



Learning from 2020-21 Education Settings

Portsmouth Safeguarding and Early Help Compact Audit

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership has a duty to ensure that agencies and services in Portsmouth are working effectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Portsmouth. One way in which the PSCP does this is through the Compact Audit. It is sent once every two years to all settings in Portsmouth that work directly with children and families in Portsmouth to consider how well they are meeting their statutory requirements in regard to safeguarding.

The Partnership recognises that services have varying statutory requirements under differing legislation and guidance they work to. Hence, the Compact Audit includes varying indicators that reflect these differences. However, in order to ensure that a holistic view of a child's lived experience in Portsmouth can be formed, these are grouped under the same 12 standards:

1. Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
2. Staff responsibilities and competencies (the term staff also refers to volunteers)
3. A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
4. Service development takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families
5. Induction, training and appraisal for staff and volunteers on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
6. Recruitment
7. Allegation management
8. Effective inter-agency working for early help and to safeguard children and promote the welfare of children
9. Information sharing
10. Equality of opportunity
11. Disabled children
12. Additional specific requirements for commissioning bodies

As always, the Partnership was delighted to note the standard of safeguarding arrangements demonstrated through the Compact Audit returns this year. We do respond to individual providers where we have identified that you could benefit from consideration or support in particular areas.

This document is intended to be a summary of the learning from the sector this year, to highlight some of the areas that settings considered to require improvement with the aim of hoping you all can benefit from this feedback.

How the Compact Audit is used for education settings

Education settings have a duty under section 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002 to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Compact Audit is designed as a self-evaluation assessment to help education settings check whether they are compliant with these duties.

The Compact Audit also seeks to support priority 6 of the [Portsmouth Education Strategy](#) which is to "Ensure all schools and education settings have robust safeguarding policies, processes and culture in place"

Learning from 2020-21 Compact Audits for Education settings

The audit can be used as a 'health check' to:

- ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection are being complied with
- evaluate your setting's safeguarding practice, and discuss any obvious issues arising from this audit in terms of patterns of strength and areas for development in the light of your whole-school/college context
- develop a robust action plan to address any weaknesses or areas for development which have been identified
- ensure that key people (including the governing body) have access to sufficient information to enable them to make a judgement about the quality of safeguarding within the school/college
- ensure your self-evaluation accurately reflects the school's safeguarding practice
- assemble evidence of impact of practice for an Ofsted inspection in accordance with the Ofsted guidance 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (September 2018)
- reflect on safeguarding policy and practice in order to strengthen arrangements to safeguarding and promote children's welfare

We're aware that in the last two years, two mainstream schools have been judged to be inadequate due to concerns about safeguarding policies, processes and culture. Other inspections have also identified some weaknesses but were not sufficient enough to lead to an inadequate rating as action could be taken on the day(s) of the inspection to resolve any outstanding concerns.

Previous evidence from the Compact Audits completed by education settings has revealed that some of the judgements made against the 12 standards may have been overly optimistic. So we would highly recommend that when assessing your school/college's safeguarding practice more rigour is applied, hence why we're sharing some of the learning from this year's Compact Audit with you.

How do you know when practice is 'good' or 'outstanding'?

Settings will have a range of information to consider using as an evidence base for the various areas within the audit. The following are examples:

- Records
 - Training
 - Children's files
 - Child Protection files
 - Staff induction
 - Staff files including qualifications and references
 - Parental responsibility and contact information
 - Staff meeting minutes
 - Health and Safety fire and risk assessments
- Key documents
 - Policies and procedures
 - Setting improvement plan
 - Parental information e.g. prospectus
- Other
 - Surveys including children, parents, staff
 - Staff meetings notes where safeguarding issues are discussed
 - Local authority visits
 - Ofsted inspection report
 - Daily staffing structure
 - Examples of learning from any QA activity undertaken in the last 12 months

You may also want to consider looking at your safeguarding notice boards, and thinking about whether they include all up to date relevant information. You could ask staff on the spot safeguarding questions to test their understanding of policies and procedures.

What was learnt from this year's audits?

Whilst you may have received some feedback on your individual return, it is helpful to reflect on the learning across the sector. There may be areas of practice within these that you wish to consider in your own setting.

So we have analysed the 30 returns received this year and would suggest that you consider what you do in your settings and whether there are any further improvements that could be made.

1.7 That records are kept of when staff have received copies of setting policies when they are introduced or updated (as relevant to their role) and that these are signed to confirm they have read and understood these

Good practice in this area is that when a new policy is introduced or one is changed, that a copy is given (or the electronic link provide) to all staff. The DSL should then keep a record of the name of the staff member and the date it was provided. The staff member should then sign a simple declaration to confirm that they have received, read **and** understood the policy. This record should then be kept in the setting's safeguarding portfolio. The DSL should have a process in place to check where these have not been signed and follow up with the staff member. A similar process should be used for all new starters and those returning from extended leave (e.g. maternity leave) to ensure they are familiar with all policies.

