

Warwickshire Safe Education Partnership

Background

The Safer Schools Partnership has been in existence since 2006. Since 2013 we have been re-establishing the Partnership and the Police have brought the number of PCSOs based in schools back to the 2010 level.

The Safer Schools Partnership, a multi-agency forum, has worked together across a wide variety of issues from road safety to on-line protection. Our purpose was about protection and prevention helping schools to safeguard their pupils.

Across all of the issues we have recognised in the partnership is the growing belief that we need to work more closely with children and young people so they become better risk managers and that the skills needed to be risk managers, like all skills, need to be learnt and practised.

What started as a need to change our title to reflect that we are now working with both pre-school and colleges as well as schools has led us to reflect and propose a new development that builds on what we have in place by creating a 'Safe Education' campaign.

So what is 'Safe Education'?

Safe Education has three elements:

Protect **Prevent** **Prepare**

Protect: Ensuring that all education establishments that work with children and young people, their governing bodies and senior management teams, have adequate and robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Prevent: That education establishments have support to help them prevent children and young people from coming to harm, both physically and emotionally.

Prepare: That children and young people, from nursery school through to college are given the necessary skills to be better risk managers and have the coping skills to recognise, evaluate and escape from risky situations. These skills need to be rehearsed and practised and are important elements of a child's personal and social development.

So why do we need 'Safe Education' now?

Children and young people live in a world full of anomalies.

Most parents and carers want to protect their children from any harm and therefore create a world that stops them from being exposed to being hurt; the 'cotton wool' syndrome. The reality is that we cannot protect 24/7 and so part of our parenting has to be exposing to harm in a safe environment. It's best that a small child knows that being stung by a nettle hurts but that a dock leaf can help. In the future they try and avoid nettles and other things that sting.

Another anomaly is the line between reality and fantasy. The power of television, virtual games and the like has graphic detail of people being hurt but that the game starts again and again; no-one gets hurt. A recent study by the Ministry of Defence is looking into why younger troops in Afghanistan were taking 'extra' risks and were looking at this link between war games and the dangerous 'bravado' decisions some young men were taking.

Yet another anomaly is recognising what is true and what is false. Children from a very young age are exposed to afternoon television with 'relationships' being played out through the many soap operas. In Warwickshire we were one of the first Local Authorities to introduce Relationships and Sex Education rather than Sex and Relationships Education so that Primary Schools saw they had an important role to play in preparing their children. The power of these soap operas cannot be underestimated and their influence can affect whether a child or young person is susceptible to grooming.

The latest anomaly is that of knowing what is right or wrong. If, for instance, a child is not feeling loved or has a special education need or totally believes everything that someone close to them believes in, they are at risk of being radicalised. They can be led to believe that there is only one 'right way' and because they are made to feel special, then they want to do the 'right thing' by those that exploit them and their vulnerability.

So we live in a complex world where children and young people are constantly trying to understand and make sense of these anomalies.

So what does a 'Safe Education' campaign need to do?

- We work out for each age level the level of risk a child or young person can cope with and what skills that are needed to be introduced, honed and developed.
- We see how these skills can be embedded into the daily life of all education establishments so that is not just a PHSE lesson but a way that constantly gets children and young people to question and work through the risks that need to be managed in all aspects of their life.
- We ensure that we cover all the bases so that we are protecting, preventing and preparing children and young people from harm and they are improving their wellbeing because they are risk managers and can make informed decisions, with confidence.
- We promote 'Safe Education' across all who seek to govern children and young people services.

*Hugh Disley: Early Help & Targeted Support
Warwickshire County Council
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Useful information

C.S.E.

<http://www.stop-cse.org> and <http://warwickshirecse.co.uk/>

Prevent Duty

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

Warwickshire Prevent



Prevent leaflet
Channel WorksMercia

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