



Ebbw Fawr Learning Community  
Cymuned Ddysgu Ebwy Fawr

# Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

January 2016

## **Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy for Ebbw Fawr Learning Community**

### **1. Introduction**

The school fully recognizes the contribution it makes to child protection.

There are three main elements to our policy:-

- Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils;
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse. Because of our day to day contact with children school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse; and
- Support to those pupils who may have been abused.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school and its governors. It is recognised by this school that all staff that come in to contact with children can often be the first point of disclosure for a child. This first point of contact is an important part of the child protection process, and it is essential that all staff are aware of and implement the schools procedures as noted in this policy.

### **2. Prevention**

This school recognises that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to safeguard children at our school.

The school will therefore:-

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and encouraged to talk and share their concerns and will be listened to;
- Ensure that children know that all adults in this school can be approached if they are worried or concerned about matters that concern them or their siblings or friends.
- Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSE which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help; and
- Include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.

### **3. Procedures**

At this school we will follow the All Wales Child Protection Procedures (April 2008) and other guidance and protocols that have been endorsed and agreed by the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board. (SEWSCB)

The school will:-

- A. Ensure it has a designated senior person (DSP) and deputy for child protection, who has undertaken the appropriate training.
- B. Recognise the role of the designated senior person and arrange support and training. The school will look to the SEWSCB and the Council's Education Safeguarding Manager for guidance and support in assisting the school's designated senior person.
- C. Ensure that all members of staff, including permanent, part time and adult volunteers, along with every governor knows:-
  - the name, contact details and role of the designated senior person (DSP), the deputy DSP and designated governor responsible for child protection;
  - that it is the lead person and/or their deputy who have the responsibility for making child protection referrals within SEWSCB timescales, by completing the agreed multi-agency form.
  - that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales agreed with the Safeguarding Children Board.
  - How to take forward those concerns where the DSP is unavailable
  - That the DSP and deputy will seek advice from the Designated Officer and or Social Services Duty and Assessment Team if necessary when a referral is being considered; **if in doubt a referral must be sent.**
- D. Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may disclose abuse. That all members of staff will be offered and expected to attend appropriate training and updates as arranged by the school.
- E. Ensure that parents have a clear understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and its staffs for child protection by setting out their obligations in school prospectus and other forms of communications. In particular, there is a clear obligation that 'the welfare of the child is paramount' and in some circumstances this may mean that the parents are not initially informed of a referral made by the school. This circumstance is in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures guidance.
- F. Provide training for all staff so that they know:-
  - their personal responsibility;
  - the agreed local procedures(SEWSCB)
  - the need to be vigilant in identifying suspected cases of abuse; and
  - how to support a child who discloses abuse, particularly the do's and don'ts
- G. Notify Social Services if:-
  - a pupil on the child protection register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently; and

- if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend).
- H. Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial and review child protection conferences and core groups; and support these with the submission of written reports.
- I. Keep written records of concerns about children (noting date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to agencies immediately.
- J. Ensure that all records and files are kept secure and in locked locations. The DSP is responsible for the security, compilation and storage of all records and should be able to access and produce them in times of need. It is the responsibility of the DSP to ensure that any transfer of records is conducted via the Authority's agreed protocol and procedures for the 'Transfer of Sensitive Information'.
- K. Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government guidance circular 002/2013 'Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff'.
- L. Ensure that all recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government Guidance, 'Keeping Learners Safe' and local guidance. The school will seek advice and guidance from the Authority's Organisational Development Department on recruitment and selection.
- M. Designate a governor for child protection will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice. This governor will feed back to the Governing body on child protection matters as and when required but will be required to write an annual report to body on the school's child protection activities.

#### **4. Supporting the pupil at Risk**

At this school we recognise that children who are at risk, suffer abuse or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.

This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless when at school, their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. At this school we will endeavour to be patient and supportive to the children at risk.

The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:-

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see section 2 of this policy on Prevention);
- The school ethos which:-
  - promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
  - Gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2 on Prevention);
- The school's behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree a consistent approach which

focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth. The school will endeavour to ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, (Shared with parents via school brochures and other points of communication) but each individual is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred. Staff should read the school's Behaviour Policy in conjunction with this and other named policies noted in this policy.

- Liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services, the Educational Psychology Service, Education Welfare Service and advocacy services; and
- Keeping records and notifying Social Services if there is a recurrence of a concern with the individual.

When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer the sensitive information to the new school immediately (Using the agreed policy and procedures for the 'Transfer of Sensitive Information' and the DSP will be central to this process) and if not already done, to inform Social Services of the move.

