

Child Protection and Safeguarding - Policy



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Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.

The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.

Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others.

The key principles on which to base work with children and families are found in the Children Act 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Welsh Office Circular 52/95. All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. They should be enabled to:

- Be as physically and mentally healthy as possible;
 - Gain the maximum benefit possible from good quality educational opportunities;
 - Live in a safe environment and be protected from harm;
 - Experience emotional wellbeing;
 - Feel valued, and to be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships; become competent in looking after themselves and coping with everyday living;
 - Have a positive image of themselves and secure sense of identity including cultural, social, sexual and racial identity;
 - Develop good interpersonal skills and confidence in social situations
- (Taken from the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008).

Aims and Objectives

This policy ensures that all staff in our school is clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:

- To raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
- To ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
- To lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

Working Together: Shared responsibility

Working together to safeguard children emphasises that protecting children depends crucially upon effective information sharing, collaboration and understanding between agencies and professionals. All agencies are expected to contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard the child and promote his/her welfare. This requires constructive relationships between individuals.

Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse

If a child discloses, there are a number of actions to support the child:

- Stay calm and be available to listen;
- Listen with the utmost care & sensitivity;
- Do not put words into the child's mouth, but note the main points carefully;
- Keep a full record – date, time, what the child did said etc.;
- Reassure the child and let them know they were right to inform you;
- Inform the child that this information will have to be passed on and to whom and a likely scenario.
- Follow the referral procedures.

Making a Referral

See referral appendix at end of doc.

Procedures

Any action that the named person takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LEA Child Protection guidelines. Appendix LEA Child Protection guidelines.

The school's named co-ordinator works closely with the Social Services department and the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, but the interest of the child is of paramount importance.

Staff are expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings held under the LEA guidelines following any referral.

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat this accordingly. We only pass information on to appropriate persons. We inform the child at all stages of who is involved, and what information we have given them.

We require all adults employed in school to have their application vetted through police records via CRB in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.

There may be times when adults in our school, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children, we have staff Timian trained. The headteacher requires the

adult involved in any such incident to report this to him/her immediately, and to record it in the interventions book, found in the Headteachers office in a filing cabinet.

The school aims to ensure all adults in the school receive annual training to raise their awareness of abuse and their knowledge of agreed local child protection procedures.

Monitoring and Review

The governing body regularly reviews any incidents detailed in the interventions book. A named governor – Emma Safhill, participates in the school's training with regard to the child protection procedures. This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

Child Protection Procedures

School Staff

REVISED 2012 IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ALL WALES CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

General

Every person in contact with or working with children, young people and their families should have received child protection training to a level commensurate with their role and responsibilities.

Definition of Child Abuse

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan.

SECTION A – Immediate Action

Action to be taken by School based staff

- 1) If a member of staff suspects that a child has been abused or is at risk of suffering abuse the Head teacher (or deputy in his absence) must be immediately informed of the concern.

- 2) The Head teacher or in his absence the Deputy Head teacher, or designated person should inform by telephone, without delay, the Duty Social Worker, at the local Children's Social Services Department Office. This should be the opportunity to discuss what action needs to be taken in any individual case and **how to keep the child safe.**

Parental Consent- Obtaining parental consent should be considered before discussing a referral concerning their child with other agencies.

Exceptions to this include:

- Where such action may put the child at increased risk.
- The possibility of threats or coercion.
- The loss of important evidence.
- The child's wishes that the parent/s are not informed, providing the child is competent to take that decision.

