

Safeguarding Report by Ros Cornish and Yvonne Wickers - Notes from a meeting at the School with Maria French, Deputy Head and School Safeguarding Lead, on 14th June 2019

1. New staff

Maria trains all staff immediately they start. This includes temporary staff, exam invigilators, peripatetic music staff and cover supervisors. Everyone receives a copy of the following documents:

- * CCHS Child Protection Policy
- * Safeguarding crib sheet
- * KCSIE (September 2018 version)
- * PREVENT duty of care
- * Staff Code of Conduct

The safeguarding leads are pointed out (now with photographs of the leads and deputies - Stephen Lawlor has been added as a safeguarding deputy in light of his new role from September) The 'at-a-glance' leaflet is available at the front office as people sign in.

2. Response to 'critical incidents'

The Critical Incident Response team has been involved in the school in the last week following the sad news of the loss of Nick Minnican to support students and staff. The Educational Psychologist has been running drop-in sessions, separated into staff sessions and student sessions to deal with the immediate aftermath of grief and associated grief.

A book of condolence has been set up, places to get support are clearly signposted, and the Dean of Chelmsford Cathedral is coming in next week to run special assemblies for the students.

3. Mental health first aiders

Five staff are now mental health first aiders with the attitude that mental health is as important as physical health. Training has been provided on protective and risk factors in mental health. Clear signs are displayed showing where they are located (Maria has one on her door as well as on her safeguarding noticeboard and filing cabinet behind her desk where it can clearly be seen by students. Maria is investigating affordable training for staff using Papyrus and there are online sources of support for students: Silver Cloud and White Wall.

4. Online dangers

The dangers to mental health and wellbeing were discussed, including the dark web and online sites promoting self-harm, eating disorders and suicide. This continues to be an issue alongside social media, especially Instagram. (I don't recall specifically mentioning the dark web or suicide - I think they are considered quite main stream Instagram accounts, sadly)

5. Counselling services

EWMHS (the new name for CAMHS) offer counselling after a rigorous referral. The school uses Renew as their main source of counselling for students and their counsellors are covered by their own safeguarding training to work with the students. They are expensive, working one to one with students and come in approximately 10 hours a week on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The counsellors feedback immediately to the school on any safeguarding issues or alternatively provide a report at the end of the three terms on the general types of problems discussed.

Maria is looking at alternative forms of counselling for 2020-21 (have already renewed for 2019-20), possibly with one of the Catholic Children's Services who are already used by Hylands School.

Counselling is available as a self-referral to Years 10 and above. Year 7 is staff referral only and generally parents are involved in the process, although it is acknowledged that parents can also be the source of the problem.

6. Gender Identity Issues

The increasing issue of students identifying differently to their birth gender or as non-binary, along with LBGTQ+ issues was discussed. Maria uses 'Educate & Celebrate' to assist understanding in the school and there is a student led 'Pride Youth Network' run by girls who are trained, plus two teachers. This is done without pushing or promoting alternative lifestyles but so as to support all students.

Training and support has also been provided by "Gendered Intelligence" with regard to transgender students. This has helped the school work with these student with regard to being known by alternative names and with issues such as use of changing rooms and toilet facilities. It was noted that school age students typically will have the physical characteristics of their birth gender and this is unlikely to cause complications when changing. Maria explained that staff are trying to avoid referring to the students as 'girls' or 'ladies' and that a staff survey suggests the staff feel more confident about transgender issues after their training. This all links to British Values and tolerance. Parental support is provided by Mermaid.

7. Using MyConcern to record concerns

The MyConcern system is considered to be excellent value for money at £1300pa and allows Maria and all the deputy safeguarding leads to see all concerns as well as bring up histories and actions for each individual concern. The dashboard (with no individual student details) showed that the numbers of concerns varied with the time of year, with more concerns in the winter months and fewer in the summer when fewer students are on site. Stephen Lawlor has been added as a deputy safeguarding lead in view of his new role from September 2019.

I don't think that we should put the percentages there without context as it might be misleading.

They are only percentages of a very small number of students- not of the whole student body. Some concerns lined to Instagram, K-POP and the band BTS. Domestic violence incidents were discussed. This is brought to the school's attention via the school nurse.

The MyConcern system is fully online with a desktop on staff logins, and all historic paper concerns are kept in a locked filing cabinet in Maria's office, with access possible for all the safeguarding leads.

Maria's enlarged office is proving much better for staff and parent interviews. The large noticeboard displays all the relevant safeguarding documents and policies plus sources of help. These are very useful to point out when parents are in for meetings and with difficult meetings with parents and social workers, for example.

8. Governor safeguarding training - I don't remember discussing this, but agree it is a useful point of information.

All governors receive annual training from Maria. The two lead safeguarding governors are actively looking for online or face to face training to update their skills. Yvonne Wickers has completed online NSPCC 'Safer Recruitment' training in order to participate in the Head Teacher interviews.

9. Single Central Record Check

All current members of staff are on this record. There are various checks for all personnel:

DBS - this is requested for all staff and they are now returned very promptly

Right to work - this is proved by holding a UK/EU passport, if this is not the case additional certificates have to be produced.

Safeguarding training - also noted on the record, this is done during an INSET day where all staff are required to attend. Staff that miss these sessions are trained immediately afterwards.

Peripatetic Music Staff - some checks are made by ECC which is acceptable to the school.

School nurses and counsellors - all checks are made by the NHS which is acceptable to the school.

The School is now in the process of obtaining all the required information for all new staff due to commence working at CCHS in September.

The Single Central Record record was up to date and is a robust system.