

Safeguarding issues in schools

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GATESHEAD
**safeguarding
children**
partnership

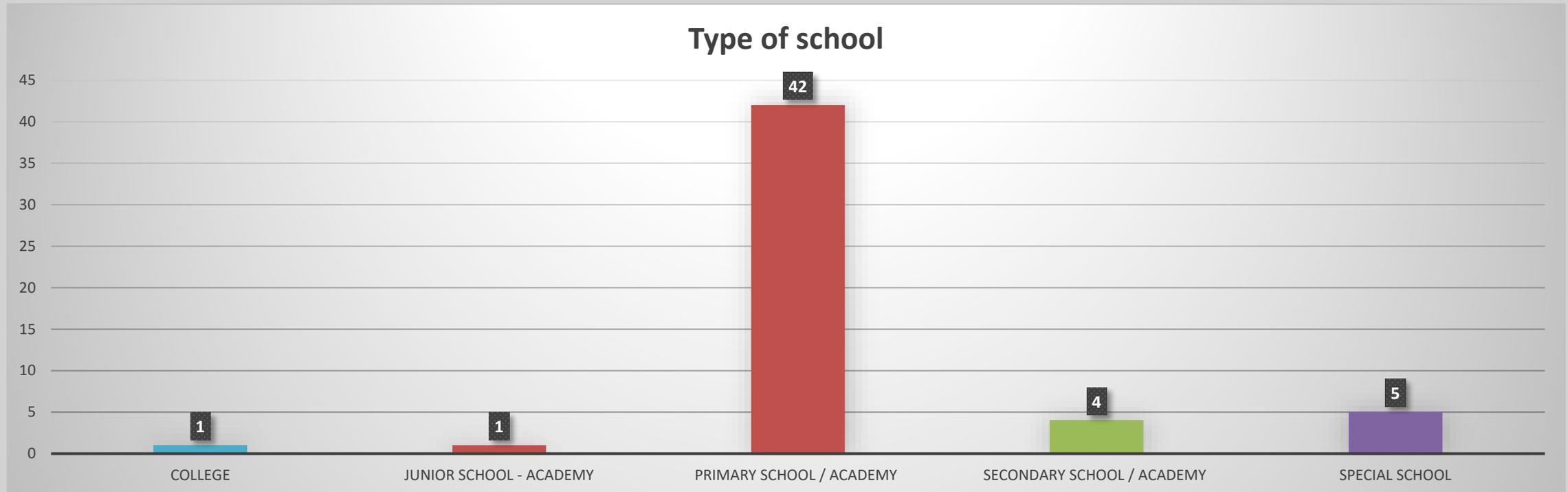
What did we do?

We are reviewing how we work with schools and colleges and how we tailor our approach to what analysis indicates are the risks to children

To help us with this, the Education Reference Group (ERG) developed a [survey](#) for schools to use to tell us what issues they are seeing, and how we can tackle them.

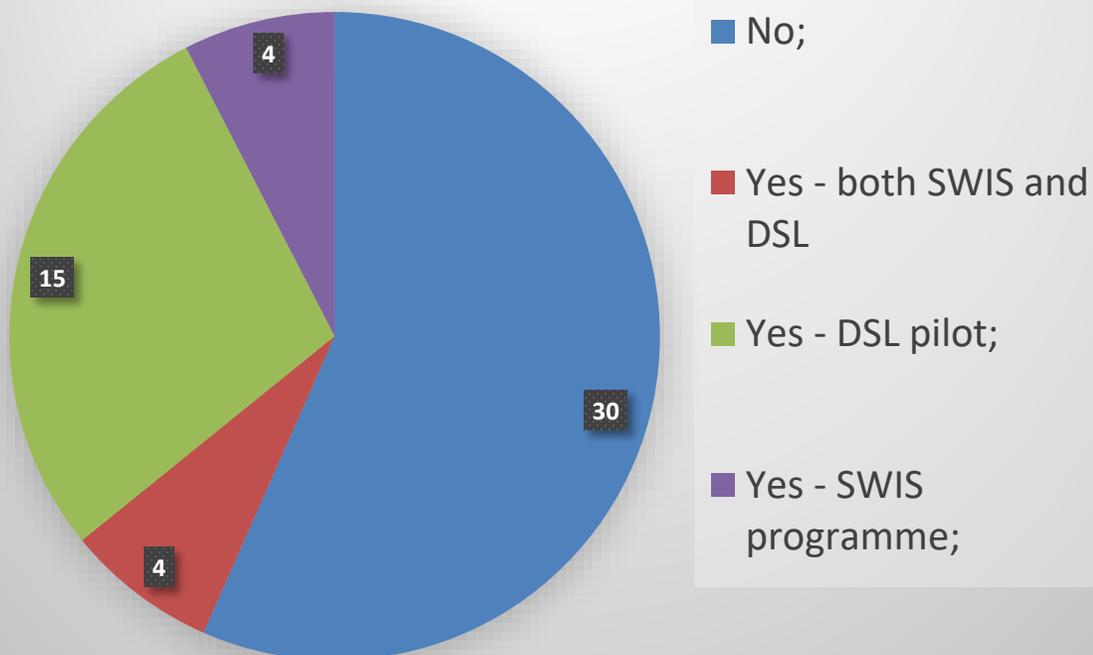
Survey was sent to all schools (including academies and independent schools) on 26th January and closed on 11th February 2022.