- Social Services Team Managers in conjunction with the police will make the decisions whether or not parents should be informed and not the referrer.
 - The reasons for the decision will be fully recorded.
- 3) It is important that the referral is made with reference to the “**All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008**”. **Every school should have copies of the referral form available if not contact your local Social Services office for further copies.**
 - 4) Information should be provided about the child’s name, address, date of birth, name and address of those with parental responsibility and reasons for the concern. Also, if known, details of any other children living in the household.
 - 5) If this discussion is confirmed as a referral, it should be confirmed in writing using the Social Services “Common Referral Form” (Can be found in the Staff section on P Drive) and **MARKED CONFIDENTIAL** .It is also helpful to send a copy to the Education Social Work Team Leader.
 - 6) If an Education Social Worker is available, they may be able to assist with any immediate action required but it remains the Head teacher’s responsibility to ensure that the action outlined above is taken.
 - 7) The Social Services Department should advise what action will be initiated and the action the referrer should take regarding communication with parents i.e. at what point parents should be contacted and by whom.
 - 8) A representative from the school will normally be required to attend any resulting Child Protection Conference.
 - 9) Whether schools attend or not they will be expected to submit a report and these should be available to the Chair/ Child Protection Coordinator 48 hours prior to the meeting, keeping to factual information and not opinion or rumour. It is good practice to share any reports with the family at least the day before the conference.
 - 10) **For a new referral it is the responsibility of the duty social worker/ social work team manager to inform a referrer of action being taken within a maximum of 10 working days. When referrals concern open cases it is the responsibility of the child’s Social Worker or their team.**

The individual employee or professional making the referral may be asked to do some or all of the following tasks, and should be prepared and willing to do them:

Contribute to a strategy discussion or strategy meeting;

Assist in the child protection section 47 enquiries;

Attend the child protection conference;

Provide a written report for the child protection conference;

Contribute to the initial and core assessments.

Professional Anonymity

Professionals cannot remain anonymous when making referrals, although members of the public are able to request this.

Sir Ronald Waterhouse, 'Lost in Care', highlights the responsibility of all professionals in respect of child protection:

"Consideration should be given to requiring failure by a member of staff to report actual or suspected physical or sexual abuse of a child by another member of staff or other person having contact with the child to be made an explicit disciplinary offence".

Education Social Workers, Education Psychologists, Peripatetic Teachers and any other staff not attached to schools

- 1) If an allegation of abuse is made whilst in a school situation, the Head teacher should be immediately informed of the concern and the school-based procedures should be followed.
- 2) If the allegation of abuse or concern is "out of the school situation" the same procedures should be followed without delay as described for Head teachers in Section A.
- 3) The employee concerned should inform his or her Line Manager of the action taken and confirm this in writing to the Education Social Worker Team Leader on the appropriate referral form.

The referrer should also, at the earliest opportunity, inform the Head teacher of this action.

SECTION B

Where it is alleged abuse has taken place involving a member of teaching or other school staff.

- 1) When it is alleged or suspected that a pupil has been abused by a member of staff employed by the Lifelong Learning Department, the following procedure should be taken.
- 2) The Headteacher/Manager or deputy in his/her absence should be informed immediately.
- 3) All suspected abuse must be reported to Social Services or The Police.
- 4) Agencies must not undertake their own internal enquiries but must refer on as described above. Agencies must not make their own decisions about whether a concern that involves a particular member of their own staff is a disciplinary issue or a child protection issue. Such complex considerations should only take place with the involvement of Social Services and The Police.
- 5) In the event of an allegation of abuse being made against an individual employee in their private life, child protection enquiries should be conducted in accordance with the procedures described in the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.
- 6) The Welsh Assembly Government has in the *Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2006* set out the requirement for an independent investigation service. Schools are now required to use an independent

investigation service in respect of any disciplinary process in relation to teaching staff. The purpose of the independent investigation service is to support school governing bodies when considering a disciplinary matter.

However the independent investigative element should not be introduced until the completion of the child protection enquiries and/or criminal investigation by the statutory agencies.

SECTION C

Action to be taken by school staff when concerned about situations not covered by sections A and B

Occasions may arise when staff are concerned that the normal procedures may not apply or be followed, e.g. if it is alleged that the abuse involves a Head teacher, Manager or senior member of staff. In such situations:

- a) Inform, without delay, the Safeguarding Officer for Education or the appropriate Chief Officer.
- b) Alternatively, request a “confidential” interview with the appropriate Chief Officer, Education Social Work Team Leader or Head of Partnership & Inclusion.

APPENDIX A

Role of the child protection coordinator / designated teachers / designated member of staff.

