

Safeguarding including Child Protection Policy

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Associated documents

Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019 <https://www.safeguarding.wales/>

MCC Safeguarding Policy

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2017/10/safeguarding-policy-Final.pdf>

Keeping Learners Safe 2021 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-04/210419-cls-the-role-of-local-authorities-governing-bodies-and-proprietors-of-independent-schools-under-the-education-act.pdf>

Safeguarding including Child Protection Policy

This policy sets out the approach and provision for Safe-guarding learners;

Designated Child Protection Officer: Mr Darryl Williams

Deputy Child Protection Officer: Miss Hayley Page

Child Protection Governor: Mrs Shonagh Hay

Introduction

- 1.1 The school fully recognises the contribution it makes to child protection. There are three main elements to our policy: -
 - A. Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils;
 - B. Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse. Because of our day to day contact with children, practitioners are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse;
 - C. Support to those pupils who may have been abused.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all practitioners working in the school and its governors. It is recognised by this school that all practitioners that come into 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 practitioners are aware of and implement the school procedures as noted in this policy.

Prevention

- 2.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to safeguard children at our school. Our values and restorative approach allow for a culture of listening, valuing every individual and their perspectives, exploring thoughts and feelings, the impact of actions and articulating our needs for wellbeing. The school will therefore: -
 - A. Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and share their concerns and will be listened to;
 - B. 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.
 - C. Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help.

- D. 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.

Procedures

- 3.1 At this school we will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/> and other guidance and protocols that have been endorsed and agreed by [Gwent Safeguarding](#)
- 3.2 The school will: -
- A. Ensure it has a named senior practitioner as the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) who has undertaken the appropriate training in line with agreed national and local requirements. This school will also nominate a named senior practitioner as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person (DDSP) who will be the central contact in times when the DSP is absent. In the unlikely event that both are absent or unavailable the most senior person will act as a contact point for other practitioners.
 - B. Recognise the role of the DSP and arrange support and training. The school will look to Gwent Safeguarding and in particular the local authority's Designated Officer for Safeguarding in Education for guidance and support in all child protection matters in assisting the school's DSP.
 - C. Ensure that all practitioners, including permanent, part time and adult volunteers, along with every governor knows: The name and contact details of both the DSP and the DDSP; - That it is the DSP and/or the DDSP who have the responsibility for making child protection referrals within timescales, by completing the agreed multiagency form. - That the DSP and the DDSP will seek advice from the Designated Officer and or The Early Help and Assessment Team (EHAT) if necessary when a referral is being considered; if in doubt a referral must be sent.
 - D. Ensure that all practitioners 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 practitioners 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 practitioners for child protection by setting out their obligations in the 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 report made by the school. This circumstance is in line with The Wales Safeguarding Procedures guidance.
 - F. Provide training for all practitioners so that they: -
 - i) Understand their personal responsibility;
 - ii) Are cognisant of agreed local procedures;
 - iii) Understand the need to be vigilant in identifying suspected cases of abuse
 - iv) Know how to support a child who discloses abuse, particularly the do's and don'ts.
 - G. Notify Social Services if: -
 - A looked after pupil or a pupil on the child protection register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently;
 - There is an unexplained absence of a looked after pupil or 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 responsible for formal investigation.
- J. Ensure that all records and files are kept secure and in locked locations. The designated person 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 designated person to ensure that any transfer of records is conducted sensitively and securely.
- K. Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Assembly Government guidance circular 45/2004 Staff Disciplinary Procedures in Schools.
- L. Ensure that all recruitment and selection procedures follow all national and local guidance. The school will seek advice and guidance from the externally appointed HR provider, Judicium.
- M. Seek to designate a governor for child protection who will champion and 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 the governing body on the school's child protection activities.

