

September 2017

# Briefing for Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and Designated Staff in Schools

## **Learning Lessons Review following the Murder of Ann Maguire**

Following the murder of Ann Maguire by her student Will Cornick in April 2014, the LSCB commissioned an independent [Learning Lessons Review](#) carried out by Nick Page.

Following its publication, the LSCB drafted an action plan to address the recommendations and this short paper is to advise schools of what they are being asked to do and give some brief guidance as to how this might be achieved.

The LLR highlighted a number of key learning points for schools:

1. **Schools / education establishments should review how decisions and agreements with parents / carers are recorded and formally communicated to parents/carers, possibly by letter (Page 42 of the report). Within this section, it was also suggested that schools might also review and seek to improve communication between staff on pastoral matters.**
2. **Schools should promote a caring ethos and a 'speak up' culture for the sharing of concerns about themselves and others – both students and staff. There should be consideration of what is 'ok' behaviour, and what is not, within the curriculum.**
3. **Safety planning and H&S audits should be reviewed in the light of this incident.**

Furthermore, schools will be affected by the recommendation to LCC for:

4. **Section 175 and 157 Child Protection Returns to include explicit confirmation that previously identified recommendations have been completed (or a plan to do so has been published).** This has already been implemented and was evident in the returns submitted last term.

The remainder of this document considers what schools might reasonably need to do to meet these recommendations. Consideration of these questions and associated actions will be put forward as a recommended agenda item for all full governing body meetings in the Spring term of 2018. To support this, key questions for school leaders and governors are found at the end of each section.

As there are a number of hyperlinks in this document, it is best read electronically.

## Guidance and Recommendations to Schools

### 1. Recording and Communicating

Schools and educational establishments must ensure that **significant** incidents, decisions and agreements made with parents/carers are formally recorded and communicated to parents/carers. If it isn't already, record keeping for child protection, safeguarding **and significant (or useful-to-recall) pastoral concerns** could move on to the organisation's Management Information System (e.g. SIMS) or on to a proprietary system such as [CPOMS](#), [Safeguard](#) or [My Concern](#). These systems have the potential to improve communication between staff (through automatic alerts), as well as with partners such as parents and other agencies.

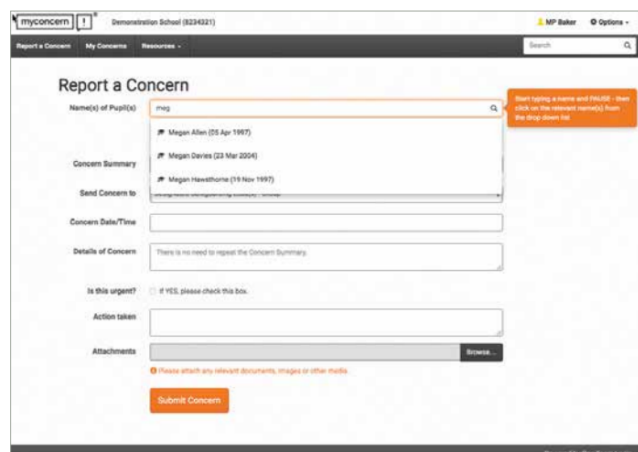
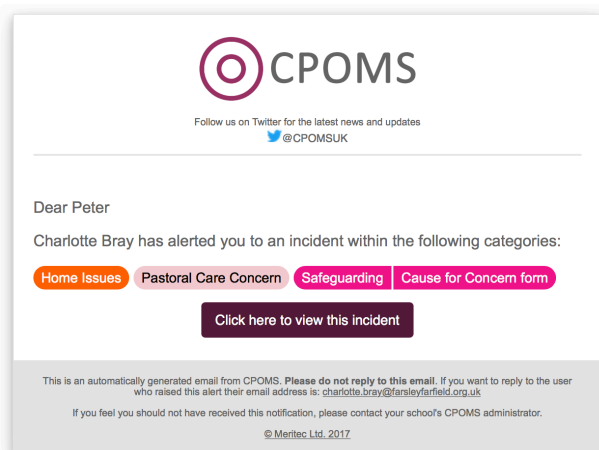


Schools and educational establishments should individually define/contextualise what they mean by a significant incident or decision, and this should be communicated to pupils, parents and staff. The act of formally recording a significant decision should form the basis of a letter or email to parents to confirm this.

If the migration of schools to electronic safeguarding record keeping is accelerated by this recommendation, then this will bring benefits beyond the aims of this LLR.

