

Beyond Referrals – Multi Agencies



Type of intervention



Online

Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:

Situations
/ Places

Internet/Online | Online | Internet Related Only

Target population

Multiple-agency partnerships to assess the extent to which they currently enable effective responses to harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) exhibited by pupils in schools and other educational settings..

Delivery organisation

Beyond Referrals for multi-agencies was developed Contextual Safeguarding Network; a team within the International Centre at the University of Bedfordshire. The International Centre is committed to researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking, by conducting academic research with children and young people. The creation of Beyond Referrals for multi-agencies is supported by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission.

Mode and context of delivery

Beyond Referrals for multi-agencies is an online tool designed for multi-agency partnerships to explore their response to HSB exhibited by pupils in schools and other educational settings. The tool is available online and agencies can utilise it as and when necessary. A parallel tool has been designed for schools and other educational settings to enable a collaborative approach to identifying contextual enablers and barriers to addressing HSB, and to ensure a collaborative implementation of new response measures.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

The Contextual Safeguarding Network do not specify any prerequisites to using the tool. As the tool requires exploration of an agency's current safeguarding policies and procedures, prior knowledge of these would be helpful. Similarly, it is important for an agency to have a good working relationship with relevant schools and other educational settings, as well as with other agencies involved.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

As the tool is freely available online and does not need to be completed within a set time, it can be used at an agency's own pace. However, the greater the time spent dedicated to exploring each response area below, and the greater the number of assessment methods used, the greater the understanding of the facility's current response level to HSB will be..

Description of intervention

Beyond referrals for multi-agencies is a traffic-light tool designed for agencies to use to assess their current response level to HSB exhibited by pupils in schools and other educational settings. It has been developed to complement and link with the NSPCC Harmful Sexual Behaviour framework and associated tools designed to support schools specifically with this practice in this area. The NSPCC's HSB framework aims to encourage multiagency approaches to working with these young people and their families in the most effective, non-judgmental way possible. The NSPCC audit, which accompanies the framework, is a practical tool that local areas can use at a systemic level to assess their current responses to HSB across the entire workforce (health, social care, education etc.) and come together to formulate a consistent and coherent way forward to address the concerns and needs of children and young people who display HSB. When undertaking the NSPCC HSB framework audit, multi-agency partnerships can use this Beyond Referrals resource to assess and record the educational sector's response to HSB and feed this into the wider workforce HSB framework audit.

There are four key response areas outlined on the traffic light tool, for the agency to explore and score: Structures and Systems, Prevention, Identification and Response and Intervention. Within each areas (otherwise known as 'levers'), there are different factors that make up that response.

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Structures and Systems	Prevention	Identification	Response and Intervention
Referral pathway	Relationships and sex education	Cultural context	HSB resource
Education representation	Response to emerging concerns	Definition	Dissemination of intervention
HSB strategy	Prevention and incident	Resources	Relationship with schools
MA awareness of school	Partnership approach	Patterns and associations	Response to trends
Analysis		Language	Thresholds
Multi-agency in schools			
Fair Access Panel			

This is a strength-based tool that focuses on what partnerships do rather than what they don't do. The traffic light tool has three columns: green, amber and red. Users should start with the green column and identify whether or not they meet that criteria. If they do not, users should use the amber column and repeat the progress. Again, if they do not meet the criteria, users should progress to the red column. Scores are determined by the area whereby an agency meets that criteria; with a score of 2 when meeting the green column's criteria, a score of 1 when meeting the yellow column's criteria, and a score of 0 when an agency falls into the red column. Once the total scores are calculated, agencies will be able to map their progress visually on five separate radar charts; and there are excel spreadsheets provided by Beyond Referrals that will help users to do that.

A range of evidence is required to complete the self-assessment. Some of this data will be readily available whereas other information may require additional collection. The methods used to gather evidence will vary between partnerships and agencies but could include:

- Case reviews – to understand the links between schools and the multi-agency partnership, thresholds, interventions and language used
- Observations of meetings – strategic and operational, related to cases of HSB such as CSE, VAWG, gangs panel, adolescent safeguarding, individual strategy meetings and education •
- Engagement with multi-agency staff through small groups or interviews to develop a picture of the approach by agencies and practitioners to HSB
- Review of local policies and procedures relating to HSB
- Engagement with young people – within schools and those that have accessed, or are currently accessing, the provision of services relating to HSB on their experiences and perspectives.

Evaluation

Data was obtained via a mixed-methods approach, with multi-agency partnerships (local authorities and Ofsted) and seven schools (including secondary schools, pupil referral units, special education facilities and further education colleges). The focus was on adolescents, aged 13 and above. The research methods used in multi-agency partnerships were mirrored in schools:

Multi-agency partnership	School
Review policies and procedures	Review policies and procedures
Meeting observations	School observations
Case review	Review behaviour logs
Focus groups with multiagency partners	Focus groups with school staff and young people

Analysis was conducted in three stages.

Stage one involved identifying the enablers and barriers to addressing HSB; both of which were agreed and then combined into larger descriptive categories and clusters based on similarity and relationships.

Stage two involved facilitating reflective workshops with the research team and local authority steering group meetings to put forward and discuss the categories and clusters identified from the first stage of analysis.

Stage three involved conducting qualitative analysis of data using NVivo 11, to refine, validate and finalise the sub-areas under the four main areas. The areas were then converted into a traffic-light model for multi-agencies, and separate but similar mechanisms were developed for multi-agency providers. See 'Description of Intervention' for information on the four areas and their sub-areas.

References

Firmin, C., Lloyd, J. & Walker, J. (2019) Beyond referrals: levers for addressing harmful sexual behaviours between students at school in England. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1659442.

<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/publications/beyond-referrals-levers-for-addressing-harmful-sexual-behaviour-in-schools>

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