

s.175 Safeguarding Audit Learning Event

Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board

4th December 2017



Joint Learning Objectives

- 1 – Share themes and outcomes of the previous s.175 Safeguarding Audit conducted in 2016;
- 2 – Understand what education professionals expect to gain from completing a s.175 Safeguarding Audit in 2018;
- 3 – Understand how the s.175 Safeguarding Audit could assist safeguarding processes in schools going forward;
- 4 – Understand how learning from the s.175 Safeguarding Audit can be put in to practice and shared with others (eg. School Governors, Parents).
- 5 – The LSCB will be seeking your feedback on all of the above; we need your input to improve the s.175 audit for 2018 so that it is an effective tool to help you examine and improve safeguarding in your educational establishment.

s.175 Education Act (2002)

s.175 of the Education Act 2002 appears to be undergoing amendment, however the prospective wording of this section includes the following –

(1) A local education authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that the functions conferred on them in their capacity as a local education authority are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

(2) The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

(3) The governing body of an institution within the further education sector shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the institution are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children receiving education or training at the institution.

Therefore, there is a responsibility going forward that both local authorities and educational institutions are able to implement and evidence safeguarding processes that promote the safety and welfare of children.

The Hillingdon s.175 Safeguarding Audit Tool (1)

- The previous s.175 audit tool was developed initially by LSCB QA & Training Officer Helen Smith and was subsequently piloted at Coteford Infants School, before it was rolled out to educational establishments in Hillingdon in early 2016.
- The audit tool was available at that time on an online platform called 'Enable'. Unfortunately, due to funding considerations, the LSCB is no longer able to access Enable; some schools who had sought to complete this audit after June 2016 may instead have received a word template containing the audit questions.
- The s.175 Audit is currently comprised of 13 core sections that contain a total of 74 questions. Two additional thematic sections (1x regarding Domestic Abuse, 1x regarding Hillingdon LSCB) added a further 17 questions.

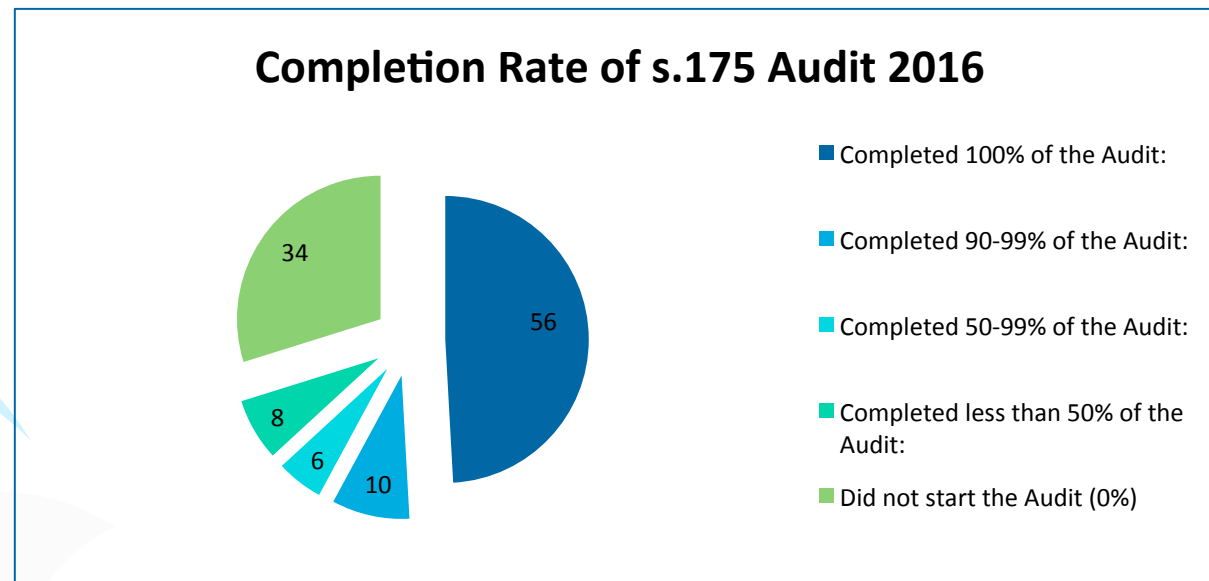
The Hillingdon s.175 Safeguarding Audit Tool (2)