How many schools?



We asked “Is your school currently part of the [*Social Worker in School \(SWIS\) programme*](#) or Supervision for [*Designated Safeguarding Leads \(DSL\) pilot*](#)?”

SWIS / DSL pilot?



great opportunity for dialogue and support with referral process.

The DSL supervision pilot has been a real support and I would recommend this being offered more widely to schools

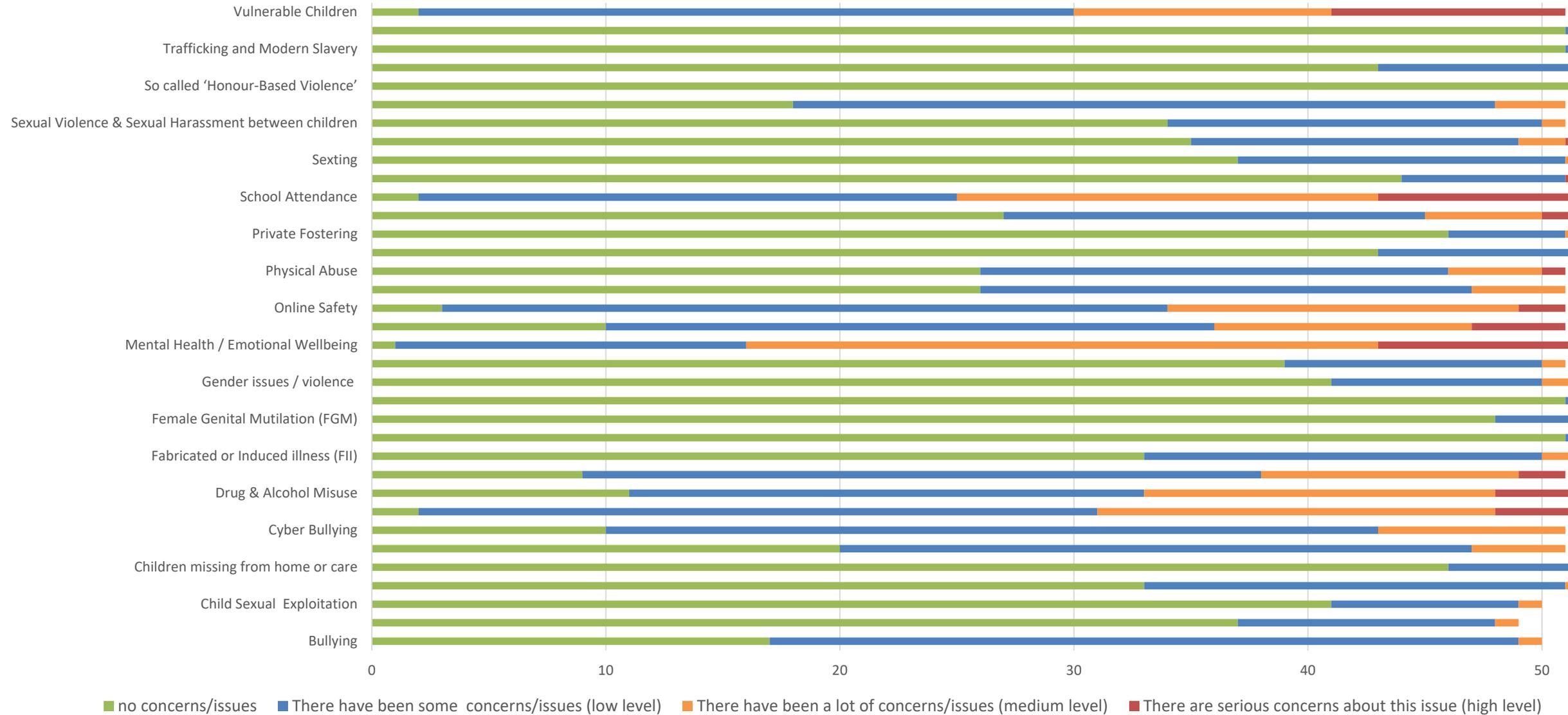
Gives a better understanding of the challenges faced and why decisions are taken under different sets of circumstances. All schools would benefit from this close level of co-operation.

