Child Protection Policy for Ysgol Comins Coch

Introduction

Ysgol Comins Coch fully recognises the contribution it makes to child protection. There are three main elements to our policy:

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

Our policy applies to **all** staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.

Our school will annually review the policy.

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 Designated Senior Person for child protection in this school is:

Mrs Sarah Payne

Prevention

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

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for Personal Social Education (PSE) which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help
- include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly regarding childcare and parenting skills.

Procedures

These should be followed in the event of a child protection disclosure/concern

We will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019. The school will:

- ensure it has a Designated Senior Person for child protection who has undertaken the appropriate training. This person is Sarah Payne and the Deputy Child Protection Officer is Mike Carruthers recognise the role of the Designated Senior Person and arrange support and training.
  Keeping Learners Safe (gov.wales)

- ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:

  - the name of the Designated Senior Person and their role and the designated governor for child protection – Mr Phil Mostyn

  - 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

  - how to take forward those concerns where the Designated Senior Person is unavailable.

- 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

- ensure that parents understand the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.

- Ensure all staff undertake any agreed local authority child protection training relevant to their role

- provide a child protection briefing at least termly for all staff so that they know:

    - their personal responsibility
    - the agreed local procedures
    - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
    - how to support a child who discloses abuse
    - any new child protection issues or changes in procedures

- notify local social services 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 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 child protection matters, including attendance at strategy meetings, initial/review child protection conferences and core group together with the submission of written reports to the conferences.

- 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

- ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations

- adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government circular

- ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government guidance 'Keeping Learners Safe' Keeping Learners Safe (gov.wales)

- designate a governor for child protection who will oversee the school child protection policy and practice. (See pages Appendix A – Responsibilities of Governing Bodies/Proprietors)

Making a child protection referral

Ceredigion Porth Gofal	
	01545 574000
Children and Families Assessment Team ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker	01545 574027
Or	
Out of hours	**0300 4563554**
School's Safeguarding Officer	
	01970 633668 / 07977 510316
Police non-emergencies	**101**
In an emergency	**999**

Copies of all Referrals must be sent to the Named Officer for Child Protection, Schools Services

Definitions of child abuse, protecting children in specific circumstances:

The definitions of abuse are found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019.

Our school acknowledges that some children can be more vulnerable to abuse and we have specific child protection duties and responsibilities in relation to these. The specific circumstances are outlined in more details in Welsh Government 'Keeping Learners Safe' guidance. Keeping Learners Safe (gov.wales)

Dealing with a disclosure made by a child

Receive

- Listen carefully to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said. The child making the disclosure may be known to you as someone who does not always tell the truth. However, do not let your past knowledge of this person allow you to pre-judge or invalidate their allegation.
- Do not attempt to investigate the allegation. Your duty will be to listen to what is being said and to pass that information on.

Reassure

Provide the child with plenty of re-assurance. Always be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep, for example: “I’ll stay with you”, or, “Everything will be all right now”.

- Alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it. For example, you could say: “You’re not to blame. This is not your fault”.

- Do not promise confidentiality. You will be under a duty to pass the information on and the child needs to know this.

React

- You can ask questions and may need to in certain instances. However, this is not an opportunity to interrogate the child and go into the territory of in depth and prolonged questioning. You only need to know the salient points of the allegation that the child is making. Any questions must be open and not leading.

- Do not criticize the perpetrator as the pupil may still have a positive emotional attachment to this person.

- Do not ask the pupil to repeat their allegation to another member of staff. If they are asked to repeat it they may feel that they are not being believed and / or their recollection of what happened may change.

Record

- Take notes as soon as it is practical to do so. Record the actual words spoken by the child – do not re-translate them into the way that adults speak or try to make sense of the structure of what was said). Do not be offended by any offensive language or words used to describe the abuse).

- Time and date your notes and do not destroy them in case they are required by a court.

- If you are able to do so then draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising but do not ask the child to remove any clothing for this purpose.

- Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Final Steps

- Once you have followed the above guidelines, pass the information on immediately to the Designated Senior Person or the person with responsibility for Child Protection. They will then have several options open to them, including contacting the local Social Services Team to seek their advice as to what should happen next.

Managing allegations against adults who work with children

In the event of a child protection allegation being made against a member of staff, the person in receipt of that allegation must immediately pass details of the concern to the Headteacher or in their absence a member of staff with Headteacher responsibilities. The Headteacher will then contact Nicola Willis to discuss the next steps in accordance with local arrangements.

If a potential child protection allegation is made against the Headteacher the member of staff in receipt of that allegation must contact Mr Phil Mostyn, Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will then contact Nicola Willis to discuss the next steps in accordance with local arrangements.