- The Core Sections of the audit include questions regarding (but not limited to) –
 - 1 – Information regarding the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection at the school;
 - 2 – Sharing of safeguarding information & training with school staff;
 - 3 – Support available to school pupils around safeguarding, including looked after & privately-fostered children;
 - 4 – Risk Assessment and health & safety for children at school and off-site, including systems to manage e-safety, racism and homophobia;
 - 5 – Record keeping with regard to safeguarding concerns, confidentiality of information, children transferring between schools and use of Early Help Assessments;
 - 6 – Information for and engagement with parents around safeguarding;
 - 7 – How safeguarding messages are promoted through the National Curriculum;
 - 8 – How schools are represented at and contribute to Child Protection Conferences;
 - 9 – The role of school governors in evaluating and reviewing safeguarding processes at the school;
 - 10 – Recruitment and selection of staff;
 - 11 – How allegations against members of staff are managed;
 - 12 – The quality of links between the school and partner safeguarding agencies
 - 13 – Safeguarding compliance across a range of areas, eg. Presence of SCR, DBS checks, use of supply teachers, evidence of appropriate safeguarding information)

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (1)

Participation & Completion Rate

- The audit tool was initially made available to 114 educational establishments via the Enable online system. The way in which educational establishments responded is outlined below:



- It is noted that some schools (less than 5) approached the LSCB for access to the s.175 audit tool after the allocated period on Enable had finished and this online tool was withdrawn. This data has not been incorporated into the chart above.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (2)

1 - Information regarding the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection at the school;

- All schools that started the audit have an identified designated safeguarding lead, who is fully trained, with a deputy. All except one school had updated the CP Lead for education when the designated lead had changed.

2 – Sharing of safeguarding information & training with school staff;

- All schools identified that child protection training was facilitated, either at INSET sessions, at induction or on an annual basis. Strategies used when staff are absent included E-learning or informal training session with the DSL;
- Schools who reported that they did not have a staff handbook, noted that information about the child protection policy and who to contact was available as leaflets/flowcharts or on the school's network;
- All schools reported having child protection as a key part of induction for new starters;
- Schools identified that decision regarding referrals are made via discussions with the safeguarding leads/teams and often with consultation with CP lead for education or MASH/Triage. Every school identified having a whistle blowing policy and identified a variety of ways of updating safeguarding procedures to staff - via training, discussion at team meetings, INSET day sessions, staff bulletins. Only one school identified that they "sent out the policy" and did not identify any form of discussion/training.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (3)

3 – Support available to school pupils around safeguarding, including looked after & privately-fostered children;

- All schools identified measures in place to ensure children's voices are heard, that opportunities are provided for them to talk about anything that concerns them and that additional support was available for children at risk of, or have disclosed abuse, these included worry books, availability of learning mentors/pastoral staff, school counsellors, circle time, PSHE, open door policies, posters, growth and nurture groups and other groups.
- Private fostering was an area where schools were more likely to respond as "unsure", "would need to seek advice" or where their response indicated that they were unclear what constituted a private fostering arrangement and their responsibilities towards this.

