

Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership



Briefing: Harvey Willgoose Murder

04/02/2026

Executive Summary

On 3 February 2025, in the courtyard of All Saints Catholic High School, Sheffield, Mohammed Umar Khan, then aged 15, fatally stabbed fellow pupil Harvey Willgoose, also aged 15. Within a minute Harvey lost consciousness and died.. It was understood that the two boys had previously been on good terms but fell out following a dispute involving other pupils, with the conflict escalating via social media. On the day of the murder, Harvey was returning to school after a period of unauthorised absence.

Following the murder, an independent review was commissioned by the academy trust responsible for the school. The review was undertaken by a former school headteacher and inspector at Learn Sheffield. Although the full report has not been published, it is reported to contain ten recommendations for the school, its Trust, the local authority and the Department for Education.

Reported Recommendations (Summary)

Published summaries indicate that the recommendations focus on systemic improvement rather than individual blame.

The full wording, numbering and implementation requirements of the recommendations have not been released publicly, but are reported to include:

- **Mandatory record sharing** at the outset of any pupil school move, with senior sign off confirming full safeguarding and behaviour records have been reviewed before a pupil starts.
- **Clear accountability** within schools and trusts for the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of all posts at all levels in the behaviour and safeguarding structures, including who monitors patterns of serious incidents. "joining the dots" across behaviour, safeguarding and weapons concerns.
- Create a **clear weapons response policy** including knife and weapons allegation, searches and post-incident safeguarding action
- Fix **systems and training** including adding dedicated knives/weapons categories in online record system and ensure all staff are trained on government guidelines on how to search, screen and confiscate knives.
- Sheffield City Council to establish a **city-wide support system for pupils** involved in, or at risk of, knife crime.
- The Department for Education to issue **further national guidance** on how schools respond to knife possession and reports of knife possession.

Additional Analysis and Safeguarding Learning

1. Information Sharing, Risk Assessment and Escalation

The review identifies repeated missed opportunities to assess and manage risk associated with the perpetrator prior to the murder. Safeguarding and behaviour records were not properly requested, reviewed or acted upon during the perpetrator's transfer to All Saints Catholic High School, leaving staff unaware of historic incidents involving violence and weapons.

Weapons-related concerns were handled inconsistently. Searches following reports of knife possession and other weapons were not followed by full investigation, risk assessment or safety planning. Serious incidents were inadequately recorded, and management responsibilities were unclear. As behaviour escalated between November 2024 and January 2025, leaders failed to "join the dots" and recognise opportunities for intervention.

Despite an open investigation into a fresh knife allegation on 3 February 2025, and only partial awareness among senior leaders of previous weapons-related concerns, the pupil was allowed to enter school unsearched and without any completed assessment. The review described this as a collective leadership failure.

2. Attendance, Alternative Provision and the Child's Lived Experience

Alongside safeguarding failures relating to the perpetrator, the case highlights significant issues in the response to Harvey Willgoose's persistent non-attendance. His family describe a young person who wanted to attend school but felt unable to do so due to emotional distress and deteriorating wellbeing.

The response to Harvey's absence focused primarily on compliance and enforcement, including attendance visits and the threat of fines or prosecution. This did not result in timely mental health assessment, specialist support or access to alternative provision. Requests for alternative provision were reportedly rejected, leaving no viable pathway when mainstream schooling had become intolerable.

Harvey's non-attendance was treated as a behavioural or parental compliance issue rather than as a safeguarding concern. This mirrors the wider pattern identified in the review, in which visible risk indicators were not addressed through timely, child-centred intervention.

Both safeguarding themes are reflected in NSCP's current priorities:

- **Ensure that the Partnership is assured that all children and young people who are not in their education setting regularly (less than 90%) are safe and well.**
- **Increase targeted interventions to support children most in need and to better understand and address the underlying causes of serious youth violence including fear of and involvement in knife crime**