## **5. Behaviour**

This school has a behaviour policy which clear states our values and expectations. This is a separate policy which is reviewed on a regular basis by the Governing Body and can be located on the staff shared area.

## **6. Bullying**

The school's policy on Bullying has been set out in a separate document/ the school's behaviour policy etc. It would be useful to note any guidance from the Authority within any documentation. This policy/information is reviewed annually by Governors and can be located on the staff shared area.

## **7. Physical Intervention**

The school's policy on physical intervention has been set out in the physical intervention policy and includes guidance set by the LEA. It is reviewed annually by the governing body and is consistent with the Welsh Government guidance on Safe and Effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons 097/2013. This policy/information can be located on the staff shared area.

## **8. E Safety**

The school's policy on E Safety has been set out in a separate document/ the schools IT policy etc and includes guidance set out by the LEA. This policy/information can be located on the staff shared area.

## **9. Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

This school recognises that statistically with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour problems need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. The school's policy on SEN has been set out in the SEN policy and can be found in the shared area.

## **10. Children who enter the Looked after System**

This school recognises that children who enter the Looked after System are often the most vulnerable and needy. Advice and guidance can be sought from the Looked After Children's Education Coordinator.

## **11. Training**

The school will be cognisant of national and local training requirements and guidance, which will include South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board's (SEWSCB) guidance, advice and training opportunities.

The school will ensure that the designated senior person and deputy will have received initial training when starting their role and continued professional updates as required. Specific updates as suggested by national and local requirements will be central to the DSP's development. The deputy will be initially supported by the DSP and consideration for joint opportunities for training with the DSP will be considered.

All staff will be regularly updated during the year as appropriate from the DSP, but will receive specific awareness raising training within a 2-3 year period.

It will be a recommendation that the governing body will also receive awareness raising training and the nominated governor will be offered opportunities for more specific training.

### **Model Note for Staff**

#### **What to do if a child tells you they have been abused:**

Where the allegation is against a member of staff you should refer to authority's guidance which takes into account the Welsh Government's guidance circular 002/2013 Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff which replaces circular 007/2011 and Welsh Government guidance circular 009/2014 Safeguarding Children in Education: Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff this must be reported to the Head Teacher and the DSP. If the concern is about the Head Teacher this must be reported to the Chair of Governors. If in doubt you can contact the Council's Education Safeguarding Manager for guidance and advice and the Social Services Duty and Assessment Team.

If there is an allegation against a LA Officer then this must be communicated to the Chief Education Officer or Deputy Education Officer who is the Lead Officer for the Authority.

If the concern is about the lead officer then the Chief Education Officer is to be contacted.

### **What to do if a child tells you they have been abused by someone other than a member of staff:**

A child may confide in any member of staff and may not always go to a member of the teaching staff. Staff to whom an allegation is made should remember:-

- Yours is a listening role, do not interrupt the child when they are freely recalling events. Limit any questions to clarifying your understanding of what the child is saying. Any questions should be framed in an open manner so not to lead the child;
- You must report orally to the school's **Designated Senior Person for child protection, Mrs M Thomas**, immediately (or in their absence, their Deputy), to inform them of what has been disclosed. In the unlikelihood of both being absent seek out the most senior person in the school;
- Make a note of the discussion, as soon as is reasonably practical (but within 24 hours) to pass on to the school's DSP. The note which should be clear in its use of terminology should record the time, date, place, and people who were present and should record the child's answers/responses in exactly the way they were said as far as possible. This note will in most case be the only written record of what has been disclosed and as it being the initial contact an important one in the child protection process. Remember, your note of the discussion may be used in any subsequent formal investigation and or court proceedings. It is advised that you retain a copy in a safe place;
- Do not give undertakings of absolute confidentiality. (see note following this section for more details) You will need to express this in age related ways to the child as soon as appropriately possible during the disclosure. This may result in the child 'clamming up' and not completing the disclosure, but you will still be required to share the fact that they have a shared a concern with you to the DSP. Often what is initially shared is the tip of an iceberg;
- That a child may be waiting for a case to go to criminal court, may have to give evidence or may be awaiting care proceedings.
- Your responsibility in terms of referring concerns ends at this point, but you may have a future role in terms of supporting or monitoring the child, contributing to an assessment or implementing child protection plans. You can ask the DSP for an update but they are restricted by procedures and confidentiality and may be limited in their response. The level of feedback will be on a need to know, but whatever is shared is strictly confidential and not for general consumption with others.

