



POLICY DOCUMENT
for
Safeguarding

Blaenau Gwent Policy August 2022

Adopted by Governing Body of Pen-y-Cwm Special School

Signed

January 2024

Mrs D Herald Headteacher

Signed

January 2024

Councillor J Morgan JP Chair of Governors

1. Introduction

Pen-y-Cwm fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding.

There are three main elements to our policy: -

- Prevention through the culture, teaching and pastoral support offered to learners
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse - because of our contact with children and adults at risk, our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse; and
- Support to learners who may have been abused.

Our policy applies to all practitioners, (staff, volunteers) working in

Pen-y-Cwm. It is recognised by this school that all practitioners that come into contact with children and adults at risk can often be the first point of disclosure. This first point of contact is an important part of the safeguarding process, and it is essential that all practitioners are aware of and implement the school's/ setting's procedures as noted in this policy.

2. Prevention

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

Pen-y-Cwm will therefore: -

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children and adults at risk feel secure, are encouraged to talk and share their concerns and are listened to;
- Ensure that children and adults at risk know that there are adults in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty Include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for relationships and sexuality education 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 activities and in the curriculum, material which will help children and adults at risk develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- build relationships with other agencies and ensure early and appropriate referrals for support and intervention are made before risks escalate.

- take a whole-school (setting) approach to well-being which will incorporate safeguarding and preventative measures to support children and families.

3. Procedures

At Pen-y-Cwm we will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, <https://safeguarding.wales/> and other guidance and protocols that have been endorsed and agreed by Gwent Safeguarding www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk.

Pen-y-Cwm will: -

- Ensure it has a designated senior person (DSP) and deputy for safeguarding, who have undertaken the appropriate training.
- Recognise the role of the designated senior person and arrange support and training. The school/setting will look to Council's Safeguarding in Education Manager and Gwent Safeguarding for guidance and support in assisting the school's designated senior person.
- Ensure that all practitioners, along with every governor, know: -
 - the name and contact details of the DSP and their role, the local authority point of contact and the designated governor for safeguarding
 - that they have an individual responsibility for reporting children at risk and protection concerns to social services, or to the police, within the timescales agreed with the Regional Safeguarding Board
 - how to take forward those concerns when the DSP is unavailable
 - that advice can be sought from the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA), and /or the Safeguarding in Education Manager if necessary when a report is being considered. When out of hours, advice will be sought from the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team (SEWEDT)
- Ensure that all practitioners are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a learner who may disclose abuse.
- Ensure that staff members are aware of wider safeguarding concerns and report these to the DSP. Staff will be made aware of the information on wider safeguarding issues contained in Keeping Learners Safe and Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- Ensure that members of staff who are EWC registrants are aware of the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for registrants with the Education Workforce Council (see www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf.html) and the expectation within the Code that the

registrant has regard to the safety and well-being of learners in their care and related content

- Ensure that all practitioners will be offered and expected to attend appropriate training and updates as arranged/directed by the school/setting.
- Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school/college/education setting and staff for safeguarding and child protection by setting out its obligations in the school brochure and/or other forms of communication
- Provide training for all practitioners so that they: -
 - Understand their personal responsibility;
 - Are cognisant of agreed local procedures and their duty to respond
 - Are aware of the need to be vigilant in identifying suspected cases of abuse; and
 - Know how to support a person who discloses abuse or neglect
 - Understand the role online behaviours may have in each of the above
- Notify Social Services if: -
 - a learner on the child protection register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently; and
 - there is an unexplained absence of a learner on the child protection register of more than two days' duration from school (or one day following a weekend).
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at initial and review child protection conferences and core groups and the submission of written reports to the conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children and adults at risk (noting date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to report the matter to agencies immediately.
- 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 MyConcern software package or using the Authority's agreed protocol and procedures for the 'Transfer of Sensitive Information' (Appendix7)
- Adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government's Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff: Revised guidance for governing bodies ([disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-for-school-staff_0.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)) Ensure that all recruitment and selection procedures follow national and local guidance and the Council's Recruitment and Selection policy. Schools will seek advice and guidance from the Council's Organisational Development Department on recruitment and selection.
- In schools, designate a governor for safeguarding who will oversee the school's policy and practice. This governor will feed back to the Governing Body on safeguarding

matters as and when required, and will be required to write an annual report to the Governing Body on the school's safeguarding activities

4. Supporting those at Risk

At Pen-y-Cwm, we recognise that children/adults, who are at risk, suffer abuse, or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.

