

Committee: **Executive Committee**  
 Date of meeting: **25<sup>th</sup> September 2019**  
 Report Subject: **Education Directorate Safeguarding Policy**  
 Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J Collins, Executive Member for Education**  
 Report Submitted by: **Lynette Jones, Corporate Director Of Education**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	15.06.19	11.09.19			15.07.19	25.09.19		EAS

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek the Executive Committee's approval of the Blaenau Gwent Education Directorate Safeguarding Policy.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Education Directorate Safeguarding Policy was originally adopted in April 2015 and has been reviewed on an annual basis. The attached draft policy has been reviewed and updated for the 2019-2020 academic year.

- 2.2 In order to fulfil its support responsibilities, the Council is required to provide model policies and procedures for maintained schools on all aspects of child protection. The policies and procedures must be consistent with Welsh Government guidance and local arrangements. The attached draft policy covers all employees and volunteers in Blaenau Gwent's education directorate and educational settings. Employees of contracted services are required to follow their organisation's safeguarding policies e.g. Education Achievement Service, Gwent Ethnic Minority Service, Youth Offending Service, and SRS. These policies are quality assured on an annual basis by the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

- 2.3 All education and training providers in Wales are inspected by Estyn and a new framework was introduced in the Autumn term 2017. Safeguarding will be inspected under inspection area four, 'Care, Support and Guidance' and as such the model policy is cognisant with the changes to the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework.

## 3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 Education and Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) considered the draft strategy document and supported the policy with no amendments.

### **Option 1**

- Approve the Education Directorate Safeguarding Policy prior to its distribution to schools.

### **Option 2**

- To suggest amendment to the policy prior to approval and distribution to schools.

## **4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

### **4.1 Statutory Responsibilities**

To ensure that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is effectively meeting its obligations. Welsh Government Circular 158/2015, 'Keeping Learners Safe' contains guidance for local authorities and governing bodies on arrangements for safeguarding children under section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

### **4.2 Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

This report is in line with the following objectives as set out in the Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan of:

- Blaenau Gwent wants everyone to have the best start in life; and,
- Blaenau Gwent wants safe and friendly communities.

## **5. Implications Against Each Option**

### **5.1 *Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no direct financial implications.

### **5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Failure of educational establishments to adopt rigorous arrangements for safeguarding poses significant potential risk to children and other education users.

5.2.1 Blaenau Gwent organisations are required to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place, reviewed annually, in accordance with local and national guidance.

5.2.2 Providing a safeguarding policy for adoption by all education settings ensures that an appropriate policy is available to all settings.

### **5.3 *Legal***

Under Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, Local Authorities, governing bodies of maintained schools and FE institutions must have regard to Welsh Government Circular 158/2015, 'Keeping Learners Safe', for the purpose of meeting their duties, and should exercise their functions in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

#### 5.4 **Human Resources**

There are no direct staffing or workforce implications arising from this report.

### 6. **Supporting Evidence**

#### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The Education Directorate Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed. There are no significant changes to the policy since last year. Updates have been made to the following areas of the policy:

- Current contact details have been updated.
- A short overview of Operation Encompass has been included.

#### 6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

Learners are provided with a safe learning environment, with the policy supporting settings to respond appropriately to concerns.

#### 6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

This policy has been consulted upon with Education DMT, Youth Service, Early Years, Organisational Development and Community Safety.

#### 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

Ensuring that the Council and its education settings operate robust safeguarding practices, informed by policy, is essential to the wellbeing of all learners in Blaenau Gwent.

#### 6.5 **Preventative focus**

Having an effective policy in place supports educational establishments to adopt practice to keep learners safe and identify concerns early.

#### 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board is a multi-agency partnership. The Board has the lead strategic role in ensuring that children and young people in the South East Wales region are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination and live in an environment that promotes their well-being and life chances.

Education forms part of this multi-agency partnership.

#### 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**

Within the context of the legal framework and associated guidance, it is important that education settings, schools and governing bodies ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and arrangements regarding safer recruitment are rigorously followed in order to safeguard children.

#### 6.8 **EgIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)**

An equality impact assessment has been completed and there are no positive or adverse impacts in relation to the revised safeguarding policy.

## 7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 The adoption of this policy will be monitored by the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

### **Background Documents / Electronic Links**

Appendix 1 – Education Services Safeguarding Policy

Keeping Learners Safe

<http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/150114-keeping-learners-safe-en.pdf>

(Former) Governors Wales

<http://www.governorswales.org.uk/>

Disclosure and Barring Service

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

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