

Argoed High School



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Agreed by Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Brodbeck'.

(Signed by Chair)

December 2015

Scheme due for review:

December 2016

If you would like a copy of this document in an alternative format or your own language please contact

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Keeping Learners Safe – Welsh Government Circular 158/2015 states:-

‘Everyone who works in education should share the same goals to keep children and young people safe’.

In order to fulfil this responsibility we work together to:

- Create and maintain a safe learning environment.
- Identify where there are welfare concerns and take the right action.
- Develop students understanding, awareness and resilience through the curriculum, including PSE.

We reach these goals by:-

- preventing unsuitable people working with students
- providing a safe and secure learning environment.
- promoting safe practice and challenge poor or unsafe practice .
- identifying when there’s an issue or concern about a student’s welfare arising from home, community or school and taking appropriate action.
- contributing to effective partnership working between all those involved in providing services for children and young people.
- teaching students how to be safe including being safe online and encouraging them to voice any concerns to a trusted adult.

Welsh Government safeguard children and young people by making sure they follow requirements of:-

- The Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- All Wales Child Protection Procedures (2008)
- Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 – these include 4 key articles relevant to children and education (Article 12/19/28/29)
- The Rights of Children & Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011

1. PURPOSE OF A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1.1 An effective whole-school Child Protection Policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about their duties and responsibilities in dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

1.2 Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and support pupils in school to enable students to have optimum life chances. We do this by:

- Protecting them from abuse and neglect
- Preventing impairment of their health or development; and
- Ensuring that they receive safe and effective care and support.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school and governors. Learning Support Assistants, mid-day supervisors, caretakers, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

2. SCHOOL COMMITMENT

2.1 We recognise that, for our pupils, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult can help with the prevention and identification of child abuse. Our school will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) Ensure that pupils know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for PSE, which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse. Further information about these activities and opportunities can be obtained from the school's PSE coordinator.
- d) Include in the curriculum, material which will help pupils develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to child care and parenting skills. Further information about this material can be obtained from the school's PSE coordinator.
- e) Ensure that wherever possible every effort will be made to establish effective working relationships with parents and colleagues from other agencies.

3. FRAMEWORK

3.1 Schools do not operate in isolation. Child protection is the responsibility of all adults including those employed by the Lifelong Learning Directorate. The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice are the responsibilities of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Our policy and procedures comply with guidance issued by Welsh Government (listed above).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect children. There are, however; key people within schools and the Education Services who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. These responsibilities are also outlined in 'Keeping Learners Safe (Circular 158/2015) which is attached (*Appendix A*).

The Headteacher **Dawn Spence** is the Child Protection Officer with responsibility for Child protection.

In her absence the following staff have responsibility within the school for child protection:

Mrs K Edwards (Assistant Headteacher) Mrs Adele Slinn (Assistant Headteacher)

4.2 It is the role of the designated teacher, the Headteacher in our school, to ensure that local Child Protection Procedures are followed within the school, and to make relevant referrals to the named agencies according to the guidance given. Additionally, it is their role to ensure all staff employed within the school are aware of the schools internal procedures, to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this.

It is the role of the Headteacher to make sure that the Child Protection Policy and procedures are in place, that there are enough resources and time for the Designated Senior Persons, and that all staff and volunteers understand what to do and feel able to raise concerns.

4.3 The role and responsibilities of the named Governor responsible for child protection, who is **Cllr Hilary McGuill**, is to ensure that the school has an effective policy, that Child Protection Procedures are complied with, and to support the school in this aspect. It is important that Governors are not given details relating to specific child protection situations to ensure confidentiality is not breached.

Each Governing Body has a duty to ensure that the school has a Child Protection Policy and procedures in place that are looked at every year; these are available to parents and carers if they ask; have steps in place to deal with reports against members of staff; support new staff.

