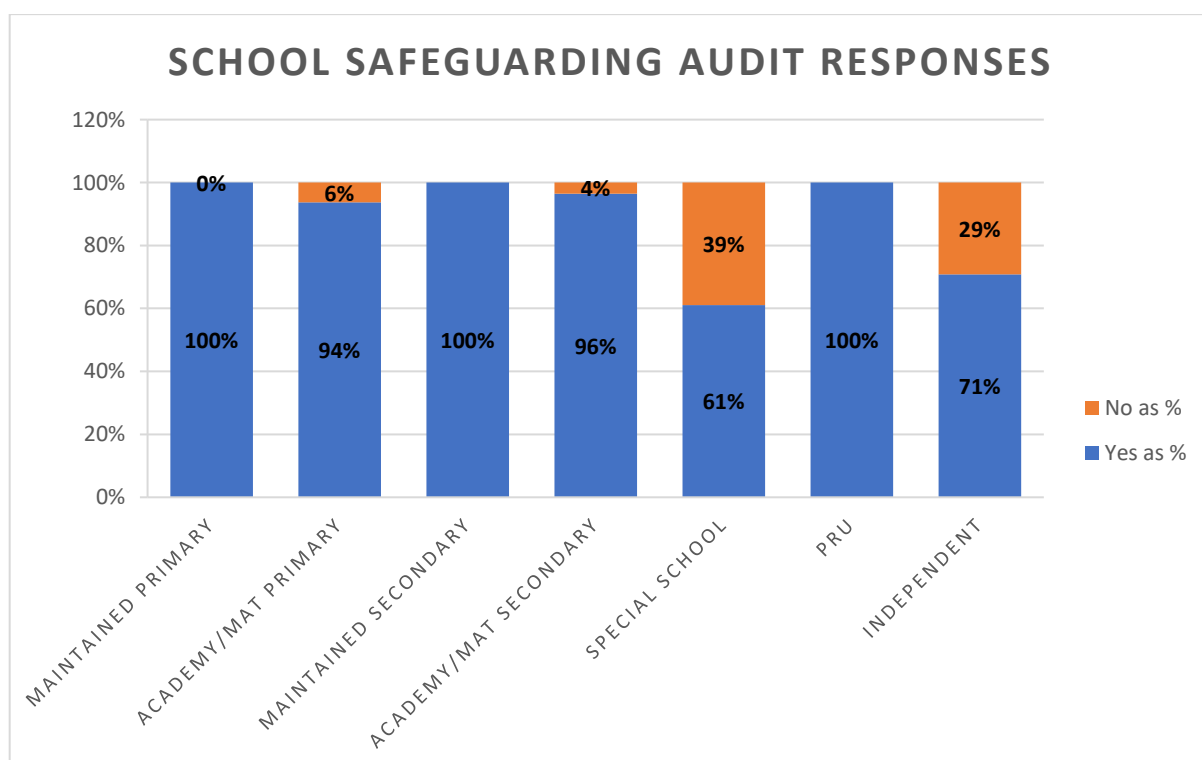# School Safeguarding Audit 2022/2023

1. Purpose of this report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Learning and Improvement Subgroup of the key themes identified from the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's (NYSCP's) School Safeguarding Audit 2022/2023 undertaken across the various educational settings in North Yorkshire.

2. Response to the Audit

2.1. The School Safeguarding Audit conducted in 2018/2019 achieved an overall response rate of 98.7% across all schools. During the audit conducted for 2020/2021 the response rate increased to 99.7% with only one primary academy not responding to the audit.

2.2. The response rate for 2022/2023 audit was lower than the previous audit with an overall completion rate of 94%. The majority of schools which have not responded related to one academy chain. The NYSCP Business Unit, Safeguarding Unit Manager and the School Improvement Service are engaging with the academies to identify ways to ensure that the audit process is supported in the future. A small selection of other educational establishments has also been contacted to ensure that the responses to their audits are completed and submitted.

