-agency safeguarding work but here are some of the key issues we thought might be of interest:

We heard about the publication of [Norfolk's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements Plan](#) and the implications of the recent government policy statement [Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive](#). These local and national developments place central importance on the role of education in safeguarding and it was good to reflect that we are already undertaking work to make sure this is more joined up locally.

We also heard about updates to local arrangements for [Joint Agency Group Supervision \(JAGS\)](#). The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead can be one of the most rewarding yet challenging aspects of the work undertaken in our schools and colleges every day. JAGS provides a reflective space for the multi-agency team working with a family to come together where things might feel complex or overwhelming. If you feel like you might benefit from joint agency group supervision in respect of a case you are working with, please contact the Education Safeguarding Team for more information or use the [request form](#) included with the revised guidance.

Helen Richardson-Hulmes also provided a valuable overview of the safeguarding landscape in the Further Education sector including showcasing some of the amazing work that is happening in our colleges as well as the complexities and challenges faced. Similar presentations are scheduled regarding special schools and the primary and secondary sectors – we will be inviting you to contribute to these presentations in the forthcoming months.

Our attendance at these meetings and more broadly the work we are embarking on will ensure that the voice of education informs strategic thinking in response to local need and the changing national landscape. We will provide regular updates to you as this work progresses but if you have any questions in the interim, please contact your sector representative or Kelly Waters.