

**SCHOOLS SAFEGUARDING AND SAFER RECRUITMENT UPDATE REPORT FOR
AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

To: **Audit and Accounts Committee**

Date: **25th July 2017**

From: **Keith Grimwade Director of Learning**

Purpose: The Committee has requested regular update reports and this report provides an update regarding the current position of safeguarding and safer recruitment in schools

Recommendations: **Audit and Accounts Committee is asked to note and comment on the update included as an appendix.**

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1. BACKGROUND

As previously reported, the School Intervention Service has devised a review tool to ensure that safeguarding in schools, including safer recruitment, is effective in schools. The review looks closely at the whole school culture of safeguarding, the single central record and since September has included scrutiny of recently appointed staff employment files as well as historical files. A summary of reviews undertaken is set out in the attached appendix. .

Source Documents	Location
None	

**Learning Directorate Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Report for Audit and
Accounts Committee
July 2017**

1. Education Adviser Safeguarding Reviews

As previously reported, the School Intervention Service has devised a review tool to ensure that safeguarding in schools including safer recruitment is effective in schools. The review covers the the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) inspection framework. The review looks closely at the whole school culture of safeguarding, the single central record and since September has included scrutiny of recently appointed staff employment files as well as historical files.

Since January the two Education Advisers have carried out 44 half day reviews in maintained schools, one independent school and some academies who have bought in the service. The School Improvement Service Area Senior Advisers plan the order for schools to be reviewed based on the OFSTED inspection cycle. It is the aim of the team to review maintained schools before they are inspected. Some schools are reviewed as a result of emerging concerns.

Outcomes

- There were no concerns in 29 schools visited.
- In 16 schools some concerns were identified with return visits arranged to ensure that the concerns were put right. Return visits have been introduced to ensure that actions identified have been addressed. The main concerns have been the quality of older employment files and clerical errors on the single central record.
- New headteachers of maintained schools are visited soon after taking up appointment to ensure that they understand their leadership of safeguarding responsibilities and to ensure they have the support they need to recruit safely to the standards set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016.
- One independent school has been reviewed at the request of the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board and monitoring continues. The safeguarding review provided reassurance that the school understood the issues and had put in place all of the recommendations made. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) have requested a further and final review in September.

- One secondary academy has been supported after being placed in an OFSTED category following safeguarding concerns. That academy has since been graded good. OFSTED reported the following:

“Leaders have sought and acted upon external advice. Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided safeguarding training. A representative of the local authority has visited the University Technical College (UTC) and worked with the principal to ensure that processes and records around recruitment reflect best practice.”

The reviews have identified that the Local Authority (LA) can support all Cambridgeshire schools by providing training on the leadership of safeguarding for Heads, senior leaders, governors and administration staff. This will be provided again in the next academic year.

2. Ofsted outcomes – safer recruitment quotes from OFSTED inspections this academic year

Ofsted review the culture of safeguarding and judges how effectively the school keeps the children safe. Areas inspected include safer recruitment, the vetting and checking of volunteers, child protection, personal safety, online safety, prevent and site security.

46 of the 49 schools inspected have been judged to be ‘effective’. The following are some sample comments:

- The trust has put good arrangements in place to ensure that safer recruitment processes are thorough and given a high priority. All recruitment is handled by the trust’s central office and the trust’s human resources manager is well aware of the need for systems to be efficient and processes thorough. Staff personnel records are well kept and maintained, and suitable checking systems are in place to ensure that all requirements are met. The school’s single central record of recruitment checks meets statutory requirements.
- Records of staff recruitment are meticulously kept, with many aspects of additional practice in place. The headteacher regularly checks these records to ensure compliance.
- School leaders and governors ensure that all staff and governor training is up to date and that the school fully complies with current safeguarding guidance.
- Appropriate checks are made on new staff and recorded on a central register. All checks are carried out when recruiting new staff to work with children.
- Checks on the suitability of staff, governors, volunteers and contractors are thorough. A governor regularly checks that safeguarding arrangements are robust.

- The school carries out appropriate checks on those appointed to work at the school.

Three schools have received ineffective judgements for safeguarding (one maintained school and two academies). All three schools were visited promptly by the LA and support put in place. The monitoring visit for the maintained school stated that safeguarding is now effective and in one of the academies, the following comment was made in their report: "The school now champions best practice in safeguarding". The second academy report stated the following: "Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided safeguarding training. A representative of the local authority has visited the UTC and worked with the principal to ensure that processes and records around recruitment reflect best practice".

3. Ofsted Complaints

The Local Authority reviews safeguarding complaints received by Ofsted and passed on to Cambridgeshire. These are followed up and the Director responds to Ofsted.

During the summer term 16 complaints have been followed up. None of the safeguarding complaints have referred to safer recruitment. One Ofsted complaint in the autumn term was linked to safer recruitment but was on investigation unfounded.

4. Safer Recruitment Training and governors

Schools can continue to access nationally accredited safer recruitment training provided by Cambridgeshire Governor Services. Six full or refresher training sessions have been delivered this academic year. Two in house sessions have been delivered two clusters of schools.

The leadership of safeguarding was a topic at the summer term Governor Briefings.

July 2017