We are very grateful to be part of the Supervision for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) pilot: this is certainly helpful for unopened cases and families we are worried about but don't meet threshold;

The use of the SWIS and TAS has been a huge success in school. Further multi agency working in schools would be a huge benefit to help combat issues on the front line.

Helps to have a named contact to consult with when cases are different or particularly challenging.

What issues are you seeing in school?



Very brief analysis..

Mental health and emotional wellbeing comes out as an area of serious concern - significant increase in issues (exacerbated by lockdown)

School attendance - schools report this (along with refusal to attend) as being a significant area of concern and want the LA to provide leadership and guidance

Vulnerable children have high number of concerns across all levels with only 2 schools reporting no concerns

Sexualised behaviour, online safety, bullying, cyber bullying and neglect have also seen an increase in concerns.

Very brief analysis..

Low level and medium level concerns are being managed by the school working with families and other services to try and prevent concerns escalating – schools would like more support

Schools are also seeing issues around contextual safeguarding and more complex issues – schools who are part of SWIS / DSL pilot report increased confidence in managing these cases

Schools are reporting an increase in a number of concerns post-pandemic; these themes of concern are being seen across the whole partnership and have been identified in a number of local, regional and national reports re impact of the pandemic, including increase in domestic abuse and drug and alcohol concerns

Are there any other areas we should be focusing on?

School attendance

- schools report this (along with refusal to attend) as being a significant area of concern and want the LA/GSCP to provide leadership and guidance

Education for parents on physical chastisement

- some schools seeing increase in reports from children about being hit by parents - Some guidance for parents on laws to educate parents.

Support for male students

- schools seeing an increase in young males with aggressive tendencies, lack of emotional resilience and warning signs or indicators of CCE but with few avenues to access support - seems to be a gap in support for males.

Understanding the impact of social media on vulnerable young people

- particularly in relation to the areas of on-line sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, sexualised behaviour, mental health and wellbeing.

Peer on Peer abuse

- This is a specific focus of the DSL pilot

Issues re families who fall short of statutory intervention / don't meet threshold

- or who have been assessed and then NFA or stepped down to Early Help

Racism and homophobia

- sessions in school delivered by specialists

Poverty and impact of the pandemic on families

- this is covered in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy

Key actions/points for GSCP to consider..

Mental health interventions in schools - what could this look like?

Consider SWIS / DSL being rolled out to all schools – could include MH practitioner - how could we achieve this? How would it be funded (current funding due to end soon)

Closer links and better communication with current networks (including talking heads and cluster networks)

Clear pathways, across early help, health and social care (including what to do if parents won't engage with early help) - this was also identified as an action following a rapid review

More support in early identification and prevention of concerns and how we can work together across agencies - also being looked at as part of the review of CAF/TAF and early help process.

Schools should be included and involved in work to address mental health and emotional wellbeing concerns - establish/develop links will health and wellbeing board, Gateshead System

Promote training offer and develop a newsletter - to include learning from local and national case reviews, and priority areas of work

Share good practice that is happening in other schools locally and nationally (and examples/case studies to show why support is given/not given and at what level?)

School attendance - schools report this (along with refusal to attend) as being a significant area of concern and want the LA/GSCP to provide leadership and guidance

Schools would like to be informed about police incidents where children are present (ones that are not domestic abuse). – Could schools be notified of CCN's (where appropriate) as part of information sharing.

Questions?

1

Do you have any ideas or suggestions for how we can tackle these issues together?

2

Are there any other areas you think we should be focusing on?