1.11 There is a policy/guidance in place for the supervision of volunteers and a risk assessment is undertaken and recorded of the role of the volunteer/s in school

The policy should provide volunteers with clear opportunities, expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school. It should set out when a DBS is required and how risk assessments are used to determine what safeguarding checks are required before a volunteer starts in the school. It should set out the period of time that teachers will supervise volunteers in order to evaluate their competence. The policy should also set out how volunteers will be familiarised with the school's child protection policies.

3.14 The use of school transport, bus companies, taxis & escorts is part of the safeguarding activity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, that staff on these know what, when & how to report concerns to the DSL. That this is quality assured & outcomes reported to the Senior Management Team / Governing Body / Trustees

For all school-organised travel there should be a Transport Safeguarding Policy, which is part of the school's Safeguarding portfolio and is overseen by the DSL. Drivers working under an arrangement to transport children may be working in 'regulated activity' and as such may require a DBS, so the DSL must ensure the required safeguarding and suitability checks on the drivers have been undertaken.

4.1 The school has developed a Safeguarding Leaflet for pupils, best practice is one developed with pupils & one which explains who is who in the school & safeguarding information for new pupils

Whilst not a statutory requirement, it is good practice to have done this. By co-producing a leaflet explaining safeguarding in schools it helps pupils gain a better understanding of the topic and know who they can talk to if they have any concerns.

4.3 The Anti-Bullying Policy has been produced in participation with the whole school community, with a child friendly version produced for pupils

All education settings must have an anti-bullying policy. By involving children and young people in the production of this they feel greater ownership of it and it has a greater chance of success. By producing

a policy in 'child-friendly' language they have a better understanding of the behaviour expected of them.

4.6 The Link Safeguarding Governor along with the other Governors assist with school questionnaires & surveys to evidence pupil safety and feeling safe (pupil voice) and includes parents views

Governors are most effective when they are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation and use the knowledge gained to support the school. Also pupils and parents may feel more comfortable giving their honest views to Governors rather than to teachers, so you may gain more useful insights.

4.7 There is an up to date complaints procedure & one easily accessible for parents with a child friendly version for pupils

The complaints procedure should be made easily available, an easy way of doing this may be to upload a version to your website or add information about it to newsletters that you send out. This must be written in a format that is accessible and uses language easily understood - so avoid any jargon or abbreviations etc.

5.4 The school has created a Staff Induction Portfolio which has the schools safeguarding information & appropriate policies & procedures for supply, agency & frequent visitors who have contact with children within the school. This is used throughout the year as part of a continuous induction process for those who join mid-school year

As stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, all staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the:

- child protection policy;
- behaviour policy;
- staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct);
- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Copies of these and a copy of part one of KCSIE should be provided to staff at induction. The DSL should keep a record of all new staff starting at the school, the date they were provided with these and ask the staff member to sign to say they have received, read and understood these. This should be done for all staff starting at any point during the school year.

5.9 Our setting has annual appraisal processes that includes a review of each worker's skills, competencies and knowledge around safeguarding and child protection, early help practice and multi-agency working.

This appraisal process will help you ensure that your workers understand their duties to safeguard children and to arrange for any remedial support or training to be put in place as and when required; before an issue arises from a worker's lack of awareness.

9.4 The school has in place agency specific guidance on information sharing that is in accordance with Government guidance. This guidance is made available to existing and new staff as part of their induction and on-going training

As set out in [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020](#), staff should not assume a colleague or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for effective identification, assessment and allocation of appropriate service provision. [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners](#) supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information (paragraph 46).

Learning from 2020-21 Compact Audits for Education settings

The school/college must provide guidance to staff on who they should consult with in the school when wanting to share information with another professional/service. This guidance should also include details about when they must gain consent from the parent/carer and how they must record what has been shared, when, with whom and why.

10.4 Changes to service, practice and processes which have potential to impact on some parts of the community more than others have been assessed using an equality impact assessment

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation. They are not a legal requirement in England, but is considered to be good practice. What is important is that when making any changes to your services or policies that you document your consideration of how it might impact any protected characteristics (such as disability, race, religion etc.) and what steps you have taken to mitigate these.

11.4 There is a Personal Care Policy and Intimate Care Policy where appropriate which is made available to parents

Settings must have a policy setting out how they will deliver personal and intimate care (for young children requiring help with toileting etc. and disabled children requiring help with changing underwear etc.). The aim of this policy should be:

- to safeguard the rights and promote the welfare of children
- to provide guidance and reassurance to staff whose role includes intimate care
- to assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about personal care and that their individual concerns are taken into account.

Parents and carers should be provided a copy of this in their introduction pack when their child joins your setting and given a copy (or advised to check the revised copy on your website) when changes are made to this.

11.6 The school has access to an up-to-date list of resources, local specialist services, intermediaries and registered and qualified interpreters who could support children with additional needs

There are various resources in Portsmouth where you can access an up-to date list. Some of these are:

- [Portsmouth SEND Local Offer](#)
- [Portsmouth Education Partnership](#)