2.3. The responses received to date for the school audit are as follows:

SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING AUDIT RESPONSES

Category	Yes as %	No as %
Maintained Primary	100%	0%
Academy/MAT Primary	94%	6%
Maintained Secondary	100%	
Academy/MAT Secondary	96%	4%
Special School	61%	39%
PRU	100%	
Independent	71%	29%

3. Audit themes

3.1.	The school safeguarding audit was separated into 9 key themed areas, these were:

- Section 1 – Safer recruitment
- Section 2a – Management of safeguarding
- Section 2b – Actions taken where there are concerns about a child
- Section 3 - Inclusion
- Section 4 – Managing risk
- Section 5 – Early years
- Section 6 – Learning beyond the classroom
- Section 7 - Premises security, and
- Section 8 - Premises health and safety

3.2.	The standards identified in each of the domains listed above were derived from:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Early Years Foundation Framework
- Health and Safety, and
- Other relevant legislative and statutory guidance

3.3.	It is important to note that although the audit tool identifies standards for all schools, some requirements may not be applicable. For example, requirements specifically identified for academies and independent schools only are not applicable to maintained schools. Likewise, where a school has no early years/Reception age class, requirements are again not applicable. However, in the main, the majority of requirements are shared across all establishments and phases of education.

3.4.	Given the nature of the School Safeguarding Audit there is an extremely wide range of requirements which are identified for school. This is based on different legislation and guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together, Health and Safety legislation, etc. Schools reported that there was strength in most areas of the audit. The audit tool identifies a total of 154 different requirements across the eight themed areas. With such a large variation in requirements it is not surprising that all schools have varying levels of implementation of requirements, and this has been reflected in previous School Safeguarding Audits for the last several years.

4. Summary of key areas of strength identified from the audit

4.1.	The NYSCP can take assurance that, based on the self-evaluation audits undertaken by schools and approved through their governance processes, for most areas schools have a high level of compliance with the different requirements (i.e. between 90%-100%) and where this is not the case, these schools typically reported that they either were implementing plans to achieve the requirement or had a plan identified.

4.2.	Based on responses, the total number of criteria which schools reported 100% compliance against any single criteria in the audit (i.e. all special schools reported a requirement in place) was as follows:

Type of school	Number of criteria where school reported 100% achievement in implementing the criteria
Maintained Primary Schools	6 (4%)
Academy Primary Schools	30 (19%)
Maintained Secondary Schools	69 (44%)
Academy Secondary Schools	25 (16%)
Special Schools	85 (55%)
Independent Schools	68 (44%)
Pupil Referral Units	78 (51%)

4.3.   As the table above measures the number of criteria where schools reported the requirements were in place rather than the number of schools who reported this provides a way of comparing school types despite the variation in the number of schools in each type.

4.4.   This comparison shows that Special Schools, where some of our most vulnerable children and young people attend have reported more safeguarding arrangements to be fulling in place that other areas. Maintained secondary schools also reported relatively highly with very few primary schools reporting 100% achievement in any given criteria identified by the audit.

4.5.   Based on this comparison there was no specific area which has been totally implemented across all types of schools. However there were multiple areas where multiple school types reported criteria being fully implemented across all themes of the audit. These included requirements relating to the governance of schools, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) role and requirements, risk managements and some elements of policies and procedures.

5.   Summary of key areas for development identified from the audit

5.1.   A number of schools identified that they had identified areas of development and were either actively developing these or had a plan in place. Based on responses to the safeguarding audit the following themes were identified as areas of development:

- **Training –** including induction training, governor training, general training in safeguarding, Female Genital Mutilation, and Escalation.

- **Policies and Procedures –** covering a variety of subjects including emergency situations, sex and relationships, prevent/radicalisation and extremism, substance use, smoke and vaping. It also relates to ensuring that these policies are robust, transparent, easy to understand and raising awareness with staff and volunteers

- **Record keeping –** this includes the Single Central Record, online searches for candidates, recording of signing of the code of conduct and other related issues and records of qualifications.

- **DSL Development –** includes ensuring they are supported in time, training, job descriptions, status and funding, multi-agency working and DSLs knowing which children have social workers.

- **Transitional arrangements between schools –** this includes transferring information, etc.

- **Online safety –** relating to monitoring and online filters, reviewing of controls to ensure they are effective, governor ownership, and the logging, monitoring of incidents and embedding in the curriculum

- **Supervision –** ensuring staff have regular supervision arrangements which includes safeguarding.

- **Governance –** Complying with legislation (e.g. equality and human rights), monitoring of use of part-time timetables to ensure that children are returned to full time education as soon as possible

- **Welfare –** Supporting pupils with complex needs, monitoring of physical interventions, Mental Health, monitoring visits, transport arrangements and unstructured elements of the day

- **Bullying –** Embedding restorative approach to bullying and harassment, reporting prejudice-based incidents

- **Elective Home Education (EHE) –** notification of EHE and notification of children who are being electively home educated.

