

Safeguarding Newsletter 11

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I hope you have all been able to get some time off in the last month. I am aware that most UK schools will still be on holiday, but BSA is sending this out in mid-August to ensure you have a chance to look at the various updates before term restarts!

BSA News

BSA has had a recalibration of roles over the summer. Andrew Lewin becomes International Director and will be concentrating on enhancing the services we offer to members overseas. Dale Wilkins has picked up responsibility for training, working closely with Liz McDonald, Senior Training Manager and both Chris Ryan, Head of Member Services, and Beth Waddington, Member Services Manager. Dale is now Director of Safeguarding, Standards and Training.

BSA Safeguarding Conference

Booking is open for the BSA annual Safeguarding Conference at the Marriott Hotel London Marble Arch on Wednesday October 16th. Speakers include Brittany Clarke of Metropolitan Police, who will give a vital update on County Lines, criminal gangs and the potential impacts on our young people. Peter Lewer, educational safeguarding specialist, will focus on safeguarding supervision and “protecting the protectors” and Erica Papaglimis, Head of Pastoral Care at Queen Ethelburga’s will discuss promoting positive outcomes for our young people. Further sessions will address growing concerns around mental health and some emerging compliance issues. **For the full programme and to book, please [click here](#).**

THC

At the very successful conference for Matrons and Nurses in July concern was expressed about a growing use of THC, and this has also been raised by some of our schools. THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol) is the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis, but is now being used as a colourless, odourless liquid in vaping devices, so is very hard to track, compared to the tell-tale smell of cannabis being smoked. Colleagues are advised to be vigilant.

Hong Kong

Many of you will have international students from Hong Kong, and will no doubt be concerned about the implications of the current unrest. At the very least, there is a likelihood of some delayed travel plans. BSA is monitoring the situation and will issue any relevant guidance as soon as possible.

Inquiries

There has been recent activity relating to boarding schools at both the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. A preliminary hearing was held on 25th July by IICSA into the residential schools’ strand of the inquiry. The first stage of the inquiry, relating to residential music schools, residential special schools and schools which are “closed” runs from 30th September for two weeks. The second phase will take place in 2020, but has not yet been scheduled. The full transcript of the preliminary hearing is available **on the [inquiry website](#)**. BSA has provided a full statement to IICSA which will be shared as soon as we are able.

On 26th July the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry published details of Phase 6 of the Inquiry which relates to seven current and former boarding schools, and which will be held in the summer of 2020. The press release can be found **on the [inquiry website](#)**.



Let Children Know You're Listening

NSPCC has shared further details of their *Let Children Know You're Listening* project. This was originally launched in Wales earlier this year. Emily Starr NSPCC Strategy and Research Assistant writes: "We have created an animation that outlines some key interpersonal skills that adults should use when a child discloses abuse and/or neglect, which can help make it clear they are listening and taking the child seriously. This animation compliments the safeguarding poster and briefing paper that we launched earlier this year. All three resources are now available in both English and Welsh at www.nspcc.org.uk/listen. While the skills outlined on the poster and in the animation are well known to people who work with children, children tell us adults don't necessarily always do these things. We aimed to create a set of practical resources that would keep these skills at the front of mind and help give professionals the confidence and skills they need to better listen to and support young people."

Safeguarding Cultures

Kristine Scott of law firm Harrison Clark Rickerbys has shared a briefing note written in response to the Charity Commission inquiry into Oxfam, and lessons which can be learned by schools. It can be found [here](#), and focuses on issues around safeguarding cultures, particularly where shortfalls are known and acknowledged but not acted upon.

International Students

During the academic year 2018-19, one of the growing areas of concern was that of safeguarding issues relating to pupils from overseas. A steadily increasing number of guidance enquiries to BSA related to this area, including how to safeguard children allegedly being abused at home, and how to get the right services for them when they have issues local to the school. BSA is preparing a briefing paper and would be pleased to hear from colleagues of any specific issues and concerns to include. Please email dale@boarding.org.uk

Supervision

For most boarding practitioners, "supervision" has traditionally had no grander meaning than simply knowing the whereabouts of the boarders and ensuring they are safe. Increasingly, however, it is being used also in the sense more traditional to the worlds of social work or counselling, in the sense of providing appropriate support for those looking after the young people, as in "caring for the carers".

These scheduled conversations are already an expectation for schools being inspected by Ofsted, but are now increasingly becoming the norm across the sector. The key is for them to be a supportive professional conversation rather than having any link to appraisal or performance management. Schools are increasingly putting this in place for those with DSL responsibility, but many are extending this to other pastoral practitioners. BSA would be keen to hear from any schools who feel they have particularly good or innovative practice, and a guidance note is being prepared which will be issued in conjunction with Peter Lewer's session at the safeguarding conference (above)

Compliance Update

ENGLAND

As has become a regular feature now, various key documents for England were published earlier this summer. The draft update to **Keeping Children Safe in Education**, which comes into force on 2nd September, was issued in late June. Changes this year are relatively minor, but nonetheless important. Annex H lists all the changes, which include:

- Removal of references to local authority "transitional" arrangements, as all LAs must have implemented their new safeguarding arrangements by late September
- References to the criminal offence of "upskirting"
- A section on serious violence
- References to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education
- Greater clarity regarding Section 128 checks for school governors
- A link to the new "Teaching Online Safety in School" guidance

Colleagues are reminded that schools must be able to demonstrate that all staff and volunteers have read **and understand** Part 1 of KCSIE.

Teaching Online Safety in School

Also in June, Department for Education published guidance on **Teaching Online Safety in School**. Although this relates primarily to the teaching of online safety, the document does contain some key concepts and principles which will be of interest to all boarding staff.

Guidance for Safer Working Practice

Although the guidance is "good practice" and not statutory, and does not relate specifically to boarding, Safer Recruitment Consortium has updated and republished its **Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings**. This contains useful advice on topics such as transporting children and one-to-one situations.

Dale Wilkins

Director of Safeguarding, Standards and Training