



Safeguarding MATTERS

Schools
Special
Edition

This edition of the Safeguarding Boards Publication 'Safeguarding Matters' has been produced especially for staff within Schools in Leicestershire & Rutland.

It's designed to bring to your attention some of the more recent issues that have been highlighted by Serious Case Reviews across the UK.

Three recent serious case reviews have highlighted the role of schools in keeping children safe

These cases are summarised below, in each of them children died or were victims of abuse. We would like you to be aware that some of the details could be upsetting but it is important that you are aware of what occurred and how we can prevent it happening again in the future.



Khyra Ishaq

Khyra from Birmingham who was aged 7, died in 2008 having suffered starvation over several months. She was one of six children in the family, all of whom suffered from malnutrition to a greater or lesser extent.

It emerged that the children had been subjected to a punishment regime. For instance, if they were caught taking any food, they were made to stand outside in the cold and forced to over-eat food until they were physically sick. Khyra even took food from a neighbour's bird table. When she died she had lost 40% of her body weight, weighing just 2st 9lbs and suffering from meningitis and pneumonia. Her parents were jailed for her death in 2010.

Schools had tried to engage with the local Children's Social Care department but were not properly heard. From December 2007 there was recorded evidence that Khyra and the other children were stealing food. Her mother's behaviour had changed and she became aggressive and un-cooperative with the schools and other professional agencies. Many official appointments were missed.

Mother withdrew most of the children from school and stated that she would educate them at home. In effect, this isolated the children and restricted access to them from professional agencies. Education officials had visited the home and had seen the room where the children were supposedly being taught. Mother was asked to produce a teaching plan but no children were seen. The review concluded that there were no effective methods to ensure that home education remains suitable and safe without the explicit consent and active participation of parents and carers to allow access and monitoring.

What does this case mean for me?

- Schools staff must be mindful of children removed from school to be home educated and ensure that the Local Authority is informed about any children thought to be vulnerable.
- Parents can use aggression directed at staff as a tool to deflect attention from legitimate concerns about children.
- Do you question the reasons why parents continually miss or fail to make appointments?
- The learning support service in Leicestershire and Rutland arrangements provide
- Head teachers in Schools must inform the Local authority when parents elect to home educate their children support to Home educating parents



**Yaseen
Ali Ege**

Yaseen, a seven year old Asian boy, died at his family home in Cardiff in 2010. His mother made a 999 call reporting a fire at home. A post mortem examination identified that Yaseen had died before the fire.

He had been hit with a blunt instrument and there was evidence of numerous historical injuries. His mother had beaten him to death and set fire to his body.

She confessed to police that she often beat him for no reason and her anger led to her being out of control. She was angry because he wasn't learning the Koran quickly enough. She was convicted of his murder.

Before his death staff at his school were concerned that Yaseen was in pain and unable to sit or walk properly. They spoke with mother and advised her that he be taken to see a GP. She never made an appointment and said that her husband had told her not to.

A teacher noticed an injury to Yaseen's hand and spoke with his mother at the end of the school day. She said that she had hit his hand with a ruler as a punishment. This was brought to the attention of the school Designated Safeguarding Person.(DSP)

These concerns were not referred for investigation under inter-agency child protection procedures as they should have been.

What does this case mean for me?

- Some parents can be articulate, strong willed and difficult to challenge. Don't let the children's needs and experiences be lost in conversations with parents.
- Report any concerns about a child to the school DSP. They have the authority, training and experience to ensure the child's needs are reported to the appropriate agencies.



Nigel Leat

Nigel Leat, 51 year old teacher, was imprisoned indefinitely in June 2011 for abusing girls in his class over a five year period in a North Somerset primary school.

The abuse came to light when one child made a disclosure to her mother. He filmed himself abusing the girls on his mobile phone. A total of 20 pupils were witness to or possible victims of abuse by Leat. Police also found over 30,000 indecent photographs in his possession.

He had worked at the school for fifteen years and throughout that time, a number of concerns were expressed about him. It was noticed he had favourite pupils and there was inappropriate or unprofessional conduct, over-familiarity and touching.

Only 11 of the 30 recorded incidents were reported formally within the school. No one in the school recognised that Leat's behaviour might have constituted grooming for sexual purposes. This raised questions about the impact of the safeguarding training that staff in the school had received. Concerns raised about Leat should have prompted notifications to the local authority. Ofsted reports had previously noted outstanding

levels of care and the school's very supportive ethos.

What does this case mean for me?

- Would you have the confidence to report to your Head Teacher any behaviour by staff members that could be indicators of grooming children?
- You can't always rely on your colleagues having seen the signs of concerning behaviour that you see. Even if they do can you be sure have they reported it appropriately? Make sure you report it.
- The Government felt this case was so important they asked for every school head teacher, deputy and school governor in the Country to be made aware of this case and the roles and responsibilities of the post of DSP.

Elective Home Education

The Local Authority has a duty to make enquiries to determine that all children who choose to be educated from home are receiving a full time education (suitable to their age ability and aptitude and any special needs they might have). To fulfil this duty, officers from the Specialist Teaching Service make arrangements to visit families, at least annually, to discuss the provision in place .

More information can be found at:

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/education/going_to_school/elective_home_education.htm

or email: homeeducation@leics.gov.uk

Young People and Self Harm

Our final article isn't included here as a result of a SCR. However, a recent audit that included school staff suggested that out of all the indicators that identify potential children in need, self harm in children and young people was the one that professionals were least confident in identifying and reporting.

There are many reasons why young people may self harm. The need to hurt themselves usually comes from emotions that are very difficult for them to cope with. Young people might self harm because it is a way of releasing tension or anger. It is a physical pain they can deal with rather than an emotional feeling that they find hard to cope with.

It can also be a way of controlling something, especially if they feel that other parts of their life are out of control or they are trapped in a difficult situation.

Self harm can also be used as a form of self punishment for something that a young person feels

bad about. Self harm can become addictive at times and it can become a habit – a way of avoiding difficult emotions.

If young people are not helped there is a risk that their self harm may go too far and cause serious damage or accidental death.

If a member of staff becomes aware that a young person is, or may be self harming, they should consider the following:

- Is contact with medical services necessary?
- Record the contact or the concern and report to the DSP who will have been given guidance in this issue
- Do not promise confidentiality

The best support for a young person is calm, non-judgemental listening. Discuss this with the DSP who is the best person to offer this. Unless there is a compelling reason not to (i.e. there is a risk of harm to the young person or disclosure of abuse by a parent) the parents should be informed.

Do you know?

The signs of abuse and what you should do are set out in two leaflets that you will have in Leicestershire & Rutland schools. These are: **Education Child Protection and Safer working practice for staff**

Both the leaflets are available on the Education Information System (EIS)



Did you know?

- There are many lines of support which can be talked through with the young person. The 24 hour Childline website is informative.
- The website **www.papyrus.org** is very helpful for parents.
- Support for parents can also come from the Samaritans who can be contacted 24/7 and offer total confidentiality

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

In line with the new Working Together 2013 a Multi Agency Single Assessment protocol is in development ... for more information contact the Safeguarding Boards Business Office

Safeguarding Development Officers

What do we do?

We provide safeguarding training, support, resources and advice for staff in Schools and Further Education (FE) colleges in Leicestershire and Rutland

This includes:

- Designated Senior Person (DSP) and refresher training
- Safer Recruitment in education training
- Allegations Management training
- Whole school staff awareness raising sessions led by one of our very experienced team of five trainers

We also offer safeguarding briefing to newly appointed Head teachers and are happy to visit schools to discuss any related concerns.

Schools are invited to achieve the Schools e-safety award, having their e-safety curriculum, policies and practices assessed by us.

We also link in with other aspects of the work of the Children and Young Peoples Service (CYPS)

- Simon has taken a lead in the development of "The Beacon" website for children in care
- We support part of the allegations management process with the Allegations Managers, Mark Goddard and Karen Browne

- We are part of MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee) supporting families in the most concerning domestic violence situations
- We link with FE Colleges in both the City and Counties

If you want to contact us:

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Here is the link to the Safeguarding in Education Training Programme

http://www.leics.gov.uk/safeguarding_in_education_training_programme_2013_14.pdf



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Contact us

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