6. Section 1 – Safer Recruitment

6.1.   Maintained Secondary Schools and Secondary Academies did report up to 100% compliance in some areas such as ensuring Section 128 and Disclosure and Barring Service checks have been completed. Maintained Primary Schools reported a slightly lower level of compliance across all requirements; however this was still very high with the majority of schools having appropriate arrangements in place.

6.2.   A new requirement under Keeping Children Safe in Education was in relation to online checks of shortlisted applicants. The level of implementation across all schools varied with as little as 60% of maintained secondary schools reporting this was fully implemented and only 40% of PRUs. Although academies and independent schools did indicate higher levels of this requirement being in place, overall this was one of the weaker areas across schools.

Recommendation 1: The NYSCP, in conjunction with the School Improvement Service and NYC HR produces practice guidance in relation to online checks.

6.3.   Record keeping was another area where some primary schools reported areas for improvement around the single central record, although secondary schools and academies, as well as special and independent schools all reported that this was fully in place.

6.4.   In terms of recruitment panels and training, most schools have in place arrangements for at least one member of interviewing panels to have undertaken safer recruitment training, with primary and secondary schools and academies with between 3% to 11% of identifying this as an area for development.

Recommendation 2: The NYSCP and School Improvement Service raises awareness of the need for all schools to be compliant with Safer Recruitment practice through the Designated Safeguarding Lead Network Meetings including the advice and guidance on the single central record and the recording of qualifications.

6.5.   Overall Safer Recruitment is generally well embedded across all North Yorkshire Schools with most schools reporting that many of the requirements identified in this area were met.

7.   Section 2a – Management of Safeguarding

7.1.   The management of safeguarding section of the School Safeguarding Audit is the largest section of the audit and has identifies 62 separate requirements ranging from leadership, the role of the DSL, training, online safety and other requirements.

7.2.   Across the management of safeguarding section, schools reported a very high levels of compliance throughout.   Schools reported 100% implementation across multiple requirements, but these were not consistent for each type of school (i.e. maintained, primary and secondary schools, academies, etc).

7.3.   Independent schools reported that their governors had received appropriate safeguarding training on induction which included child protection. While the majority of other schools and academies (averaging approximately 88%) reported that governors had appropriate training in place, a number of schools and academies reported this was an area of development with PRUs and Special Schools reporting a higher level of ongoing development.

7.4.   Ensuring that policies and procedures were transparent and easy to understand was a concern for some schools, with this requirement being identified undertake work in this area. However, despite this, overall the majority of schools reported that this requirement was in place. Linked to this, between 13% and 27% of schools reported that they were undertaking work to ensure that staff are provided with policies on induction.

7.5.   Online safety policies were high on the agenda for schools with over 90% of schools reporting that governors have included this in their Child Protection (CP) Policy with the remaining schools indicating that they were in the process of developing this area. However, while most schools had in place online safety in their CP policy, schools reported a slightly lower level of implementation for arrangements to regularly review the effectiveness of their online safety arrangements. It should be noted that many schools utilise the Template CP Policy produced by the NYSCP and the School Improvement Service rather than produce their own policies. With the changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education and the ever-changing nature of the online word, it may be understandable that schools are more cautious about the effectiveness of their online policies.

Recommendation 3: NYES Digital should be invited to provide input to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Network Webinars regarding the filtering and monitoring of online activities through Smoothwall and provide guidance on what actions schools should be taking to be compliant with the filtering and monitoring requirements in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

7.6.   Designated Safeguarding Leads within schools are key roles and it was reassuring that the vast majority of schools reported that their DSLs carry the appropriate status and authority to undertake their role and were available in and out of term time. Training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and their deputies was in place in the majority of schools with only a small percentage of schools (around 6%) identifying that work was ongoing in this area. Duties of the DSL were not always reflected in job roles although it was noted that Special and Secondary schools were more likely to have this requirement fully implemented. This may be

due to the dual role many headteachers in primary schools undertake as it is common practice for headteachers to also be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7.7. Schools reported that governors generally had an understanding of the need to keep children in care or those previously looked after by the local authority safe. However, an area for development for a number of schools was in relation to ensuring they have a designated teacher for children in care in place and ensure that they have received appropriate training to undertake the role. Although the majority of schools reported that this was in place, there remained a number of schools who identified this as an area for development and a small number of maintained primary schools (1%) which reported this as an unidentified risk.

Recommendation 4: The Virtual Head works with those schools which do not have a designated teacher for children in care to develop plans to ensure arrangements are achieved by the end of the 2023/2024 academic year.

7.8. In terms of prevent and radicalisation, the majority of schools reported that leaders and staff had received appropriate training to implement their duties with between 6% and 11% of schools identifying that this is an area for development.

7.9. Another requirement placed on schools is to ensure that they have robust procedures to manage emergency situations should they arise. It was of note that school confidence levels in this area were very mixed, with as little as 40% of PRUs, 44% of Special School, 60% of secondary academies and 66% of maintained primary schools reported that their arrangements were fully in place, with primary academies and maintained secondary schools reporting high levels of implementation, but only by an additional 10%-20%. Given that in recent years schools have had to manage the COVID-19 Pandemic, which was a significant emergency situation, it would be reasonable to expected that school arrangements would be more robust and may be an area which the NYSCP may wish to further explore.

Recommendation 5: The School Improvement Service considers the development of training/guidance in relation to emergency planning within schools. This should be scenario based and link to relevant guidance and procedures for different situations.

8. Section 2b – Actions Taken When There Are Concerns About a Child

8.1. Safeguarding of children and young people appears to be well embedded within schools with the majority of schools reporting they were compliant with all audit requirements relating to taking actions when there are concerns about a child.

8.2. While the majority of schools (above 95% in most criteria) reported they were fully compliant, there were some areas which schools have identified as areas for development.

8.3. Secondary schools reported a slightly lower level of staff awareness of the legal duties on teachers to report concerns of FGM. While this may be a low level of risk for children in North Yorkshire, it is not non-existent and may be an area for the NYSCP to assist in raising awareness through the Designated Safeguarding Lead Network Webinars.

8.4. Another area of development for some schools was in relation to understanding of the NYSCP escalation procedures. This issue has been raised by the NYSCP Partnership Manager and NYSCP Policy and Development Officer separately to the audit following conversation with schools and is an area which the NYSCP could take action to address through the Designated Safeguarding Leads Network Webinars.

Recommendation 6: The NYSCP includes a section on the Escalation Policy in the Spring or Summer Term 2023/2024 School Safeguarding Network Meeting. This element of the webinar should also be circulated through the NYSCP Podcast for a wider partner audience.

8.5.   While not all schools reported having arrangements fully in place, the use of CPOMs in schools has improved the recording of safeguarding incidents reported to the DSL and further escalated to the Local Authority. This was identified as a theme from the previous audit, and it is good to demonstrate that schools have actively improved in this area.

8.6.   Schools reported that most staff working with children with safeguarding concerns receive regular supervision and support. While this is good, there remains an average of 13% of primary and maintained secondary schools who are not fully compliant with this requirement and concerningly, 32% of secondary academies which report that this is not fully operational, although all of these schools report they have plans to address this.

8.7.   Overall, arrangements within schools to address safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people appear to be good with some areas for development.

9.   Section 3 – Inclusion

9.1.   In terms of inclusion, as would be expected, Special schools reported very high levels of compliance across most requirements; however, there were some areas of development in relation to the level of awareness of the governing bodies regarding their duties to comply with legalisation, having systems in place for all students to know who they can talk to if they have concerns as well as systems for monitoring and reporting hate crime incidents. There was also development work ongoing in some schools ensuring that deregistering a child from school was rigorous and evidenced.

9.2.   Attendance monitoring is vital to ensure that children are accessing education. Where children have a part-time timetable, a number of schools reported that they did not have in place rigorous systems in place to monitor the use part timetables, ensuring children returns to full time provision as quickly as possible and routinely inform the LA of pupils on part timetables. Special and Secondary Schools together the PRUs generally reported lower levels of this requirement being fully implemented, whereas this appears to be more embedded within primary schools.

9.3.   In terms of elective home education there was some weaknesses in arrangements within the PRUs for notifying the EHE Team of pupils which have become EHE within 10 days of receiving a notification from parents/carers, with only 60% of PRUs reporting this was in place; however it was noted that those PRUs which did not have this in place reported they had a plan to do so.

9.4.   EHE across other areas was embedded in the majority of schools with all secondary schools stating that they reported pupils within 10 days. However, 12% of independent schools reported that this was an unidentified risk.

9.5.   Where parents were considering elective home education, a fifth of secondary academies, PRUs and independent schools reported that this was not fully embedded. Primary schools and maintained secondary schools reported that this was in place in most schools with development work being undertaken in some cases.

Recommendation 7: A task and finish group comprising of representation from the Children and Young Peoples Service, including School Improvement, Virtual School and Inclusion, the Police, representation from each type of school and the NYSCP is established to examine issues relating to attendance and elective home education. This group should identify what actions can be undertaken by partners to raise awareness of issues of attendance, duties on schools, arrangements which should be in place and examples of good practice.

9.6. In relation to legal obligations under equality and human rights legislation, most schools (between 89% to 100%) reporting a high level of confidence that their governors, trustees or proprietors were aware of their duties and complied with them. However, given the turnover of senior leaders within schools, governor/trustee/proprietor training will remain an important issue for schools to ensure that their governing bodies have sufficient knowledge to successfully discharge their duties.

9.7. The recording of restrictive interventions was in place in all special schools and PRUs; however, not all schools reported that this requirement was in place and was an area for development in up to 14% of primary schools and 40% of secondary schools.

Recommendation 8: Raising awareness of restrictive interventions should be including in the School Safeguarding Lead Network Webinars.

9.8. Hate crime reporting arrangements are in place within the majority of schools, which was an area for development in the last audit. Most schools reported that they analyse types and patterns of bullying and use restorative approaches to incidents of bullying and harassment, although fewer secondary academies and independent schools reported full compliance and indicated ongoing development in this area.

10. Section 4 – Managing Risk

10.1. Special and independent schools stated that their governors ensured that children and young people were taught how to protect themselves online and reported a 100% compliance level in this requirement. While all other schools reported a high level of compliance, with over 90% of schools stating this was fully in place, only 80% of secondary academies felt that this was fully embedded.

10.2. Most schools reported that they had staff who received appropriate continuous professional development to teach children and young people age-appropriate methods of safeguarding. However, this was less embedded within secondary academies, with only 60% of this schools reported fully meeting this criterion, whereas 80% of maintained secondary schools reported this to be in place.

Recommendation 9: The School Improvement Service, together with the NYSCP and NYES Training Solutions identifies recommended key training requirements for Governors, Headteachers, DSLs and other roles in schools. This should be promoted to schools through the DSL Network Webinars and the North Yorkshire Council Governors Meetings

10.3. Up to date policies for relationships, sex education, substance misuse and smoke/vape free environments was another area which requires further development by schools with just over half secondary academies reporting having these in place. The level of compliance against this

requirement rose across other types of schools to 89% special schools, which reported the highest level of policies in place.

Recommendation 10: Public Health is invited to the DSL Network Webinars to raise awareness of concerns relating to substance misuse and smoking and vaping as well as any other related health risks to children and young people.

10.4. In relation to LGBTQ+, most schools reported that their CP policy identified children may have additional barriers which may stop them from speaking out. However, it should be noted that the NYSCP template CP Policy, adopted by many schools addresses this concern.

11. Section 5 – Early Years

11.1. Early years requirements were generally well embedded within relevant schools. However, not all schools reported that they had facilities for the delivery of intimate personal care to pupils when required.

11.2. In terms of supervision ratios of children, up to a third of primary schools reported that this was not fully implemented and, in some cases, reported that this was not applicable.

Recommendation 11: While some schools may not have reception year pupils, this should be further investigated by the Early Years' Service to ensure that there are adequate staffing arrangements in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Framework for all relevant aged children.

12. Section 6 – Learning Beyond the Classroom

12.1. Learning beyond the classroom was one of the areas of highest compliance against the standards identified in the audit, with many schools reporting 100% compliance in multiple areas.

12.2. One of the areas which required further development mostly within primary schools was in relation to the retention of staff leading outdoor activities to have evidence of their qualification recorded as required by the school's procedures. As with other areas, records management was an area which some schools did have plans in place to improve and the recording of qualifications links to the single central record. Record keeping was also a theme identified from the School Safeguarding Audit for 2021/2022.

13. Section 7 – Premises Security

13.1. Schools reported a generally high level of compliance across most areas of premise security. Most schools reported they had arrangements in place to ensure the security of the school site during school hours.

13.2. Schools reported very high compliance with the requirement to have robust arrangements in place for receiving and handing over pupils at the start and end of the school day, with some schools identifying they had plans in place to address these requirements.

13.3. In the previous audit, measures to manage the risk of moving vehicles and plans to manage risks from vehicles was a weakness for a number of schools. While there was improvement noted in a number of schools, this is still an area of development, particularly for 19% of primary academies and 27% of maintained primary schools. However, the management of pedestrian safety from vehicles was in place in a greater number of schools, with up to 19% of schools identifying this as an area of ongoing development.

