

Cambridgeshire County Council Safeguarding Review

Kimbolton School

April 2016

1. Context

The review took place at the request of the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board and with the full agreement and co-operation of the school. The report is to be shared with the school, the LSCB and the Executive Director Children, Families and Adults Children at Cambridgeshire County Council.

2. Methodology

The review used the Learning Directorate safeguarding review template. This was completed at the school during interviews with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Senior Headmaster, the Bursar and other staff. The reviewers met with the Headmaster before the review and after the staff and pupil interviews.

The safeguarding review was followed up by interviews with groups of staff and students. These included a group of teachers, members of the school Support staff (Support Group), 6th form students, 4th/5th year students (Years 10 and 11) and the pastoral boarding team.

3. Safeguarding Review

The safeguarding template which summarises the findings is provided in full as Appendix A. The review process has been used in over 100 of Cambridgeshire maintained schools and academies. The review takes a holistic look at safeguarding and covers the following areas:

- Policies and documentation
- Child Protection and Induction Training for staff
- Allegations against staff who work with children
- Governor responsibilities for safeguarding
- Prevent Training and awareness
- Safer Recruitment including the Single Central Record
- Site Safety and Security
- Medical and First Aid

- Critical Incidents
- Curriculum
- Physical Intervention
- Prejudice-related incident

The review indicates that the culture of safeguarding at the school is strong and in line with Ofsted expectation. Statutory procedures and policies are in place. There were no specific areas that gave cause for concern although there were some recommendations for the school to consider.

The school has a comprehensive set of policies relating to safeguarding and these have been recently reviewed and these are published on the school website.

Child protection training meets LSCB expectations and the school has an experienced Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is supported by five other trained staff, including the Deputy Senior Headteacher.

There is a strong induction programme in place for all groups of staff that covers a range of safeguarding areas in addition to child protection. There are records of training and staff receive essential documentation to support them with their work. Staff have an application on their IPAD which directs them to these documents when they have to refer to them.

It was recommended after the first visit that the school made some changes to its procedures for reporting concerns to the Designated Lead and some changes to filing and these recommendations had been put in place by the second visit.

The school has procedures in place for dealing with allegations against staff.

Governors have an appropriate overview of safeguarding and the school has ensured that the school is meeting the Prevent Duty.

The review also focused upon safer recruitment and the Single Central Record was scrutinised with the Bursar and his colleague. The record met the statutory expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015. It was recommended that although it was a comprehensive record, the school should review the way in which the database produced some blank fields in the record. It is good practice for all cells to have a comment rather than leaving them blank or stating not applicable. The review concludes that recruitment is carried out appropriately and safely, with all the necessary employment checks in place. There was a recommendation about reviewing the checks required for contractors.

In terms of site safety and security, the grounds are sometimes used by local people. Of greater concern is the existence of a public footpath through the grounds and it is recommended that the school continues to ask for the right of way to be diverted to improve security and the safety of pupils.

As to be expected in an Independent school setting the arrangements for medical care are good and better than a state school, with professional health staff employed in a medical centre.

The school has plans in place for critical incidents both on and off site. Evacuation procedures are in place, but it is recommended that the school considers planning for invacuation in the event of an external threat.

The curriculum appropriately covers personal safety and students are taught about e-safety. The school has a cyber-bullying policy. Students can use their own IT devices in school, but have to register them to the school network which is closely monitored.

The school behaviour policy covers the possibility of staff carrying out physical intervention and there is a system for recording prejudice-related incidents.

The review focused on policy, processes and systems that are currently in place in the school. The review demonstrates that a good culture of safeguarding is in place at the school.

In order to verify the day to day operation of the policy, systems and processes, the review was followed up by meetings with groups of teachers, support staff and students.

4. Interviews with student groups

Students in the 4th and 5th Year were interviewed as well as students in the sixth form.

The following questions were asked

- If you have a concern at school, are you confident there is an adult you can go to?
- Would you feel happy about raising a concern?
- Are you confident something would be done?
- What makes you feel safe at school?
- What are you taught at school about keeping yourself safe?

The 4th and 5th year students were clear that if they had a concern at school, then they could speak to an adult. All said they felt comfortable that they could easily access somebody who would listen to them that they trusted. Examples given included, their tutor, the Designated Safeguarding lead, Health Centre counsellors, nurses, sport staff and music staff.

The 6th form students stated that prefects also helped the younger pupils. They commented that E-Safety had been a recent focus in the school, which they welcomed.

Without exception, both groups stated that they would be happy to raise a concern. It was agreed that teachers were easy to talk to and that they trusted them to know what to do to help them. Students who boarded were confident that the duty staff would help them.

Both groups stated that they were confident that something would be done, either by the staff member they approached or another person in the school.

They felt safe at school, because there were lots of teachers who listen and the school is small. They were positive about the relationships with their teachers. They often had good friendship groups or older siblings who could also help them. The sixth form students were confident that a teacher would notice if they had a problem and that it was difficult to hide anything. They also commented on the close but appropriately professional bonds that students had with the non-teaching staff. They also trusted staff to give them feedback.

They were taught to keep themselves safe, through age appropriate Personal Social and Health Education and specific safeguarding assemblies. They also had a safeguarding application on their iPads. They were also aware of outside agencies such as ChildLine and posters were on display around the school telling them where they could access outside help and information.

They felt that the school taught them to keep themselves safe and to be prepared for what school life threw at them. They mentioned internet safety and talks from outside speakers which they found useful. The sixth formers spoke positively about an Online Safety Week and the sixth form citizenship talks from outside speakers. They spoke very positively about the help that the Designated Safeguarding lead gave to students. They also commented that as the school was small, the students knew how to look after each other.

5. Interviews with staff groups

Teachers, support staff and boarding staff were interviewed in separate groups.

The following questions were asked

- What safeguarding training have you received as staff?
- What school policies and systems relating to safeguarding are you aware of?
- Do you know how to raise and log a child protection concern?
- Are you aware of the school whistleblowing procedure and how would you use it if you had a concern or needed to report an allegation?
- Which aspects of the curriculum teach students about personal safety?
- How does the school promote student well-being and how do students raise a concern with an adult?

All three groups of staff were very clear about the range of training relating to safeguarding that they had received. Safeguarding was one key session within the

induction programme and staff receive regular safeguarding updates at staff meetings and during in service training. Safeguarding is now part of department meeting agendas. They were aware that the school kept a training record for each member of staff. Other training related to safeguarding that was mentioned included, Prevent and mental health awareness. They also mentioned headmaster emails on the subject and they referred to the application on their iPads that directed them to key safeguarding documents. They were aware of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015. The member of staff responsible for the Army Cadet Force clearly articulated the expectations of the Ministry of Defence with respect to safeguarding that were in addition to the school's requirements. All were aware of the Designated Lead and her team of designated staff.

It was interesting to note that safeguarding updates were issued to staff by being stapled to payslips.

The three groups confirmed that they were aware of the school's safeguarding policies and systems. The code of conduct was mentioned, together with whistleblowing, E-safety, the school handbook and calendar, missing children, child protection, games policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the staff safeguarding application.

It was confirmed that logging sheets were now used for reporting concerns to the Designated Lead, rather than using emails. This was a recommendation following the first visit. The form was understood and the staff stated that they received appropriate feedback after passing on a concern.

All staff interviewed were confident about the whistleblowing policy and knew how to report an allegation.

There was a clear and shared understanding of how the curriculum and ethos of the school helped the students to keep themselves safe. This understanding matched the responses of the students.

Safeguarding was prominent in House assemblies, the weekly Personal, Social and Health Education lessons throughout the school including the sixth form where they have citizenship education. Recent topics covered have included, internet safety and gaming addiction, cyber bullying and self-harm, sexual behaviour and health awareness. Guest speakers come into school and there had been a recent E-Safety week. Other less obvious areas that were mentioned included lifeguard training where the course teaches the young people how to keep themselves and each other safe.

It was felt that students knew how to raise a concern with an adult and this matched the perceptions of the students. The school tried to ensure that students could speak to somebody they were comfortable with. Examples mentioned matched those quoted by the students and included the Designated Lead, tutors, councillors,

Housemaster, boarding staff and staff in the Health Centre. Posters providing information for students are on display around the school. It was felt by one group that communication and information sharing within the school had been a focus within recent times. It was also stated that the Health Centre staff can link directly into the school pastoral information management system.

6. Conclusions

The focus group interviews with staff and students confirmed that there was a consistent approach to safeguarding across the school. The students were very positive about their personal safety and about the school and its staff looking after them. The consistency of responses across the staff groups reflected a positive culture at the school with significant understanding of the importance of safeguarding. Staff knew they were being interviewed for a reason, but all without exception spoken professionally about the importance of the safeguarding of their students and understood their training and the school's processes and systems.

The interviews also demonstrated that the senior staff responses to the safeguarding review were in operation on a day to day basis in the school.

The review therefore concludes that at the time of the review, the school was operating as we would expect a school to operate in keeping students safe. There were no major issues and a considerable number of areas of good professional practice, ranging from safer recruitment, policy implementation through, induction and training to creating a safe culture in the school.

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