#### Key Questions for Leaders and Governors:

- 1.1 Does your school record incidents efficiently to help identify trends and concerns and to alert the correct people?
- 1.2 Are 'significant' decisions confirmed in writing?



## 2. A caring ethos and a 'speak up' culture

It is essential that schools and educational establishments keep learners safe through having a strong safeguarding culture, ethos and sense of community amongst pupils and staff. Schools and educational settings must have demonstrable strategies that:

- encourage and empower pupils to share, and seek support for, any concerns in respect to how to keep themselves safe (who to talk to in school, including helpline numbers and links)
- make clear how to share concerns and anxieties with trusted adults (formally, informally and anonymously)



The LLR's author was keen for schools and educational establishments to work with their school councils to develop "speak up" type campaigns relating to citizenship rights and responsibilities, personal problems, bullying and concerns about peers. It has been decided that this will not be a city-wide LSCB-led campaign as schools need to tailor this to their own circumstances and pupils.

One example of a school web page related to this is:

<http://www.farsleyfarfield.org.uk/safeguarding-information-for-children/> or a school might prefer to invest in a reporting system like [Tootoot](#). Tootoot is currently being supported by the [Department for Education](#).

A web page or app alone is clearly not the answer: is there a culture of open-ness, pupil voice, trust and responsiveness in the school and are safeguarding messages high profile? This work also needs to be supported by a high quality, modern PSHE curriculum such as the ['You, Me and PSHE'](#) primary school scheme of work. This scheme, now used by well over half of Leeds primary schools, has a number of flagged units of work that support safeguarding outcomes and promote the 'speak up' message, supporting children when things change or go wrong. Leeds' Health and Wellbeing Team can also provide support with programmes of study for [secondary](#) and [post 16 education](#).

### Key Questions for Leaders and Governors:

- 2.1 Does your establishment have a demonstrable strategy that promotes the reporting of concerns of children for themselves and for others?
- 2.2 Has your PSHE curriculum been reviewed and does it meet the needs of children and young people today?
- 2.3 What do the results of the 'My Health, My School' survey tell you about the effectiveness of your PSHE and safeguarding? If you don't use this survey, what other arrangements do you have to monitor your effectiveness in this area?

### 3. Safety planning and Health and Safety Audits

A recommendation from the LLR was that emergency contact lists for pupils and staff should be updated regularly (at least annually). We would expect that schools would do this every September as a matter of routine.

Emergency planning has been high profile more recently due to new government guidance (January 2016) and incidents such as the Jo Cox tragedy and the Manchester bombing. The West Yorkshire Safer Schools Forum (WYSSF) have developed guidance for schools and further training dates are being rolled out to schools on 6th October 2017, 1st December 2017, 31st January 2018 and 20th March 2018. If they haven't done so already, schools should seek to attend this training and amend plans accordingly. For more details call 0113 3788298 or email [educ.hs@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.hs@leeds.gov.uk) (Please note October and December sessions are now full).

The [LCC Health and Safety Audit](#) form for schools has been revised and expanded as a result of the LLR. The revised form now includes questions about Emergency Planning, and the screening/searching pupils. There are a number of Emergency Planning guidance documents available via the Education Hub - [HR, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team documents](#) page and all file names start: Emergency Planning. This includes a Site Security Assessment and Checklist to be completed as part of the audit process.

The LLR also raised the issue of tracking young people affected by this murder. The LLR required the hand-over of pupil information between educational establishments to be robust and full, identifying support needs as appropriate. The post 16 transition form has been strengthened since the LLR was published, and all schools are reminded of the need to ensure prompt and comprehensive handover of child protection files. The increased use of electronic systems to record wider safeguarding and pastoral information could, potentially, greatly enhance the value of information sharing between institutions, but this shouldn't be wholly at the expense of more direct communication between colleagues. Depending on how electronic systems are used, more useful pastoral information might be effectively shared if all schools move to electronic systems.

Key Questions for Leaders and Governors:

- 3.1 Are emergency contact lists for pupils **and staff** updated regularly (at least annually)?
- 3.2 Has the school attended the WYSSF seminars to support emergency planning?
- 3.3 Are Child Protection records transferred as required by the model Child Protection Policy?
- 3.4 How effective is our sharing of pertinent pastoral information?
- 3.5 Do we use the most recent version of the post-16 transition form?