

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE & SPORT COMMITTEE
13 NOVEMBER 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

E-SAFETY DEVELOPMENTS

Report by Director of Education, Culture & Sport Service

SUMMARY

This report details for members the proposed developments in safe use of internet resources for young people. The report highlights the main elements in e-safety to be rolled out to young people and staff within Highland.

**1. STRENGTHENING THE HIGHLANDS
THE PROGRAMME OF THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL 2009-2011**

1.1 e-safety developments contribute to the delivery of programme outcome:

1.1.1 We will achieve full implementation of the Scottish Government's policy of "Getting it Right for Every Child" which will ensure that all children get the help they need when they need it, by 2009.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The internet allows for global exploration which offers extraordinary opportunities for children and young people. Social networking among young people is very common. An Ofcom survey has shown that 49% of children 8-17 have an online profile. Exploration however, can also bring risks similar to those in the offline world. For example there is little doubt that the internet has increased the risks of strangers contacting children. These risks have given rise to e-safety for young people being incorporated into the Highland Child Protection Business Plan.

2.2 The recently DFES commissioned The Byron Review March 2007 provides a set of recommendations for policy makers. The UK Government has recently established the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) which brings together Child Exploitation and On-line Protection Centre (CEOP), social networking sites and technology firms. It aims to teach children about web dangers, target harmful net content and establish a code of conduct for sites featuring material uploaded by users.

2.3 A key recommendation from the Byron Review is that education in schools should be balanced focussing on both 'Internet Safety and Responsible Use'. The Scottish Government 'Click Thinking', British Education Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) and Learning and Teaching Scotland, are keen to see this work developed as schools explore leading edge technologies for learning including GLOW.

2.4 Another area of concern highlighted by the Byron report is Cyber Bullying.

'The nature of bullying changes when online, making it anonymous and potentially more damaging.'

Cyber bullying refers to bullying behaviour that takes place through electronic means such as sending threatening text messages, posting unpleasant messages about people, and circulating unpleasant pictures or videos of someone. For example, visual images can be altered and passed on to other people. Cyber bullying can be particularly upsetting and damaging because it spreads more widely, with a greater degree of publicity. It can invade the victim's privacy and the safety of the home. Cyber bullying can affect staff as well as school pupils.

2.5 The development of e-safety for young people sits firmly within Strengthening the Highlands, the Programme of the Highland Council 2009-2011, which seeks to achieve full implementation of the Scottish Government's policy of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' by 2009, a key component of which is to protect children and young people from abuse, neglect or harm, at school or in the community.

2.6 To develop work on internet safety a short life e-safety group has been established with representatives from the Council, Police, Health and the voluntary sector to fulfil the actions detailed in the Child Protection business plan. The group has developed an underlying set of principles for the delivery of internet safety education and has identified a set of actions requiring to be implemented to ensure that young people benefit from strategies to minimise harm.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1 Internet Safety education work in Highland:

- will be based on effective practice, active learning methods and will be thoroughly assessed
- will ensure that a supportive environment and climate conducive to learning will be established to effectively deliver the education programmes, this will include after support and through care if necessary
- will ensure that high quality, accredited training is available to all professionals who work with children and young people in our school communities
- will provide a consistent approach across all ages, stages and settings,

reflecting the diversity and needs of all Highland school communities

- will develop clear policies and provide guidance to professionals working with children and young people including foster carers and staff working with looked-after children
- will monitor feedback using questionnaires designed for Highland use

4. PRESENT SITUATION

- 4.1** 65 individuals from the Council, Health, Police and the Voluntary sector have undertaken CEOP “Thinkuknow” training. The “Thinkuknow” e-safety programme has been undertaken by S2 pupils at Gairloch High School, with positive feed back. Highland Youth Voice Xecutive members have also undertaken training as have the staff at Fortrose Academy.

Internet safety awareness training is currently being delivered as part of the 2-day Child Protection training course.

5. PROPOSED ACTIONS

5.1 E-safety Awareness

- That S2 pupils in all secondary schools within Highland undertake e-safety awareness training by August 2009. This will be extended to other age groups in the following years. The training will include parent information evenings prior to the S2 training.
- E-safety and cyber bullying training will be provided for foster carers and staff working with looked-after children.
- For primary school young people “Hector the Protector” and Cyber Cafe materials will be piloted with the intention of rolling out to all primary schools within Highland by December 2009.
- Consideration be given to appropriate materials to use with young people with special educational needs.
- E-safety and cyber bullying training is included in the staff Continuing Professional Development calendar and incorporated into Child Protection training.
- 100% of schools should have Acceptable Use Policies that are regularly reviewed, monitored and agreed with parents and students.
- Provide training for school staff, youth workers, HPS officers with a view to integrate e-safety as part of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum across the ECS service
- Any Highland Council funded projects will incorporate an e-safety

information link with report abuse facility within their websites

5.2 Cyber Bullying

- 'Let's Fight it Together' materials on cyber bullying be made available to all schools.
- Appropriate use of the internet guidance to be issued to schools by December 2008
- Taking of images policy to be implemented by schools by November 2008
- Guidance on how to deal with cyber bullying to be issued to schools by February 2009

5.3 Dedicated Website

Establish, within the Highland Council main website a dedicated page for Child Safety, with information on internet safety, cyber bullying and with downloadable resources.

5.4 Minority Languages

- Materials in minority languages to be posted on the child safety web page
- Versions of publications for young people to be provided in the Gaelic language

5.5 e-Steering Group

- Form a strategic group reporting to the ECS GIRFEC and Child Protection Officers group to monitor the strategic implementation of and future developments in e-safety. Meeting on a 3 monthly basis
- Develop an operational multi disciplinary group to oversee the implementation of the above proposals meeting 6-weekly.

6. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Funding for the above proposals can be met from current budgets.

7. Consultation

7.1 The contents of this report has been discussed and endorsed by the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT).

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Members are asked to approve the proposals contained in the report relating to –

- e-safety awareness
- cyber bullying
- a dedicated web site
- use of minority languages
- an e safety steering group

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Date:

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Background Papers: The Byron review; DFES 2007
Strengthening the Highlands,
The Programme of the Highland Council 2009-2011
www.ceop.gov.uk
www.thinkuknow.co.uk