Schools have a valuable role to play in the context of Child Protection, particularly at the recognition and referral stage.

The “All Wales Child Protection Procedures”, make it clear that all schools and colleges should have a designated member of staff (Child Protection Coordinator) responsible for coordinating Child Protection issues and in particular liaison with other agencies. This person also has a key role in monitoring the implementation of plans, post Child Protection Registration, in the context of their school or facility.

In order to assist schools and facilities in defining more clearly the responsibilities expected of the designated person the following details have been outlined. The information is not meant to be conclusive and should be considered within the wider context outlined in ‘The All Wales Child Protection Procedures and the Local Safeguarding Children Board’s Local Protocols.

General Consideration

Child Protection is a serious issue, particularly to those who may be victims, potential victims or involved in support. Frequently situations do not appear to be “black or white” and tensions often exist between agencies.

It would seem essential therefore that the person nominated or appointed should have;

- a. A clear understanding of the importance of Child Protection and the role of the school or facility in this process.
- b. The ability to communicate effectively with other agencies and the ability to appreciate all relevant perspectives.
- c. The ability to relate well to pupils, parents and colleagues in order to gain their confidence.
- d. Sufficient seniority or recognition within the school in order to act on behalf of the organisation and in some instances bring about change if required.
- e. A willingness to develop awareness of Child Protection, particularly through training and obtaining information available in existing and future procedures , circulars and guidance.

Specifically

The role of the coordinator/designated person would include:

1. Ensuring that all members of staff are aware of the appropriate Child Protection Procedures and who the designated teacher is. This is particularly important for new staff.
2. Ensuring that the proper procedures are followed.
3. Liaison with other agencies over cases of alleged abuse and the promotion of co-operative working including attendance at Case Conferences.
4. Ensuring that the designated named officer for Child Protection for Schools is aware of any breakdown in communication or problems with the implementation of local procedures.
5. Maintaining appropriate records regarding cases which cause concern and subsequent action taken.

6. Ensuring that ongoing monitoring exists for pupils having been the subject of child abuse concerns and/or, placed on the Child Protection Register and made the subject of a plan involving their school.

APPENDIX B

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home **or being bullied**, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

APPENDIX C

Disclosure / Allegation of Abuse

Should a young person disclose that s/he has been or is being abused, this information must be passed on. If a young person discloses abuse, the staff member should:

DO	DON'T
Listen to the child / young person rather than directly questioning him or her.	Stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
Encourage the child / young person to allow another person to be present.	Show shock or disquiet.
Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and are right to tell.	Guarantee confidentiality.
Inform the child / young person that you will have to pass information on.	Put words into the child / young person's mouth.
Make a written record of the discussion as soon as possible after	Be afraid to seek support from yourself from your line manager.

the child has made the disclosure to you , taking care to record the timing, setting, personnel / other staff as well as what was said.	However, it is not appropriate because of the high standard of confidentiality that must be maintained in child protection to discuss individual cases with personal friends or acquaintances, who may be able to identify the family concerned.
Be clear about your own position, you work for a Department that has a responsibility to protect children and young people.	Interrupt the child / young person.
Keep any drawings, paintings etc. that the child / young person may do to show what happened to him or her.	Expose the child / young person to mass examination by staff to verify any injuries.
Remain calm and reassuring.	Question the child, remember, this task must be undertaken by specially trained professionals.

APPENDIX D

Additional information from the new All Wales Procedures:

1. During the course of an initial assessment, if Social Services establish that a school age child is not attending school, they should alert the Lifelong Learning Department, and ensure that in the interim, the child is subject to adequate daytime care and supervision arrangements.
2. Where a teacher or other member of staff has cause to believe that a child is at risk from, or is the subject of, fabricated or induced illness, the teacher with designated responsibility for child protection should be immediately informed. As with all forms of suspected harm, the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* will apply and the designated teacher will take responsibility for making an appropriate referral to Social Services. All evidence relating to the concern should be kept safely as it may be needed to inform decision making or contribute to any consequent investigation.

Teachers and other school staff should not carry out their own investigations or discuss the matter with the child's parent/caregiver.

