

Child safeguarding workshop

Delivering a three-day child safeguarding workshop for officers and staff working in safeguarding teams.

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Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Organisational
Topic	Organisation including workforce Vulnerability and safeguarding
Organisation	North Yorkshire Police
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Region	North East
Partners	Police Private sector
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	March 2025
Completion date	March 2025

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults Children and young people Offenders Victims Workforce

Aim

The aim of the safeguarding workshop is to upskill police officers and staff working in safeguarding teams such as a local MASH (multi agency screening hub), domestic abuse team, exploitation and missing teams.

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of the safeguarding workshop are to:

- improve participants knowledge and skills to protect vulnerable individuals from abuse, harm and neglect
- improve the continued professional development (CPD) opportunities offered within North Yorkshire Police

Description

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) identified North Yorkshire Police's safeguarding training as an area of concern. Officers and staff were joining these roles from other areas of the force without having completed substantial safeguarding training. The force's external training provider, Opto Training, met with a detective inspector from the MASH to discuss the child protection inspection coordinator's concern of officers and staff being in safeguarding posts without receiving any child protection training. Opto Training and North Yorkshire identified a need to develop a safeguarding workshop to ensure all offices and staff are

equipped to do their roles.

Safeguarding workshop

Three three-day face-to-face workshops, over a period of three weeks were delivered in March 2025. The decision on the length of the course was based on officers and staff schedules. Pre-course feedback also highlighted a preference for face-to-face training from subject matter experts. The force's funding for the course was in place until the end of the 2024/25 financial year, hence the reason to schedule the training delivery for March.

North Yorkshire Police commissioned Opto Training to deliver the safeguarding workshops. There were 12 spaces available on each workshop for officers and staff from the MASH, domestic abuse team, missing persons team, exploitation team and other safeguarding roles. The workshops were held on North Yorkshire Police's premises.

The workshop covered:

- a historical overview of child protection in England and Wales
- safeguarding vs child protection and contextualised safeguarding
- harmful sexual behaviour and disguised compliance
- adultification and victim blaming

Public Protection

- authorised professional practice (APP) investigative mindset
- professional curiosity, respectful uncertainty and healthy scepticism
- legislation – Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- civil legislation – powers and orders
- working together 2023 and information sharing – assessment framework and early help

Assessment

- making and recording decisions – factors that affect decision making
- assessing risk – national decision model and risk principles
- child development in the context of abuse – attachment theory and impact upon the developing child

- parental responsibility – Gillick principles and Fraser guidelines
- glossary of social care terms
- wellbeing as a safeguarding professional
- child abuse perpetrator behaviour

A social worker and a psychologist also attended the workshops providing input alongside the training professional.

Cost

The cost for the design and delivery of each course is £6,250 plus VAT, and a total of £18,750 plus VAT for all three courses. This includes the course materials, an attendance certificate for each delegate, travel and accommodation costs for the trainers and subject matter experts. The funding is covered by North Yorkshire Police's training budget.

Overall impact

Opto Training designed and collated a feedback form and then sent it out to the force. The feedback from the course was to make sure both the course objectives and personal objectives were met. Other areas covered in the feedback were:

- how much of the course learning will be put into practice within attendees individual roles?
- did attendees feel able to participate in the course?
- was the course content and presentation appropriate?

The feedback received from all attendees from across the three courses has been really positive on the structure and content of the course and the trainers. Officers and staff who had not previously received training commented on the increase in their confidence in performing their roles.

Feedback from officers and staff has been shared with the vulnerability board and the child protection tactical working group.

It is anticipated that the force will run a workshop each year to cover new staff and CPD days. This will be led via the child protection tactical meeting.

Learning

- The content was very interactive with professionals from different bodies assisting with understanding safeguarding to the full extent covering the 'why do we do that?' question. In response to the positive feedback, it has been put forward to include this course at least once a year in the future due to the staff movement in these teams.
- The force intended to fill all spaces across the three courses. However, this was not achieved due to officers and staff on annual leave and the funding for the course was for this financial year only. The first course was attended by seven delegates, the second ten and the final course nine.
- It is essential to plan and ensure officers and staff can attend to prevent the loss of paid places on the workshops. Previously with other courses the force has co-hosted with Cleveland Police, and this is being looked at going forward so that the workshop places are filled.
- It is essential that the training provider and force use the same terminology for products, teams and departments to avoid confusion.

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