

# KBSP

## Safeguarding in Education Report

### 2023-24.

The Safeguarding in Education Team (SET) undertake activities related to S.175 (1) of the Education Act 2002 which places a duty on the Local Authority to decide for ensuring their education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The team's work with all educational establishments in Bristol on the Local Authority's behalf to ensure that settings comply with their own legal duties (reflective of their status) to promote the safety welfare of children. The Safeguarding in Education Team undertake the following activities to achieve this:

- [Responding to deficits in practice](#);
- [KBSP Returns from the education workforce](#) (priorities for 2024-25)
- [Training and CPD](#)
- [Strategic governance of the KBSP Education Reference Group](#)

Risks:

- [Police Safeguarding Notifications \(Op Encompass\)](#)
- [MASH and MARAC](#)

## Responding to deficits in practice.

The team have responded to complaints from professionals, Ofsted, Regions Group, and parents. When a deficit in practice is identified, a School Safeguarding Advisor will meet with the headteacher/principal and the local governing body/Multi-academy trust to review practice, procedures and policy to test whether there is a need for further support or intervention in accordance to the [Schools Causing Concern statutory guidance](#).

Complaint figures have dipped since last year.

2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (to date)	2023-24 (to date)
54	79	85	60

Total number of complaints dealt with by the Safeguarding in Education Team about Bristol Settings.

### Keys reasons for complaints 2022-23:

- Unresolved issues around child-on-child harm and issues of prejudiced based bullying.
- Management of behaviour and inclusion
- Lack of provision for children with Special Educational Needs.
- Leadership and management
- The setting's response to prejudice related bullying.
- Poor engagement with the parent/carer about their child.

Compiled by Henry Chan, Safeguarding in Education Team Manager.

### **Keys reasons for complaints in 2023-24:**

- Unresolved issues around child-on-child harm and issues of prejudiced based bullying.
- SEND provision and meeting need.
- Management of behaviour and physical interventions.
- Exclusions and attendance

Themes generally reflect the previous years complaints. This may highlight wider systemic problems around practice.

Work continues around the transformation of the Child, families and Education directorate, further work is taking place to ensure that Local Authority teams can more effectively respond and prevent schools/education settings from hitting crisis point. Schools causing concern is currently held at Head of service level with the Directors Management Team. Wider meetings are convened to help feed leaders' information to the Department of Education. The model is interim pending the completion of the directorate transformation along side development of the school improvement model.

### **Safeguarding Reviews**

This academic year, the Safeguarding in Education Team have conducted six reviews.

The reasons for these reviews:

- consideration for an independent outside perspective.
- consideration for compliance with statutory guidance with a judgment around the effectiveness of procedures, policy, and practice.
- provide reassurance from regulatory bodies either in preparation or following an inspection.
- benchmark performance following a change in leadership.

## **KBSP Returns from the education workforce.**

There has been poor returns for this academic year as it has been requested for the first time this year. Reasons for the rate of returns from the workforce have included:

- returns not being statutory (at the time of request)
- data drop requiring additional resource, time, and capacity to align record keeping across the workforce (each setting would record different data).
- resource and capacity of the workforce.
- multi-academy pressure to complete their own audit and not the Local Safeguarding Partnerships' audit.

For the academic year 2024-25 – the Local Safeguarding Partnership and Local Authority will be enforcing expectations from Working Together 2023 in line with paragraph 79

Education providers, including multi-academy trusts, have a responsibility to play their full part in local safeguarding arrangements, including where their footprint extends across several local authority areas. This includes, but should not be limited to, responding to safeguarding audits of quality and compliance, as requested by the local authority and/or local safeguarding partners. This is to ensure that policies are consistent with the local multi-agency safeguarding

arrangements and relevant legislation and/or regulations. They should also provide staff and governor training that meets local and national safeguarding requirements. **Education providers where required should report their audits to their governing bodies and proprietors to be shared as requested by the LSPs.** Training for designated safeguarding leads and designated teachers should include shared understanding about different levels of need and how these need to be responded to. Education providers also play a vital role in sharing and contributing to key information about children, including attendance data, exclusions, concerns about abuse, neglect, exploitation, and wider social and environmental factors including extra-familial contexts, which are a key aspect of keeping children safe.

## The Safeguarding Audit (s.175 Audit) – 2022-24 (Biennial)

This is a mechanism to attempt to get a view from Bristol settings around their duties. This applies to all phases and sectors.

- 40 Fully completed.
- 54 partially completing the audit.
- 71 Nil returns.

### Top 10 Themes (areas of deficit from the sample size)

1. Completion of a Prevent self-assessment and risk assessments.
2. Compliance with Domestic abuse statutory guidance and the Right to Choose (statutory guidance on Forced Marriage).
3. Having an easy read version of their child-on-child abuse/harm policy and having proportionate approaches to managing incidents.
4. Having a clear home to school agreements around setting out parental duties.
5. Being compliant with the Local Safeguarding Partnerships - Offensive Weapons and controlled drugs in Education setting guidance.
6. The setting has reviewed the curriculum against the principles of protected characteristics.
7. The setting has clear safeguarding procedures when there has been a critical incident or sad event.
8. There is effective curation of the staff behaviour policy/code of conduct which should include low level concerns and whistleblowing procedures.
9. The setting has published their measurable equality objectives and reviews them at least every four years.

## Annual data drop 2022-23

Data drops have indicated the following areas of need concern.

- 52 completed.
- 264 did not respond.

Analysis continues but provides the number of cases that each setting has dealt with around topical safeguarding issues. Data can and will be presented to relevant boards and requests from partners to assist with multi-agency working. Data will be limited the small sample size but is able to demonstrate trends. Whilst a full report has not been compiled basic analysis can provide:

- Incidents by phase/type
- Incidents by area
- Incidents by school/trust.

- Incidents managed at different thresholds.

It is anticipated next return will be more successful given that a grace period has been provided to support education settings to set up systems to capture data.

## Training and CPD.

The Safeguarding in Education Team offer two training courses which reflect local processes and procedures. Whilst settings do not have to commission the training, the workforce does appear to be engaging with local provision.

- There have been 161 new colleagues who have completed the Designated Safeguarding Lead training.
- There have been 190 who have completed Designated Safeguarding Lead refresher training.
- Governor's development service has commissioned the Safeguarding in Education Team for 3 sessions have taken place this academic year and have been oversubscribed. There continues to be a demand for this training.
- Professional networks have taken place both face to face and online covering a range of topical safeguarding areas and or updates from the KBSP across the locality and online.
  - There have been 12 Designated Safeguarding Lead networks
  - 3 Governors Safeguarding networks
  - There have been 3 early years networks.

The team have been commissioned to provide specialist topical courses by multi-academy trusts and individual settings:

- Annual refresher courses
- Prevent
- Prevent for DSLs
- Tackling Female Genital Mutilation
- NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 Training
- Tackling Child on Child
- Tackling Sexual abuse sexual harassment.
- Child Sexual Exploitation

Due to the significant incidents of murders and serious youth violence in the city, the Safeguarding in Education Team in partnership with the Educational Psychology Service have put on 4 face to face sessions this academic year to support education leaders to prepare and respond to critical incidents and sad events.

- 125 Education leaders participated (Headteachers, Designated safeguarding leads)
- 60 settings attended from the Early Years sector.

The Bristol Safeguarding in Education Website continues to be developed to ensure that resources are accessible and local/national updates are curated.

## The strategic governance of Safeguarding in education through KBSP Education Reference Group

The purpose, structure and function of the group is under review to consider workforce commitment and engagement with new statutory guidance. We are hoping for the chairing responsibility will involve the education workforce in line with potential changes with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

# Risks

## Operation Encompass and the Bristol Safeguarding Notification Scheme

In April 2024, the Police Safeguarding notifications have been paused following the security of funding for the scheme this has resulted in the post being lost. Education has faced significant fiscal pressures and other agencies were not able to support with funding the scheme.

Operation Encompass continues in its most basic form through the Think Family Education App. This accounts for 61% of settings that currently access safeguarding notification scheme (than through the TFEA flags). Excluded settings include alternative providers, early years providers, independent settings, Post 16 settings and those attend out of Local Authority settings.

The issue has been escalated to the Exec Director Hannah Woodhouse who is liaising with senior leaders across the partnership around the long-term prospects of reinstating the work..

## Headlines

- **14.72%**. Additional notifications are sent from the those received from the police due to dual registration and **10.9% more children being connected to an incident being identified** through human processing.
- **100% of Bristol settings, early years – Post 16 are set up to receive notifications.** Out of Local Authority areas settings are supported to receive information safely and compliant with Data Protection regulations.
- **The margin of error of data breaches is 0.3% with the notification work** – officers can rectify incidents quickly and ensure that cases are resolved in line with the information sharing protocol and Data Protection guidance. Other Local Authorities and police forces who use automated systems report a significantly higher level of breaches (wrong child, wrong setting) despite only processing domestic abuse coded incidents.
- **15% of all notifications sent through are coded as domestic abuse.** 18.3% of children who go missing. The 66.7% use other codes are linked to crime and safeguarding concerns which involve or mention a child which could indicate domestic abuse and other wider safeguarding issues. These could range from harassment to risk/threat to life.
- **110 settings can access TFEA.** This accounts for 61% of settings that currently access safeguarding notification scheme (than through the TFEA flags). Excluded settings include alternative providers, early years providers, independent settings, Post 16 settings and those attend out of Local Authority settings.

- This equates to **30% of the incidents that are currently not eligible to be accessed via the Think Family Education App (TFEA)** as flags.
- Of those that can access the app - **3.4% of TFEA log ins have resulted in settings accessing Domestic Abuse Flag alert, 1.5% for Missing Person Incidents, 1% for anti-social behaviour.**
- Currently colleagues must proactively manually log on and check the app daily to see these. The flag is limited. Information **only** indicates:
  - date uploaded to the system
  - an event took place within the last 12 months.
- Settings have not found this helpful as this does not provide contextual or additional safeguarding information.

Learning from statutory reviews such as the Child Safeguarding Practice Review have highlighted the important role of information sharing with education settings. The notification scheme has consistently been highlighted as the mechanism for this effective multi-agency working. Anecdotal feedback from the education workforce from receiving full safeguarding notifications are:

- Trauma informed approaches to behaviour curtailing needs for suspensions and exclusions.
- Proactive and more effective targeting of early help provision at universal and universal plus thresholds preventing more acute escalations.
- Support with increasing attendance.
- Better working together and information sharing between agencies.
- Contextual Safeguarding approaches with peer groups and year groups.

## MASH and MARAC

There continues to be risk associated to resourcing work in line with the principals of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and the Children Act 2004. Currently there is a fixed term position of a Data Officer coordinating information flow to and from the education sector.

This position is due to end in December 2024. Without further funding there will be significant risk of education contributions to assessments and meetings around managing risk to children and families. There is no current spend in the system to secure this work. The likely outcome will be as follows:

- Limited contributions to and from the education sector impacting on effective working together.
- Additional pressure on existing teams leading to additional stress and burn out.

Heads of Services for School Partnerships and Childrens Safeguarding and Targeted Services will raise this issue to the corporate decision pathways. This is likely to be progressed in Phase for of the directorate transformation if successful.