In addition local Social Services will be able to advise when these situations arise.

Abuse of position of trust

Welsh Assembly Government Guidance indicates that all Education staff need to know that inappropriate behaviour with, or towards, children is unacceptable. In particular, under the Sexual Offences Act, 2003, it is an offence for a person over 18 (for example teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child. (See Appendix A – Abuse of Trust)

Supporting the pupil at risk

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. 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:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact. Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern

- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

The content of the curriculum encourages self-esteem and self-motivation as outlined in Chapter 2 of the Welsh Government 'Keeping Learners Safe' guidance.

- promote a positive, supportive and secure environment
- give pupils a sense of being valued

The school will support positive behaviour strategies aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school; we recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

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;

- 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.

- 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, the Education Welfare Service and advocacy services

When a pupil on the Child Protection Register leaves the school, in addition to the standard transfer of information to the new school, the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will make immediate contact with the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection in the new school in order to inform them that the child is on the Child Protection register and will seek urgent agreement from the Child Protection Conference Chair for the transfer of minutes of Child Protection Conference meetings and Core Groups, together with other relevant Child Protection information, to the new school.

Use of physical intervention

Our policy on physical intervention is set out in *(a separate document*) and 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 http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/130315safe-effective-en.pdf

Review

This policy and Appendix A will be reviewed and ratified annually at a full governing body meeting at least once a year and recorded in the minutes. In preparation for this review, the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection may wish to provide the Governing Body with information on the following:-

- changes to Child Protection procedures;
- training undertaken by all staff and governors in the preceding 12 months;
- the number of incidents of a Child Protection nature which arose in the school within the preceding 12 months (without details or names);
- where and how Child Protection and Safeguarding appear in the curriculum;
- lessons learned from cases.

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Mr Phil Mostyn	Phil Mostyn	21.9.26
Head Teacher	Mr Mike Carruthers	Mike Carruthers	21.9.26

Review Date

September 2027

Appendix A

Responsibilities of the Designated Senior Person (DSP) for child protection

1.1 Each school should identify a Designated Senior Person (DSP) with lead responsibility for managing child protection issues and cases. The DSP should know how to recognise and identify the signs of abuse and neglect and know when it is appropriate to make a referral to the relevant investigating agencies. The role involves providing advice and support to other staff, making referrals to and working with other agencies as necessary. The DSP role is not to investigate allegations, but they must keep the head teacher informed of all child protection issues in the establishment.

1.2 The DSP need not be a teacher but must be a senior member of the school's leadership team with the status and authority within the organisation to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources to child protection matters, and where appropriate directing other staff. Dealing with individual cases may be a responsibility of the education welfare officer or other supports, but it is important that a senior member of staff takes responsibility for this area of work.

1.3 In many schools a single Designated Senior Person will be sufficient, but a deputy should be available to act in their absence. In establishments which are organised on different sites or with separate management structures, there should be a Designated Senior Person for each part or site. In large organisations, or those with a large number of child protection concerns, it may be necessary to have a number of deputies to deal with the responsibilities.

1.4 The establishment must also make arrangements to cover the role of the DSP when that person is unavailable. In many cases, there will be a deputy DSP in place and larger schools may have a team of staff working together.

1.5 The DSP does not have to be an expert in the area of child protection but will take responsibility for the establishment's child protection practice, policy, procedures and professional development working with other agencies as necessary. The head teacher should ensure that the DSP:

- is given sufficient time and resources to carry out the role effectively, which should be explicitly defined in the post holder's job description
- has access to required levels of training and support to undertake the role
- has time to attend and provide reports and advice to case conferences and other interagency meetings as required.

Referrals

1.6 The DSP should act as a point of contact and a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

1.7 The DSP is responsible for making referrals about allegations of suspected abuse to the relevant investigating agencies. Where these relate to cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse against staff, the process is set out in Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff (002/2013) and Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff (009/2014), published in April 2014.

Record keeping

1.8 It is the responsibility of the DSP to keep detailed, accurate and secure written records of children where there are safeguarding concerns. These records are confidential and should be kept separately from pupil records. They should include a chronology of concerns, referrals, meetings, phone calls and emails.

1.9 Where children leave the establishment, the DSP should ensure their child protection file is copied to the new establishment as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main pupil file.

Raising awareness

1.10 The DSP is responsible for ensuring that parents or carers see copies of the child protection policy. This avoids potential for later conflict by alerting them to the role of the establishment and the fact that referrals may be made. Many schools include information about this at induction meetings for new parents, in their prospectus and on their website.

1.11 It is good practice for the DSP to provide an annual briefing and regular updates at staff meetings on any new child protection issues or changes in local procedures. This ensures that all staff are kept up-to-date and are regularly reminded of their responsibilities, and the school's policies and procedures. Many schools find it helpful to discuss safeguarding regularly at staff meetings so that awareness remains high.

1.12 The DSP should liaise with the Designated Governor for child protection, so that the Designated Governor can report on safeguarding issues to the governing body. Reports to the governing body should not be about specific child protection cases, but should review the safeguarding policies and procedures. It is good practice for the nominated governor and the DSP to present the report together.

1.13 The DSP should ensure the establishment's child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the governing body or proprietor regarding this.

Policy review

1.14 As well as the school policy for child protection, there are other policies which have relevance to safeguarding and the DSP may be involved in monitoring the effectiveness of these other policies to ensure the school safeguards its pupils. Other relevant policies include:

- attendance
- behaviour staff code of conduct
- anti-bullying
- intimate care
- recruitment and selection
- e-safety
- physical intervention
- confidentiality

1.15 Further support and guidance on the role of the DSP may be obtained from the local authority. The NSPCC also provides helpful resources and guidance.

Child protection and multi-agency training

1.16 It is the role of the DSP, working with the head teacher, to ensure all staff and volunteers:

- have access to and understand the school's child protection policy especially new or part-time staff who may work with different educational establishments
- have induction and refresher training covering child protection, an understanding of safeguarding issues including the causes of abuse and neglect
- are able to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse
- know how to respond effectively when they have concerns
- know how to respond to a disclosure appropriately
- know that they have a responsibility to report any concerns immediately as they arise

1.17 Records should be kept by the DSP of the dates of the training, details of the provider and a record of staff attendance at the training.

1.18 In addition to the requirement for the Chair of Governors and the Designated Governor to undertake child protection training, all governors should be given access to safeguarding and child protection training (not just the Designated Governor for child protection) to ensure a basic and consistent level of awareness. Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the school's policies and procedures for child protection meet statutory requirements and all governors should know what to do if they have concerns about a child.

1.19 Teachers should receive training in child protection as part of the course of training leading to Qualified Teaching Status (QTS), but this will need to be reinforced by further training, or refresher training, when they are first appointed. The QTS Standards are a set of outcome statements that trainee teachers have to meet which are linked to other publications and statutory requirements as appropriate. Trainees must be able to evidence that they establish a purposeful learning environment for all children where learners feel secure and confident.

1.20 Trainees are also required to demonstrate professionalism to ensure that relationships with learners are built on mutual trust and respect, and to recognise that this will help maximise their learning potential. Trainees are expected to evidence this standard by being able to demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the rights and entitlements of all learners, as laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and key Welsh Government policies.

1.21 Other staff and governors should receive training when they are first appointed. All staff who do not have designated responsibility for child protection, including teachers, should undertake suitable refresher training at regular and appropriate intervals thereafter, to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

1.22 Individual agencies are responsible for ensuring that staff have the competence and confidence to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. The LSCB will be able to provide advice on the minimum levels of training required by staff to ensure they are able to comply with locally agreed procedures.

1.23 Further information on inter-agency training and development is set out in chapter 11 of Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004.

1.24 The purpose of multi-agency training is to achieve better outcomes for children and young people including:

- a shared understanding of the tasks, processes, principles, and roles and responsibilities outlined in national guidance and local arrangements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare

- more effective and integrated services at both the strategic and individual case level
- improved communications between professionals including a common understanding of key terms, definitions, and thresholds for action
- effective working relationships, including an ability to work in multidisciplinary groups or teams
- sound decision-making based on information sharing, thorough assessment, critical analysis, and professional judgement.

1.25 The DSP should receive prompt training in inter-agency procedures that enables them to work in partnership with other agencies, and gives them the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their responsibilities. They should also undertake refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date.

1.26 Other staff should receive training when they are first appointed and undertake suitable refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

1.27 The revised Becoming a Qualified Teacher: Handbook of Guidance was published by the Welsh Government in January 2014. This reflected recent changes to the initial teacher training (ITT) entry requirements in Section 2 of the document – Requirements for the Provision of ITT Courses. This section provides information for ITT providers on the latest guidance on safeguarding children in education.

Responsibilities of governing bodies/proprietors

2.1 Governing bodies are accountable for ensuring effective policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with this guidance, and monitoring its compliance with them.

