

Supplement – schedule of questions received for meeting of children and young people scrutiny committee – 16 September 2019

Agenda item no. 5 - Question from members of the public

Question Number	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1	Mr Clements, Hereford	<p>Peer-on-peer sexual abuse is a national phenomenon. DfE guidance recognises that after sexual assault by a school peer, a victim is likely to suffer harm if their school does not take action to ensure they can attend school without risk of seeing their abuser.</p> <p>In several cases in Herefordshire since 2016 children have not been safeguarded appropriately in school after reporting a sexual assault to police; concerns have been raised that schools are continuing to fail victims.</p> <p>Under s.47 Children Act 1989 the Council has a duty to investigate and take action if they have <i>"reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives ... in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm"</i>.</p> <p>How long is a reasonable delay between the Council being alerted to possible safeguarding failure, and the Council starting an investigation?</p>	Chairperson of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Response: Thank you for your question. The committee recognises that some parents across the country have raised their concerns about Peer on Peer abuse and this is why this committee has chosen this subject to scrutinise. The issue raised is relevant to the scoping document for the peer on peer abuse in schools spotlight review published with the agenda and will be explored by the committee under that item on the agenda.			
PQ 2	Name and address supplied	<p>In 2018 a secondary school in Herefordshire paid compensation to settle claims made under the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act in connection with the failure to safeguard a student in school after she disclosed she was the victim of a serious sexual assault by a school peer.</p> <p>I am aware that other children in Herefordshire have also not been safeguarded appropriately after they report a sexual assault by a school peer to their school or to the police.</p> <p>Has the Committee seen evidence that the Council undertook a thorough investigation into the 2018 case in order to learn lessons, and that those lessons have been disseminated to schools to ensure that no other child suffers preventable harm after a sexual assault?</p>	Chairperson of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Response: Thank you for your question. The committee recognises that some parents across the country have raised their concerns about Peer on Peer abuse and this is why this committee has chosen this subject to scrutinise. The issue raised is relevant to the scoping document for the peer on peer abuse in schools spotlight review published with the agenda and will be explored by the committee under that item on the agenda.			