At Pen-y-Cwm we will endeavour to be patient and supportive to the person at risk.

This education setting/school will endeavour to support people through: -

- The content of the activities and the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- The ethos of the school/setting which: -
 - promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
 - Gives pupils/adults at risk a sense of being valued
- The setting/school's behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the setting. All practitioners will agree on a consistent approach that focuses on the behavioural outcome of the child but does not damage the individual's sense of self-worth. The setting will endeavour to ensure that the learner knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- 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 as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.

When a learner on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school /setting immediately using MyConcern (where MyConcern is not used in both settings, the Safeguarding File – Transfer of records proforma will be used) using the procedure outlined in appendix 7, Safeguarding File – Transfer of Records). The DSP will be central to this process, and if not already done, will inform Social Services of the move.

5. Behaviour

Pen-y-Cwm has a behaviour policy, which clearly states our values and expectations. This is a separate policy, which is reviewed on a regular basis by the Governing Body.

6. Bullying

Pen-y-Cwm has a policy on Anti-Bullying has been set out in (a separate document/ the behaviour policy etc... This policy/information is reviewed annually by Governors. Blaenau Gwent also have an Anti-Bullying Strategy Toolkit.

7. Physical Intervention

Pen-y-Cwm policy on physical intervention has been set out (in a separate document). 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.

8. Keeping Safe Online

Pen-y-Cwm policy on Online Safety has been set out in (a separate document)

9. Children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Pen-y-Cwm recognises that statistically children and young people with additional learning needs are most vulnerable to abuse. Practitioners 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's policy on ALN has been set out in (A separate document).

10. Care Experienced Children

Pen-y-Cwm recognises that Children Looked After (CLA) are often the most vulnerable. Advice and guidance can be sought from the Local Authority's Education Coordinator for Children Looked After.

11. Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism

Pen-y-Cwm is committed to providing a safe environment for all of our students and practitioners. There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our setting. Where we become aware of information involving identification of potential instances of extremism and radicalisation, we will refer to Children's/Adult Services in the same way as for all safeguarding concerns. The Local Authority has 'Secure and Shelter' (Lockdown) procedures that may be activated in response to any number of situations and includes the requirement to carry out practice procedures (appendix 9).

Our policy statement for community cohesion is attached as appendix 8: Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism.

12. Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV)

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender based violence, abuse and sexual violence.

The protection of victims and support for people affected is underpinned by the 'Ask and Act' duty placed on public service staff to ask potential victims about the possibility that they may be experiencing VAWDASV and act so as to reduce suffering and harm.

The regional VAWDASV board has also prioritised a 'whole school approach' to training and support in order to continue a preventative agenda to domestic abuse. This approach is relevant for all education settings.

Every school should have a designated lead responsible for supporting learners with relationships and sexuality education. There is extensive guidance available on preventing and responding to child sexual abuse, including 'Keeping Learners Safe' [Keeping learners safe | GOV.WALES](#) and [guidance-for-education-settings-on-peer-sexual-abuse-exploitation-and-harmful-sexual-behaviour.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

The school/setting's policy on VAWDASV has been set out in (a separate document/ the schools VAWDASV policy etc.).

The school participates in Operation Encompass. The purpose of Operation Encompass is to safeguard and support these children and young people who have witnessed and/or been present at the time of a domestic abuse incident. 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 they feel safe and included.

13. Modern Slavery

Modern slavery describes forced labour practices with the perpetrator – the slave master-trapping and controlling the victim. The most common form of modern slavery is sexual exploitation. Labour exploitation is the second most common form of slavery occurring most frequently in the agricultural, food, hospitality and construction sectors. Victims may be vulnerable UK or foreigner citizens. Police, Local Authorities, the National Crime Agency and the Gangmasters Labour and Abuse Authority who encounter a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking have a duty to notify the Home Office under Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Modern slavery is a hidden, pervasive crime targeted towards those individuals most vulnerable. The Council and BAWSO are first responding organisations to cases of slavery. Training and victim support regarding Modern Slavery can be found at BAWSO, www.bawso.org.uk

14. Safer Schools' Partnership

The Safer Schools' partnership allows the safe and legal sharing of information that will ensure children can be safeguarded where they are identified as being at risk of or involved in crime and anti-social behavior. This is a multi-agency risk assessment approach. Specific advice on this can be sought from the Safeguarding in Education Manager/Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Education.