14. Section 8 – Premises Health and Safety

14.1. As with all other areas of this audit, the majority of schools reported that they were fully compliant with Health and Safety requirement. The majority of maintained primary schools (98%) reported that they had a Health and Safety Policy while this fell to 88% in the case of secondary academies. As the Health and Safety Policy is part of the suite of policies produced by North Yorkshire Council for school, it can be expected for most schools to have this in place. However, no schools reported this as an unidentified risk and where not fully compliant with the requirement, this was an area of development.

14.2. Arrangements for the maintenance of premises was slightly improved from the 2021/2022 audit and the majority of schools reported that they had records for equipment maintenance. Most primary and secondary schools reported having plans to manage legionella and asbestos, with over 90% of schools stating that this was fully implemented; however, this number was lower in independent schools (81%) and special schools (89%).

14.3. In terms of Medical and First Aid Policies, the majority of schools have these arrangements in place (over 95% for most categories of schools). Again it should be noted that North Yorkshire Council produce a template policy for adoption by schools.

14.4. Primary Academies reported a high level of compliance (94%) for ensuring their safety policy has been communicated to all staff and they had signed to say they had read the policy. However this was an active area for development for a number of maintained secondary schools (up to 27%) and secondary academies (20%). It was also noted that some schools were also developing how they shared emergency arrangements and fire safety information.

Recommendation 12: School Education and Safeguarding Advisors promote the need for Health and Safety Policies to be communicated to all staff and work with schools to ensure that evidence of this is in place.

14.5. Most schools and academies have in place health and safety inspection reports and actions plans but was an active area of development in up to 20% of schools.

15. Panel Events

15.1.

16. Summary

16.1.

17. Recommendations

17.1. It is recommended that the NYSCP accepts the findings of this report and:

17.2. Recommendation 1: The NYSCP, in conjunction with the School Improvement Service and NYC HR produces practice guidance in relation to online checks.

17.3. Recommendation 2: The NYSCP and School Improvement Service raises awareness of the need for all schools to be compliant with Safer Recruitment practice through the Designated Safeguarding Lead Network Meetings including the advice and guidance on the single central record and the recording of qualifications.

17.4. Recommendation 3: NYES Digital should be invited to provide input to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Network Webinars regarding the filtering and monitoring of online activities through Smoothwall and provide guidance on what actions schools should be taking to be compliant with the filtering and monitoring requirements in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

17.5. Recommendation 4: The Virtual Head works with those schools which do not have a designated teacher for children in care to develop plans to ensure arrangements are achieved by the end of the 2023/2024 academic year.

17.6. Recommendation 5: The School Improvement Service considers the development of training/guidance in relation to emergency planning within schools. This should be scenario based and link to relevant guidance and procedures for different situations.

17.7. Recommendation 6: The NYSCP includes a section on the Escalation Policy in the Spring or Summer Term 2023/2024 School Safeguarding Network Meeting. This element of the webinar should also be circulated through the NYSCP Podcast for a wider partner audience.

17.8. Recommendation 7: A task and finish group comprising of representation from the Children and Young Peoples Service, including School Improvement, Virtual School and Inclusion, the Police, representation from each type of school and the NYSCP is established to examine issues relating to attendance and elective home education. This group should identify what actions can be undertaken by partners to raise awareness of issues of attendance, duties on schools, arrangements which should be in place and examples of good practice.

17.9. Recommendation 8: Raising awareness of restrictive interventions should be including in the School Safeguarding Lead Network Webinars.

17.10. Recommendation 9: The School Improvement Service, together with the NYSCP and NYES Training Solutions identifies recommended key training requirements for Governors, Headteachers, DSLs and other roles in schools. This should be promoted to schools through the DSL Network Webinars and the North Yorkshire Council Governors Meetings

17.11. Recommendation 10: Public Health is invited to the DSL Network Webinars to raise awareness of concerns relating to substance misuse and smoking and vaping as well as any other related health risks to children and young people.

17.12. Recommendation 11: While some schools may not have reception year pupils, this should be further investigated by the Early Years' Service to ensure that there are adequate staffing arrangements in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Framework for all relevant aged children.

17.13. Recommendation 12: School Education and Safeguarding Advisors promote the need for Health and Safety Policies to be communicated to all staff and work with schools to ensure that evidence of this is in place.