

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 21 April 2022

Sexual Harassment in Schools Spotlight Review – Final Report

Recommendation

The Spotlight Review recommends that the Committee:

- a. Consider the final report of the Spotlight Review on Sexual Harassment in Schools, with a view to endorsing the recommendations and agreeing its submission to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) for their Executive Response.

Report of the Scrutiny and Support Officer

1. The joint Spotlight Review on sexual harassment in schools is now complete and the Review Group has produced its final report and recommendations. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the report and determine whether they endorse it for submission to the Cabinet, for the provision of an Executive Response. If forwarding the report, the Committee is invited to consider if they wish to make any accompanying comments.

Report

Background

2. At the beginning of the new municipal year the Safeguarding, Prosperous and Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committees each raised sexual harassment in schools as an area for further scrutiny, with each separate Committee including this issue on their work programme. To avoid duplication the Committees agreed to undertake a joint spotlight review with one member from each committee taking part in the Review.
3. Sexual harassment in schools is an issue of concern nationally. The “Everyone’s Invited” on-line platform raised the profile of this issue and highlighted concerns around the levels of abuse and harassment in education. The Government asked Ofsted to complete a rapid review to identify the extent of any problems and give recommendations for addressing these.

4. This joint spotlight review considered the issues highlighted nationally and scrutinised whether these were reflected in Staffordshire Schools, to what extent, and how/whether the issues identified were being address.

Summary

5. The Spotlight Review was held on 14 January 2022. Representatives attended with a range of expertise, including educationalists and safeguarding professionals. Further information was gathered after the review to address remaining queries.
6. The findings from this investigation give a current picture of the work to identify and address sexual harassment and abuse within schools. Following their investigations, the Review Members have drawn together their conclusions and set out seven recommendations to support the considerable work already in place.

Next Steps

7. As this was a joint review, with representation from three separate Overview and Scrutiny Committees, each Committee will need to consider the report and recommendations, and, subject to the endorsement of each Committee, the final report, together with any accompanying submissions that the Committees may wish to make, will be submitted to the appropriate Cabinet Members for their Executive Response.

Link to the Strategic Plan

8. Offer every Staffordshire child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential.

Implications

9. The equalities and legal; resource and value for money; and risk implications are set out in the attached report.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Final Report of the Spotlight Review

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