15. Transfer of school records

Where children are transferred to or from this school, we will ensure appropriate record keeping of the transfer of safeguarding records through the use of My Concern software package. Where My Concern is not used in both settings, the Safeguarding File – Transfer of records proforma will be used. (See appendix 7).

16. Out of Hours

After 5pm and on weekends and bank holidays, the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on 0800 328 4432

17. Information for staff/volunteers

a) What to do if a person tells you they have been abused or harmed:

A person may confide in any practitioner. Practitioners to whom an allegation is made should remember: -

- Yours is a listening role, do not interrupt the when they are freely recalling events. Limit any questions to clarifying your understanding of what is being said. Any questions should be framed in an open manner so not to lead;
- In schools, you must report to the **Designated Senior Person (DSP) for safeguarding** immediately (or in their absence, their Deputy), to inform them of what has been disclosed. In the unlikelyhood of both being absent, seek out the most senior person in the school;
- For other education settings, the process outlined in the setting's own procedures must be followed.
- Make a note of the discussion, as soon as is reasonably practical (but within 24 hours) to pass on to the 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 answers/responses in exactly the way they were said as far as possible. This note will in most cases be the only written record of what has been disclosed, and as it is the initial contact, an important one in the 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. You will need to express this in age/developmental related ways 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 a shared a concern with you to the DSP. Often what is initially shared is the tip of an iceberg;
- That a person may be waiting for a case to go to criminal court, may have to give evidence or in the case of a child, may be awaiting care proceedings.
- You may have a future role in terms of supporting or monitoring the person, for example, contributing to an assessment or in the case of a child, implementing child protection plans. You can ask the DSP for an update on concerns shared, 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.
- When making a report about an 'adult at risk', consent is not required to make the report, but it would be helpful to know if the adult at risk consents to the adult safeguarding process.

b) What to do if a person tells you they have a practitioner concern (including volunteers):

If an allegation of abuse is made against a practitioner, this must be reported in accordance with the information below.

Where there is a practitioner concern, reports to Children's/adult services are made in the same way as for all safeguarding concerns

Where there is an allegation/concern about a practitioner, you should refer to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and the authority's guidance which takes into account the Welsh Government's guidance circular 002/2020 Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff and Welsh Government guidance circular 009/2014 Safeguarding Children in Education: Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff. (A summary of procedures is included in appendix 6: Professional Allegations/Concerns).

If a safeguarding allegation/concern about a practitioner is made, this must be reported to the Head Teacher/ manager.

If the concern is about the Head Teacher, this must be reported to the Chair of Governors and if the concern is about a manager, it must be reported to the next line manager.

The matter must also be discussed with the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

In the absence of the Safeguarding in Education Manager, do not delay, contact the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Team.

If there is an allegation against a Local Authority Officer then this must be communicated to the Corporate Director for Education (Interim), Lynn Phillips Tel: 01495 355603/ 07772379795 and the Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) for the Education Directorate, Michelle Jones Tel: 01495 355823 mobile 07881815904

If the concern is about the SSL, then the Corporate Director for Education is to be contacted. If there is a concern about the Corporate Director for Education, then this should be referred to the Chief Officer/Head of Paid Service.

Upon receipt of an allegation/concern about a practitioner in a school, the Head teacher/ manager (or where appropriate, the Chair of Governors), will:

- obtain details of the allegation in writing, signed and dated

- Keep a record of dates, times, location and names of potential witnesses.
- Not investigate the allegation, or interview pupils, or discuss the allegation with the member of staff, but should consider, in consultation with the Senior Officer, whether the allegation requires further investigation and if so by whom.
- inform the Chair of Governors / manager
- Contact the Safeguarding in Education Manager who, together with Children's Services will give urgent consideration as to whether or not there is sufficient substance to the allegation to warrant an investigation: The outcome will either be:
 - i. without foundation
 - ii. internal disciplinary procedures
 - iii. a report under the safeguarding procedures
- In the case of adults at risk, further advice can be sought from the Protection of Adults at risk (POVA) Coordinator, Sarah Jones (01495 354613)

Pending the outcome of this process, interim safeguarding arrangements will be necessary. This will require a risk assessment to be completed and documented by the Head teacher/Chair of Governors/manager. This should ensure that there is no contact between the person who is the subject of the allegation and the person who has been accused of the allegation. Interim safeguarding measures should also be put in place regarding the contact that takes place between any other child(ren)/adult at risk and the person against whom the allegation has been made.

The sharing of information about an allegation must be handled sensitively and must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to safeguard.

Information about the child, adult at risk or family must not be shared with the individual against whom the allegation was made or anyone representing them.

The matter must be treated confidentially and will not be discussed with practitioners.

When a report has been made to the Local Authority, consideration will be given to the report by the statutory authorities, who can conclude their considerations at any stage in the safeguarding process. Once the statutory authorities have completed their consideration of the allegation, the matter is referred back to the governing body to consider any actions required by the employer. The Safeguarding in Education Manager will consult with the Headteacher and chair of governors to discuss next steps at the conclusion of the involvement of statutory services ([Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and staff | GOV.WALES](#))

Each establishment, organisation or service will keep and maintain records which detail allegations of abuse against any practitioner working for them, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, whatever the outcome. There are clear requirements of when this information is to be shared with legal or statutory organisations such as DBS and the Education Workforce Council (EWC). Advice and guidance for the sharing of this specific information **must** be sought from Organisational Development.

c) Confidentiality

The school/setting and practitioners are fully aware of confidentiality issues if a person divulges that they are or have been abused. A person may only feel confident to confide in a practitioner if they feel that the information will not be divulged to anyone else. However, practitioners have a professional responsibility to share relevant information with the designated statutory agencies when a child is experiencing child welfare concerns or an adult is an 'adult at risk'.

It is important that each practitioner deals with this sensitively. When responding, practitioners should explain that they must inform the appropriate people who can help, but they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. Practitioners should reassure the person and tell them that their situation will not be common knowledge within the setting. Be aware that it may well have taken significant courage 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.

Ensure that only those with a professional involvement, i.e. the DSP and Head teacher/Manager, have access to safeguarding records. At all other times, they should be kept secure and separate from the person's main file.

18. Training

Pen-y-Cwm 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/deputy DSP development. DSP training will be inter-agency training and refresher training will take place on a regular basis, not exceeding a three year period.

All practitioners will receive safeguarding training and will be regularly updated during the year as appropriate from the DSP. All practitioners will receive specific awareness raising training within a 3-year period.

Members of school governing bodies should also receive awareness raising training and the Chair of governors and the nominated governor for safeguarding should undertake multi-agency safeguarding training.

In addition to the safeguarding Children and/or adults training, all staff must complete Group 1 training on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) as outlined in the National Training Framework and should also be trained through the Home Office Workshop to Raise Awareness (WRAP) of the Prevent programme. Links to online PREVENT training are contained in Appendix 8.

All educational settings and partners working with children and adults at risk in Blaenau Gwent must keep records of training and carry out regular audits to ensure that all practitioner training for safeguarding is kept up to date. Educational establishments and partner agencies will be required to provide information on practitioner training to the Council and the Safeguarding Board upon request.

Monitoring and Review

The governing body regularly reviews any incidents detailed.

A named governor – Counsellor Jennifer Morgan JP, is the link with regards to the child protection procedures.

Overall accountability for Safeguarding lies with the

Head Teacher: Mrs D. Herald.

Designated Senior Person (DSP): Miss Sian Blackmore

Deputy Designated Senior Person(s): Laura Lloyd (ALNCo), Theresa Evans-Rickards (Deputy Headteacher)

All staff have received training in Child Protection. The training should be deployed in every situation without exception.

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with the staff and Governors on an annual basis and in the light of updated legislation.

Further Information

The Safeguarding in Education Manager is Sarah Dixon

Sarah.Dixon@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 07815 005241

Social Services can be contacted as follows:-

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

Documentation:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - Corporate Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Policy for Education

Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004

Keeping Learners Safe (Welsh Government Circular 158/2015)

Safeguarding Children in Education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (Welsh Government circular 009/2014)

All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008

South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board regional protocols.

<http://www.sewsc.org.uk/professionals/protocols-guidance-and-useful-documents/>

Keeping learners safe – <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150114-keeping-learners-safe.pdf>

Safeguarding in education: handling allegations

<http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/140410-safeguarding-children-in-education-en.pdf>

All Wales CP Procedures - <http://www.childreninwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/All-Wales-Child-Protection-Procedures-2008.pdf>

Working together - <http://gov.wales/pubs/circulars/2007/nafwc1207en.pdf?lang=en>

All national guidance listed above are also available on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board Website. [Welcome to the Gwent Safeguarding website - Gwent Safeguarding](#)
www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk

