

Safeguarding in lockdown

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Issues arising from lockdown

- Responsibility for safeguarding whilst schools are closed
- Online safety and remote learning
- Protecting vulnerable children – the role of the school
- Bullying and exploitation/abuse during lockdown

Statistics – overview

- When schools were closed in March 2020, the following children were permitted to continue learning in a school setting (NB not necessarily their own school, but a setting) . Of relevance today are:
 - (a) Those with EHC plans
 - (b) Those who are vulnerable – with a social worker
- Govt’s own statistics estimates only 5% of ”vulnerable children” are attending school”
- The Secretary of State wrote a letter to all schools and LA’s last week identifying this as a problem and encouraging schools to try and get these children into school or in their line of sight.

Children's Commissioner – April 2020

- Publication of “We are all in this together”²⁵ April 2020: makes for sobering reading: designed to try and capture data on how many children there are at risk, and highlight those at risk.
- (a) Highlights that nearly all the places that vulnerable children are picked up (school, GP, youth centres, nurseries) are closed.
- (b) Identifies that those in overcrowded accommodation, with parents with their own issues, who look after others
- © Those without internet access
- (d) Those with SEN but without a plan (big variation in the country as to the numbers with plans).

Safeguarding processes

- Govt produced Safeguarding in schools guidance on 27 March 2020
- Identifies the need to keep the DSL /safeguarding policies and procedures in place and operating to a degree
- Identifies the need for those running cluster or hub schools to have adequate processes
- Identifies the need to ensure online safety in remote learning.
- Applies to all schools and FE colleges.

Online safety – for schools

- Need for schools to run secure and safe systems: guidance on what appropriate looks like (available on gov.uk website)
- UK Council for internet safety provides guidance on what is safe
- Also UK Safer Internet professional online safety helpline: 0344 381 4772
- Each school should have a remote learning policy devised and looking at relevant guidance
- UK Safer Internet centre has guidance on safe remote learning
- London Grid for Use of videos and livestreaming.
- Make sure signpost Childline, UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP .
- Safeguarding children – Teacher toolkit
- Children’s Commissioner has a helpful – Tips and tricks using Zoom

Online safety – parents

- Safety online largely involves parent being aware of issues around e-safety.
- IICSA research recently published showed that schools considered that parents often did not understand or were not aware of e-safety rules.
- Places to look:
- Internet matters: internetmatters.org – provides help with online issues, and on how to set controls
- London Grid for Learning: LGFL.net – provides flyers and information and learning resources about remote issues – such as animations to stop children thinking its OK to get undressed on camera
- Net – aware: NSPCC support – net-aware.org.uk – about social networks, apps and games

Online safety parents (2)

- Thinkuknow – thinkuknow.co.uk – run by the national crime agency: advice about staying safe online – related to age, and specific help for parents/carers
- Uk safer internet centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Children’s commissioner has a guide to staying safe online for parents – a kit which can be downloaded.
- Also provides screen guidance – digital five a day kit

Online safety – children

- All the resources above provides guides for children
- Children’s guide to staying safe online from the children’s commissioner – childrenscommissionerl.gov.uk/coronavirus/digitalsafety-and-wellbeing-kit is also helpful

Online safety – children with SEN

- Children with SEN may have particular difficulties with online communication: not being able to follow the often unspoken rules about social communication.
- However, it can also be an excellent tool for greater socialisation etc.
- The NAS produces specific resources on e-safety for those with Autism

Children with SEND

- SEN risk assessment advice : issued by the govt to schools – SEND risk assessment guidance (19 April 2020)
- Each child should have a risk assessment as to whether or not it is safer to be at home, or to be in school
- Residential schools should still be open and keeping children safe where possible
- Govt expectation that some services can be moved from education setting to home, ie online sessions, phone support, provision of equipment
- The Council for Disabled Children produces an excellent guide for parents with LD and autism as to how to manage not just school, but other resources – www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk

Supporting vulnerable children

- Guidance published by govt on 19 April 2020
- Identifies that those with a social worker (but without EHC/SEN) should attend school/other provision unless it would be a risk to their health: there should be follow up if there is absence.
- EHC Plan children should have a risk assessment.
- For others – those on the edge of care – should be encouraged to attend school.
- DSL should know and review their lists of vulnerable people, and share with local authority.
- Have school (with others) keep in touch, e-mail, phone, letter , visit.
- LA's should make transport provision available for children to attend.

Things to think about

- You can and should still report possible abuse to the LADO – they are trying to run a service, and are worried that referrals have gone down significantly.
- Think about online bullying/peer on peer abuse. This can still be dealt with by the school even if it is all remote.
- Sexual exploitation online – have relevant filters: tell your children about online harms: identify what is appropriate and not appropriate.
- Criminal exploitation – children at home with nothing to do – much greater risk of induction into criminal gangs/county lines /human trafficking.

Thank you for listening

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