Supporting the pupil at risk

- 4.1 At this school we recognise that children who are at risk, suffer abuse or witness violence maybe deeply affected by this.
- 4.2 This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school due to these adverse factors 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.
- 4.3 The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:
 - A. The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see section 2 on Prevention);
 - B. The structure of the curriculum which allows all children to be known well by their Form Tutors
 - C. The school's restorative ethos which: - i) Promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and ii) Gives pupils a sense of being valued and listened to (see section 2 on Prevention);
 - D. The school's Relationships Policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All practitioners will agree on a consistent approach which positively supports the behaviour of 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 but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;
 - E. 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 others;
 - F. Keeping records and notifying Social Services if there is a recurrence of a concern with the individual.

- G. Making a referral to the Early Help Panel which considers a student's needs and matches with those the wider support services that might be appropriate.
- H. When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new setting immediately and inform Social Services.

Prevent Duties

- 5.1 In March 2015, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act received Royal Assent. The Act includes how we need to work together to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- 5.2 Where we become aware of information involving identification of potential instances of extremism and radicalisation we will refer to Adult/Children's Services in the same way as for all safeguarding concerns. The purpose of these arrangements to safeguard learners who are, or could be, vulnerable to radicalisation which could in turn lead to their involvement in a range of activities with the potential for harm to themselves and other people.

Information for all Practitioners

- 6.1 What to do if a child tells you they have been abused or harmed. A child may confide in any Practitioner and may not always go to a member of the teaching staff. Practitioners to whom an allegation is made should remember:-
 - yours is a listening role, do not interrupt the child if he or she is freely recalling significant events. Limit any questions to clarifying your understanding of what the child is saying. Any questions should be framed in an open manner so as not to lead the child
 - you must report orally to the school's designated senior person for child protection immediately make a note of the discussion, as soon as is reasonably practicable (but within 24 hours) to pass on to the school's designated person for child protection. 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. Remember, your note of the discussion may be used in any subsequent court proceedings
 - do not give undertakings of absolute confidentiality. You will need to express this in age/understanding related ways to the child as soon as appropriately possible during the disclosure. This may result in the person 'clamming up' and not completing the disclosure, but you will still be required to share the fact that they have shared a concern with you to the DSP. Often what is initially shared can be the tip of an iceberg;
 - that a child may be waiting for a case to go to the 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 and monitoring the child, contributing to an assessment or supporting safeguarding plans. You can ask the designated person 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 basis, but whatever is shared is strictly confidential and not for general discussion with others.

- 6.2 If an allegation of abuse is made against a practitioner this must be reported to the DSP. Where the allegation is against the Headteacher this should be brought to the attention of the Chair of Governors.

Confidentiality

- 7.1 Confidentiality issues need to be understood if a child divulges information they are being abused. A child may only feel confident to confide in practitioner if they feel that the information will not be divulged to anyone else. However, practitioners have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the designated statutory agencies when a child is experiencing safeguarding concerns. It is important that each practitioner deals with this sensitively and explains to the child that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. They should reassure the child and tell them that their situation will not become common knowledge within the school. Be aware that it may well have taken significant courage on their part to disclose the information and that they may also be experiencing conflicting emotions, involving feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disloyalty (if the abuser is someone close) and hurt.
- 7.2 The school/setting has pastoral responsibilities. Only those with a professional involvement, e.g. the DSP and the head teacher, have access to the child protection records. At all other times records are securely locked and separate from the child's main file.

Training

- 8.1 The setting/service will be cognisant of national and local training requirements and guidance, which will include Gwent Safeguarding advice and training opportunities.
- 8.2 The service/setting will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) 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 support the DSP's development. The designated deputy will be initially supported by the designated person and consideration for joint opportunities for training with the designated safeguarding person will be given.
- 8.3 All practitioners will be regularly updated during the year as appropriate from the designated lead, but will receive specific safeguarding awareness raising training within a 2 year period.

Operation Encompass

- 9.1 Operation Encompass was launched across Monmouthshire County Council schools on 4th March 2019 as part of a Gwent wide initiative to address limitations in the early sharing of information between Police and schools. Its vision is to safeguard children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse, by ensuring that appropriate services are made aware of an incident at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 9.2 This school fully supports Operation Encompass the purpose of which is to safeguard and support those children and young people who have witnessed and/or been present at the time of a domestic abuse incident. Following such an incident taking place, children will often arrive at school distressed and unprepared. Operation Encompass aims to ensure that appropriate practitioners are made aware at the earliest possible stage in order to provide relevant and tailored support to children and young people in a way that means that they feel safe and included.
- 9.3 All information will be managed sensitively, and only practitioners who need to be made aware will know about the concern.
- 9.4 If you have a concern about someone in your household or family presenting a risk of harm to others, you can discuss at school – we are here to listen and support.

Impact of COVID-19

- 10.1 We are aware that throughout recent months there have been increased risks for those living at home with someone who has abusive behaviours. It may also be more difficult for those at risk to report concerns.
- 10.2 Whether safeguarding concerns are identified when a pupil attends the school site, through blended learning approaches or through other contact between practitioners and students – the school continues to have a legal duty to report all safeguarding concerns. Please report any concerns you may have to school staff, safeguarding and supporting children and their families during these challenging times continues to be a priority.
- 10.3 If there are further periods of lockdown, or times when full time attendance at school is not available due to government guidance – we will continue to support children through blended learning approaches and during these times safeguarding children remains a priority.
- The Designated Safeguarding Person at this school is:- Mr Darryl Williams
 - The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person at this school is: - Miss Hayley Page
 - The nominated governor for child protection at this school is: - Mrs Shonagh Hay
 - The Designated Lead Officer for Safeguarding in Education for Monmouthshire County Council is: - Heather Heaney who can be contacted by: - Phone- 01633 644392 Email- heatherheaney@monmouthshire.gov.uk

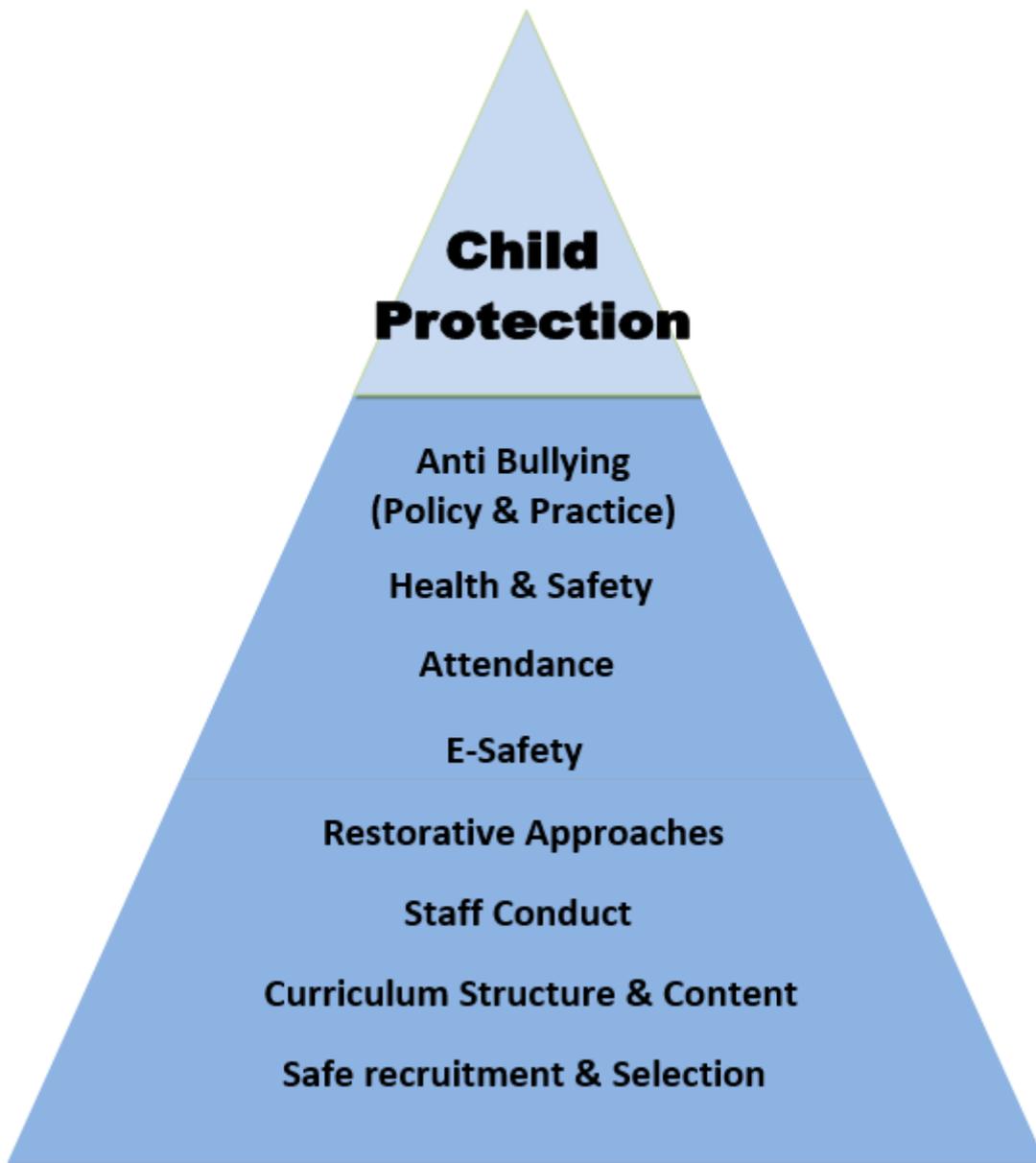
Monmouthshire Children’s Services can be contacted as follows: - Phone: 01291 635669 Out of hours telephone number: 0800 328 4432 In an emergency, please call 999 to report a child at risk.

If you have a concern about an adult or child at risk you need to speak with the relevant duty officer. In the first instance please always contact us immediately via a telephone call. The email addresses are for info.

Children Services: 01291 635669 childduty@monmouthshire.gov.uk

If it is outside of office hours – Out of Hours and Bank Holidays Emergency Duty Team: 0800 328 4432

In an emergency dial 999



Appendix 1

Listening to Children and Young People and Dealing with Disclosures

Receive – Reassure – React – Record - Support

Receive

- Listen to the child. If you are shocked by what they tell you, try not to show it. Take what they say seriously. Children rarely lie about abuse and to be disbelieved adds to the

traumatic nature of disclosing. Children may retract what they have said if they meet with revulsion or disbelief.

- Accept what the child says. Be careful not to burden them with guilt by asking, “Why didn’t you tell me before”?

Reassure

- Stay calm and reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you. It’s essential to be honest with the child, so don’t make promises you may not be able to keep, like “I’ll stay with you” or “Everything will be alright now”.
- Don’t promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk.
- Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the child displays. For example, you could say: “You’re not to blame” or “You’re not alone, you’re not the only one this sort of thing has happened to”.
- Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the child to tell you what happened.
- Empathise with the child – don’t tell them what they should be feeling.

React

- React to the pupil only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter: but do not ‘interrogate’ them for full details.
- **Do not ask** ‘leading’ questions such as “What did he do next”? (this assumes that he did!) or “Did he touch your private parts”? Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later prosecution in court. Instead ask open questions like “Anything else to tell me”? “Yes”? or “And”?
- **Do Ask: Style of Questions**
 - **What** has happened? (Enough details to establish what has taken place)
 - **When** did it happen?
 - **Who** is involved or was otherwise present?
 - **Where** did it happen?
- Do not criticise the perpetrator: the pupil may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat everything to another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.
- Inform the designated teacher for child protection.
- Try to keep the matter to yourself and keep in contact with the pupil.
- Ensure that if a Social Services interview is to follow, the pupil has a ‘support person’ present if they wish (possibly yourself).

