

BRIEFING	TO:	Rotherham Schools Forum
	DATE:	5.12.2025
	LEAD OFFICER:	Pam Ward – Head of Service Education Lindsay Wootton Ashforth – Education Safeguarding Lead
	TITLE:	Safeguarding in Schools
1. Background		
1.1	An Education Safeguarding Lead (ESL) was appointed in January 2023. This post is jointly funded through a one third contribution from Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) with the remaining funded through the Designated Schools Grant (DSG).	
2. Key Roles and responsibilities		
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide strategic and operational leadership, support and challenge for school leaders to sustain high quality, robust safeguarding systems and procedures• Provide specialist up to date safeguarding advice and consultancy• Lead safeguarding audits in Local Authority Maintained schools and where necessary (school of concern)• Assist schools with Ofsted preparation or school improvement planning• Lead and coordinate the delivery of termly Education Safeguarding Forum meetings• Analyse Section 175 School Assurance Safeguarding Self-Assessment. Lead multi-agency partners in quality assuring safeguarding across the borough• Develop and facilitate bespoke safeguarding training for Designated Safeguarding Leads and School Governors• Actively participating in the RSCP Learning & Improvement delivery groups and RSCP quarterly audit activity• Ensure there is an up-to-date programme of learning & development events including the appropriate commissioning of services which cannot be delivered in-house and support schools in responding to emerging themes and trends• Support schools in the participation of Rapid Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, and other quality assurance activity• Represent education on the Channel Panel, Child Death Overview Panel, Serious Violence Group – silver, Elective Home Education Strategic Group, Kinship Care Strategic Working Group• Respond to and support schools with with safeguarding complaints including Ofsted safeguarding qualifying complaints• Support onsite support for schools during Ofsted inspections• Support schools who receive an inadequate safeguarding judgment to achieve an ‘effective’ safeguarding outcome	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write the LA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and whole school training materials and provide statutory guidance and information linked to emerging or priority safeguarding issues within schools • Ensure that all up to date national, regional and local guidance and safeguarding legislation is shared, understood and implemented by schools
3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	<p>Education Safeguarding Forum: <i>Distributed leadership model</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus: national, regional, local safeguarding <i>emerging themes, threats and trends</i> • Held termly, free, universal offer to all schools, colleges • Separate PVI (Private, Voluntary and Independent) Early Years Forum held • All Multi Academy Trusts/LAM represented • Attendance of key multi-agency partners: RSCP, CSC - MASH, South Yorkshire Police, Evolve, Counter Terrorism Police Officers (Prevent), Trading Standards, Public Health • Consultation with schools – <i>‘the here and now’</i> • Over 95% of schools attend, in person.
3.2	<p>Themes explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Keeping Children Safe in Education (annual) • Families First – workforce transformation • Child exploitation (sexual/criminal) – <i>Evolve</i> • Multi-agency pathway for Vapes in Schools including illicit substances (THC) • Contextual safeguarding – <i>Children’s Social Care ‘Harm outside the Home’ launch June 2025</i> • Professional Curiosity • Sexual Health support services for young people - (inc. consultation with schools) <i>MESMAC</i> • Private Fostering/ Kinship care (<i>producing effective legal documents for court</i>) • Online risk- <i>Safer Rotherham Partnership</i> • South Yorkshire Police: new and emerging illegal online platforms – Com Network (Criminal Online Networks) • Partnership Intelligence Reporting – ‘schools’ best practice’ South Yorkshire Police • Ofsted safeguarding complaints and revised Local Authority protocol • Neglect – <i>Principle Social Worker</i> • Elective Home Education (<i>Access to Education Team</i>) • Children Missing from Education • Spiritual and Ritual Abuse (SARA) • LADO – allegations against staff management (<i>LADO Team support</i>) • Gender Questioning children and young people • Hate Crime – <i>South Yorkshire Police Hate Crime Officer</i> • SYP – knife crime and the management of bladed articles – <i>Violence Reduction Unit, SY Police GRIP Team</i> • SYP Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – <i>SY Police Specialist Officer</i> • Cyber Prevention – <i>SY Police Cyber Crime Prevention Officer</i> • Prevent national updates: Counter Terrorism Local Profile, Extreme Right Wing, Incel ideology, Toxic influencers - <i>SY Police Counter Terrorism Police Team</i> • SYP Prevent Counter Terrorism Officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent referral to Channel (good practice case study) - Emerging themes and trends (the here and now) <i>ERW</i> e.g. ‘spotting the signs’ - Referral process to Channel: support for Headteachers - Signposting to support: Counter Terrorism Officers (Local, Regional) - Sheffield Prevent Education Officer – <i>in school training offer</i> - Commissioned bespoke support: <i>school management of ‘Threat and Risk Sept</i>

	<p>2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent Governor training - Curriculum resources: <i>Educate Against Hate</i> – DfE materials • Responding to emerging need and threats in school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ‘Vapes in Schools’ – multi agency pathway for schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safe Search, Screen and Confiscate – SY Police - Testing for THC – SY Police, Trading Standards - Confiscation from site - Trading Standards - Local Drug Information System (LDIS) - Public Health - 0-19 School Nurse support for vaping cessation - <i>Pilot project December 2025 – Introducing a Vape-Free Approach, a harm reduction approach</i> • Manvers 2024 – Home Office Small Steps delivery to all Secondary aged pupils in the borough (comprehensive engagement 14/16 Secondary schools) • Prevent November 2025 – specialist training for SEND/DSLs re: neurodiversity and online radicalisation susceptibility • Groundswell – Home Office approved face to face, Year 11 SEND/neurodiverse student workshops re: risks on line radicalisation and threshold of criminality • Development and pilot of Neglect screening tool for education professionals: RESHAPED tool. Launch during Safeguarding Awareness Week 2025, Neglect Conference. • Development of Child Sexual Abuse Pathway (Summer 2026)
4. Recommendations	
4.1	That the report be received and the content noted.