

Safeguarding Newsletter 9

www.boarding.org.uk

Happy New Year to everyone. 2018 was a busy year for safeguarding, and it looks as if 2019 will be no less so.

IICSA Update

The preliminary hearing into the residential school strand of IICSA was held on January 16, 2019. The full transcript of the hearing is available at:

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/9007/view/preliminary-hearing-transcript-16-january-2019.pdf>

The hearing considered matters relating to closed schools, residential music schools and residential special schools, all of which will be involved in Phase 1 of the inquiry, which will begin on September 30, 2019. There was also some preliminary information regarding the broader Phase 2, for which the themes will be as below (full details on p64 of the transcript):

- the policies, practices and processes of schools, local authorities, and central government and other bodies.
- training, education, recruitment and professional development of both teachers and other school staff.
- how schools, the police, local authorities and the CPS responded to disclosures that children were being sexually abused.
- was abuse reported to statutory authorities?
- the role of the LADO, the police and prosecutors
- the structure and governance of a school, and how that may impact upon its ability to minimise the risk of abuse.
- the systems in place at a particular place and time to ensure accountability for the wellbeing and safety of students.
- the adequacy of systems of redress and reparations, including apologies, counselling, awareness raising and training
- Phase 2 will also examine the culture of the education sector as a whole, by which the inquiry means its behaviours, values and beliefs

Publications

BSA Chair 2018, Martin Reader, has produced a briefing paper which aims to help schools deal with allegations of non-recent abuse. The briefing paper is available on the BSA website: <http://boarding.org.uk/secure/422/briefing-papers>

BSA Research Fellow 2018, Delyth Lynch of Wellington College, has produced a report on *Abuse in Boarding Schools: What makes boarding schools vulnerable and what can we do to create a safer culture for all boarders?* Delyth will be launching the report at the conference for Deputies and Heads of Boarding in Brighton from 30 January to 1 February, and it will subsequently be uploaded to the BSA research site CEBER.



NSPCC

BSA is pleased to support the work of many organisations with a focus on safeguarding, and a very useful meeting was recently held with NSPCC. Prep schools in particular are invited to engage with the NSPCC Speak Out. Stay Safe. programme, as many of you already do. The NSPCC's Speak out. Stay safe. programme can help you to keep your pupils safe. Through assemblies and workshops, the programme empowers primary-aged children to understand abuse, know how to recognise it and know what to do if it's happening to them. It supports children to speak out to a trusted adult, or to Childline, if they ever feel sad, worried or unsafe.

Delivered by specially trained NSPCC staff and volunteers, Speak out. Stay safe. links directly to the curriculum and helps you to meet safeguarding inspection requirements. The programme is offered at no cost to schools, but a number of curriculum-based fundraising activities can be built in. The NSPCC have already delivered Speak out. Stay safe. into over 80% of UK primary schools and want to ensure that even more children receive these essential messages. Find out more and request a visit at www.nspcc.org.uk/speakout

Research into wellbeing

You are invited to participate in a research project examining staff and student wellbeing in boarding schools. The project will compare different workforce models in boarding houses and their effects on both staff and students. Boarding houses are being recruited which are either *run by teachers* with a dual boarding and academic role, or *separate boarding staff* with a sole caregiving role and no additional teaching responsibilities. As schools take many different approaches to staffing their boarding houses, responses are also welcomed which cover alternative arrangements.

The research is non-invasive in nature, and designed to improve the quality of boarding provision in the UK. To participate in the project, staff would be invited to complete an interview with a member of the research team. At this stage, only staff members will be involved, and not boarders.

To express an interest in participating in this project and contributing to the understanding of wellbeing in boarding, please contact Jon Clair at jclair@aldenham.com. Your participation, while welcomed, is completely voluntary.

Jon Clair is a teacher of Art and Chemistry at Aldenham School in Hertfordshire, and is completing masters level research through Griffith University, Australia.

County Lines

The vulnerabilities surrounding "County Lines", whereby young people are exploited by drug gangs to either move, buy or sell drugs, is an area which creates difficulties for schools with regard to providing the right level of training to staff, the right level of awareness for pupils and an appropriate response to this growing issue, but one which keeps it in context. Many schools will have had no worries or concerns, but equally BSA is aware of schools which have had this problem very local to their site. This remains one of the more recent areas of England's Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance which has yet to become fully embedded in safeguarding training in schools. A recent feature in **Eastern Daily Press**, whilst not relating to boarding schools, is indicative of the kinds of issues involved, and might be useful reading for those struggling to make sense of this new vulnerability. Whereas much of the focus has been on England, this problem is clearly one which crosses country as well as county borders.

Unscrupulous agents

A couple of years ago, the BSA was alerted by the Home Office to the dangers of some unscrupulous agents using boarding schools as a means of trafficking young people into the UK for sexual exploitation. There has been a similar case more recently, and schools are advised to take particular care, especially when dealing with agents with whom you are not familiar. There seems to be a particular vulnerability around Vietnam. BSA will soon be launching an accredited agent scheme as part of our response.

KCSIE Translations

With thanks to Andrew Hall of **Safeguarding In Schools** for the tip, London Grid for Learning has facilitated translations of KCSIE into several languages, which will be useful to members of staff for whom English is a challenge. The **LGfL site** highlights the fact that the version in English remains the definitive version, and that these are an aid for schools without any statutory foundation. Nevertheless, colleagues might find them useful.

Social Media, Screen Time and Depression

With UCL having recently **published a study** highlighting the link between social media and depression, on the very same day **the BBC produced an article** inviting parents to worry less about their children's screen time. BSA is keen to collect further information around current practice in boarding schools in this area, so watch out for further details!

Events

BSA is co-hosting an event with IAPS for Prep School staff interested in safeguarding to be held at Caldicott on January 28, 2019. Details and booking are available **on the IAPS website**.

On March 5, 2019 there will be a DSL seminar hosted by Shrewsbury School. Booking for this is via the BSA website.