4 – Risk Assessment and health & safety for children at school and off-site, including systems to manage e-safety, racism and homophobia;

- All schools have arrangements in place in respect of health and safety guidelines and have risk assessments in place. All schools noted having filters in place in respect of appropriate internet use, and other strategies, including e-safety lessons, e-safety and acceptable usage policies. Schools also report that e-safety is embedded in the curriculum. Access for staff for training in respect of addressing racist and homophobic behaviour is identified in 20 schools. This is a significant area of development. Three of these 20 schools met this need via sessions at INSET days, workshops or staff meetings. There are behaviour logs in respect of bullying and racism recorded and monitored in all schools.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (4)

5 – Record keeping with regard to safeguarding concerns, confidentiality of information, children transferring between schools and use of Early Help Assessments;

- Schools identified procedures in place for secure handling of sensitive data, and transferring data to other schools.
- Schools identified that year 6 to year 7 transfers within the borough are not problematic. However 21 schools identified that processes in place in respect of receiving information when children transfer in is "variable" depending on which school the child transfers from. All apart from two schools stated that on the first day of a child's absence a truancy call/text or a call from a staff member will be made to the child's parents. Of the other two schools, one has a process waiting to be signed off by governors, and the other a process where information is sought, however the response does not specify if this is done on the first day.

6 – Information for and engagement with parents around safeguarding;

- Schools consistently identified the use of their websites for providing information to parents in respect of their safeguarding responsibilities. Other means of communicating with parents frequently included, newsletters, noticeboards, annual questionnaires, home/school link books. Many primary/infants/junior schools identified having an open door policy to encourage parents to seek advice, and using a home/school link book to communicate messages.
- Schools consistently identified undertaking a parental questionnaire/survey to gather parents views. In respect of e-safety, schools report information being provided to parents via school website and e-safety briefings/evenings, although comments indicate that attendance at events is mixed.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (5)

7 – How safeguarding messages are promoted through the National Curriculum;

- All schools identified that promoting messages of safeguarding to children is undertaken in PSHCE (Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education) lessons, that this underpins the school values and that messages are also communicated to children in assemblies.
- Six schools specifically gave the example of teaching children the NSPCC “Pants” rule in these lessons.

8 – How schools are represented at and contribute to Child Protection Conferences;

- All schools identified that a member of the safeguarding team, or a member of staff who was trained in safeguarding would attend child protection conferences and core groups, this was usually identified as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or Deputy Safeguarding Lead. All schools reported that they provided a report to child protection conferences, with some schools noting that paper copies of these reports were brought to these meetings also. 14 Schools specifically identified that they are able to, or have sought support from the Early Intervention Team in respect of Early Help assessments, with one school reporting that "EIT are very supportive". 5 schools however noted that there are no monitoring arrangements in place in respect of Early Help Assessments or the quality of these. All but two schools identified that they had a policy on staff conduct which included positive handling and physical intervention.
- Three schools did not identify that they had staff policy with reference to conduct and behaviour outside of school, these schools indicated that this was discussed in training, at staff meetings, or whose response was unclear about what policy was in place.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (6)

9 – The role of school governors in evaluating and reviewing safeguarding processes at the school;

- All schools were able to identify their designated governor with responsibility for safeguarding, although 21 schools were either unable to provide a clear response as to what training had been undertaken by their designated governor or this information was not provided.
- Governors monitor child protection arrangements in a variety of ways - meetings with heads, reports being sent to the governors, as an agenda item on Governors board meetings - three schools identified this as an action point. All schools identified that action points from the audit would be monitored by their Governors, with the report and/or action plan being shared and discussed at Governors meetings.

10 – Recruitment and selection of staff;

- Most schools identified that recruitment policies are in place, with three schools identifying that their policy needed reviewing. One school identified that they ask a question regarding safeguarding at all interviews, regardless of the role.
- In respect of induction, one school identified that this was an action, and another provided a response of "no comment". Four other schools were either unclear if a record/evidence of this was kept on school files, or identified that these records were not kept and this was a action point.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (7)

11 – How allegations against members of staff are managed;

- All except three schools reported that the governing body has procedures for dealing with allegations, with schools identifying that this was part of either their Child protection/HR or whistle blowing policy. One school commented that they kept 'records of incidents' but made no mention of a policy or procedure and two further schools commented that they were unsure, that this was "to be completed".
- It was noted that staff were made aware of these procedures through Induction, staff training, and/or annual briefings. One school identified that they had recently had a briefing from the Local Authority LADO. One school identified that they needed to check this and another named the previous LADO indicating that they are not aware of changes in personnel within LBH.
- 58 schools identified that the chair of governors or the safeguarding chair (in some cases this was the same) would be responsible for following procedures in the case of allegations against the head. Four schools identified that they had alternative arrangements in place with an executive head or CEO undertaking this role.
- In respect of schools reducing the likelihood of allegations against staff a key response was messages to staff not be left alone with children and young people, that policies regarding manual handling were in place and that staff were encouraged to read and be familiar with whistle blowing policies/staff codes of conduct and that this was discussed at induction and/or training.
- One school noted that Social Care were supporting a member of the school staff undertaking AYSE and also that Social care staff were supporting the work of their student social work unit in conjunction with a university in Buckinghamshire.

Themes from s.175 Safeguarding Audit 2016 (8)

12 – The quality of links between the school and partner safeguarding agencies;

- All schools reported having very good links with other services, engagement with the participation team, MASH and social care. Examples were given of raising EHA's with the participation team, of working with school nurses to support staff to understand children's health needs, working with other schools and allocated social workers. All schools reported that they ensured good communication with other agencies and could evidence this by attendance at meetings, responses to letters/calls/emails.

13 – Compliance with Safeguarding requirements across a range of areas (eg. Presence of SCR, DBS checks, use of supply teachers, evidence of appropriate safeguarding information);

- All schools stated that they had a Single Central Record which was up to date with names, DBS and QTS status.

How the s.175 Safeguarding Audit could assist safeguarding processes in schools going forward;

- Informal feedback from some schools was that they used this audit as a reminder to update their safeguarding policies.
- How do you see the audit as a tool that can assist you in fulfilling safeguarding duties?
 - Procedural reminder as above?
 - OFSTED evidence base?
 - Tool to ensure that all staff have relevant training and skills?
 - Living document to return to after a period of time to measure improvements?
 - Way of stimulating thinking and innovation around safeguarding in your educational establishment?

How learning from the s.175 Safeguarding Audit can be put in to practice and shared with others

- **Implementing Learning**

- How has your establishment used the results of previous s.175 audits in practice? Has the audit tool led to changes or new initiatives around safeguarding at your workplace?

- **Governors**

- How have Governors been involved in s.175 processes in your establishment in the past? Has this been satisfactory or helpful?
- Where Governors have been involved, has this led to positive changes or increased support and oversight around safeguarding within your establishment?
- Would it be helpful for Governors (or the lead safeguarding Governor) to be directly involved in completing specific parts of the s.175 audit?

- **Parents**

- How has information regarding learning from the s.175 audit and/or changes in safeguarding practice at your establishment been communicated to parents previously? What effect did sharing this information have?

A potential new template for the s.175 Audit.

- Oxfordshire LSCB have previously used an alternative type of s.175 template that addresses similar safeguarding areas, however provides a range of pre-determined responses for each question, inviting the establishment to select which response for each question best fits where their establishment is placed. Please see attached 'Oxfordshire School Safeguarding Audit Form'.
- This format allows for educational establishments to gain a sense of where their safeguarding processes may be on a continuum, rather than having to identify specific evidence directly.
- It is proposed however that space for comment/additional evidence is provided so that educational establishments are able to express their unique safeguarding arrangements in addition to selecting the relevant response for each question.

Feedback and Q&A Session

This event provides an opportunity for you to shape the way in which the s.175 audit is carried out over the upcoming year. We would greatly appreciate your views on –

- your experiences of previous s.175 audits;
- the strengths/areas to develop on the s.175 audit tool;
- what impact the s.175 audit has had upon safeguarding practice at your establishment;
- how the tool could be amended or improved to assist you in developing safeguarding practice at your establishment;
- how any learning from the s.175 audit could be meaningfully shared at your establishment;
- any other thoughts on the s.175 audit process.