4.4 The Inclusion Services designated Safeguarding Lead provides advice, support, and arranges the training to the school and to the schools named person. They are a representative on the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and can raise concerns about procedures on behalf of the school.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 We will

- Follow the procedures set out in the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and the Child Protection Procedures produced for all Education Services in April 2011 in leaflet form. All staff follow procedures outlined in Appendix 2 within the Keeping Learners Safe – Welsh Government Circular 158/2015. The Headteacher or Designated Senior Person follows the flow chart in appendix 3 within the Keeping Learners Safe – Welsh Government Circular 158/2015.
- Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government circular 002/2013: 'Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff'.
- Ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government guidance, 'Keeping Learners Safe' Circular 158/2015 .
- Ensure that all Staff are kept informed about Child Protection Procedures, through induction, briefings and awareness training – and staff are to be kept informed regularly who the nominated person is and her Deputy in her absence.
- There needs to be a face to face interview on induction for new staff, outlining safeguarding procedures and responsibilities, and these interviews should be recorded and filed appropriately.

- Other adults visiting the school (e.g. peripatetic teachers, learning support staff) will be advised of the schools policy and the named person to whom they should raise any concerns with.
- A statement in the school prospectus will inform parents and carers about our school's duties and responsibilities under the All Wales Child Protection Procedures (from new publication in 2015).
- Notify the local social service team if:-
 - A pupil on the Child Protection Register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently
 - If there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register for more than two days from the school (or one day following a weekend)
 - When a pupil on the Child Protection Register leaves we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform Children & Family & Safeguarding Service.

6. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

6.1 Our school will ensure that the key child protection staff and the nominated Governor for Child Protection attend training relevant to their role. All staff will undertake awareness raising training during their induction into the school and periodically to refresh and update their knowledge and understanding. This is recorded and put on file. Support will be available for staff from the Headteacher in the first instance, and from other members of the school's Leadership Team or SDP where there are concerns or queries about child protection. School staff should know their personal responsibilities, and agreed local procedures, be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse, and know how to support a child who discloses abuse.

7. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1 Confidentiality is an issue, which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with the pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the named person and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities. This would lead to a breakdown in trust of adults by the pupil and could potentially compromise their wellbeing and safety. The Headteacher will invoke the local agreed guidelines and procedures, where there is a cause for concern. Staff will be informed of relevant aspects in respect of child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves. Consideration will be made before parents are contacted to ensure the well-being and protection of the student.

8. RECORDS AND MONITORING

8.1. Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our school is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our school, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies. A file note will be made of the concern raised and action taken. These file notes are kept in a confidential file. In the same way notes must be kept of any pupil who is being monitored for child protection reasons. All files are kept in a secure cabinet and locked cupboard in an SLT office.

9. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CONFERENCES

The Headteacher, or one of the Designated Senior Persons would be invited to a child protection conference called in respect of a pupil. He/she may be accompanied or represented by other relevant staff (e.g. HoH or Head of Resource). Staff attending such conferences will be offered support if they wish to receive this.

10. SUPPORTING PUPILS AT RISK

10.1 Our school recognises that children who are at risk, suffer abuse or who witness violence will be deeply affected and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Whilst at school, their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant. It is also recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may in turn abuse others. This requires a considered, sensitive approach in order that the child can receive appropriate help and support.

10.2. This school will endeavour to support pupils through:

- a) The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- b) The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment in which pupils and adults feel a sense of being respected and valued.
- c) The implementation of the school Behaviour for Learning policy.
- d) A consistent approach, which recognises and separates the cause of behaviour from that which the child displays. This is vital to ensure that all children are supported within the school setting.
- e) Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies that support the pupils and their families.
- f) A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's interests to do so.
- g) The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.

10.3 This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school. These are:

- The Sex and Relationships Education Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Substance Use and Misuse Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy (including cyberbullying)
- Food & Fitness Policy
- Guidance on the duty on schools to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. (Counter terrorism and security act 2015)
- Positive Handling and Intervention Policy (Guidance on Physical contact with pupils, including restraint- Keeping Learners Safe, Welsh Government Circular 158/2015)
- ALN policy (including support for medical conditions)
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Educational visits procedures
- Alternative provision and extended work experience risk assessments provided through Dreamsafety and the 14-19 Flintshire network.
- Performance Management Policy
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checking and rechecking Policy (Checking procedures for the safe recruitment of staff)
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Arrangements for safe lunch and break time supervision, and before and after school.
- Acceptable use policy (promoting the safe practices in the use of ICT, internet/e safety)
- Arrangements for monitoring and addressing other concerns such as :
 1. Forced marriage
 2. Female genital mutilation
 3. Trafficking
 4. Child sexual exploitation

10.4 We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who work, in any capacity, with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse. It must also be stressed that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

BULLYING

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document, this has been adopted by our local consortium. It is reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Our policy on physical intervention is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body. It is consistent with the Welsh Government guidance on Safe and effective restraint-use of reasonable force and searching for weapons 097/2013.