## **Confidentiality**

6.1 The school and staff are fully aware of confidentiality issues if a child divulges that they are or have been abused. A child may only feel confident to confide in a member of staff if they feel that the information will not be divulged to anyone else. However education staff (that is all staff at this school) have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the designated statutory agencies when a child is experiencing child welfare concerns.

It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the child that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. Staff should reassure the child and tell them that their situation will not be common knowledge within the school. Be aware that it may well have taken significant courage on the part of the child to disclose the information and they may also be experiencing conflicting emotions, involving feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disloyalty (if the abuser is someone close) and hurt.

Remember the pastoral responsibility of the Education Service. Ensure that only those with a professional involvement, i.e. the DSP and head teacher, have access to child protection records. At all other times, they should be kept securely locked and separate from the child's main file.

**The Designated Senior Person** for child protection at this school is:-  
Mrs Melanie Thomas

**The Deputy Designated Senior Person** for child protection at this school is:-  
Mrs Carys Llewellyn (Primary) and Mrs Georgina Davidson (Secondary)

**The designated governor** for child protection at this school is:-  
Mr Mostyn Phillips

**The Council's Education Safeguarding Manager** is:-

**Sarah Dixon** and can be contacted by:-

Telephone - **07815 005241; 01495 356016**  
Email- Sarah.Dixon@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

**Social Services** can be contacted as follows:-

Telephone- **01495-315700**  
Out of hours number **0800 328 4432**



**This policy was updated on 12/01/2016**

**This policy was presented and accepted by the Governing Body on 12/01/2016**

**This staff were made aware of this policy and or updates on 18/01/2016**

**This policy will be reviewed on 12/01/2017**

## **Appendix A**

### **List of associated and additional policies, guidance, advice and appropriate website links**

**All these documents can be found on Government website:**

**[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)**

- All Wales Child Protection Procedures- April 2008
- Keeping Learners Safe: The role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002. (January 2015)
- Education Records, School Reports and the Common Transfer System- circular 18/2006
- Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004- circular 12/2007
- Teaching Drama: guidance on Safeguarding Children and Child protection for managers and drama teachers- circular 23/2006
- Procedures for Whistle blowing in Schools and Model policy- circular 36/2007
- Reporting Cases of Misconduct or Professional Incompetence in the Education Service- circular 018/2009 (replaces no: 33/2005)
- Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff- circular 002/2013 (replaces circular 007/2001)
- Safeguarding in Education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff.
- Information and Guidance on Domestic Abuse: Safeguarding Children and Young People 2010
- Children Missing from Education 2010
- Safe and effective intervention-use of reasonable force and searching for weapons October 2010

### **Other documents from other sources**

- Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000: Chapter 44- Sections 1-7, her Majesty's Stationary Office and Queen's Printer of Acts of Parliament.
- Safeguarding Children and Safer recruitment in Education (Came in to force 1st January 2007 in England) Every Child Matters: Change for Children.
- The Children Act 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education Act 2011
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- The Children Act 1989

### **Hyperlinks to websites that have important links to Safeguarding, and in particular Child Protection (This is not an exhaustive list)**

- [www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk)
- [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk) (Use this for Disclosure and Baring Service)
- [www.gtcw.gov.org](http://www.gtcw.gov.org)
- [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)
- [www.governornet.co.uk](http://www.governornet.co.uk)
- [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- [www.everychildmatters.co.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.co.uk)
- [www.wales.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.wales.gov.uk/domesticabuse)

**SEWSCB documents can be found on their website: [www.sewsc.org.uk](http://www.sewsc.org.uk)**

## **Appendix B**

### **Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect**

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.

#### **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.

#### **Identifying significant harm**

The Children Act 1989 introduced **the concept of significant harm** as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in order to protect children. Significant harm is defined in the legislation as ill treatment or the impairment of health and development. It describes the effects of sexual, physical, emotional abuse

or neglect, or a combination of different types. Local authorities have a statutory duty under *the Children Act 1989* section 47 (1) (b) to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in their area is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. A single, serious event of abuse, such as an incident of sexual abuse or violent assault, might be the cause of significant harm to a child. However, more frequently significant harm occurs as a result of a long-standing compilation of events, which interrupt, change or damage a child's physical and psychological development. The significant harm resulting from the corrosive effect of long-term abuse is likely to have a profound impact on the future outcomes for the child.

At the time of referral it might not be clear whether a child is in need or is suffering significant harm. The initial assessment should ensure that sufficient information is obtained by social services to make a judgement about the nature of the need and/or harm and what action is required. This requires the sharing of information between agencies, structured assessment and analysis, including taking into account the child's own view about his/her circumstances according to his/her age and understanding.