2.2 Governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of independent schools should ensure that their respective organisations:

- have effective child protection policies and procedures in place that are:
    - in accordance with local authority guidance and locally agreed interagency procedures
    - inclusive of services that extend beyond the school day (e.g. boarding accommodation, community activities on school premises, etc.)
    - reviewed at least annually
    - made available to parents or carers on request

        - provided in a format appropriate to the understanding of children, particularly where schools cater for children with additional needs

- operate safe recruitment procedures that take account of the need to safeguard children and young people, including arrangements to ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and unsupervised volunteers who will work with children, including relevant DBS checks

- ensure that the head teacher and all other permanent staff and volunteers who work with children undertake appropriate training to equip them with the knowledge and skills that are necessary to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, which is kept up-to date by refresher training

- give clear guidance to temporary staff and volunteers providing cover during short-term absences and who will be working with children and young people on the organisation's arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities

- ensure that the governing body remedies without delay any deficiencies or weaknesses regarding child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention

- ensure that the designated senior person (DSP) for child protection, the designated governor and the chair of governors undertakes training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by, the LSCB and refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date, in addition to basic child protection training.

Designated governor

2.3 Identify a Designated Governor for child protection to:

- take responsibility for child protection matters
- ensure the governing body reviews the school's policies and procedures annually
- be the designated governor to maintain contact with the statutory authorities in relation to child protection staff disciplinary cases as set out in Welsh Government guidance Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff (002/2013), and
- ensure that the governing body/proprietor undertakes an annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures and how the above duties have been discharged.

2.4 While governing bodies have a role in exercising their disciplinary functions in respect of child protection allegations against a member of staff, they do not have a role in the consideration of individual cases which will be investigated under arrangements set out in Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of professional abuse against teachers and other staff (Welsh Government circular 009/2014 published in April 2014).

2.5 Whether the governing body acts collectively or an individual member takes the lead, for the governing body to have an effective policy in place and for the Designated Governor to have confidence in their role, it is helpful if all members of governing bodies undertake relevant child protection training. This ensures they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their wider safeguarding responsibilities. Other useful information on the role of governors in child protection can also be found on the Governors Wales website.

DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

What is child abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatments of a child. A child is abused and neglected when someone inflicts significant harm or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. "Children", therefore, means "children and young people" throughout. The fact that a child has become 16 years of age and may be living independently does not change their status or their entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act, 1989.

Significant harm is defined in legislation as serious ill treatment or the impairment of health and development of a child, compared with that which could be reasonably expected of a similar child.

Everybody should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks that abusers may pose to children;
- share their concerns so that information can be gathered to assist in the assessment of the child's needs and circumstances;
- work with agencies to contribute to actions that are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare'
- continue to support the child and their family.

Classifications of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as fabricated or induced illness.

Indicators of Physical Abuse:

- 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.

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
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home.

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). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Indicators of Sexual Abuse:

- 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
- 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
- not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar 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, or the exploitation or corruption of a child.

Indicators of Emotional Abuse:

- 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

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- extremes of passivity or aggression
- overreaction to mistakes
- self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; not ensuring adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or failing to provide access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of Neglect:

- 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.

Abuse of Trust

Welsh Assembly Government Guidance indicates that all Education staff need to know that inappropriate behaviour with, or towards, children is unacceptable. In particular, under the Sexual Offences Act, 2003, it is an offence for a person over 18 (for example teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child.

In the Education Service, all relationships between staff and pupils are founded on trust. Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of trust or influence over the other, by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. The individual in the position of trust may have the power to confer advancement or failure. The relationship may be distorted by fear or favour. It is vital for all those in such positions of trust to understand the power it gives them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence. While such a relationship of trust exists, allowing a relationship to develop in a way that might lead to a sexual relationship is wrong. A sexual relationship itself will be intrinsically unequal in a relationship of trust, and is therefore unacceptable. It is also inappropriate since the 'professional' relationship of trust would be altered.

The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2000, set out a series of occupations to which the Abuse of Position of Trust laws apply. This includes anyone working in an educational institution.

The primary purpose of the Abuse of Trust provisions is to provide protection for young people aged 16 and 17, who are considered particularly vulnerable to exploitation by those who hold a position of trust or authority in their lives.

Subject to a number of limited definitions, it is a criminal offence for a person, in a position of trust, to engage in any sexual activity with a person aged under 18 with whom they have a relationship of trust, irrespective of the age of consent even if the basis of their relationship is consensual.

A relationship exists where a member of staff or volunteer is in a position of power or influence over young people aged 16 or 17 by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken.

The principles apply irrespective of sexual orientation: neither homosexual nor heterosexual relationships are acceptable within a position of trust. They apply equally to all, without regard to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability. This is an area where it is very important to avoid any sexual or other stereotyping. In addition, it is important to recognise that women as well as men may abuse a position of trust.

All staff should ensure that their relationships with young people are appropriate to their age and gender, and take care that their language and conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.