11. SAFE SCHOOL, SAFE STAFF

- Many of our pupils would have difficulty in talking about these issues and most lack the vocabulary for this. Staff will need to be sensitive to the pupil's preferred style of communication and their individual special needs if we are to be able to provide a safe environment for our pupils. When engaging with pupils all staff must be aware of the potential for misinterpreting our pupils' efforts to raise a child protection concern or issue.
- Staff working in a one-to-one situation with a pupil should ensure that they are positioned so as to be visible and audible to other staff where there may be a possibility of misinterpretation of their interaction with a pupil.
- School staff are informed about counselling and/or giving advice to children/ young people about sexual matters through the school policy on sex and relationships education.
- School staff are familiar with the signs of abuse(listed below).
- School staff are aware of legislation such as the All Wales Protocol for the Management of Young People Engaged in Sexually Harmful Behaviour; the Child Sexual Exploitation Safeguarding Guidance from Welsh Government, and the HM Government – Prevent Duty Guidance: for England & Wales (guidance for specified authorities in England & Wales on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- School staff work hard to maintain effective partnerships with parents and carers, and they should be aware that this policy might affect this working relationship at a given time. However, we will maintain our commitment to working with parents and carers to the benefit of all pupils. Sensitive and supportive handling of these issues, whilst affirming that the pupils in our care are our first priority, will help maintain this working relationship.
- All staff are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring check prior to taking up their appointment, and to sign a declaration regarding convictions relating to the harm of children during their application process. Staff who deliberately seeks to mislead the school in respect of this will be subject to dismissal.
- Where a member of staff is subject to an accusation of abuse, this will be fully investigated under the school's disciplinary procedures and All Wales Child Protection Procedures Part 4. Advice should also be sought from a Senior Officer in Education Services and Flintshire's Education Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any suspected or alleged abuse must be reported to Flintshire Social Services for children or the Police.

Please note:

In the unlikely event that neither **the Headteacher nor DSPs** are available you may seek advice and guidance from **Linda Ellis** our ESW on
01244550217

If you are not able to locate any of the above please phone Children's Services on **01352 70100, you need to speak to the Duty Officer.**

and report the disclosure.

The out of hours number is **08450533116**.

Allegation against staff including the Head Teacher

If an allegation is made against a member of staff the Headteacher should be informed. If an allegation is made against the Headteacher you must inform the DSP, **Mrs K Edwards (Assistant Head) or Mrs Lisa Davies (Pastoral support)** who will inform the Chair of Governors.

Contact is also made with the local authority officer with responsibility for providing advice and monitoring professional abuse cases.

A referral will be made to Social Services via the usual route (CP referral).

Children in Need

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child either directly by inflicting harm, or indirectly, by failing 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Signs of Abuse

This relates to both children and adults. They both have their individual codes of practice and relevant staff need to be familiar with these documents.

These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive, but only serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family or relationship problems between parents/carers. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, Social Services will always want to understand them in relation to the child's development and context.

There are four types of child abuse. They are defined in the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and Welsh Government guidance *Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004* as follows:

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 carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The physical signs of abuse may include:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body

- multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
- cigarette burns
- human bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds, with upward splash marks
- multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge

N.B. Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life. Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbow, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the 'soft' parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks.

Changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:

- fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
- depression or withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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 (ie living in a domestic abuse environment) or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

- neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- being unable to play
- fear of making mistakes
- sudden speech disorders
- self-harm
- fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for

example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet) and through Child Sexual Exploitation.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bedwetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

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 carer 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.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- constantly dirty or 'smelly'
- loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- inappropriate clothing for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments

- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

See Appendix A: Keeping Learners Safe – Welsh Government Circular 158/2015. (In staff-CHILD PROTECTION)