

Safeguarding

Newsletter 8

www.boarding.org.uk

Contextual Safeguarding

The notion of “contextual safeguarding” has been introduced into both *Working Together to Safeguard Children* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. Of more general relevance, however, is the work of Dr Carlene Firmin MBE (University of Bedfordshire), on which the guidance is based. Contextual Safeguarding urges professionals to look at safeguarding issues in context, and to understand the home/family background, peer issues, school environments and the “neighbourhoods” the children inhabit. Children can be subject to peer-on-peer abuse because of the *interplay* between those contexts and the *weight of influence* they have on young people.

Traditional safeguarding models focus too narrowly on the impact on the individual, without always considering wider groupings and associations. More information on this vital topic is available on the **Contextual Safeguarding Network** website. Dr. Firmin spoke at the recent very successful peer on peer abuse conference organised by Farrer and Co. A reminder that a peer-on-peer abuse toolkit is available on the **Farrer and Co website**. Peer on peer abuse is becoming an area of increasing concern, with both current and non-recent issues in schools being highlighted recently. A reminder to member schools, therefore, to ensure BSA is advised of any cases in which social care or the police have been involved. To advise the BSA, please email **Dale Wilkins**.

Neglected Older Children

Among those issues where contextual safeguarding is relevant, the **Government report** into neglect relating to older children is certainly one. A multi-agency report was published in July with the following major findings, none of which will be a surprise to safeguarding professionals:

1. Neglect of older children sometimes goes unseen
2. Work with parents to address the neglect of older children does not always happen.
3. Adult services in most areas are not effective in identifying potential neglect of older children.
4. The behaviour of older children must be understood in the context of trauma.
5. Tackling neglect of older children requires a coordinated strategic approach across all agencies

Transgender Guidance

One of issues most frequently raised by schools is that of finding appropriate responses to transgender children. In addition to BSA guidance a document from Scottish organisation LGBT Youth “**Supporting Transgender Young People**” will be of general interest, and there is some guidance on residential aspects, though clearly not every aspect relevant to boarding.

Suicide Prevention

Many professionals have had to deal with young people in boarding who have had suicidal thoughts.

A parliamentary briefing paper, applicable to all regions of the UK, gives some interesting insights (education focused on from page 40).

One Day Conferences

BSA has three one-day conferences on safeguarding topics this year:

Safe and Sound: safeguarding one day conference: November 21, 2018

Accept and Respect: Gender In Boarding: November 29, 2018

Empowering and Preparing Young People: January 22, 2019

News from other providers:

BSA is pleased to have a relationship with a variety of groups and individuals who are working hard to help safeguard children. Colleagues will be aware of the UKCIS document **Education for a Connected World** which was produced in the spring. The organisation **"Freedom from Abuse"** has issued some further guidance: **The Digital Generation**.

Those wishing to work with young people on the areas of rights and responsibilities will find the new **"It'll tell you everything"** resource of interest. Director of **Article 39**, Carolyne Willow writes: "A unique website developed with and for children who live in group settings, including boarding schools, is now live. The site is packed with information on topics children said were important to them, including staying in touch with your family, feeling good about yourself, feeling listened to and feeling safe. The site is run by Article 39 children's rights charity. A child involved in making the site urged others to check it out because 'it'll tell you everything'." A teaching assistant said: "I just wanted to compliment you on such an amazing website... genuinely moved by the empowering message. Your website feels like a very safe place to be".

NSPCC has recently highlighted the frequency with which children are exposed to nude images. One in 25 children aged seven to 11 told researchers that an adult had sent them a naked or semi-naked picture or video on an app, site or game. For children aged 11 to 16 it has affected one in 20. Further details and some very good guidance on the issue of sexting are available **on the NSPCC website**

Barnardo's recently conducted a **poll of childcare professionals** with some very challenging results. Chief Executive Javed Khan described the findings as a wake-up call and a 'perfect storm' of more children needing help, increasingly complex challenges, and a system struggling to cope. Mr. Khan also highlighted the way in which social media is fuelling a mental health crisis in the young.

Despite our training, many of us probably believe it is unlikely that we will ever come across a case of Female Genital Mutilation. **A recent BBC report** indicates a clear link between this abhorrent practice and peer-on-peer abuse.

Dale Wilkins, Head of Safeguarding and Standards, BSA

Critical Incident Response Conference: London, 14th November 2018



Education without Borders: Incident Response

The 4th Annual 'Education without Borders, Students & Staff overseas in a High Risk World'

Does your school send students overseas? Are you aware of the legal obligations you are under in fulfilling your duty of care to them? Would you be able to respond quickly and in a well-prepared manner should an injury, illness or security situation mean they need immediate assistance?

If your school is exposed in this way, this is the most valuable day out of school you'll take this year.

The Incident: A coach has crashed in a rural part of Spain. The area is not remote, but the local medical facilities cannot provide definitive levels of care. There are two female students onboard from the same UK academic institution; one dies at the scene and the other is in a critical condition, needing to be moved immediately to access emergency care.

'Deep Dive' - Our day will follow six key 50-minute sessions which will illustrate in granular detail a situation as it unfolds through various stages. Starting with 'At The Scene' and culminating in the legal processes and implications one year on.