Record

- Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and then write them up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case a court requires them.

- Record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. If the child uses their family’s own private sexual words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into ‘proper’ words.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of the bruising.
- Be objective in your recording: include statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Support

- Make sure that you continue to support the child, providing time and a safe space throughout the process of investigation and afterwards.
- Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the child to colleagues.

What stops children telling?

- Direct threats – children are taught to obey their parents.
- Fear of punishment.
- Guilt and shame.
- Lack of appropriate vocabulary to describe what is happening.
- Children may not recognise the abusive experience is abuse – they may believe sexual abuse is part of the affectionate relationship.
- In sexual abuse children may love the abuser and feel they are special, favoured in some way.
- Lack of opportunity to be heard.
- Awareness of the possible implications, such as family break-up, medical examination – children may think their silence protects others.
- Children ‘tell’ in a variety of ways – through their behaviour, play and creative work as well as through direct disclosure.
- Many children may make some attempt to ‘tell’ but are not ‘heard’.

Strategies for coping with troubled children

Appendix 2

Be aware and respond to children who seek you out (sometimes for no good reason), but don't single them out. Find or make an opportunity - for example, by getting them to help you with something. Watch or join in their play. Reflect back what they say, rather than ask questions, except to establish things like who they are talking about, or where something happened. Don't ask leading questions. Restrain your own emotional responses. Reassure the child that it is alright to talk about these things. You don't have to solve all their problems, listening may be enough to help them cope, but if you cannot provide the time they need, or are worried about their behaviour or emotional state, seek further help for them.

The following lists of possible signs of abuse need to be used with care and common sense. There may be alternative explanations for some of these signs other than Abuse. If there is any doubt, however, practitioners should err on the side of caution and seek advice from Social Services.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Injuries which have been left untreated
- Injuries displaying unmistakable imprint of hand or implement e.g. shoe, belt etc.
- Injuries to the face - black eyes, broken noses, split lips etc.
- Recurrent injuries or burns which cannot be explained.
- Implausible excuses given as explanation for injuries
- Refusal to talk about injuries.
- Admission of seemingly excessive punishment.
- Limbs being covered in hot weather.
- Patchy hair loss.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Worries about returning home.
- Running away persistently.
- Avoidance of physical contact.
- Dread of seeking medical advice/assistance.
- Tendencies towards self-harm.
- Aggressive behaviour towards others.

Domestic violence - practitioners should be aware that in families where there is physical violence between the adults there is a high risk that children in the home may also be physically harmed.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Emaciated appearance
- Persistent hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Clothing in poor condition
- Medical problems which are left untreated
- Permanent tiredness
- Frequently late for or not attending school
- Poor self-esteem
- Destructive behaviour
- Irrational disturbed behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Obsessive stealing or searching for food
- Inability to maintain social relationships
- Persistent running away

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Physical, mental and emotional developmental delay
- Unexpected speech disorders
- Dread of new situations
- Unusual emotional reaction to painful situations

- Disturbed behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Reports of extreme punishment
- Over-reaction when errors made
- Anxiety about parents being contacted
- Persistent running away
- Substance abuse
- Self-harming
- Extremes of behaviour
- Obsessive stealing or searching for food

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- A child may:
- Have a blank expression, seem downcast, bewildered, dejected
- Exhibit withdrawn behaviour
- Experience sleep disturbance - i.e. persistent nightmares
- Display dramatic changes in behaviour
- Suffer depression
- Develop eating disorders
- Indulge in substance abuse
- Hint about secrets they are unable to divulge
- Ask if you will keep secret something they may tell you
- Give a report verbally or in writing of someone else who has been abused
- Show sexual behaviour inappropriate to their age
- Produce sexually explicit drawings
- Sexually abuse another child

This policy was approved by the Governors

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date:

Signed: Headteacher

Date: