



SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Effective Date of this policy:	March 2009
Person responsible for this policy:	Nicola Allan
Date of last policy review:	July 2021
Date of next policy review:	July 2022

Child Protection Policy for Maes Ebbw School

INTRODUCTION

Maes Ebbw School fully recognises the contribution it makes to child protection.

There are four main elements to our policy: -

- 1- **Recognising** child abuse
- 2- **Prevention** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and through *Safer Recruitment* practices
- 3- **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
- 4- **Support** to pupils who may have been abused.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school, Governors, Learning support assistants, Mid-day supervisors, Caretakers, Secretaries as well as Teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

This policy may be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Whistle blowing

Disciplinary

Complaints

Anti bullying

Positive behaviour

It should also be read in conjunction with the following:

Social Services and Well Being Wales Act 2014

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which states

“The Convention defines a child as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.

The Convention applies to all children, whatever their race, religion or abilities. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.”

and

United Nations Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities which states

“The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective nurturing care.

1- RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

Definition of an Abused Child (All Wales Child Protection Procedures)

“Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional 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.”

There are four categories of abuse:

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 care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Physical

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

Emotional

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the 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 and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example 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

Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

May involve: Physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.

Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities.

Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

2- PREVENTION

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to safeguard pupils.

The Governing body of Maes Ebbw ensures that the school has up to date and relevant safeguarding policies in place which are reviewed annually. They also ensure that the school follows safer recruitment practices in accordance with the Welsh Government document 158/2015.

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

We recognise that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal 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 will therefore:-

- a. establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- b. ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty; (See Annex C)
- c. 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
- 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.
- e. follow the school's Safer Recruitment policy to ensure Maes Ebbw is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this expectation.

Prevention of Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually by the governing body.

E Safety

Maes Ebbw is committed to keeping children and young people safe on line and when using technology. The school has a separate policy and E safety is taught throughout the school.

Radicalisation

The school is aware of its responsibilities (under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the *Prevent Duty Guidance*) to safeguard pupils at risk of radicalisation. The school does this by:

- Providing a safe environment for pupils to talk about issues that may concern them, including sensitive topics such as terrorism and extremist ideology.
- Identifying and risk assessing individuals who may be drawn into terrorism, violent or non-violent extremism.
- All staff knowing how to complete a Channel referral and how to seek support for the child/young person
- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate training and have the knowledge and confidence to identify pupils at risk of being drawn into terrorism and extremism and challenge extremist ideas.
- Ensuring children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school, including having in place appropriate levels of filtering.

Safer recruitment and selection

We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the school who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult including volunteers, governors and staff employed by contractors. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applicants, verifying identity and academic or vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and, where appropriate, undertaking List 99 and Criminal Records Bureau checks / Debarring Scheme

In line with statutory changes, underpinned by regulations, the following will apply:

- a CRB / DBS Enhanced Disclosure is obtained for **all** new appointments to our school's workforce;
- this school is committed to keep an up to date single central record detailing a range of checks carried out on our staff
- all new appointments to our school workforce who have lived outside the UK will be subject to additional checks as appropriate;
- our school ensures that supply staff have undergone the necessary checks and will be made aware of this policy;
- as good practice governors may be asked to complete a volunteer DBS check on appointment.

3- PROCEDURES

We will follow the All Wales Child Protection Procedures that have been endorsed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The school will:-

a. ensure it has a designated senior member of staff, who has undertaken the appropriate training at Maes Ebbw, The Designated person for Child Protection is **Nicola Allan** (Head Teacher) with **Chris May** (Deputy Headteacher) and **Graeme Tully** (Assistant Headteacher) as the Deputy Designates.

b. ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:- (see note to staff, Annex A)

- the name of the designated person and their role;
- that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children Board; and
- how to take forward those concerns where the designated person is unavailable.

c. ensure that 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;

d. ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school brochure; (See note to parents, Annex B)

e. provide training for all staff and ensure that the designated Governors access training so that they know:-

- i. their personal responsibility;
- ii. the agreed local procedures;
- iii. the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse; and
- iv. how to support a child who discloses abuse.

f. notify the local social services team 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);

g. work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial review and child protection conferences and core groups and the submission of written reports to the conferences;

h. keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to social services immediately;

i. ensure all records are kept secure or in locked locations;

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j. adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government guidance circular, *158/2015 Keeping learners Safe*. This ensures that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in an education setting is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The quick resolution of allegations of abuse should be a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned. All unnecessary delays should be eradicated. Maes Ebbw has procedures for dealing with allegations and all staff and volunteers should understand what to do if they receive an allegation or have concerns about another member of staff. The procedures make it clear that **all allegations should be reported immediately** to the Head teacher (or the Deputy Head teachers in her absence.) In the event of an allegation against the Headteacher, concerns should be reported to the Designated Governors for Child Protection or to the Local Authority Designated Officer Nicola Davies on 01633 656656. Trained staff will have access to a direct line and the out of hours service etc details are clearly signposted on the noticeboard in the foyer.

k. ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government guidance circular *158/2015 Keeping learners Safe*

l. designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice. Governors with this responsibility are **Hilary Leadbeater (Chair of Governors) and Robert Hay (Vice Chair of Governors)**

For those pupils who are in the category of adult services (18+) the school will follow the same procedures but will liaise with the adult services using Protection of Vulnerable Adults referral (POVA) procedure.

Physical Intervention

The school has a separate policy for Restrictive Physical Intervention and the Use of the Calming Room which is reviewed annually by the Governors. These policies are consistent with Welsh Government guidance on Safe and Effective Intervention – Use of Reasonable Force and Searching for Weapons 097/2013.

Mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The school is aware of its duty to report known cases of FGM to the police (*section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015*). Where staff *suspect* FGM may have been carried out or think a girl *may be at risk* then the school will follow existing safeguarding procedures in these cases.

There is specific guidance contained within the All Wales Guidance if you perceive that a student is a risk of FGM see the link. <http://www.childreninwales.org.uk/our-work/safeguarding/wales-child-protection-procedures-review-group/>

Modern Slavery, Child Sexual Exploitation, Forced Marriage, Honour based violence

If there are concerns that any pupil is subject to slavery, CSE/FM or HBV then the school would follow the relevant All Wales Guidance document with reference to Keeping Learners Safe Chapter 4: safeguarding responsibilities in specific circumstances.

4- SUPPORT

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.

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 school ethos which:-

- i. promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
- ii. gives pupils a sense of being valued (see section 2 on Prevention);

c. the school's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on 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 but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;

d. liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service; and

e. keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern; When a pupil on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform Social Services.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality issues need to be understood if a child divulges information they are being 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 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 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.

Please remember the pastoral responsibility of the education service. Ensure that only those with a professional involvement, e.g. the designated senior person and the head teacher, have access to the child protection records. At all other times they should be kept securely locked and separate from the child's main file.

The staff can also find guidance in raising concerns via the NCC Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedures these can be accessed by contacting the Civic Centre 01633-656 656 and asking to speak to Human Resources Department. You can remain anonymous in raising concerns.

If a member of staff needs support following a disclosure, Care First Counselling can be provided in addition to a de brief with a member of the Senior leadership team.

The designated child protection person for this school is:

NICOLA ALLAN

The deputy designated child protection persons are **Chris May** and **Graeme Tully**. If the designated CP person is unavailable, staff must refer all safeguarding concerns to either of the deputy designated persons and in their absence or if the allegation concerns a member of this team, to the Designated Child Protection Governors **Katie Diamond** or **Hilary Leadbetter**. This information is clearly displayed in the school's main reception area.

LA Child Protection Officer **Nicola Davies**— contact 01633 656656.

Note for Staff - ANNEX A

If a child tells you they have been abused by someone other than a member of staff then you need to inform the designated person for Child Protection as soon as possible.

Where the allegation is against a member of staff you should immediately inform the Head Teacher. If the allegation is against the Head Teacher you should immediately inform the designated Governor for Child Protection. In line with Welsh Government guidance *circular 158/2015 Keeping learners Safe and Prevent*

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 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 person for child protection (Nicola Allan)** immediately or to the Deputy Designates in her absence.
- make a note of the discussion, ("My Concern" should be used for this purpose) 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;
- 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; and
- 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.

Note for Parents or Carers - ANNEX B

Parents/carers should be aware that schools have a responsibility to ensure the well-being of all pupils. This responsibility means that the school:-

- will have a child protection policy and procedures;
- should make parents or carers aware of its child protection policy possibly through the school prospectus, and that this may require their child to be referred to the statutory child welfare agencies if they believe that the child or other children may be at risk of significant harm;
- should endeavour to work with parents/carers regarding the welfare of their child and remain impartial if their child is being, or has been referred;
- should help parents or carers understand that if a referral is made to social services or the police, it has been made in the best interests of the child and that the school will be involved in any child protection enquiry or police investigation in relation to their child's welfare and educational progress; and
- keep the parents or carers informed of the welfare and educational progress of the child.

On 1 September 2006, *section 175 of the Education Act 2002* came into effect. This introduces a duty on local authorities, the governing bodies of maintained schools, and the governing bodies of further education institutions, to have arrangements in place to ensure they safeguard children and that such arrangements take account of guidance issued by the Welsh Government.

However, this should only be done where such a discussion and agreement will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm. That advice will be provided by the local social services department in consultation, where appropriate, with the police.

The designated child protection person at the school should clarify with these statutory agencies, when, how and by whom, the parents or carers will be told about any referral. They should also seek advice as to whether or not the child should be informed of the process.

As a parent or carer you may sometimes feel alone but there is usually somebody you can talk to. Caring for children is not always easy and if you're struggling to cope you may need to ask for help and support to protect your child.

You may find the following helpful:-

- make time to talk and listen to your child;
- familiarise yourself with your child's friends and routine;
- be sensitive to changes in behaviour;
- teach your child to feel confident to refuse to do anything they feel is wrong;
- be aware of your child's use of the internet and mobile phone to ensure they don't place themselves at risk.

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PUPILS - ANNEX C

If someone is hurting you or your friends, there are people who can help you and stop people from making you feel scared or hurt.

You should tell someone you trust:-

- you can tell a teacher, your parents, carers, grandparents or other members of your family who may be able to help, or you can tell a friend

The person in this school who has special responsibility for helping you if someone's hurting you or your friends is:



NICOLA ALLAN

If you cannot find her, you can go to



CHRIS MAY

or



GRAEME TULLY