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Contact:/Cysylltwch â: Democratic Services



THIS IS A MEETING WHICH THE PUBLIC ARE ENTITLED TO ATTEND

6th July, 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

JOINT EDUCATION AND LEARNING & SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SAFEGUARDING)

A meeting of the Joint Education and Learning & Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) will be held in virtually via Microsoft Teams - if you would like to attend this meeting live via Microsoft Teams please contact committee.services@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk on Wednesday, 14th July, 2021 at 10.00 am.

Please note that a pre and post meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start and following the conclusion of the meeting for members of the committee.

Yours faithfully

Michelle Morris
Managing Director

AGENDA

Pages

1. SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

We welcome correspondence in the medium of Welsh or English. / Croesawn ohebiaith trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg.

Municipal Offices
Civic Centre
Ebbw Vale
NP23 6XB

Swyddfeydd Bwrdeisio
Canolfan Dinesig
Glyn Ebwy
NP23 6XB

a better place to live and work
lle gwell i fyw a gweithio

You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

2. **APOLOGIES**

To receive.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

To consider any declarations of interests and dispensations made.

4. **TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To consider.

5. **JOINT EDUCATION & LEARNING AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SAFEGUARDING) MINUTES** 5 - 12

To receive the Minutes of the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) held on 26th April, 2021.

(Please note the Minutes are submitted for points of accuracy only)

6. **ACTION SHEET - 26TH APRIL 2021** 13 - 14

To receive the Action Sheet.

7. **SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION – 1ST APRIL TO 31ST MARCH 2021** 15 - 50

To consider the report of the Corporate Directors of Education and Social Services.

8. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION SERVICES SAFEGUARDING POLICY** 51 - 122

To consider the report of the Corporate Director Education.

9. SAFEGUARDING SELF-EVALUATION OUTCOMES

123 - 138

To consider the report of the Strategic Education Improvement Manager.

To: Councillor S. Thomas (Chair)
Councillor H. Trollope
Councillor D. Bevan
Councillor G. Collier
Councillor M. Cook
Councillor G. A. Davies
Councillor G. L. Davies
Councillor M. Day
Councillor P. Edwards
Councillor L. Elias
Councillor K. Hayden
Councillor S. Healy
Councillor J. Hill
Councillor W. Hodgins
Councillor J. Holt
Councillor C. Meredith
Councillor M. Moore
Councillor J. C. Morgan
Councillor J. P. Morgan
Councillor G. Paulsen
Councillor K. Rowson
Councillor T. Sharrem
Councillor T. Smith
Councillor B. Summers
Councillor D. Wilkshire
T. Baxter

All other Members (for information)
Manager Director
Chief Officers

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COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

**REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE JOINT
EDUCATION & LEARNING AND SOCIAL SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SAFEGUARDING)**

**SUBJECT: JOINT EDUCATION & LEARNING AND SOCIAL
SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(SAFEGUARDING) – 26TH APRIL, 2021**

REPORT OF: DEMOCRATIC & COMMITTEE SUPPORT OFFICER

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S. THOMAS (CHAIR)

Councillors: H. Trollope
D. Bevan
M. Cook
G.A. Davies
M. Day
K. Hayden
J. Hill
J. Holt
C. Meredith
M. Moore
J.C. Morgan
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Summers

Co-opted Member

A. Williams

AND: Corporate Director of Education
Strategic Education Improvement Manager
Head of School Improvement & Inclusion
Service Manager Inclusion
Service Manager Development & Commissioning
Service Manager Education Transformation &
Business Change
Service Manager Children's Services (Safeguarding)
Adult Safeguarding Manager
Safeguarding in Education Manager
Scrutiny & Democratic Officer / Advisor

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<p><u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u></p> <p>It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.</p>	
No. 2	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Collier, G.L. Davies, P. Edwards, L. Elias and D. Wilkshire.</p> <p>Tim Baxter - Co-opted Member</p> <p>Corporate Director of Social Services</p>	
No. 3	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
No. 4	<p><u>JOINT EDUCATION & LEARNING AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SAFEGUARDING)</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) Meeting held on 8th October, 2020 were submitted, whereupon:-</p> <p>The Chair referred to item 5 on page 6 of the minutes and pointed out that the comment regarding Covid-19 should have been minuted before the heading relating to the Action Sheet – 2nd December, 2019.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED, subject to the foregoing, that the Minutes be accepted as a true record of proceedings.</p>	
No. 5	<p><u>ACTION SHEET - 8TH OCTOBER, 2020</u></p> <p>The action sheet arising from the meeting of the Joint Education & Learning and Social Services Scrutiny Committee (Safeguarding) held on 8th October, 2020 was submitted.</p>	

	The Committee AGREED that the action sheet be noted.	
No. 6	<p><u>SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION – 1ST APRIL TO 31ST DECEMBER 2020</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the joint report of the Corporate Director Social Services and Corporate Director Education which was presented to provide Scrutiny Members with safeguarding performance information and analysis from Children’s Social Services and Education from 1st April 2020 to the 31st December 2020.</p> <p><u>Social Services</u></p> <p>The Service Manager, Children’s Services (Safeguarding) spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained within the Social Services Safeguarding Performance information.</p> <p>In relation to the format of the report, the Chair suggested changes to the layout of the covering report, that when it referred to graphs or tables in the appendix, e.g. Figure 1.1, the related graph or table is pulled into the report from the appendix, and in relation to paragraph 6.2.3 – Child Protection the Chair suggested a change to the wording from “no cause for concern” to “these figures fall within expected levels given the current situation”. The Service Manager took these points on board and would look to change the report format for future reports.</p> <p>A Member referred to the police being the highest referrer to Social Services and enquired how the referrals were monitored to ensure they should actually be referred. The Service Manager said that they constantly look at this area and under the Early Action Together, which was an initiative from the Police & Crime Commissioner for the Detective Sergeant to be part of the IAA service, part of that role was to critique and to quality assure the PPN (the referral method the police use). The police policies on making referrals differed from the Local Authority and as such when police were called to a property and there were children present, under their policies and procedures they were duty bound to refer that incident to Children’s Social Care, who would then decide if that referral needed statutory</p>	

intervention or low level support. They work closely with partners within the police to try to support the police to make professional judgements around whether to make a referral into statutory social care or consider whether lower tier preventative services would be more appropriate and were working towards a point where both service areas were happy with the approach being taken.

The Chair commented that this provided an added level of assurance for Members and welcomed police involvement in the IAA process to strengthen collaboration between the two areas. The Service Manager advised Members that they had now moved into the Hub model which had proved extremely successful in relation to other partners such as Health and Education in having that same level of support to provide the IAA service with information quickly to enable them to make the right decision at the right time. The Detective Sergeant would undertake checks on persons of interest or people the IAA may need additional information on, Health colleagues were able to do the same with regards to children and any adult concerns and Education were also getting on board to be part of the process and she felt that this was a very positive position moving forward.

A Member enquired regarding the number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) who were transitioning into Adult Services and also raised concerns regarding Senior Police Officers attendance at Corporate Parenting meetings. As the Corporate Parent there was a duty to provide support for Children Looked After at school disciplinary meetings and with the pandemic easing off he felt there may be a rise in Children Looked After needing more support in schools to stop them being permanently excluded. The Service Manager said that Figure 2.4 on the Performance Report showed the age range of children on the Child Protection Register, the 16 to 18 age range represented the lowest number of children on the CPR. The 10 to 15 age range were the highest group with 14 female and 10 male, and for those teenagers about to come into adulthood she hoped that the risks would have been extensively worked through before they reached adulthood. She took on board the Members comment around transition as the transition into Adult Services was crucial for all groups but especially Children Looked After with quite complex needs and mental health issues. There were two

females in the 16 to 18 age range in quarter 3 on the CPR and as part of the Child Protection Plan consideration would be given to whether those support needs would continue into adulthood.

In relation to Corporate Parenting the Service Manager said this was a valid point to raise and where children were subject to any internal processes within schools there were Children Looked After Education Mentors, an Education Co-ordinator and also a Safeguarding Manager in Education and would take this point back to senior management with regards to the Education service to advise whether or not they needed to attend those meetings with regards to Social Services children and consider if there were capacity issues around officer attendance at those meetings.

With regards to issues rising as children return to school the Service Manager informed Members that an additional two Social Workers had been appointed in schools there were now four in total, and their role was to consider the needs of children and families at an early stage and that included children and families that had been suffering through the Covid pandemic. Having that ability within schools for children and families to speak with Social Workers to address any issues, then those interventions provided some positive outcomes for children and families.

A Member raised concerns regarding issues with parent's behaviour in the school yard and outside of the school, there had been instances of parents speaking unsuitably with their young children in the school yard, traffic incidents, threats and cyber bullying etc. Some schools were now erecting signage to ensure that parents were aware of the zero tolerance policy. The Service Manager said that schools were best placed to form a judgement on how best to handle behaviours of that kind. If one parent was threatening another then that would potentially be a police matter and if anyone felt that children were suffering as a result of parental bad behaviour or caught in the crossfire between disputing parents' then it was everybody's business to make a referral into Social Services. When that referral was looked at in detail it may be that low level support or referral onto other agencies might be the outcome.

Another Member also raised concerns regarding the increased incidents in and outside of schools and he felt that there needed to be a protocol, with guidance for schools to follow, between the school and Social Services with regard to serious incidents outside of schools. The Service Manager reiterated that anybody who witnessed something or felt uncomfortable with or concerned about could make a referral to Social Services. If schools were witness to bad language and bad behaviour she felt there was no reason why the school could not speak with the parent about acceptable language and behaviour in and outside the school grounds. In the case of cars causing Health & Safety issues, incidents should be reported through the PCSO's to the Community Safety Partnerships.

As this issue was across two Directorates, the Service Manager commented that guidance that may currently be in existence could be strengthened around the points raised.

In relation to traffic management in schools the Service Manager Education Transformation & Business Change explained there was a specific group that managed and monitored issues, and when schools report traffic issues Wardens were allocated schools on the basis of priority. She was aware that monitoring and reporting was being undertaken and schools did address issues directly with parents. She advised there was a priority list of works that were planned to be undertaken at each of the schools to relieve some of the traffic issues. The Member commented that traffic abuse was only one of the issues raised and due to the pandemic the school gates were closed early morning and felt that most incidents occurred outside of the school gates.

The Strategic Education Improvement Manager said that schools were well placed to look at children's needs in a contextual setting and could pick up on these points around potential abuse, online, verbal or traffic etc. and when such incidents were looked at through a broader lens this could allow colleagues to have a better understanding on the impact on the child.

Education Services

The Strategic Education Improvement Manager spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained within the Education Performance information. She advised Members that it had not been possible to present the usual information and data normally collated through schools, as schools had been responding to the challenges of the pandemic, however, she assured Members that schools had been reminded of the need to report data with the expectation that that information would be presented to this Committee. Work was also being undertaken in relation to the development of an online system and prior to the pandemic a 'my concerns' option model had been purchased which sits within the School Information Management System (SIMS) that would enable schools to regularly report and hold data on an electronic basis, and advised Members of the intention to present a report to this Committee in the near future.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 1; namely that the approach and information detailed in the report provided be accepted.

No. 7 **ADULT SAFEGUARDING REPORT FROM 1ST APRIL 2020 TO 31ST MARCH 2021**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Social Services which was presented to provide Scrutiny Members with Safeguarding Performance information relating to Adult Services from 1st April 2020 to the 31st March 2021.

The Adult Safeguarding Manager spoke to the report and highlighted the main points contained therein. She advised that several changes had taken place in Adult Safeguarding over the last year. The All Wales New Safeguarding procedures had been introduced in April 2020 and the new procedures supported the individual to be the centre of the safeguarding process and to support their desired outcomes and what was important to them to keep themselves safe. As the process had changed considerably so had the reporting and data collected, and this year did not show a breakdown of figures for the previous year to look at comparisons.

A Member referred to vulnerable adults and enquired if links to unofficial partners such as community groups set up in the pandemic to deliver food parcels etc. would continue to ensure that no vulnerable adults were overlooked. The Adult Safeguarding Manager commended the work of the community groups throughout the pandemic and was aware that IAA and Supporting People had been involved in these community groups and agreed that these links needed to be maintained moving forward. She felt it was important for Adult Safeguarding to tap into community groups to raise awareness and also to speak with individuals who were receiving the service, as they were extremely vulnerable and as the data showed the number of people self-referring for Adult Safeguarding was very low, and this was something that needed to be looked at with a programme that was accessible for individuals who received the service and working closely with community groups could help Adult Safeguarding understand who were the most vulnerable adults and how to reach them.

The Service Manager Development & Commissioning added that in relation to communication and awareness raising, extensive work was being undertaken with other local authorities and the team were also continually updating web sites. He felt that part of the recovery phase would be to strengthen the building blocks already in place and communication and awareness raising would be a clear focus as part of the business plan moving forward.

In response to a Member's question regarding only reporting on the main category of abuse, the Adult Safeguarding Manager clarified that with the data reported to Committee they could only now report on the primary category of abuse. When completing a duty to report form into Social Services, several categories of abuse could be ticked, but Adult Safeguarding would only report to Committee on the primary category of abuse.

The Committee AGREED to recommend that the report be accepted and endorse Option 2; namely that the report as provided be accepted.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Action Sheet

Joint Education and Learning and Social Services (Safeguarding) Scrutiny Committee – 26th April 2021

Item	Action to be Taken	By Whom	Action Taken
6	<p><u>Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services and Education – 1st April to 31st December 2021</u></p> <p>Members requested changes to the format of the covering report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That when the report refers to the graphs or tables in the appendix, e.g. Figure 1.1, the related graph or table is pulled into the report.• That when referring to numbers on the Child Protection Register, e.g. Figure 2.5 of the report, consideration be given to using an alternative narrative to the phrase 'no cause for concern'.	<p>Performance Officers / Alison Ramshaw / Michelle Jones</p> <p>Alison Ramshaw</p>	<p>Some graphs too large to include in covering report. Suggest that the presentation and discussion is focussed on the Appendix rather than the covering report.</p> <p>Narrative has been amended in the report.</p>

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Agenda Item 7

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Joint Education and Learning and Social Services (Safeguarding) Committee**

Date of meeting: **14th July 2021**

Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services and Education – 1st April to 31st March 2021**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**
Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member Education

Report Submitted by: **Alison Ramshaw, Service Manager, Children’s Services**
Michelle Jones, Strategic Education Improvement Manager

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
24.06.21	01.07.21	04.07.21			14.07.21	21.07.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Committee with safeguarding performance information and analysis from Children’s Social Services and Education from 1st April 2020 to the 31st March 2021. Monitoring and reporting systems are well developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

The information provided will enable members to identify safeguarding trends and areas within the authority that require further development to improve safeguarding practice in order to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people within Blaenau Gwent.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from social services from 1st April 2020 – 31st March, 2021 and education information from 1st January – 31st March, 2021.

2.2 This report is written in order to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda. The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to a Joint Social Services /Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee after each school term.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Option 1

Accept the approach and information detailed in the report provided

Option 2

Consider the information provided and provide comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes.

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

The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the Council's Corporate Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Plan
- Single Integrated Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of CLA Strategy
- Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy

Social Services work to a number of regional and national safeguarding procedures which can be located on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board website: <http://sewsc.org.uk>

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

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

There is no impact on the budget both in the short and long

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies the highest risks for the Social Services Department. These are monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director of Social Services.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data (see Appendix 1)**

6.2 **Social Services**

6.2.1 **Referrals to Social Services**

Figure 1:1 Shows the number of referrals made to social services. The chart demonstrates a slight increase in referrals during Q1 (1,113) and further increases in Q2 (1,292), Q3 (1,363) and Q4 (1,368). The data indicates a levelling off of referral rates for Q4 although the rise in referrals from the start of the year through to the end of the year is currently being monitored and similar pictures have been observed across neighbouring authorities. The COVID pandemic is likely to have had an impact on families and may be a reason for the rise.

Figure 1.2: Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, police remain the highest referring agency (40% in Q1, 39% in Q2, 35% in Q3) and 36% in Q4), followed by Health (17%) and followed by Individuals (12%).

Figure 1.3: shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. During Q1 the number increased to 824 from 817 in Q2 this number increased to 981 in Q3, and 1,055 in Q4. Again the COVID pandemic is the likely cause for rise in referrals on open cases. The LA rag rated open cases during the first lockdown and when services resumed in line with WG guidance the LA did experience more families requiring intervention and support as services became more available to them

6.2.2 **Youth Services**

Figure 1.4: Shows the numbers of youth service referrals during Q's 1, 2 and 3. The figure shows that a reduction in referrals 15 in Q1 to 8 in Q4.

The youth service is an active partner on the Space Wellbeing Panel, they sit on the Steering Group as part of the Families First model and they actively participate in the South East Wales Safeguarding Local Network meetings. Multi-agency working and close partnership arrangements with the youth service ensure that safeguarding is prioritised.

Child Protection

Figure 2.2: Gives a summary of the number of children on the child protection register the numbers of registrations and deregistration is also included. There were a total of 62 children on the child protection register in Q1 to 33 families. This accounted for an additional 1 child being registered in this quarter. The numbers of children on the child protection register increased by 14 to 76 in Q2 involving 39 families.

6.2.3 Q3 saw 68 children on the child protection register to 33 families, which was a decrease of 8 from the previous quarter. The number of children reduced to 52 in Q4 to 24 families.
62 in Q1 (2020)

76 in Q2 (2020)
68 in Q3 (2020)
52 in Q4 (2021)

The reduction in child protection registration during Q4 has been closely monitored. Children's services have been using a strengths based model of assessment and intervention and this has proved very successful in how social workers intervene with families. The strengths based model requires assessments to consider what is working well within the family and what matters to families in respect of change. Risk management is a contributing factor in the assessments and is having a very positive outcome when engaging with all family members.

Figure 2.5: shows the average time a child is on the CPR. The social services senior management team review all those children on the CPR for 12 months or longer to ensure there is no unnecessary drift. The data provided does not give rise to concern and is as expected.

Figure 2.6: gives the breakdown on both initial and review conferences. They show the numbers of conferences held the number of families involved and the outcomes in terms of registered or not.

The numbers of initial conferences increased in Q1 to 33 children to 19 families. Of the 33 children subject to child protection case conference 32 were registered.

51 review conferences were held in Q1, 23 children continued registration with 28 children who ceased to be registered.

The numbers of initial conferences held in Q2 decreased to 30 children to 16 families. Of the 30 children subject to child protection case conference 29 were registered.

45 review conferences were held in Q3 and 27 children continued registration with 18 who ceased to be registered.

The numbers of initial conferences held in Q3 decreased to 28 children to 12 families. Of the 28 children subject to child protection case conference 27 were registered.

53 review conferences were held in Q3. 26 children continued registration with 27 who ceased to be registered.

The numbers of initial conferences held in Q4 decreased to 13 children to 8 families. Of the 13 children subject to child protection case conference 12 were registered.

29 review conferences were held in Q4. 29 children continued registration with 26 who ceased to be registered.

Figure 2.7: shows the number of initial conferences held within timescales. There has been consistent practice in this area throughout Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4, with 100% of conferences held within timescales.

Figure 2.8: relates to review conferences and the percentage held within timescale shows 100% for Q1 and Q4, 84.4% for Q2 and 96.2 for Q3. The data provided does not give rise to concern.

6.3 **Education Information**

6.3.1 **Overview**

Blaenau Gwent Council and the Education Directorate is committed to ensuring that Safeguarding in Education processes are robust, fit for purpose and are being consistently applied. Through this report Scrutiny Members are provided with greater clarity on the extensive work that is undertaken in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements give no cause for concern and fulfil the requirements as set out in the Estyn framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES). Moving forward the Directorate intends to review the data presented to this Committee and as such it is likely that further reports will encapsulate a much broader data set.

Turning to the reporting period for this report i.e. January 2021 to March 2021, Members will be aware that schools did not commence their gradual return to face to face learning until after the February half term and as such this report is limited in the data that can be shared. However, as advised in the last Scrutiny meeting all schools were written to at the start of the Summer term advising them that the routine data collection would be reinstated from 1st April and thus it is anticipated that moving forward further reports will capture all data sets.

6.3.2 **Bullying Incidents and Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI)**

There have been processes developed between Education and the Youth Offending Service to tackle anti-social behaviour in schools and a draft policy is in the process of being adopted to look at parenting contracts and parents.

6.3.3 **Numbers of restrictive physical interventions**

Systems are in place within the Council to gather incidents when Restrictive Physical Interventions (Figure 4.1) are used in school to manage pupils' behaviour. Following each incident, the school is required to record the incident in a Bound and Numbered book and complete an incident form. The incident form is sent to the Education Directorate, where it is recorded on a central recording system.

Figure 4.1: number of RPIs used in school during the Spring term 2021.

The number of RPIs in the Spring term was 3. This is a significant decrease from data previously reported but this reduction is to be expected during this

time as schools were closed to the majority of learners due to COVID restrictions, only partially reopening prior to the end of the Spring term.

Regular monitoring of incident forms is undertaken by the Safeguarding in Education Manager to ensure the use of physical intervention is appropriate.

6.3.4 **Numbers of bullying incidents reported which have led to exclusions**

Bullying has been identified by children and young people as an issue that requires close monitoring. An anti-bullying strategy has been developed by the Education Directorate.

Figure 4.2 shows that between January and March there were no exclusions from school where bullying was recorded as the primary reason for the exclusion. In fact, there have been no exclusions from school for bullying since the summer term 2019.

Whilst this is an improving picture, it should be noted that schools have had periods of COVID-19 closure since March 2020.

6.3.5 **Quality Assurance Visits**

The Education Directorate has developed a quality assurance process across Local Government Education settings (LGES), which has been in place since September 2017.

Members will be aware through a report to this Committee that this protocol was recently reviewed and learning from visits and broader safeguarding issues has continued to inform the focus of the Safeguarding in Education Manager's work.

As such, quality assurance visits to Local Government Education settings include pupil and staff voice through pupil and staff discussions, scrutiny of training, policy, safe recruitment practice, and record-keeping of concerns. A 'dip test of activity' is undertaken by the Safeguarding in Education Manager to test the robustness of the safeguarding systems and to ascertain a level of assurance.

During the Spring term 2021, 1 out of a projected 4 QA visits took place. This was held virtually during the school closure period, which directly impacted on the remaining visits. No significant safeguarding issues were identified during this visit, providing reassurance that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place. Whilst formal QA visits were impacted during this period, schools engaged well with the termly meeting for Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs) and with training provided for Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to development of knowledge and understanding of safeguarding matters.

6.3.6 Estyn Judgements

Scrutiny Members will be aware of the Estyn framework for schools, which changed in 2017 and that Inspection area 4 covers the safeguarding element. In arriving at a judgement Inspectors will consider whether the schools safeguarding arrangements are effective and give no cause for concerns. In coming to a judgement Inspectors will consider a multitude of evidence such as;

- whether the schools safeguarding arrangements protect all children
- the arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers
- how well the school promotes safe practices and a culture of safety
- whether the school complies with statutory guidance in discharging its safeguarding functions
- the arrangements of the management of bullying, harassment and discrimination reporting of physical interventions
- how well the school keeps pupil safe from radicalisation
- arrangements for the provision of pupils educated off site and;
- the health and safety of the school buildings and site.

Figure 4.4: - provides an overview of the Estyn judgements for schools inspected under the new arrangements from September 2017 up until March 2021. Estyn inspections have been suspended during the pandemic, and therefore, there is no change in the data in this report. However, moving forward, it is anticipated that Estyn visits will take place during academic year 2021-22.

The table evidences that care support and guidance arrangements in nearly the majority of schools (5/9) are good or better, with 4 schools receiving adequate judgements. All schools inspected during the period were assessed as having suitable arrangements for safeguarding in place that meet requirements and give no cause for concern

6.3.7 Operation Encompass

Figure 4.5: shows the number of domestic abuse incidents reported during the period. During the period there were 141 occurrences involving 185 children. From the data received this time it is not possible to break this down further to understand the age profile of the children affected.

Of these (185) children, a few (25) experienced repeat incidents during the period.

However, of the children affected during the period:

- Very few (4) cases were high risk
- A few cases (21) were medium risk
- Many cases (95) were a low risk

Risk is assessed on a case by case basis by a professional against a risk tool known as the Dash checklist. The purpose of the Dash risk checklist provides a consistent and simple tool for practitioners who work with adult victims of domestic abuse in order to help them identify those who are at high risk of harm and whose cases should be referred to a MARAC meeting in order to manage their risk.

Compliance Reporting

The Police compliance target for recording the school name on the PPN is 90%. During, the current period the compliance rating has improved to 75.8%.

6.3.8 Elected Home Educated (EHE):

Elective Home Education (EHE) is when parents decide to provide home based education for their child rather than sending them to school. Home educated children, are therefore, not registered at mainstream or special schools.

Figure 4.6: The total number of children electively home educated as of 31st March 2021 was 94. At the same point in 2020 the number was 77.

Figure 4.7: sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the Summer, Autumn and Spring term. There is a decrease of 7 pupils leaving school when compared to the data for the previous two terms.

Figure 4.8: sets out the number of additional pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the Spring Summer and Autumn term. There is an increase of 29 pupils coming out of school when compared to the data for the previous two terms.

Figure 4.9: provides a breakdown by year group of EHE pupils. The numbers of pupils in KS4 is the highest, which is similar to the pattern across Wales where KS4 is the highest.

Members should note that there are appropriate processes in place to monitor elective home education with formal visits held to check on the suitability of education. However, whilst the number of EHE pupils overall has seen an increase this is similar to the rest of Wales.

6.3.9 School Attendance

Figure 4.10 shows the primary and secondary attendance for the Spring term. Due to COVID it would not be appropriate to compare the data to the same period last year as schools have only been open for hub provision for the majority of the Spring term. A comparison to other LAs in the South East Wales, has therefore, been provided for Members.

It should be noted that it is difficult to have any accurate comparative data for the Spring term as both hub provision and schools reopening plans varied across the region.

6.3.10 **School Exclusions**

Figure 4.11 shows the primary exclusion data for the Spring term. Whilst the number of exclusions are relatively low, the rate of exclusions is the 3rd highest in the consortia.

Figure 4.12 shows the secondary exclusion data for the Spring term. Whilst the number of exclusions are low, the rate of exclusions is the 4th highest in the consortia.

Due to COVID, it would not be appropriate to compare the data to the same period last year. A comparison to other Las in the South East Wales has therefore been provided for Members.

6.4 **Corporate – Education**

6.4.1 **DBS Escalations**

Figure 5.1.1 provides the DBS escalations for the period. Within the Education Directorate there are well established escalation processes that are in place to manage any non-compliance issues of DBS or registration with EWC. This information along with other data such as training uptake, policy adoption etc. is held on the Directorate safeguarding matrix that is monitored by the Safeguarding in Education Manager who produces a FADE report for consideration by Education DMT on a termly basis providing an overview of the position across the Education Directorate and schools.

With reference to the 1 non-compliance issue regarding DBS this relates to an exam invigilator who is not working as the usual arrangements for exams were suspended this time last year.

6.4.2 **VAWDASV**

Figure 5.3.2 provides the training uptake for Group 1 training by schools. This confirms that the current level of take up is 77%

7.1 **Expected outcome for the public**

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded, and that the Local Authority adheres to legislation regarding statutory intervention.

7.2 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads meetings which are due to be reconvened help ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for

safeguarding and are kept undated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.

Termly meetings also take place with the Safeguarding Leads from all the schools and monthly meetings take place between the safeguarding team and lead education staff.

The SEWSCB local Safeguarding Network group also reviews the safeguarding information to ensure all partner agencies are as fully aware as possible.

7.3 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables Social Services to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future.

7.4 **Preventative focus**

The work undertaken by the Social Services Directorate looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having a proactive rather than reactive approach to service planning can also help with planning resources.

Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny Committee enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

7.5 **Collaboration / partnership working**

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

Throughout Q's 2 and 3 partnership working with the police continues to progress through the Early Action Together programme. The Detective Sergeant (DS) in post continues to make positive contributions to the safeguarding process. Strategy Discussions are now being held in a timely manner (within 24hours) and information relevant to safeguarding decision making happens in a much more efficient manner.

Regarding the quality assurance element to the DS role, it has been reported through the Early Action Together steering group meetings that the police are feeling better supported in the completion of the PPN's and this has been evidenced with the Information Advice and Assistance service as the quality of information in the PPN's is much improved

7.6 **Integration (across service areas)**

All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

7.7 **EqIA**

N/A

8. **Monitoring Arrangements**

The Local Safeguarding Network Group is a sub group of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board. This group is made up of multi-agency representation from within Blaenau Gwent who monitors and reviews the safeguarding information and performance. This group has direct links with the Youth Forum to ensure the voice of the child is fully considered and heard on safeguarding issues.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Append 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Template 2020-2021 (Final)

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Safeguarding Performance Report

Social Services

1st April 2020 to
31st March 2021

Education

Spring Term 2021

Corporate Services

1st April 2020 to
31st March 2021



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

00 | Table of Contents

00

Foreword
Community Profile - Demographics

01

Referrals to Social Services

Number of referrals received by social services (on new and closed cases)
Percentage of referrals received by source
Additional Multi Agency Referrals (on open cases)
Referrals from Youth Services

02

Child Protection

Number of children on the Child Protection Register
Child Protection Register Summary
Categories of Abuse
Age Breakdown

Average Length of Time on Register
Child Protection Conferences
Initial Child Protection Conferences
Review Child Protection Conferences

03

Referrals to Education

Contacts by Source (Primary)
Contacts by Source (Secondary)
Contacts by Source (Other)

04

Education

RPI Incidents
Bullying Incidents leading to Exclusions
Quality Assurance
Estyn Judgements
Operation Encompass

Elected Home Education (EHE)
School Exclusions

05

Corporate

DBS Compliance
Corporate Training
Risk Register
Regulatory Proposals

Purpose of the report

The council is committed to creating an environment which enables people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities whilst feeling safe and protected.

We believe that all children, adults and young people have the right to be safe from harm and it is a corporate objective to put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm.

We recognise our responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and this includes the contribution we make to working together with other agencies so that all children and young people reach their full potential and we continue to look after the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The purpose of this report is to provide safeguarding information that is recorded and monitored to ensure that we are indeed delivering this objective.

Monitoring and reporting systems are well-developed to ensure the department is able to track information and evidences that the safeguarding agenda remains a priority for the local authority.

Performance information is collated from Social Services, Organisational Development and Education information systems which identifies activity, demands and trends of data. This includes a number of items that are statutory requirements as part of the Welsh Government Performance Framework.

The report includes information on the following:

- Referrals received and their outcomes
- Children who are being safeguarded and analysis
- Quality assurance arrangements with education settings
- Broader issues within education that impact upon safeguarding
- Corporate progress on recommended proposals for improvement
- DBS Compliance
- Safeguarding Corporate Risk Register

This report will be shared with Senior Management Teams and presented to the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee for Social Services, Education and Active Living.

00 | Community Profile - Demographics

Community Profile



– key benefit claimants August 2014 - 23.2% in Blaenau Gwent compared to all Wales level of 16.4%)

- The total rate of Blaenau Gwent's recorded offence levels was higher than comparative areas. For the year ending December 2014 Police recorded crimes - 76.89 crimes per thousand population in Blaenau Gwent compared to its most similar group of areas average (as defined by the Home Office) of 69.03 per thousand population.
- Total Population: 69,713 Number of 0 – 17 year olds: **13,607** (2018 Population Estimates)
- Number of Open cases to Children's Social Services as at 31st December 20: **930**
- Number of pupils attending primary schools: **5,961**
- Number of pupils attending secondary schools: **3,115**

- 45% of Blaenau Gwent's local areas are amongst the top 20% deprived areas in Wales. (Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)
- The proportion of benefit claimants amongst people of working age was higher in Blaenau Gwent than the proportion across the comparable authorities (working-age client group

01 | Referrals to Social Services

Fig: 1.1 Number of referrals received by Social Services

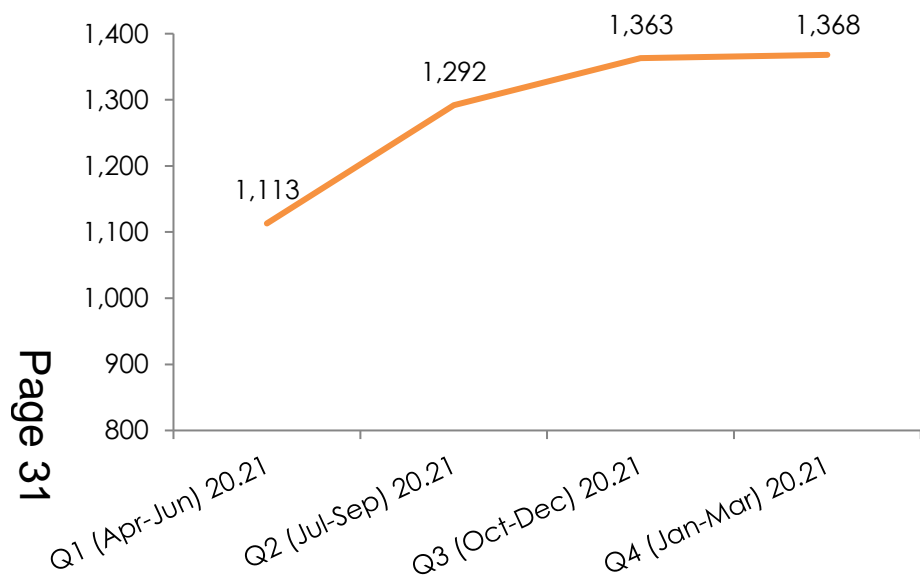
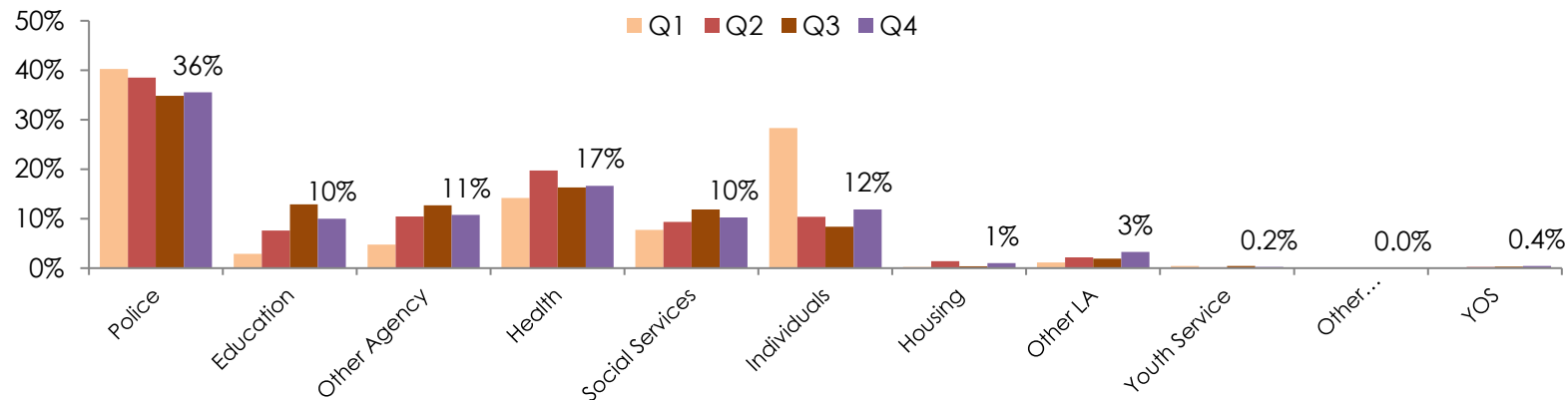


Fig: 1.2 Number and Percentage of Referrals by Source (Q1, Q2, Q3 & Q4)

	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Police	448	40%	498	39%	475	35%	486	36%
Education	32	3%	93	7%	158	12%	135	10%
Other Agency	53	5%	135	10%	173	13%	147	11%
Health	158	14%	255	20%	222	16%	228	17%
Social Services	86	8%	121	9%	162	12%	140	10%
Individuals	315	28%	134	10%	114	8%	162	12%
Education - Post 16		0%	0	0%	3	0%	2	0%
Education - OOC		0%	5	0%	15	1%	0	0%
Housing	3	0%	18	1%	5	0%	14	1%
Other LA	13	1%	28	2%	26	2%	45	3%
Youth Service	5	0%	2	0%	6	0%	3	0.2%
Other Departments	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
YOS	0	0%	3	0%	4	0%	6	0.4%
Total	1,113	100%	1,292	100%	1,363	100%	1,368	100%

01 | Referrals to Social Services

Graph showing the source of referrals and the percentage



Page 32

Fig: 1.3 Multi-agency referral forms (MARF's) received on open

cases

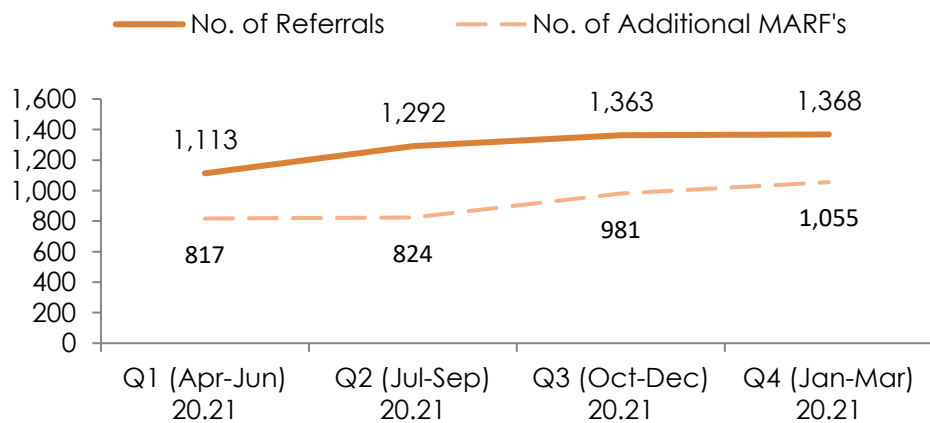
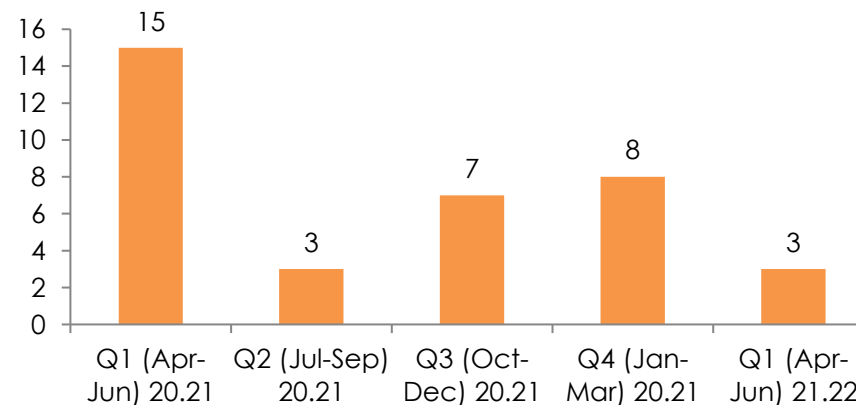


Fig: 1.4 Referrals received from Youth Services



02 | Child Protection Register

Fig 2.1 Children on the Child Protection Register

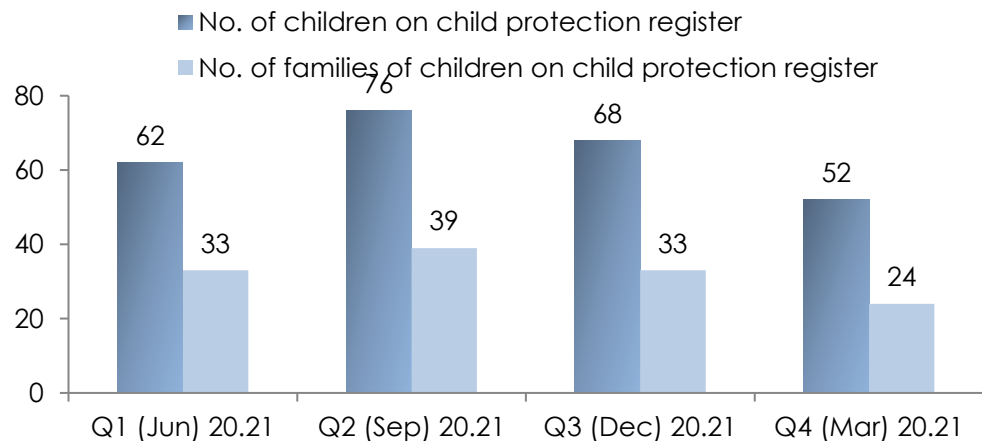
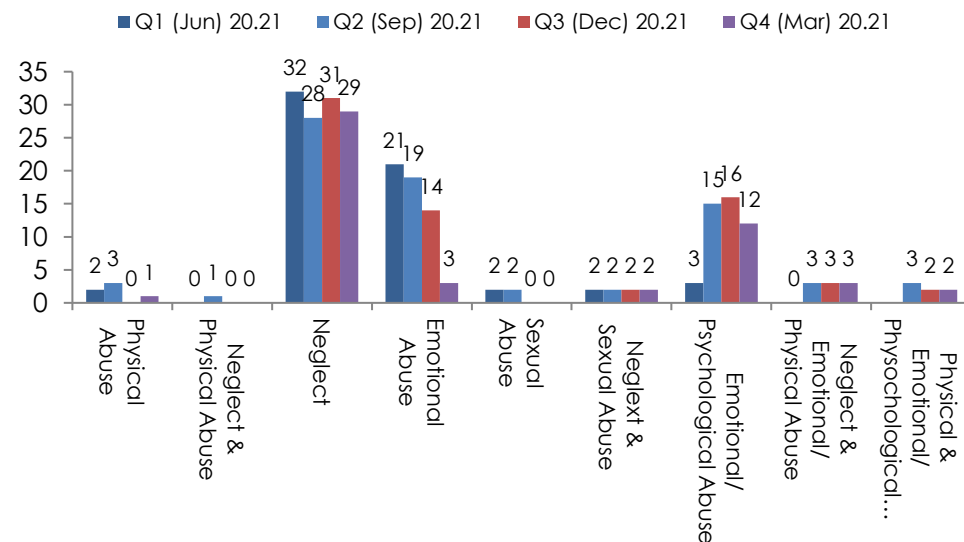


Fig 2.3 Categories of abuse



Page 33

Fig 2.2 Child Protection Register Summary

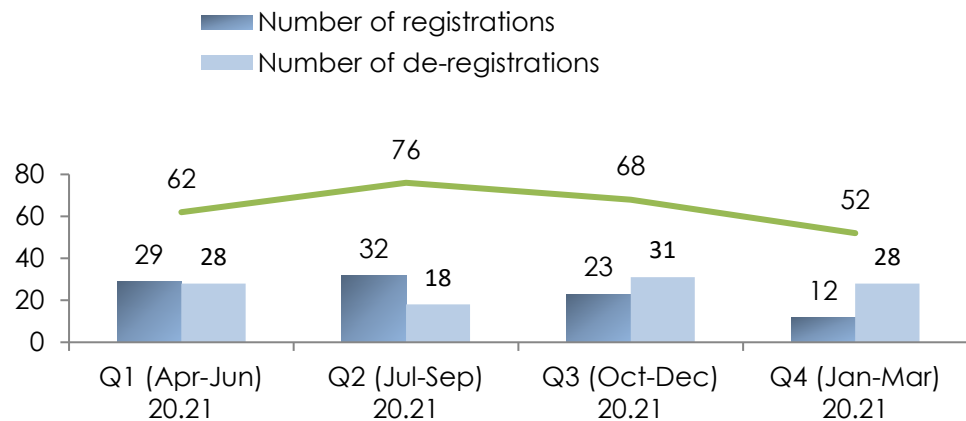


Fig 2.4 Age Breakdown of children on child protection register

02 | Child Protection Register

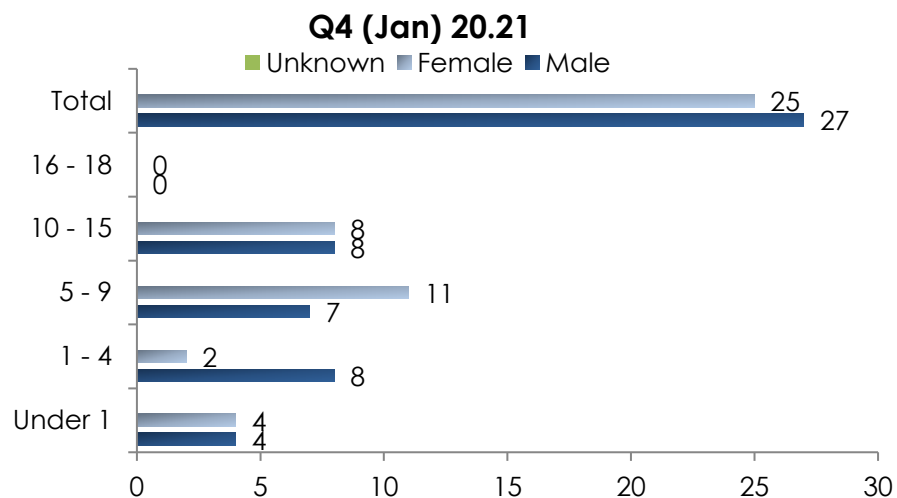
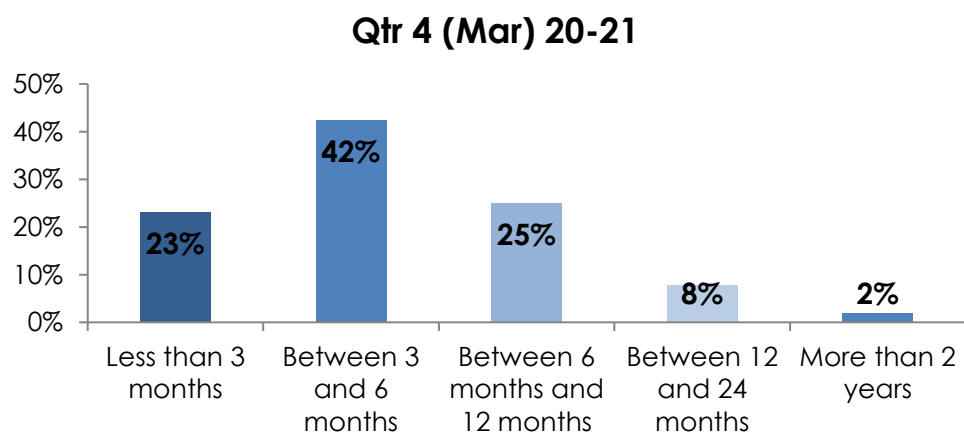


Table showing the breakdown of children on the child protection register over the last 12 months

	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21	Q4 (Mar) 20.21
Less than 3 months	25	31	23	12
Between 3 and 6 months	14	15	20	22
Between 6 months and 12 months	19	26	15	13
Between 12 and 24 months	4	4	9	4
More than 2 years	0	0	1	1
	62	76	68	52

Page 34
Fig 2.5 Average length of time on register



02 | Child Protection Register

Fig 2.6: Child Protection Conferences

	Q1 (Jun) 20.21		Q2 (Sep) 20.21		Q3 (Dec) 20.21		Q4 (Mar) 20.21	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Conferences Held	84		75		81		68	
Initial Conferences	33	39%	30	40%	28	35%	13	19%
No. of Families	19		16		12		8	
Review Conferences	51	61%	45	60%	53	65%	55	81%
No. of Families	27		22		29		25	

Initial Child Protection Conferences	33		30		28		13	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Registered	24	73%	26	87%	22	79%	8	62%
Registered at birth	8	24%	3	10%	5	18%	4	31%
Not registered	1	3%	1	3%	1	4%	1	8%

Review Child Protection Conferences	51		45		53		55	
<i>Outcome:</i>								
Continue with registration	23	45%	27	60%	26	49%	29	53%
Cease registration	28	55%	18	40%	27	51%	26	47%

03 Referrals to Education

Fig 2.7 Initial Child Protection Conferences

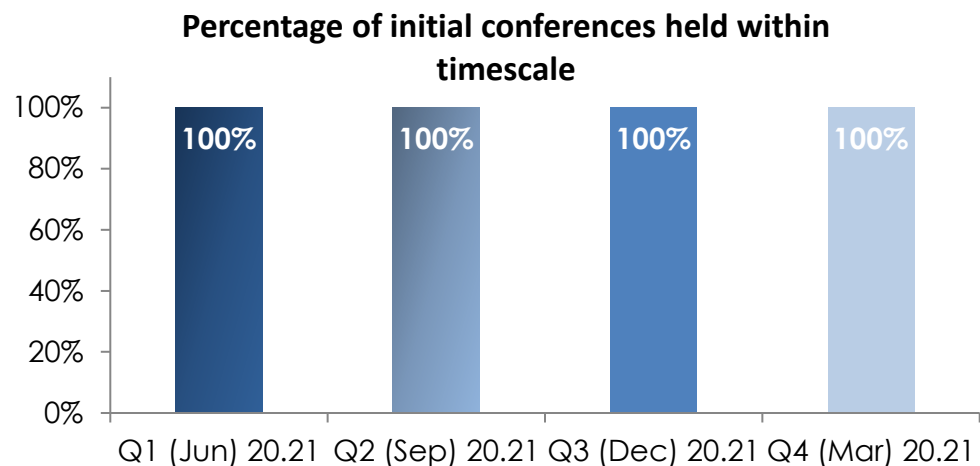
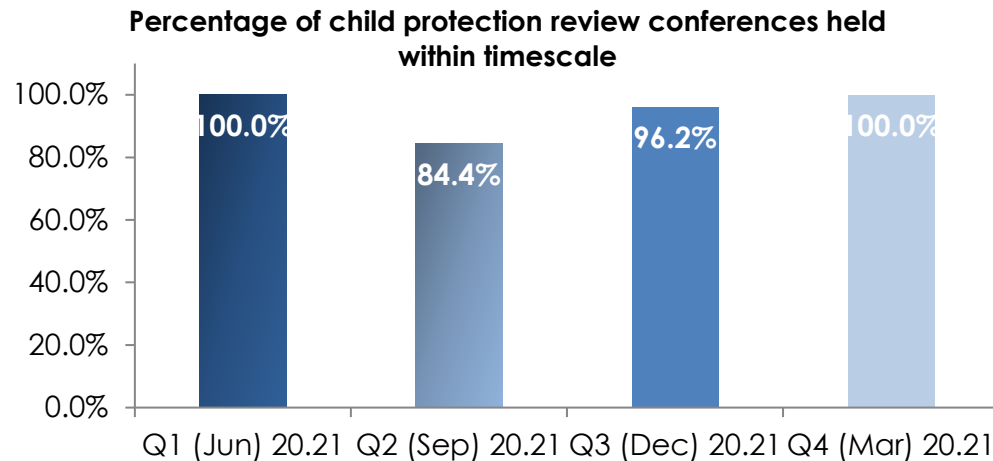


Fig: 2.8 Child Protection Review Conferences



Page 36

	Q4 (Mar) 19.20	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21
Number of initial conferences held	33	30	28	13
Number of initial conferences held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion	33	30	28	13
Percentage of initial conferences held within timescale	100%	100%	100%	100%

	Q4 (Mar) 19.20	Q1 (Jun) 20.21	Q2 (Sep) 20.21	Q3 (Dec) 20.21
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held	51	45	53	55
Number of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	51	38	51	55
Percentage of Review Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	100.0%	84.4%	96.2%	100.0%

03 | Referrals to Education

Fig 3.1 Contacts by Source – Primary School

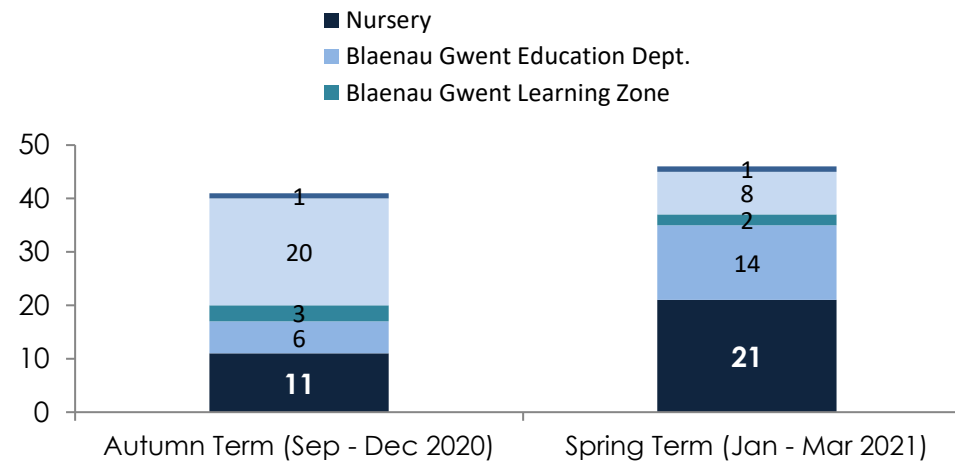
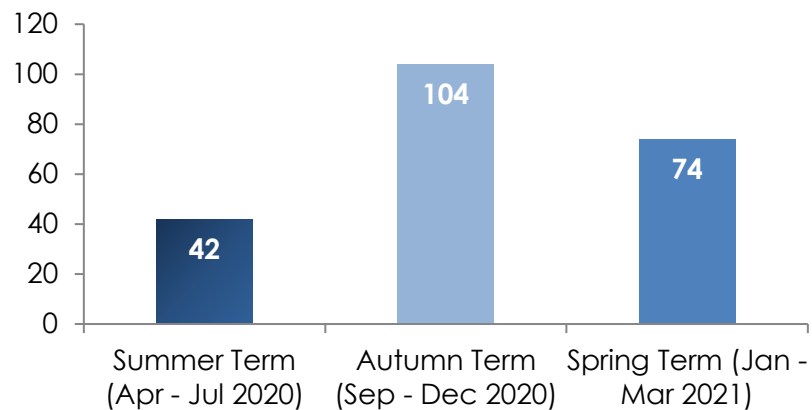
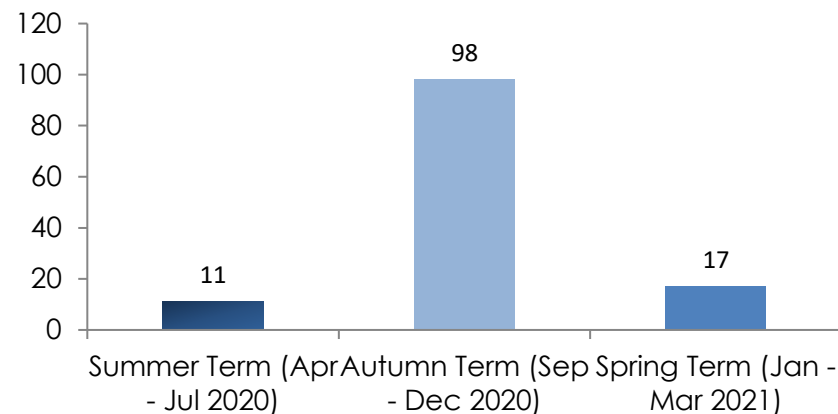


Fig 3.2 Contacts by Source – Secondary School



Page 37

Fig 3.3 Contacts by Source - Other

Attendance at schools has been severely disrupted due to the Covid pandemic. Schools have been closed for extended periods of time, repurposed, and partially opened, re-opening after February half-term. For these reasons, it is not advisable to make comparisons with performance in previous quarters, and years.

Fig: 4.1 RPI Incidents

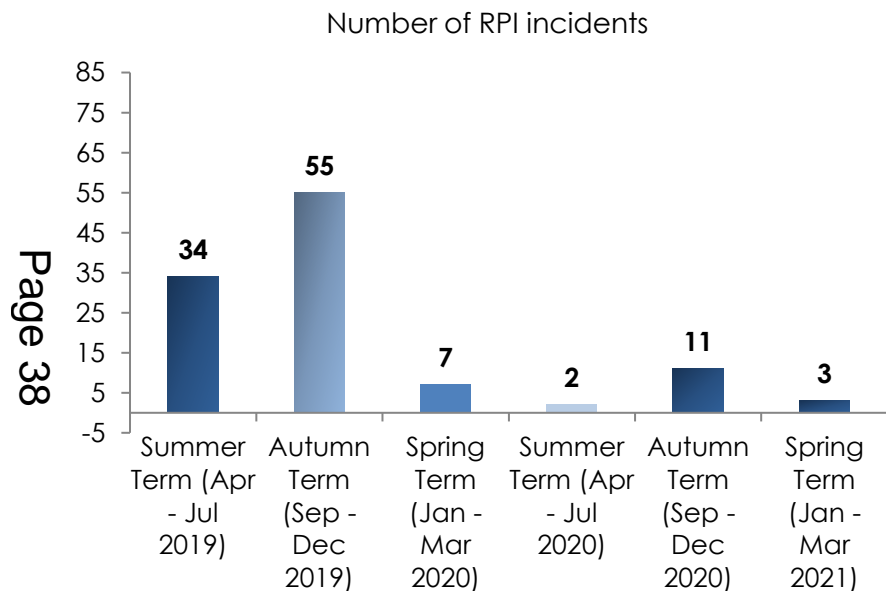


Fig: 4.2 Bullying incidents leading to exclusion

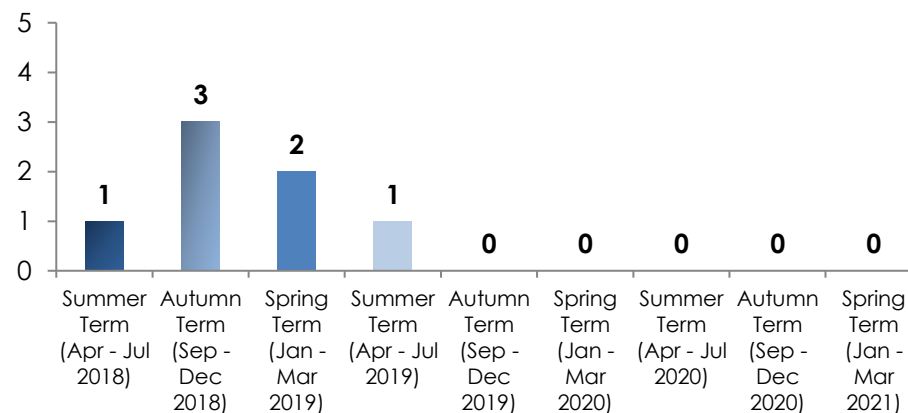
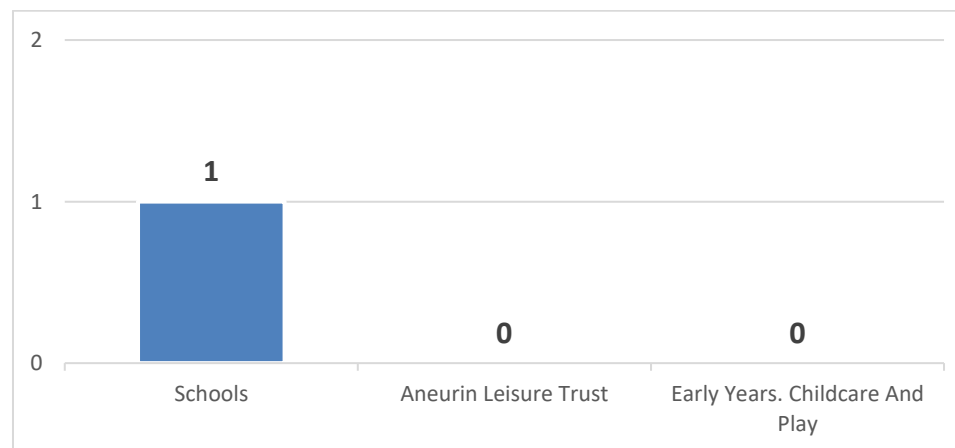


Fig 4.3 Quality Assurance Visits



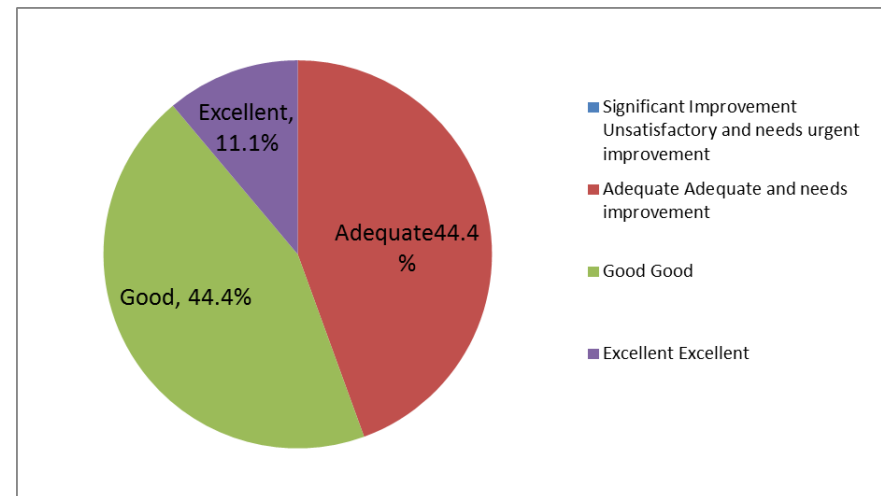
4 Estyn Judgements

The table below provides an overview of the Estyn judgements for schools inspected under the new arrangements from September 2017 up until December 2020.

Estyn Inspection Framework September 2017							Inspection Areas					
LA	Phase	School #	School	Date report Published	Follow-up Activity	Monitoring Visit 1	Standards	Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Teaching and learning experiences	Care, Support and guidance	Leadership and management	Out of Follow-up activity
BG	Secondary	6775401	Brynmawr Foundation School	Dec-19	SM		Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
BG	Primary	6773309	St Marys CIW Primary School	Mar-19	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6772310	Rhos y Fedwen Primary **	Feb-17	Estyn Review		Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Jul-18
BG	Primary	6772310	Blaenycwm Primary	May-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	
BG	Secondary	6772306	Abertillery Learning Community	01/02/2018 (revisit June 19)	SI	SI	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	
BG	Primary	6774074	St. Joseph's R.C. Primary	Jan-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6773316	St. Illtyd's Primary	01/10/2017 (revisit Mar 19)	Estyn Review	-	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Mar-19
BG	Primary	6772312	Glyncoed Primary*	Nov-17	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	
BG	Primary	6772309	Glanhowy Primary*	Feb-18	-		Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	

Page 39

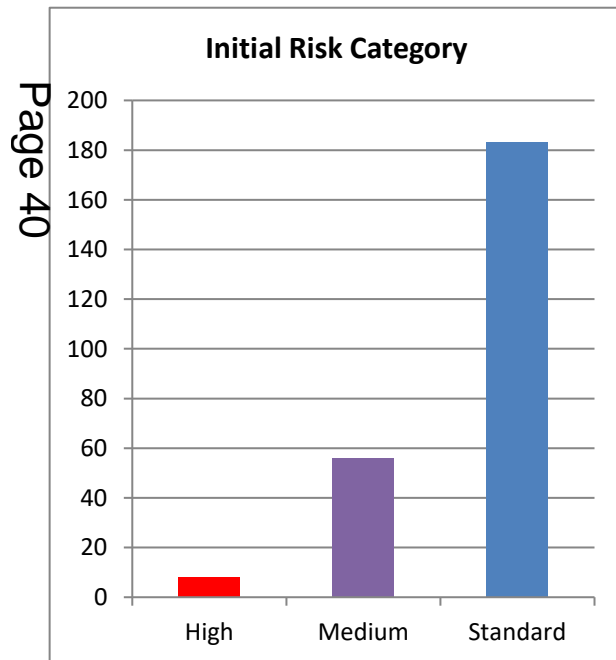
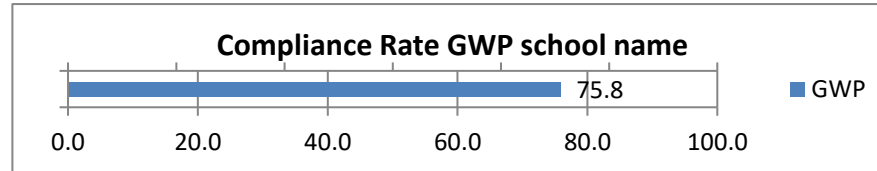
Care and Support Guidance Inspection Ratings



4.5 Operation Encompass

For the period Quarter 4 – January to March

Occurences	CYP
141	185



4.6 Elected Home Education (EHE)

	March 2021	March 2020
Total number of children electively home educated	94	77

4.7 The table below sets out the number of secondary age pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn and spring term.

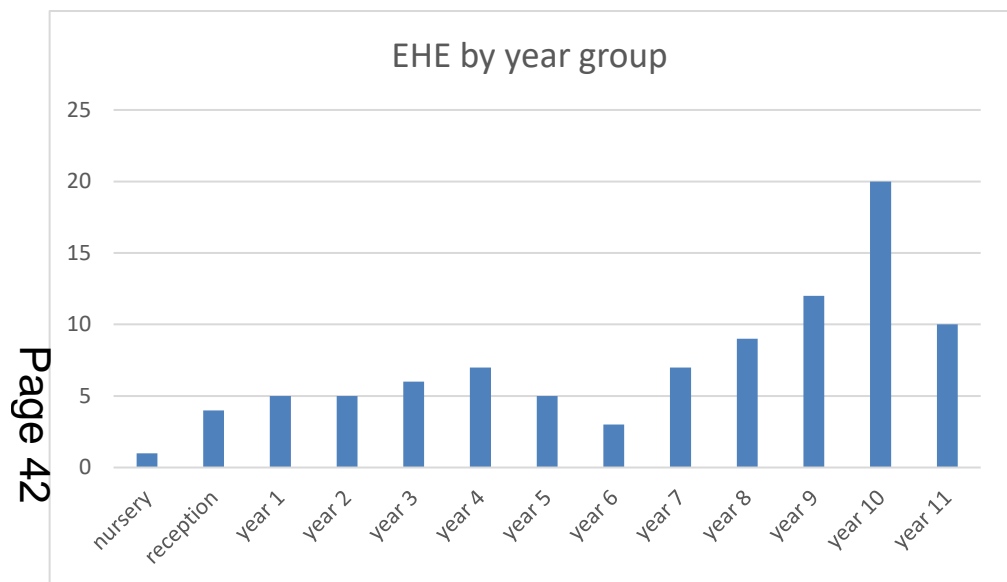
Month	School 1		School 2		School 3		School 4	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Apl – Jul 2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sept – Dec 2020	2	0	3	0	4	2	1	0
Jan – Mar 2021	1						2	
Total	3	0	3	0	4	2	3	0

Page 41

4.8 The table below sets out the number of additional pupils who have become EHE or who have returned to school from being EHE during the summer, autumn and spring term.

Month	Primary		College		Did not transition		Moved into/out of Borough (including BG pupils that were in OOC schools)		School place unavailable	
	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In
Apl – Jul 2020	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sept – Dec 2020	18	2	0	2	8	0	4	5	2	0
Jan – Mar 2021	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	1		
Total	20	3	0	2	9	0	6	6	2	0

4.9 Breakdown per year group EHE



5.1 DBS Compliance

Managers are required to identify the requirement of a DBS check utilising the eligibility criteria, all DBS checks are renewed on a 3 yearly basis. Organisational Development co-ordinates this DBS process for new starters and 3 yearly rolling programme along with monitoring the compliance of these checks and we have formal escalation processes in place. The updates on the compliance with DBS are provided bi-annually to Corporate Leadership Team.

This reporting has been relaxed during the pandemic, however the monitoring and escalation processes have continued.

The information shown below is as of 22nd April, 2021.

5.1.1 Position Statement: New Starter / Rolling Programme DBS Checks Schools

Page 43

Effective Date: 22nd April 2021

Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1263
Staff with a valid DBS	1262

Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks	1 - 3 months	More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance	0	0	0	0
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance	0	0	1	1
Totals	0	0	1	1

Only those schools with DBS out of compliance will be detailed below.

Rolling Programme							
Department / School	Awaiting Appointment	Appt Comments	Awaiting Certificate	Cert Comments	Total	Escalation	
						Chased with Employee	Escalation to Operational Team
School 1	1	Awaiting ID documents	0		1	0	1
Totals	1		0		1	0	1

Page 44

Escalation Process

Employees and Managers receive automated e-mails from the DBS system reminding that the process has not been completed

Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required

5.1.2 Position Statement: New Starter / Rolling Programme DBS Checks Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (Excluding Schools).

Effective Date: 22nd April 2021

Criteria	Total
Staff requiring a DBS	1079
Staff with a valid DBS	1079

Out of Compliance	Less than 4 weeks	1 - 3 months	More than 3 months	Total
New Starters currently out of compliance	0	0	0	0
Rolling Programme currently out of compliance	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	0

Escalation Process

Employees and Managers receive automated e-mails from the DBS system reminding that the process has not been completed

Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required

5.3 VAWDASV Corporate Training Online

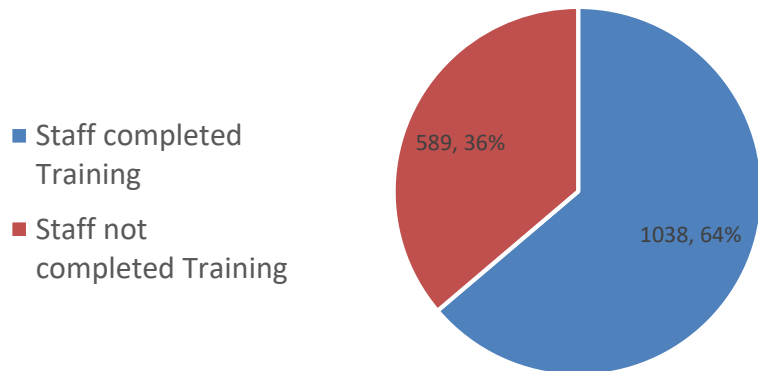
Corporate Training

Domestic abuse Training

Corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with **69%** of staff having **completed** the **VAWDAS online training**.

5.3.1 VAWDASV Corporate

VAWDASV Corporate Online Training



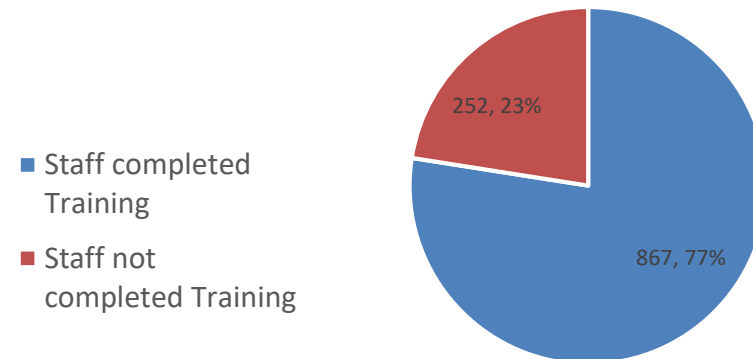
All Wales Safeguarding Training on line for staff

Online Safeguarding training was included in the online corporate induction module in 2019.

In terms of the wider workforce a suitable module is currently being evaluated by the corporate Safeguarding group which has been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic.

5.3.2 VAWDASV Schools

VAWDASV School Online Training



5.4 Risk Register

Ref No.	Description of Risk	Triggers	Consequences	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Status	Proposed further controls to mitigate / reduce risk	Risk Owner
CRR4	Safeguarding - Failure to ensure adequate safeguarding arrangements are in place for vulnerable people in Blaenau Gwent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is inadequate assessments and monitoring • If there is a lack of documentation • If there are increasing referrals for services • If there is a lack of appropriate guidance and training • If there is poor communication between all parties (internal / external) • If there is a high turnover of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential significant harm / loss of life • Long term reputational damage and confidence in the Council undermined • Increase in complaints / Potential litigation / prosecution • External intervention • Increased pressure on budgets • Low staff morale 	3	4	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board • SE Wales Safeguarding Children's Board • Standing item on CLT agenda • Safeguarding Network • Director of Social Services has a corporate responsibility for safeguarding • Lead Executive Member identified for safeguarding • Adult protection co-ordinator and process in place in line with All Wales process. • Manager's report consistently on safeguarding to elected Members and the Corporate Leadership Team • Joint Education and Social Services Safeguarding Team • Joint Social Services and Education Safeguarding scrutiny meeting held 3 times a year • Joint Business unit and subgroups for adults and children 	2	4	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plans will further embed risk assessment tools • Embedding of quality assurance processes in adult safeguarding • Training for all staff on Domestic Abuse Corporately 	<p>Director of Social Services</p> <p>Councillor John Mason</p>

Quarter 4 Progress (January – March 2021)

In Adult Services – the recent analysis of our adult safeguarding performance data and complexity of cases has resulted in an additional safeguarding post being created within the Safeguarding Team. This will add additional capacity to undertake safeguarding assessments and timely investigations and enable the service to enhance our preventative work through engagement and training. It has also enabled the safeguarding lead to further embed our quality assurance processes.

In Children’s services –Children in Blaenau Gwent have now started to return to school. Although we have seen an increase in referrals each Quarter during 2020/21 the rise has not been concerning to date. We await to see the impact on referrals when children have been in education with face-to-face contact for a longer period. The Children’s Services Service Manager has now completed the work on the Corporate Safeguarding policy update and a corporate safeguarding training programme which will be brought before CLT in quarter 1 of 2021/22.

The lack of meaningful safeguarding data available primarily due to most learners receiving their learning remotely resulted in the postponement of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee

The Joint Safeguarding Committee will now be held on 26th April and a report will highlight a need following the emergency response to the pandemic to re-establish the collection of data from schools through the safeguarding and inclusion protocol. This action is in hand and will be presented to CLT/Members accordingly. The Safeguarding in Education Manager has been tasked to provide a FADE evaluation of the safeguarding matrix as at the end of the Spring term. The information on the matrix includes policy adoption, training, DBS escalations and volunteer information. The Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) policy is being finalised and will be presented to the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee in the near future. The implementation of the data management system, namely MyConcern across the school estate continues. The Summer term Estyn Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) meeting will cover an update to the inspectorate on safeguarding aspects of work.

End of Year Review 2020 2021

Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the directorate has continued to provide a consistent and timely response to safeguarding including face to face visits. Initially there was a reduction of referrals when we first went into lockdown but quickly this returned to more ‘normal levels’. We have continued to report safeguarding performance to Welsh Government throughout the pandemic and to the Regional Safeguarding Board. Now that schools have returned full time to face to face contact we will continue to monitor the impact on referrals during quarter 1 of 2021-22.

In Adult Services due to the number and complexity of referrals we have created an additional social worker post within the safeguarding team, however the post is unlikely to be filled until quarter 1 of 2021-22. Also our lead service manager for Corporate Safeguarding has led

on the update of the Corporate Safeguarding policy as well as the proposed corporate safeguarding training programme which will be implemented in quarter 1 of 2021-22.

The risks around pupils not receiving “face to face” learning in the school setting as a result of the pandemic were recognised , WG guidance “Stay safe, Stay Learning: supporting the education system” encouraged practitioners to make virtual contact with learners based on routines developed by head teachers while following WG guidance on live streaming and video conferencing.

In relation to vulnerable learner provision, there was a strong provision in place to support learners that are Children Look After and those learners that are on the Child Protection Register whose families may have needed support. There were also arrangements in place with the education welfare service. The lack of meaningful safeguarding data available primarily due to most learners receiving their learning remotely resulted in the postponement of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee.

The Joint Safeguarding Committee will now be held on 26th April and a report will highlight a need following the emergency response to the pandemic to re-establish the collection of data from schools through the safeguarding and inclusion protocol. This action is in hand and will be presented to CLT/Members accordingly. The Safeguarding in Education Manager has been tasked to provide a Focus area of Analysis Development Way Forward (FADE) evaluation of the safeguarding matrix as at the end of the Spring term. The information on the matrix includes policy adoption, training, DBS escalations and volunteer information. The Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) policy is being finalised and will be presented to the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee in the near future. The implementation of the data management system, namely MyConcern across the school estate continues. The Summer term Estyn Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) meeting will cover an update to the inspectorate on safeguarding aspects of work.

Regulatory Proposals

88	WAO	Follow-up review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children Document Reference: 1521A2019-20	01/10/2019	<p>1. Corporate Safeguarding Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the Policy • Update the structure • Include updated information from the All Wales Policy • When adopted in April 2020, include information from the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures <p>Completion Date April 2020</p>	Alison Ramshaw (Corporate Safeguarding Group) T1 Families First, IAA 14+ and Safeguarding	Social Services	<p>The Corporate Safeguarding Leads mtg were on hold during the first stage of the pandemic but reconvened during the latter part of the year. The chair of the CSL group wrote a report to CLT and the Audit Committee seeking approval to extend the completion dates of the WAO Safeguarding Review recommendations as the pandemic meant that no progress could be made. Extended dates were agreed and a further 12 months was approved. Work was completed on the updating of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and a Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework has been developed. Both pieces of work are currently awaiting CLT approval prior to implementation. The Wales Safeguarding App is available to all those staff who have a works mobile and communications have gone out to alert those staff without a works mobile of the App which is available to all via Google search engine. Lead officers with responsibility for safeguarding are still to be identified</p>
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Agenda Item 8

Executive Committee and Council only

Date signed off by the Monitoring Officer:

Date signed off by the Section 151 Officer:

Committee: **Joint Education and Learning and Social Services Scrutiny (Safeguarding) Committee**

Date of meeting: **14th July 2021**

Report Subject: **Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Joanne Collins, Executive Member Education**

Report Submitted by: **Lynn Phillips, Corporate Director of Education
Sarah Dixon, Safeguarding In Education Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
24.06.21		04.07.21			14.07.21	21.07.21		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Scrutiny Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy following its annual review.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The Education Directorate Safeguarding/Child Protection 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 2021-2022 academic year.
- 2.2 In order to fulfil its safeguarding 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 practitioners in Blaenau Gwent's Education Directorate and educational settings. Employees of commissioned services are required to follow their organisation's safeguarding policies e.g. Education Achievement Service, Gwent Ethnic Minority Service, Youth Offending Service and Shared Resources Service (SRS). These policies are quality assured on an annual basis by the Safeguarding in Education Manager prior to the commencement of each academic year.
- 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 of the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework.

2.4 The inspection of local authority education services for children and young people covers the statutory functions of the local authority, including the local authority youth service.

2.5 Children in Wales (CIW) and Estyn jointly inspect care and education in regulated non-school settings eligible for funding for part-time education. These joint inspections evaluate the care provided for all children up to the age of twelve and the education of three and four year old children that do not receive education in a maintained setting for children aged three and four years old.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 Scrutiny Members are asked to consider the reviewed Safeguarding Policy in order to inform the development of the report that is to be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. The options for Scrutiny Members to consider are to:

Option 1 - accept the draft policy as presented in appendix 1; or,

Option 2 - make amendments to the draft policy.

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**

All schools have statutory duties to operate in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This is a statutory duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the responsibilities in terms of the promotion of well-being, places a duty on local authorities to arrange or provide for services which contribute to the prevention of abuse or neglect and ensures all agencies give sufficient priority to safeguarding.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019) are national procedures which guide safeguarding practice. They are applicable for all practitioners and managers working in Wales.

4.2 **Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing Plan**

This report is in line with the following objectives as set out in the Blaenau Gwent Wellbeing 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. Settings are required to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place, reviewed annually, in accordance with local and national guidance. Providing a safeguarding policy for adoption by all education settings ensures that an appropriate policy is available to mitigate risk.

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 272/2021, '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. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the responsibilities in terms of the promotion of well-being, places a duty on local authorities to arrange or provide for services which contribute to the prevention of abuse or neglect and ensures all agencies give sufficient priority to safeguarding.

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 Local Government Education Services Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed. Updates have been made to reflect Keeping Learners Safe (KLS) guidance, which was updated in April 2021 and which now identifies the requirement where guidance 'must' or 'should' be followed and aligns to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures

The main changes are to the following areas of the policy:

- Amendments to the role of the designated safeguarding person (DSP) and further clarity to the training requirements, including the expectation of the council for governor safeguarding training.
- Updated guidance reflecting the KLS guidance on responding to concerns that a child is at risk and reporting a child at risk
- Reference to the roll-out of 'MyConcern'; a safeguarding software package purchased by the Council for use across the school estate
- Reference to the recent ministerial statement on sexual harassment and abuse in education settings including the establishment of a named single point of contact in each setting
- Basic training requirements for all staff, volunteers clarified further, and,
- Annual return of settings self-evaluation document to the Safeguarding in Education Manager who in turn will provide an analysis to DMT in the Autumn term of the main findings and any key areas for improvement

Adoption of the policy is monitored through the safeguarding matrix, which is overseen by the Safeguarding in Education Manager

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, Social Services, 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

Gwent Safeguarding is the statutory multi-agency partnership Board responsible for making sure safeguarding is at the core of all services provided across the region.

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 EqIA

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 through the safeguarding matrix.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Education Directorate LGES Safeguarding Policy

Keeping Learners Safe

[Keeping learners safe | GOV.WALES](#)

**Education Directorate
Local Government Education Services
Safeguarding Policy**

June 2021



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol

Blaenau Gwent

County Borough Council

Contact Information

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Looked After Children Education Coordinator		Catherine.Edwards@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
PREVENT Lead	07791 875737	Helena.hunt@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Youth Service Manager – Joanne Sims		Joanne.Sims@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Sarah Jones – Protection of Adults at risk (POVA) Coordinator		Sarah.Jones@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Education Directorate SSL – Michelle Jones		Michelle.Jones@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
Deputy – Claire Gardner		Claire.Gardner@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk
South East Wales Emergency Duty Team (SEWEDT) - after 5pm, weekends and Bank Holidays.	0800 328 4432.	
Domestic Abuse	01495 291202	info@pheonixdas.co.uk
Modern Day Slavery/Trafficking – Training and Victim Support (BAWSO)	0800 731 8147 01633 213213	www.bawso.org.uk
Gwent Safeguarding		www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk
Executive Member – John Mason		

With regard to Safeguarding across the Council as a whole The Local Authority Designated Officer is the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager in Social Services. Sarah Dixon, the Safeguarding in Education Manager, covers the responsibilities laid out in WG circular no 009/2014, 'Safeguarding children in Education: - Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff'. Sarah Dixon is the first point of contact with schools, education settings and education directorate staff for advice regarding safeguarding and child protection issues arising in education settings in relation to adults who work with children."

Document version	Author	Date of issue	Changes made
1.0	Sarah Dixon	April 2015	Updated to reflect changes in WG Guidance, Keeping Learners Safe 158/2015
2.0	Sarah Dixon	May 2016	Update to reflect changes in legislation: Counter Terrorism and security Act 2015
3.0	Sarah Dixon	May 2017	Annual review and updated to reflect changes in contact details and the change to Information, Advice and Assistance team.
4.0	Sarah Dixon	Aug 2018	Annual review. Updated to reflect changes in contact details and Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework
5.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2019	Annual review. Updated to reflect changes in contact details.
6.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2020	Annual review. Updated with reference to the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and to include details of safeguarding data collection, BG Youth Service policy and COVID 19 procedures
7.0	Sarah Dixon	June 2021	Updated to reflect changes in WG Guidance, Keeping Learners Safe 272/2021 and the use of My Concerns software package

CONTENTS

Section		Page
1	Introduction	5
2	Scope/Relevant Legislation	6
3	What is Safeguarding	6
4	Preventative Approach	7
5	Responsibilities for Safeguarding in Education	7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of the Governing Body in Maintained Schools • Responsibilities of Head Teachers/Managers • Role of the Designated Person in schools • Training • Responding to concerns that a child is at risk • Reporting a child at risk 	8 10 11 13 14 16
Appendices:		
	Appendix 1- Example Policy template for education settings/schools	18
	Appendix 2 – Example policy template for early years settings	29
	Appendix 3 – Policy template for Blaenau Gwent Youth Service	41
	Appendix 4 – Types of Harm	54
	Appendix 5 – How to Make a Report	55
	Appendix 6 – Professional Allegations/Concerns Flowchart and procedures	57
	Appendix 7 – Safeguarding file - Transfer of Records	58
	Appendix 8 – Community Cohesion-Preventing Extremism	60
	Appendix 9 – Secure and Shelter Procedure (guidance)	62
	Appendix 10 - Associated Policies, Guidance and Advice	64
	Appendix 11 – Safeguarding Data Protocol	66

INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse is everybody's responsibility.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the County Borough is safe and protected and that our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and adults at risk are effectively met. This is reflected in the wellbeing plan. Objectives include Blaenau Gwent having safe and friendly communities and everyone having the best start in life.

Children are defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Education services provide support to young people up to the age of 25 years. This policy covers all children and adults at risk.

All Local Government Education Services (LGES) are required to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place. The Council seeks assurance from its commissioned services that these policies and procedure are in place and this is validated by the Safeguarding in Education manager on an annual basis. Settings will need to assure themselves that commissioned services and those activities which extend beyond the school day (and not in the direct control of the setting) have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place.

It is recommended that the policy format recorded in Keeping Learners Safe (Welsh Government circular [272/2021](#)) is used as the basis for all establishments, organisations and services linked to Education. This format can be adapted to meet the needs and requirements of those linked to Education and can be used as the starting point for specifically constructed policies to suit their roles and responsibilities in working with and supporting children and young people.

Other information for children, parents, staff, volunteers and governors could be added as appendices to the main policy. This could include methods of internal recording of concerns and guidance and advice to children, staff and parents in raising concerns.

The policy should be dated and also notification when the next formal review is intended. Where appropriate the date of approval by the Governing Body or Management would be important to be recorded on the policy.

Basic items from the policy could be included in school/ education setting and or organisation's publications for parents and children. A full copy of the policy must be made available to parents on request, but a nominal cost may be incurred.

Safeguarding arrangements have continued to flex as the pandemic has progressed. At this stage the annex for responding to Covid has been removed from this year's policy report but should future situations arise in relation to Covid the Safeguarding in Education Manager will issue timely advice for safeguarding arrangements to education settings through the Safeguarding bulletins which will continue to be published. As such, moving forwards safeguarding will be a key theme of the Council's recovery and renewal action plan.

SCOPE

For the purposes of this policy, 'workforce' is defined as those engaged by the Council, including permanent and temporary employees, students, volunteers, workers employed by employment agencies, contractors and consultants. Where the term 'practitioner' is used, it describes anyone in paid employment and unpaid volunteers.

This policy covers all education settings within Blaenau Gwent.

While practitioners and contractors are likely to have varied levels of contact with children, young people and adults at risk as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.

All education settings must have their own safeguarding policies and procedures which are in keeping with this document and local, regional and national procedures and guidance. An example policy template can be found at appendix 1.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requiring local authorities and non-maintained settings to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the well-being and welfare of the children on their care.
- Children Act 1989/2004
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014
- The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/>

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding means preventing and protecting children and adults from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.

The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect:

'Abuse' means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place. 'Financial abuse' includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

‘Neglect’ means a failure to meet a person’s basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person’s well-being for example, impairment of the person’s health

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

PREVENTATIVE APPROACH

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council wants safe and friendly communities. With regard to this, the council is committed to the development of approaches to ensure organisations meet the same Council objective. Local Government Education Services will be expected to respond to the needs of children/adults at risk, understand how to establish a positive culture of safeguarding and adhere to the principles of partnership working, promoting prevention and early intervention.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFEGUARDING IN EDUCATION

Overview

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk of harm.

All practitioners working for or on behalf of the Council have a **“duty to report”** any concerns they may have for the welfare and/or protection of children and adults at risk. The process to follow to make reports is contained in Appendix 5.

The Council promotes safer recruitment policy and practice. Safe recruitment procedures will be implemented in accordance with local, regional and national guidance. Education settings will implement the relevant Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Manager’s Guide to Volunteers in the Workplace.

Practitioners working with children and young people are required to undergo a DBS check, at the appropriate level, which is updated on a three year rolling programme. Education settings must maintain a record of DBS checks, recording the certificate number and date of issue. To ensure compliance with GDPR, original/photocopied certificates should not be retained. All school governors should undergo a DBS check at the appropriate level, upon appointment and renewed at the start of each term of office.

Where practitioners have safeguarding concerns or suspicions about other practitioners or contractors these should be reported through safeguarding procedures. Practitioners should also be aware of the statutory protection provided by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (“PIDA”) that protects employees against victimisation if they speak

about concerns about conduct or practice within a school which is potentially illegal, corrupt, improper, unsafe or unethical, or which amounts to malpractice.

All practitioners will be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities as part of their induction to their employment. Additional training will be undertaken appropriate to the practitioner's role and responsibilities.

Any person responsible for, or working with, children or adults at risk in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, is considered both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care. This includes a duty to behave in a manner that does not threaten, harm or put people at risk of harm from others.

All practitioners have a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children or adults at risk.

Each local government education setting/school is responsible for nominating a Designated Senior Person (DSP) and deputy DSP with responsibility for safeguarding. All DSP's will be invited to termly DSP meetings with the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

The Role of the Governing Body in Schools

The Council's agreed statutory partnership agreement sets out the responsibilities of school's governing bodies, which are summarised below:

Governing Bodies of schools are accountable for ensuring effective policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and monitoring its compliance with them

Governing Bodies **must** ensure that their schools:

- 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. community activities on school premises)
 - Reviewed at least annually
 - Made available to parents/carers upon request
 - Provided in a format appropriate to the understanding of children, particularly where schools cater for children with additional needs
- Operate safe recruitment procedures in line with Local Authority policy and 'Keeping Learners Safe' guidance. Safe recruitment procedures must 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 volunteers who will work with children, including relevant DBS checks and professional registration (if required).

- Ensure that the head teacher/principal and all other permanent practitioners 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 with refresher training
- Ensure that any agency staff who work with children have the relevant pre-employment checks and DBS checks in place
- Give clear guidance to volunteers/temporary staff 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 in regard to child protection arrangements that are brought to its attention.
- Provide a copy of the school's safeguarding self-evaluation to the Safeguarding in Education Manager **annually at the start of each academic year.**
- Ensure that data for the safeguarding matrix is provided twice a year to the Safeguarding in Education Manager
- Ensure that the DSP and deputy DSP undertake inter- agency training at least every three years and the Chair of governors and the Safeguarding governor also undertake safeguarding training.
- **Ensure that there is a designated person for relationship and sexuality education, who is appropriately trained.**

It is the expectation of Blaenau Gwent council that the designated safeguarding governor and the chair of governors undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by or to the standards agreed by the Safeguarding Children Board, as well as refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date, in addition to basic safeguarding training. Training should be refreshed at a period not exceeding three years

It is also the expectation of Blaenau Gwent council that all members of governing bodies undertake relevant safeguarding and child protection training. This should be within the first term of starting the role to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to perform their functions and understand their wider safeguarding responsibilities. As a minimum, governors should complete the Keeping Learners Safe modules which support practitioners in education settings to understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

The Governing Body of a school controls the use of the school premises both during and outside school hours, except where a trust deed allows a person other than the governing body to control the use of the premises, or a transfer of control agreement has been made. Governors can enter into transfer of control agreements in order to share control of the school premises with another body, or transfer control to it. The

other body, known as the 'controlling body', will control the occupation and use of the premises during the times specified in the agreement.

Transferring control of the premises to local community groups, sports association and service providers can enable school facilities to be used without needing ongoing management or administrative time from school staff.

Where the governing body provides services or activities directly under the supervision or management of school staff, the school's arrangements for child protection will apply. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the governing body must confirm that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate.

Responsibilities of Head Teachers/ Managers

Head teachers/Managers should foster a nurturing culture within settings and promote open communication between staff and pupils on safeguarding matters.

Head teachers/Managers **must** ensure that all practitioners (including supply staff and volunteers):

- Fully implement and follow the safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by the governing body or proprietor
- Have both time and access to sufficient resources to enable them to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussion and other inter-agency meetings as well as contributing to the assessment of children. Ensure
- Understand the procedures for safeguarding children, feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and be confident that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with Welsh Government Procedures for Whistleblowing in Schools (Model Policy).
- As part of their induction, are given a written statement about the setting's policy and procedures, and the name and contact details of the DSP.
- Understand and comply with pre-employment, DBS and Professional Registration requirements
- Receive appropriate safeguarding training (Staff, volunteers and governors)

Head teachers/ Managers should also:

- Provide timely updates to the Safeguarding in Education Manager in line with the safeguarding data protocol (Appendix 11)
- Participate in the Quality Assurance processes in a timely manner
- Ensure that the safeguarding processes are reviewed annually and shared with staff, the governing body and the Safeguarding in Education manager through the provision of the safeguarding self-evaluation document to the latter, annually, at the start of each academic year.

Role of the Designated Person in schools and educational settings

The Designated Senior Person (DSP) for safeguarding fulfills an essential role in developing and implementing policies that help to safeguard adults and children from all forms of abuse and create a safe environment.

Each education setting must identify a DSP with lead responsibility for managing all safeguarding concerns. The DSP must be available to discuss safeguarding concerns; should be consulted, when possible, as to whether to raise a safeguarding concern with the local authority; and will manage any immediate actions required to ensure the individual at risk is safe from abuse. All practitioners should know who to contact in their education setting for advice and they should not hesitate to discuss their concerns no matter how insignificant they may appear.

The DSP need not be a teacher, but must be a senior member of the leadership team with the status and authority within the organisation to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources to safeguarding matters and directing other staff. The DSP could also be a single appointment within the senior team and need not carry other duties.

Each DSP should have at least one deputy who has equal status and access to the same training. The number of deputies will depend on the education setting, and should reflect the proportion of work involved and the size and scale of the education setting. Larger education settings should have a team of staff working together and split-site education settings should have a DSP available on each site.

The DSP should possess the necessary skills and qualities for the role, which will have a strong focus on communication with learners and professionals. This can be a demanding role and will require a level of expertise, knowledge, resources and support.

Handling individual cases may be a responsibility delegated to other members of staff, but it is important that a senior member of staff take overall responsibility for this area of work. The DSP should always be kept informed of the progress and the outcome of all cases. All staff taking on these responsibilities should be fully trained and skilled in their responsibilities.

In education settings with a high number of safeguarding concerns, consideration should be given to appointing a full-time DSP with relevant skills and experience. An alternative arrangement might involve the delegation of day-to-day responsibilities while the DSP retains overall responsibility, as described above.

The DSP should have adequate support, training and supervision to undertake their role effectively. The supervision should support the DSP with the emotional impact of their

role and provide an opportunity for reflection on their practice. This could be done on an individual or group basis but the DSP should be provided with an opportunity for individual support where necessary.

The DSP must know how to recognise and identify the signs of abuse, neglect and other types of harm, irrespective of whether it is online or offline, and know when it is appropriate to make a report to the local authority (or police where the child/children are in immediate danger).

The DSP role involves providing advice and support to other staff, record-keeping, working with family members or carers, making referrals to children's services and attending statutory meetings, as well as liaising with the SCB and working with other agencies as necessary. The DSP role is not to investigate allegations, but they must keep the headteacher informed of all safeguarding concerns raised in the school or college. The Council has purchased the MyConcern software package for schools to better facilitate the sharing of information in a timely manner

The DSP should also consider how safeguarding more widely can be addressed and ensure preventative measures are adopted in the education setting. This part of the role will include building relationships with other agencies, as well as ensuring staff and learners are informed about risks and how to access support. This will form part of the whole-school (setting) approach and learning through the new curriculum.

The DSP will take responsibility for the education setting's safeguarding and child protection practice, policy, procedures and professional development, working with other agencies as necessary. The DSP should ensure the education setting's safeguarding policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the governing body or proprietor regarding this.

The DSP is responsible for ensuring that parents/carers see copies of the child safeguarding policy. This may help avoid the potential for later conflict by alerting them to the role of the education setting and the fact that reports may be made to the local authority where there are safeguarding concerns. Many education settings include information about this at induction meetings for new parents/carers, in their prospectus and on their website.

As well as the education setting's safeguarding policy, there are other policies that have relevance to safeguarding, and the DSP may be involved in monitoring the effectiveness of these other policies to ensure there is consistency and coherence in the way the school effectively safeguards their children.

The DSP should ensure the education setting completes the School Safeguarding Self-Evaluation to support a whole-setting approach to safeguarding, as well as to provide a benchmark against which to seek to continually improve safeguarding approaches and structures. The audit tool should be regularly reviewed to ensure that there is constant reflection, learning and updating of processes within the education setting.

The principles outlined in the responsibilities of the DSP should be adopted as effective practice in all education settings.

The head teacher/ Manager 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, including ongoing professional development and regular participation at DSP meetings.
- Has time to attend and provide reports and advice to case conferences and other interagency meetings as required

Safeguarding training

The DSP must have regular training in safeguarding to meet the requirements of the role. This will require a higher level of training than for other staff in education settings, and will include more specialist training in different types of abuse as well as the skills required to respond so the DSP has a good understanding of current issues and skills. 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 fulfil their responsibilities. They should also undertake refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

It is the role of the DSP, working with the headteacher, to ensure all practitioners:

- have access to and understand the education setting's safeguarding policy, especially new or part-time staff who may work with different education settings
- have induction and refresher training covering safeguarding
- understand the causes of abuse, neglect and other kinds of harm
- understand the different types of abuse
- are able to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and other kinds of harm
- know how to respond effectively when they have concerns
- know how to respond to a disclosure appropriately
- know how to communicate effectively with children and young people, including using skills such as empathy
- know that they have a responsibility to report any concerns immediately as they arise.

The DSP must keep a record of all staff training, including the dates, details of the provider and a record of staff attendance.

All staff should attend refresher training preferably within two years, but should not exceed three years between training; due to the changing nature of online safety it is recommended that this be renewed regularly.

The Keeping learners safe modules ([210419-keeping-learners-safe-module-guidance.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)) support all staff in education settings to understand their safeguarding responsibilities as set out in this guidance.

All governors, including the chair of governors, and safeguarding governor should be given access to safeguarding and child protection training to ensure a basic and consistent level of awareness. This training includes, but is not limited to, the Keeping learners safe modules ([210419-keeping-learners-safe-module-guidance.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)). Governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the education setting policies and procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements, and all governors should know what to do if they have concerns about a child.

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 training on Preventing Extremism. Links to online PREVENT training are contained in Appendix 8. Further training on wider safeguarding issues should be accessed according to the needs of the setting.

Responding to Concerns that a child is at risk

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment and to identify children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or harm irrespective of where this happens (online or offline, on or off the education setting premises). All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed. In addition to working with the DSP, staff members should be aware that they might be asked to support social workers to take decisions about individual children

Early identification and intervention are key to meeting the needs of children by preventing or delaying circumstances that might lead to social services' intervention. Addressing low-level well-being problems early can stop issues escalating. Therefore, prevention, identification and early intervention are key, and equipping teachers and other school staff with the necessary knowledge to identify problems, together with support in the form of consultation, liaison and advice from more specialist services is key to the whole-school (setting) approach.

Everyone in the education system who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children, as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent issues from escalating. Staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children

Education settings should consider how they could build relationships with other services to ensure early referrals and offers of support to children and families are made before their needs escalate.

The DSP should provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties and liaise closely with other services such as children's social care and family support services.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures provide common standards to guide safeguarding and child protection practice and a framework within which individual reports of a child at risk, actions, decisions and plans are made and carried out. They are an integral part of the framework for safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children. The DSP should ensure that everyone working in the education setting is aware of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and knows how to access a copy of the procedures.

Staff should always speak to the DSP in the first instance to discuss their concerns, but it is important to remember that anyone can contact the local authority children's social services to raise a concern at any time. Where a concern about the well-being of a child is identified staff members should always act in the best interests of the child.

A child, parent, carer, relative or member of the public who expresses concerns about a child's well-being to anyone working in the education setting must never simply be asked to make a direct report to social services or the police. These concerns should be shared with the DSP. If the individual wishes to make a report, this report should not change the actions of the DSP; a report must still be made by the DSP if it is felt that the child is at risk.

Every education setting must have a suitable system in place to support effective data collection of children suspected to be at risk. 'My Concern' is the software package for use in Blaenau Gwent. This package will support staff to log concerns and the DSP to identify patterns of abuse, neglect, or other kinds of harm.

Where a staff member has concerns but would like further advice on these concerns they should have a discussion with the DSP. Concerns must be shared with social services through a report, supported by the DSP. The DSP can advise on and manage the process. Whether the actual making of the report is done by the DSP or the staff member will depend on the arrangements in place at the individual education setting.

All agencies involved in safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children must have policies and procedures specifying arrangements for the retention, storage and destruction of electronic and paper case records. The policies should ensure that case records are stored safely and able to be retrieved as required.

If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, the staff member must write a record of the conversation as soon as possible, distinguishing clearly between fact, observation, allegation and opinion, noting any action taken in cases of possible abuse or neglect, and signing and dating the note.

All education settings must reassure and inform children there is a safe environment to talk about matters that affect them. Displaying information of national children's

helplines and peer support schemes, in visible and easily accessible places, can encourage them to share concerns and receive help. These posters provide support to children to speak out when they have a concern. Education settings should display these posters on their premises in clear view of children as effective practice.

Reporting a child at risk

Partners must inform the local authority where they have reasonable cause to believe a child to be at risk.

The DSP should act as a point of contact and a source of support, advice and expertise for schools and colleges when deciding whether to make a report to the local authority. The DSP should also take a lead in liaising with relevant agencies unless there are immediate concerns and staff should make contact directly.

Where the DSP has reasonable cause to suspect that a child attending the education setting is at risk, a report must be made to the local authority as soon as possible. However, if there are immediate concerns about a child's safety or a criminal offence against a child is suspected, the emergency services must be contacted without delay to protect the child/children from risk of serious harm.

Where staff members have concerns that a child is at risk of abuse, neglect or other harm they must raise these with the DSP. The DSP must then decide whether it is appropriate to make a report to social services and/or the police. It is important to note any staff member can also report concerns to local authority social services or to the police directly; however, liaison with the DSP is advisable in all cases where possible

Concerns should always lead to help and support, either through a report to social services, or direct support through the education setting or other service such as family support services. The DSP should share the following information with the staff member making the report and the headteacher or principle:

- proposed initial action, including signposting or that no further action will be taken
- who will be taking action.

Staff members must also be aware of wider safeguarding concerns and report these to the DSP.

Where the concerns relate to cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse against staff, guidance is available in [Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff \(210419-keeping-learners-safe-module-guidance.pdf \(gov.wales\)\)](#), and the process is set out in the [Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff: Revised guidance for governing bodies \(see gov.wales/disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-school-staff\)](#). The relevant process is set out in the example template policy (appendix 1, under the heading, 'What to do if a child tells you they have been abused by a practitioner (including volunteers)').

All practitioners and contractors have a responsibility to share their concerns in accordance with this policy and to undertake relevant training.

Children - Further guidance and the relevant Multi Agency Referral Form to make a report can be found through the Gwent Safeguarding website, at <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

Adults - Further guidance and the appropriate referral form for reporting an adult at risk can be found through the Gwent Safeguarding website <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

Example policy template for schools/education settings

Child Protection Policy for (Name of School /Setting)

1. Introduction

The school/setting 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 and volunteers) working in the school/education setting. In the case of schools, it is the Governing Body's policy. It is recognised by this school/setting 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.

The school/setting 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 this school/setting 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 .

The school/ setting 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 this education setting/school we recognise that children/adults at risk who are at risk, suffer abuse, or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.

At this education setting/school 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

This setting/school 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

The setting/school's policy on Bullying has been set out in (a separate document/ the behaviour policy etc.) (It would be useful to note any guidance from the Authority within any documentation.) This policy/information is reviewed annually by Governors

7. Physical Intervention

The setting/school's 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

The school/setting's policy on Online Safety has been set out in (a separate document)

9. Children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

This school/setting 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

This school/setting 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

This school/setting 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 crim 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

The school/setting 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.

The Designated Senior Person for safeguarding at this school/setting is:-

.....

The Deputy Designated Senior Person for safeguarding at this school/setting is:-

.....

The designated governor for safeguarding at this school is:-

.....

The Council's Safeguarding in Education Manager is:-

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**

This policy was updated on _____ by _____

This policy was presented and accepted by the Governing Body on _____

This staff were made aware of this policy and or updates on _____

This policy will be reviewed on _____

Example policy template for Early Years, Childcare and play

Safeguarding Policy for (Name of Setting)

.....(setting) believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to safeguarding all children in our care from harm. The practitioners at (setting) fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguard children and complies with Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, Gwent Safeguarding Children's Board and Blaenau Gwent authority's safeguarding policy.

We recognise the key role that.....(setting) can play in working with children and their families to seek early help to address any emerging concerns to help prevent problems from escalating, in preventing abuse by providing our children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Our setting will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, respected and valued, where children are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- ensure that all children know there is an adult in the setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- encourage positive emotional health and well-being, self-esteem and self-assertiveness;
- promote a caring, safe and secure environment;
- have regard to the characteristics, culture and beliefs of the child and their family (including, for example language) whilst recognising the paramountcy of safeguarding the individual;
- liaise and work together with all other support services and those agencies involved in early intervention services and the safeguarding of children and young people;
- providing continuous support to a child about whom there have been concerns;

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of National and Gwent Children's Safeguarding Boards' guidance and protocols that seek to protect children, namely:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requiring local authorities and non-maintained settings to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the well-being and welfare of the children on their care.
- Children Act 1989. Children and Family (Wales) Measure 2010
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

- Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014
- Domestic abuse (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019
- The UNCRC seven core aims for children and young people in Wales
- Relevant Welsh Government guidance on safeguarding children

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working at
(setting).

We aim to:-

- Ensure that all children are never placed at risk while in the care of(setting);
- Support child's health and development in ways that foster security, confidence and independence;
- Ensure that the child's best interests are paramount and as far as reasonably practicable, have regard to the child's views, wishes and feelings, so that they receive the care and support they need before a problem escalates;
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times;
- Ensure parents are fully aware of our safeguarding/child protection policies and procedures when they register with the setting and are kept informed of all updates when they occur;
- Practitioners should always seek to be transparent with people they are working with about circumstances where they may need to share information with social services and/or the police;
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents;
- Ensure that all staff have regard to this guidance when fulfilling their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse - safeguarding and promoting the welfare, health and well-being of children in their care;
- Ensure that all staff regularly revise Safeguarding issues and procedures and sign a declaration that they have understood and will adhere to the setting's policies and procedures;
- That practitioners understand their duty to seek early help to address any emerging concerns to help avoid problems escalating;
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm;
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff;
- To develop a structured procedure within(setting) which will be followed by all members of staff;

- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other 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 support with the submission of written reports.
- To ensure that all adults within the setting, who have access to the children, have been checked as to their suitability (including visitors);
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) CIW will be notified of any allegations made against staff, managers, any volunteers, students and/or outside agencies in the setting.

Safe recruitment

..... (the setting) operate safe recruitment procedures and ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new practitioners and volunteers who will work with children, including disclosure and barring checks (DBS) in line with current guidance. We abide by CIW requirements in respect of references and suitability checks for practitioners and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children. All practitioners and temporary practitioners/volunteers providing cover during short-term absences and who will be working with children are given clear guidance of the setting’s arrangements for child protection and their responsibilities during induction.

Children with additional learning needs

We recognise that statistically children and young people with behavioural difficulties and disabilities have an increased risk of being abused compared with their non-disabled/non sensory impaired peers. We also recognise that adults who support children and young people with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or emotional and behaviour problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

Appointed Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and their responsibilities.

The setting’s Designated Safeguarding Person is
 who will be responsible for supporting practitioners in liaising with Social Services, Gwent Safeguarding Children’s Board and CIW regarding any child protection matter.

The setting’s Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person is
who will be responsible for supporting practitioners in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Person and their Deputy will:

- act as a source of advice and support within (the setting) and provide a point of contact for practitioners who have concerns or information that child or young person may be suffering abuse;
- co-ordinate any necessary reports to Social Services, **however** individual practitioners have a duty to report and the responsibility for raising concerns, completing report information, informing Social Services and involvement in any safeguarding processes that follow after a report is made. (e.g. requests for information, attending case conferences etc.)
- support those practitioners in our setting who have been involved with a child who has suffered, or was at risk of suffering harm, who may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- ensure that(the setting) contributes fully to the safeguarding processes e.g. by providing reports, attending meetings or conferences when needed;
- ensure that all practitioners and parents/carers are aware of and have access to our setting's safeguarding policy and procedures and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures;
- disseminate safeguarding information gained from training and other sources to all practitioners in our setting and ensure that newly appointed practitioners are aware of their child protection/safeguarding responsibilities;
- inform CIW of any allegations that have been made against managers, practitioners and volunteers.

Practitioner commitment

The(setting) is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities in respect of child protection and safeguarding through the provision of support and training to practitioners. Therefore,(setting) will ensure that:-

- all practitioners have up to date safeguarding training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of harm, abuse and neglect
- implement safe recruitment practices for all practitioners, students and volunteers, including verified references and full and up to date enhanced DBS checks
- all practitioners and volunteers are given a copy of the Safeguarding policy during their induction, and have its implications explained to them.
- all practitioners are alert to children's needs including any potential or suspected risk of abuse or harm and understand what action they should take
- any practitioner, student or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, will be subject to the provisions of the setting's Disciplinary Policy
- all practitioners and volunteers receive regular staff meetings and supervision where opportunities to discuss Safeguarding/Child Protection issues will be made and further support provided if necessary;

- all practitioners are aware of any early intervention services that could help prevent any problems escalating;
- All practitioners should familiarise themselves with the culture and beliefs of those families they work with. Practitioners should not be afraid to ask about particular behaviours and the reasons for them in a sensitive manner and should never overlook potential harmful practices on the basis of cultural sensitivity;
- all practitioners are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All students and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the DSP or setting's manager.
- All visitors/contract/external workers will sign a visitor's book and be formally identified before accessing the setting. They will be accompanied whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use.

Supporting Practitioners

We recognise that all practitioners working in the setting who has been involved with a child who has suffered, or is at risk of suffering harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support the practitioner by providing opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Safeguarding Person and to seek further support if needed.

Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse can manifest itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, an institution or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger.

Indicators of abuse (although this is by no means an exhaustive list)

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Inappropriately clothed

Types of Harm

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;

- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others;
- **sexual abuse** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including: 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 or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be: not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.
- **Identity Neglect** – not recognising or addressing the child or young person’s needs in terms of (for example) culture, religion, gender and sexuality.
- **Emotional Neglect** – It also includes not saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child’s successes, not showing any emotions in interactions with a child

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures:
<https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

What to do if a practitioner has a concern

The action that (the setting) take to safeguard children will be in line with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

It is not the role of any practitioner in our setting to investigate and attempt to seek out evidence on matters relating to safeguarding concerns and they must not attempt to do so. Practitioners in our setting all have a role in assisting social services and/or the police and/or CIW by providing information for safeguarding/child protection enquiries. They recognise that sharing information for the purposes of safeguarding is essential and that safeguarding the individual overrides the need to keep information confidential.

Practitioners in our setting will inform the Designated Safeguarding Person of:

- any concerns that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to be suffering some form of abuse;
- any allegations of abuse against a practitioner;
- any disclosures of abuse.

Any child currently on the Child Protection Register who is absent without explanation for two days will be referred to the social services team.

Not all child protection information results in a report to Social Services, but small

pieces of information may be significant on their own to create a wider picture.

The practitioner who is making the report should seek to obtain consent from parent or carer. This supports positive working relationships between children/young persons and their families. The child and parent/s wish not to report may be over-riden if it is considered by practitioners that there is still a need for a report.

It may not be appropriate to seek parent consent:

- ❖ the possibility that the child would be put at further risk;
- ❖ the possibility that a child would be threatened or otherwise coerced into silence;
- ❖ a strong likelihood that important evidence would be destroyed/lost;
- ❖ the parent identified as the alleged abuser
- ❖ the child in question not wishing the parent to be involved at that stage and is competent to take that decision;
- ❖ it is in the public interest.

Practitioners should discuss whether it is appropriate to seek consent from the child and parents with their agency's designated safeguarding person (DSP). If the decision is made not to seek consent this decision must be recorded.

Information that should be included in a report:

- Date of disclosure/concern
- Date and time of the record being made
- Name, address and date of birth of the child/children
- Details about the **cause for concern** regarding risk of harm
- A factual report of what happened, what was witnessed or said – use the child's own words!
- Detailed description of any injuries sustained and any allegations, for example sexual abuse, their sources, timing and location
- A note of any other people involved, family circumstances
- Whether the child is safe currently or is in need of immediate protection and actions taken so far
- Whether consent has been obtained and if not, why not
- Any discussions held with the parent/s (where deemed appropriate)
- Name of the person making the report and their job title
- Signature

The Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) should be informed and given the record. The member of staff should contact Social Services via telephone, to express their concern and Social Services will advise if a report should be made.

- Note the time of the telephone call to Social Services;
- Note the name of the person that is dealing with the telephone call;
- Note the actions to be taken;

If a report is to be made the DSP will support the practitioner (report maker) in completing the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) and processing the report.

Further guidance and the relevant Multi Agency Referral Form to make a referral can be found through the Gwent Safeguarding website, at

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

***Remember to create the Picture** so that the person reading the report gets a clear understanding of why you have concerns about a child or children. Make it factual – how you are involved, what did you see, what did you hear, what happened, where did it happen, when did it happen, who else is involved and why you are reporting.

Third Party Information

Practitioners ‘must not leave it to the member of public to contact social services or just advise the person to contact social services directly’. The practitioner has a Duty To Report concerns raised by a member of the public. Practitioners have a responsibility to report any concerns they are alerted to by the general public – both in their work and private lives. When making a report that comes from a third party or the public Practitioners must:

- Record exactly what has been said by the member of public
- Give the information provided to them
- Establish what evidence the member of public has regarding the risk of harm. For example - have they witnessed the abuse, spoken to the individual who is at risk of harm, or heard something?
- Explain that whilst respecting any wish to remain anonymous this may not always be possible, for example if a crime is suspected.

Where possible, members of the public should be encouraged to provide contact details.

The Prevent Duty

As a registered childcare provider we are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

As a childcare provider, we as a setting, understand our role in identifying the possible risk to children in our care who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in their own family or outside.

.....(setting) is committed to:

- Taking appropriate action when observing concerning behaviour
- Training practitioners so that they are able to identify families and children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation
- Build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values.
 1. Democracy
 2. Rule of law
 3. Independent liberty
 4. Mutual respect and tolerance
- Assist in promoting children's learning in their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world
- Report any concerns following our setting's safeguarding procedures

Allegations against a practitioner

If an allegation of any form of child abuse is made against a practitioner, the following procedure will be adhered to:-

- All allegations of abuse of children by a professional or practitioner must be taken seriously and treated accordingly
- All practitioners are made aware and understand that they can approach social services or the police, independently, to discuss any worries they have about abuse, neglect or harm and that they should always do so if;
 - ❖ They have concerns that their manager, designated practitioners or proprietors may be implicated;
 - ❖ They have concerns that the manager, designated practitioners or proprietor will not take the matter seriously and/or act appropriately to protect the child; or
 - ❖ They fear intimidation and/or have immediate concerns for their own or for the service user's safety
- All allegations and suspicions of professional abuse must be referred to Social Services, CIW or to the Police. The setting will follow their safeguarding procedures and submit a report.
- All allegations and concerns must be recorded, dated and signed.
- The setting will have high regard to;
 - ❖ Any concerns about a practitioner's behaviour towards their own children/family members;

- ❖ If there are concerns about the practitioner's behaviour towards children unrelated to their employment or voluntary work;
- ❖ When an allegation is made about historical abuse;
- A responsible senior manager from Social Services will meet with the setting's manager for an initial discussion and establish if further action is to be taken. Social Services will provide guidance and inform the setting's manager on how to proceed.
- If further action is to be taken, the responsible senior manager will arrange a strategy discussion with the police to consider any immediate action to be taken to protect the child, and to arrange a strategy meeting.
- At any point after an allegation is made the setting's manager may decide to suspend the practitioner.
- The practitioner should be informed that an allegation has been made at the earliest opportunity. Details of what can be shared will be discussed during the strategy discussion.
- The child's parents/carers will be informed of details of the allegations and the procedures to be followed.
- On no account should the allegation be discussed and direct questioning should be avoided if the police wish to interview the practitioner
- During the strategy discussion, a decision will be made regarding a Professional Strategy Meeting (PSM). If a PSM is to be held, this will be convened by Children's Services. The PSM should develop an action plan with time scales in order to avoid any necessary delay.
- The practitioner will be informed that the child protection enquiry will be carried out in accordance with child protection procedures. The practitioner will be reassured that every effort will be made to preserve confidentiality, however information gained which is relevant to disciplinary or criminal proceedings may be disclosed for this purpose.
- If the practitioner is a member of a trade union or other professional association they should be advised to contact that organisation. They can request copies of the minutes of the Professional Strategy Meeting if they so wish.
- At the conclusion of the investigation the member of staff must be informed, in writing, within 5 working days about the allegation that was made, the procedures followed and the outcome.
- Arrangements should be made to keep the child and their parents/carers informed of the outcomes.
- Where a practitioner is dissatisfied with the enquiries/investigation, or the outcome reached, they should be informed of grievance, complaints or appeals procedures which may be applicable.

Record Keeping

Children's records are freely accessible to parents. However, a written request must be made for personal files on the children as we must take into account data protection rules when disclosing records that refer to third parties.

The designated safeguarding person will ensure that:

- a chronological record of concerns about a child is maintained even if there is no need to make an immediate report;
- all such records are kept confidentially and secure.
- A file is maintained with copies of safeguarding reports, child protection conference minutes, observations, feedback from Social Services, record of injuries, reasons of absence, copies of emails are headed with the child's name, Social Workers name and contact, Health Visitors name and contact and kept within the child's file.

Safe Caring

All practitioners will make:-

- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when practitioners, students or volunteers are left alone with a child. If practitioners are left alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another practitioner should be informed
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a practitioner this will be recorded fully in the Incident Record Book
- Practitioners will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves. Where this is essential, a practitioner will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, a practitioner should not accompany children into the toilet. Practitioners are aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued.
- Practitioners will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.

Confidentiality

Practitioners cannot keep confidential a disclosure or allegation of abuse and must refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Person and/or other senior member of staff. It is important that each practitioner deals with this sensitively. When responding, the practitioner 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 child/young 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.

All reports should be made with the knowledge that during any subsequent investigation, the source (i.e. the setting) will be made known to the family.

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

Other practitioners may need to be alerted to concerns about a child or young person, possibly in order to monitor the concern or to gather further evidence prior to a report being made, or to assist in providing appropriate support to a child or young person once a report has been made. Information should only be shared on a strict need to know basis.

Relevant Telephone Numbers

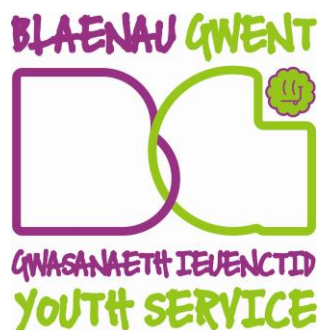
Social Services IAA Team	01495 315700
Social Services out of hours service	0800 328 4432
Gwent Police	01633 838111
Care Inspectorate Wales	0300 7900 126

This policy was updated on _____ by _____

Staff were made aware of this policy and or updates on _____

This policy will be reviewed on _____

Policy template for Blaenau Gwent Youth Service



Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service is committed to safeguarding the welfare of the young people who engage with us through creating and maintaining an environment where young people are listened to and are able to talk safely about any concerns that they may have.

Legislation

Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child states that children have:

‘the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them.’

It further states that protective measures should, as appropriate, include:

‘effective procedures for prevention, identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow up of instances of child maltreatment.’

The Children Act 1989 (updated in 2004 following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry) legislates for Children in England & Wales. The principles of the Act are to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children and young people under the age of 18 are met. This also includes the need to be protected from harm.

Part V of the Act relates to this and states that in addition to **Social Services** only the **Police** and the **NSPCC** have the legal right and responsibility to investigate concerns about child abuse.

However, when working with children and young people **you have a duty of care** and should report any concerns that you may have. If any person has knowledge, concerns or suspicions that a child or young person is suffering, has suffered or is likely to be at risk of harm, it is their responsibility to ensure that the concerns are referred to one of

the agencies that have a statutory duty to make enquiries and intervene when necessary.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, takes into account the above legislation and should be used as the main basis for all child protection in Wales. **A copy of this document is available via <https://safeguarding.wales/> and the South East Wales Safeguarding Board (<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>) and can be downloaded as an App. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise yourself with the documents and it's location.** This policy does not replace this document but provides you with the necessary information and guidance needed to assist you with your duty of care to safeguard young people. This policy sits underneath the **Corporate Child Protection Policy**, which is available via your line manager.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

All practitioners should be aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect in the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, as well as the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. This is essential in order to communicate concerns about harm in a meaningful way.

S.130 (4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines a **child at risk** as a child who:

1. Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm;
2. Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect:

'Abuse' means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place. 'Financial abuse' includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

'Neglect' means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being for example, impairment of the person's health

'Harm' means abuse or the impairment of (a) physical or mental health, or (b) physical, intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development, (including that suffered from seeing or hearing another person suffer ill treatment)

Types of Harm

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others;
- **sexual abuse** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including: 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 or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be: not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse, Neglect and Harm In a Child <https://safeguarding.wales/chi/cp/c1p.p2.html?highlight=pointers>

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures: <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

Safeguarding

If you have a concern that a young person may be at risk of harm (e.g their safety or welfare), but are not in immediate danger or at significant risk then this has to be noted and passed onto your line manager. This may be something that you have heard, seen or had disclosed to you. These cases can be difficult to judge and therefore should be discussed with your line manager, as soon as possible, with action to be taken within the next 24 hours.

Child Protection

If you have a concern, or a young person has made a disclosure that makes you believe that an individual may be at risk of significant or immediate harm you must respond urgently to secure their safety and inform your line manager as soon as possible to inform them of your course of action.

Safeguarding Young People and Staff

(taken from the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019)

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales Act 2014, specifies the duty to report both adults and children at risk or where there is reasonable cause to suspect are at risk of harm. You have a duty to report concerns, suspicions, observations or disclosures made to you regarding safeguarding/child protection which involves a member of staff. Note the date, time, location and who was present and report to your line manager. Notes should also be kept of meetings/discussions with clear agreement about what action is to be taken and by whom. If the decision is made that no further action is to be taken, this should also be recorded with the reasons for the decision. These notes should be kept in a confidential file should they be required at a later date. Should there be serious concerns, agencies must not make their own internal decisions about whether it is a disciplinary issue or a child protection matter. These complex considerations should only take place with the involvement of social services and the police. The police have the statutory powers and responsibility for determining whether a criminal investigation is to be undertaken.

Informing Young People

As a youth worker it is important to let young people know, where possible before they make a disclosure, that if you have concerns for their wellbeing that you may need to pass that information on to ensure that they are kept safe from harm. Should a concern need to be referred on, be open and honest with the young person, keeping them informed, as much as possible, of the process and steps taken to secure their safety and/or wellbeing.

Informing Parents/Carers

Where possible parents should be informed that a report to Social Services is being made. Consent should be given by the parent/carer for this to happen. If the parent does not consent, yet the concern is still of enough significant for a report to Social Services then a report should still be submitted. It should be made clear on the form the reasons for consent not being given or reasons that parents could not be contacted to inform them of the report.

Sharing Information Among Professionals

A failure to share information is a common finding of practice reviews.

Effective sharing and exchange of information between professionals is essential in order to safeguard children and young people.

The law is rarely a barrier to disclosure of information. There is no restriction in the Data Protection Act or any other legislation that prevents concerns regarding individuals being highlighted and shared between agencies for the purpose of protecting children. The Bichard and Carlile reports both confirm the need to be aware that concerns from a number of sources, which individually may not be of any significance, can build up a picture which may suggest a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm and therefore requires professionals to act to protect them.

Whenever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties, but in the public interest in child protection always overrides the public interest in maintaining confidentiality or obtaining consent from families. A child's safety is the paramount consideration in weighing these interests.

Any discussion relating to a young person's welfare should be noted. Note the date, time and who was present at the meeting/discussion. At the end of the meeting/discussion there should be a clear agreement about what action is to be taken and by whom. If the decision is made that no further action is to be taken, this should also be recorded with the reasons for the decision. All concerns about a child or young person's welfare should be documented whether or not further action is taken. These notes should be kept in a confidential file should they be required at a later date.

Pointers for Practice: Seven Golden Rules for Information-Sharing

<https://safeguarding.wales/chi/cp/c3p.p5.html?highlight=information-sharing>

<https://safeguarding.wales/adu/ap/a3pt1p.p7.html?highlight=information-sharing>

Supervision

In addition to regular supervision for staff, where there is a safeguarding/child protection concern, line managers should make additional provision for staff to ensure that procedures have been followed and that support and guidance is given to the referring member/s of staff.

Training

All staff will be expected to keep up to date with child protection policies and procedures. Where this necessitates training then staff will be required to attend. Training in respect of safeguarding and child protection will be ongoing and identified by the youth service. Staff will be informed of when this will take place and will be expected to treat this as a diary priority.

Youth Work Staff Located Offsite

All staff should adhere to the Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures of the youth service. Where a youth provision is based within another setting e.g. schools, then staff should obtain and familiarise themselves with the child protection procedures of that

setting and have available the name and contact details of the designated safeguarding person. Should a safeguarding/child protection issue be raised, staff should firstly seek advice from their line manager. Following this, the designated safeguarding person at the setting should be informed of the concern and any action taken.

Youth Work Staff Working in Out of Hours Provision

Staff working out of hours should adhere to the Child Protection/safeguarding procedures of the youth service. Where concerns are raised then the procedures for Out of Hours Service should be followed.

Protection of Adults at risk (PoVA)

As youth workers we provide services to young people aged 11-25 years. This means that we may come into contact with adults who may need intervention from Social Services. Just as with safeguarding/child protection, we have the same duty of care for adults at risk. This means that staff should act if they:-

- Witness abuse;
- Receive information about abuse, suspected abuse or concerns about the care or treatment of a vulnerable adult;
- Have concerns or suspicions about possible abuse or inappropriate care

As with younger aged young people, adults at risk have the same rights to be fully informed and involved in the safeguarding process and make decisions about their safety and welfare. Adults at risk, if they have the mental capacity, should also have their wishes respected if they seem able to make an informed decision about action and/or intervention unless:

- There is a statutory duty to intervene e.g. a crime has been committed or may well be
- It is in the public interest e.g. another person/s are being put at risk
- It is suspected that they are under the undue influence or someone else

Who are Adults at Risk?

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act states that an 'adult at risk' is an adult who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs);
- as a result of those needs, is unable to protect him/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

This definition may include a person who:

- Has learning disabilities
- Has mental health problems
- Is an older person with support/care needs
- Is physically frail or has a chronic illness
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Misuses drugs or alcohol
- Has social or emotional problems
- Has an autistic spectrum disorder

Abuse can be physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial (includes theft, fraud, pressure about money, misuse of money). It can take place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place.

Neglect describes a failure to meet a person's basic needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person well-being. It can take place in a range of settings, such as private dwelling, residential or day care provision.

The following behaviours could place the adult at risk of abuse or neglect (this list is **not** exhaustive):

- Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV)
- Modern Slavery
- Domestic abuse and violence against men
- Criminal exploitation
- Financial abuse
- Institutional abuse
- Discrimination and hate crime e.g. racial, homophobic, disability
- Forced marriage
- Abuse by another vulnerable adult
- Abuse by children

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse and Neglect in an Adult at risk <https://safeguarding.wales/adu/ap/a1p.p2.html?highlight=pointers>

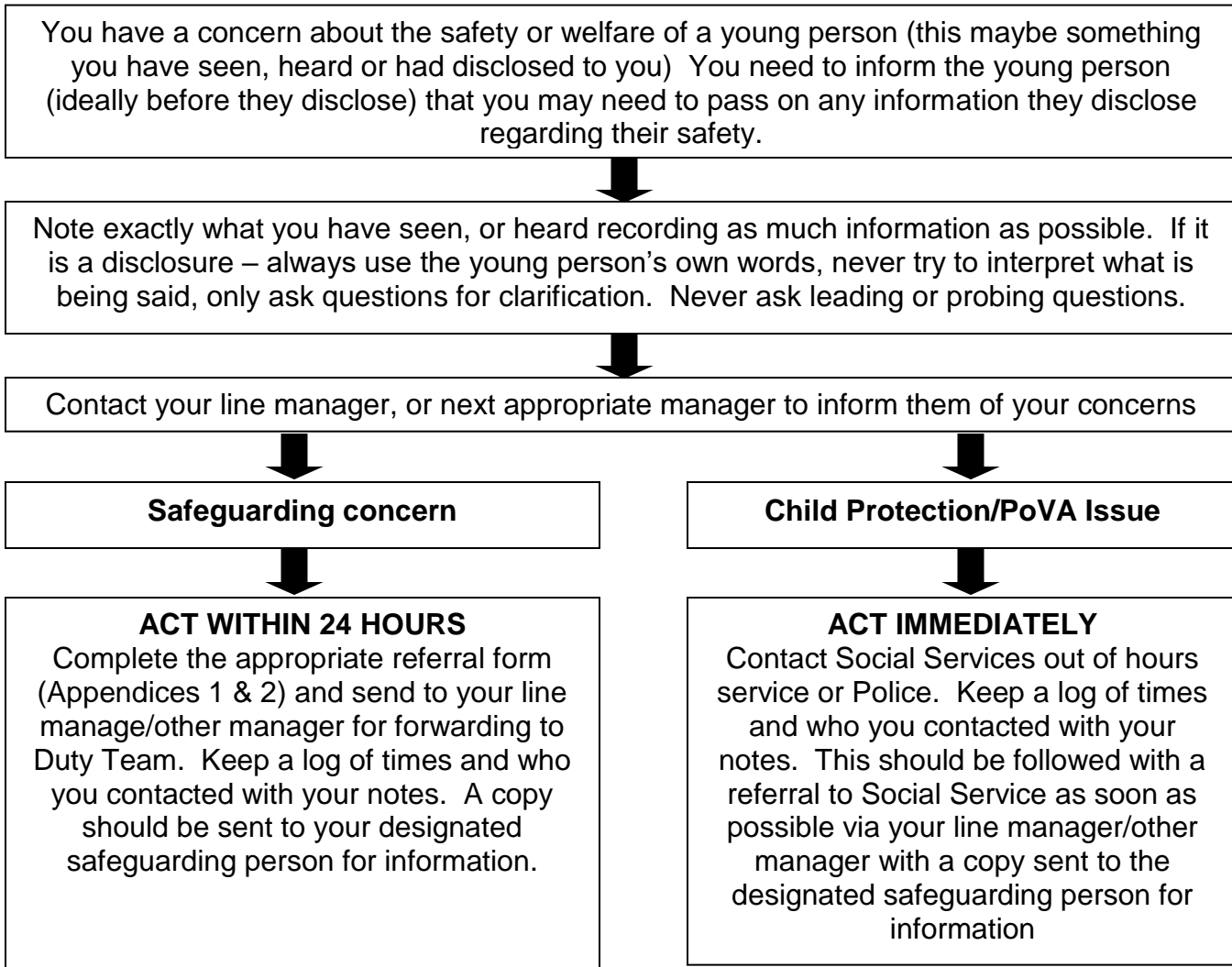
When making the decision to report an adult at risk, you should apply the same procedures as safeguarding/child protection and may need to refer to **the Wales Safeguarding Procedures**. **It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise yourself with these procedures and how to access them, <https://safeguarding.wales/>**

The referral numbers for adults at risk are the same as Child Protection. Links to the relevant forms are found here:

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

Full time provision - Safeguarding/Child Protection Procedures

Flow chart



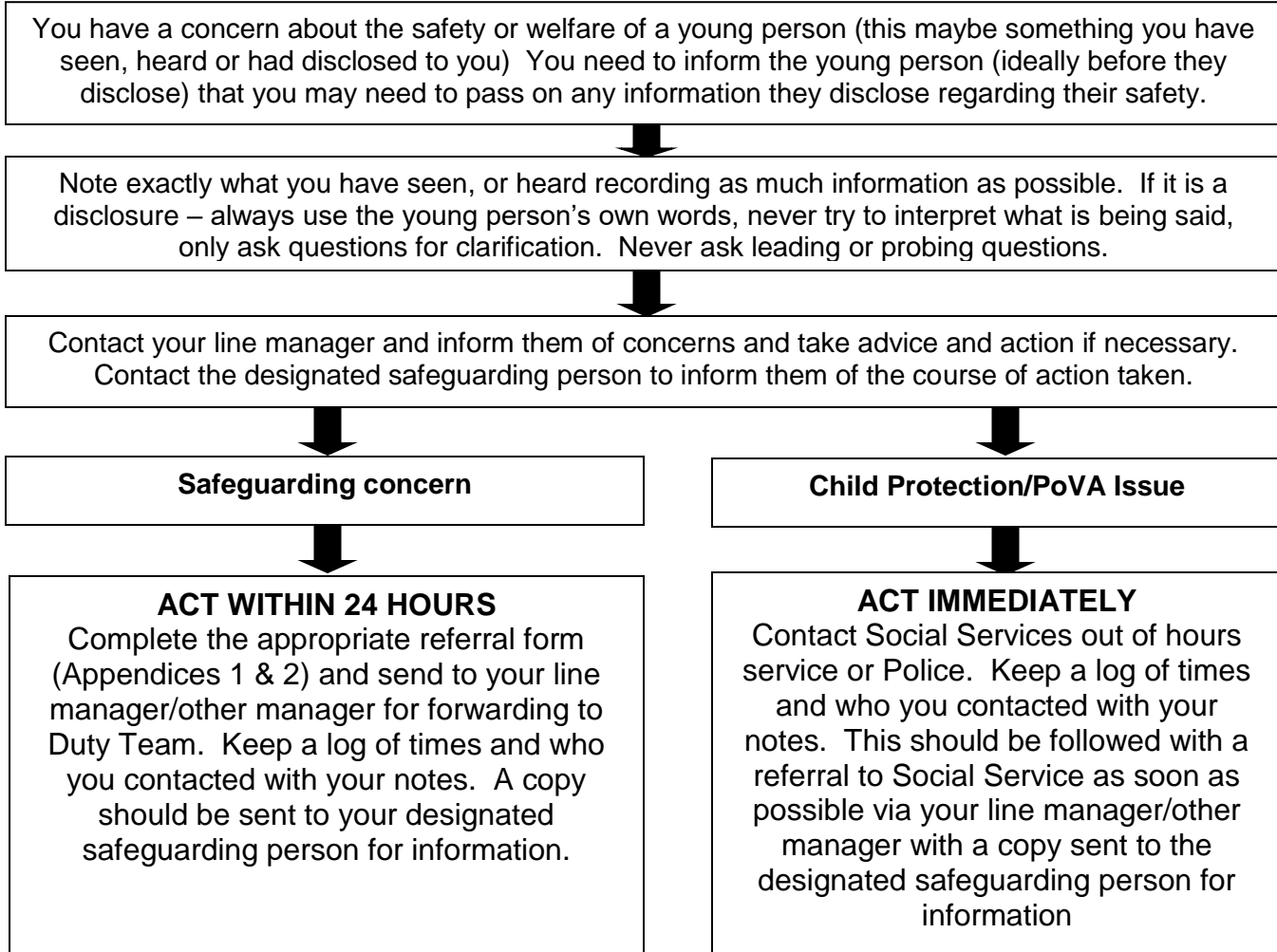
Useful Numbers

Joanne Sims	Youth Service Manager	01495 357866 07772 755435
Claire Madden	Youth Service Development Officer/ Designated Child Protection Officer	01495 357863 07581 628601
Ben Arnold	NEETS Projects Manager	01495 357864 07791 443612
Greg Morgan	Detached Youth Development Officer	01495 355674 07970 208727
Julia Swallow-Edwards	Inspire 2 Achieve Team Lead	01495 355690 07817 760771

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service

Full time Provision located Offsite – Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures

Flow chart



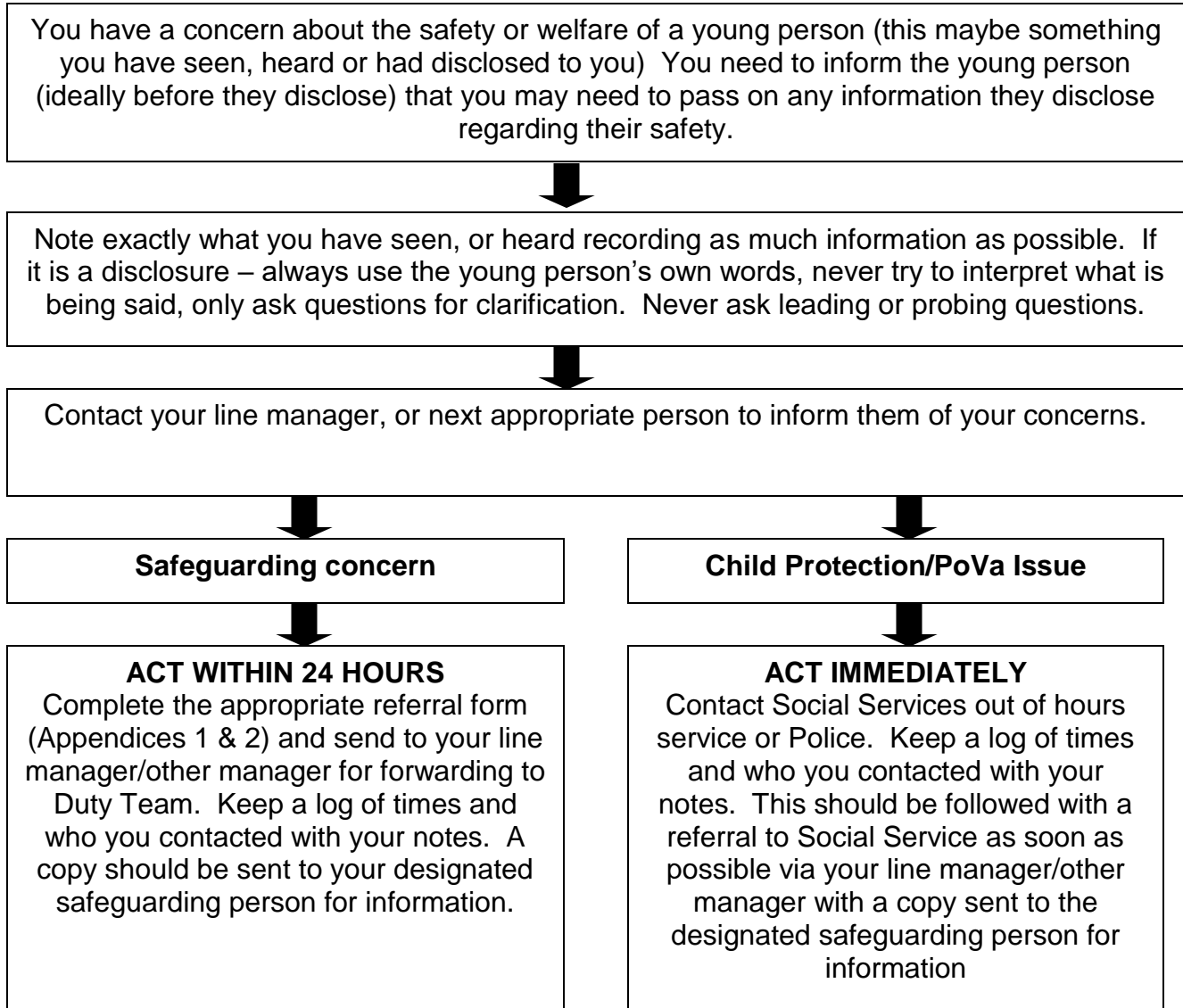
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Blaenau Gwent Youth Service

Out of Hours Provision – Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures

Flow chart



Useful Numbers

Joanne Sims	Youth Service Manager	01495 357866 07772 755435
Claire Madden	Youth Service Development Officer/ Designated Child Protection Officer	01495 357863 07581 628601
Ben Arnold	NEETS Projects Manager	01495 357864 07791 443612
Greg Morgan	Detached Youth Development Officer	01495 355674

07970 208727

Julia Swallow-Edwards Inspire 2 Achieve Team Lead 01495 355690
07817 760771

Liam Thomas Engagement and Progression Coordinator 01495 355690
07854 937489

Social Service Referral Telephone Number 01495 315700

Out of Hours Social Services Telephone Numbers 0800 3284432
01495 767045

Police 01633 838111

NSPCC Helpline (for professional advice) 0808 800 5000

Types of Harm

All practitioners should be aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect in the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, as well as the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect. This is essential in order to communicate concerns about harm in a meaningful way.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

S.130 (4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines a **child at risk** as a child who:

3. Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm;
4. Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act states that an 'adult at risk' is an adult who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs);
- as a result of those needs, is unable to protect him/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Types of Harm

- **Physical abuse** - hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **emotional/psychological abuse** - threats of harm or abandonment, coercive control, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, witnessing abuse of others;
- **sexual abuse** - forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, including: 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 or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways;
- **financial abuse** - this category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be: not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or complaints that personal property is missing.
- **neglect** - failure to meet basic physical, emotional or psychological needs which is likely to result in impairment of health or development.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures: <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

How to make a Report

LISTEN

If you are concerned because of something a child or adult at risk is saying, you should not attempt to take any action directly but **you should**:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully, do not directly question him or her, instead use open questions; what, where, when, who?
- Never stop them talking if they are freely recalling significant events
- Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform (see below)
- Never promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record what was said, when and where it happened and who else was present

SHARE

Any safeguarding concerns should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Person in the respective service area. With the support of the Designated Safeguarding Person the decision to report a concern to Social Services will be made and responsibility for reporting will be agreed i.e. the staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Person will make the report.

Should the concerns relate to a professional, the same procedure will apply. Educational settings must also contact the safeguarding in education manager

Reports in relation to a concern about a child, young person or adult should be made to Social Services as soon as possible and certainly **within 24 hours**.

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on:

01495 315700

Outside office hours, reports should be made to the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team or if there is immediate risk, to the Police.

The Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on: **0800 328 4432**

Practitioners and providers should be aware that they **cannot remain anonymous** when making a report.

The Duty Worker taking the report should be given as much information as possible if it is available to the reporter. This will include the following:

- Full name of the subject of the concern
- Their date of birth or age
- Their address
- The nature of the concern
- Who may be responsible
- Their name and relationship (if any)
- What happened
- When and where
- What has been done in response
- Whether or not the Police have been informed
- The names and relationship of those with caring responsibility
- The names and ages of any other adults living in the household
- The names of any professionals known to be involved e.g. school, GP
- Any information affecting the potential safety of staff
- The allocated social worker or team if known/if applicable

RECORD

All telephone reports should be confirmed in writing within two working days.

- For Children, a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) should be used:

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

- For an Adult, a Duty to Report form should be used.

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

LISTEN, SHARE, RECORD

PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS/ALLEGATIONS

This Flowchart should be used as a brief checklist of procedure for professional concerns/allegations

Detailed procedures are outlined in Wales Safeguarding Procedures, section 5

Also refer to Safeguarding Children in Education: Handling Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff 009/2014

Professional Concerns/Allegations
Child Protection Process

Professional Concerns/Allegations identified in school & reported to HT/Chair of Governors/Manager

Detailed note made immediately of concerns & circumstances

Inform Education Safeguarding Manager
Report to Children's Services – IAA Telephone number 01495 315700. Calls to this number must be followed up in with a written MARF within 48 hours.

Inform practitioner that concerns have been reported.
(Do not give any detail at this stage.)

Risk assessment to be completed and interim
safeguarding measures implemented during

Team manager will coordinate Child protection procedures, progressing to a strategy discussion where appropriate. Decision made whether a professional strategy meeting will be convened.

Professional Strategy Meeting?

YES

NO

Initial Professional Strategy Meeting arranged by Social Services. Meeting is chaired by Safeguarding Manager, Social Services. Participation coordinated by Social Services.

Employer's Actions:
Employer informed
Employer determines actions, e.g. No further action, management advice, disciplinary action, OD Policies.

Follow advice of Children's Services in consultation with Education Safeguarding Manager during and following the investigative process.

Safeguarding File - Transfer of Records

A receiving school must be made aware of the existence of a Child’s Safeguarding file prior to the child transferring from their original school.

The confidential Safeguarding File must be securely transferred to the new school either in Person, or via secure mail that requires a signature of receipt. This Transfer of Records form should be completed and forwarded with the file to the new school. Either the Head teacher or the Designated Senior Person for safeguarding should sign receipt for the file.

Sending Schools should retain a copy of the signed` Transfer of Records forms as evidence of the transfer, and ensure appropriate signatures are obtained.

Child Name	
DOB	

Name of sending school/setting:		
Date record ended at this school/setting (pupil end date):		
Name of receiving school/setting:		
Date of contact with new school/setting		
Has sensitive and urgent information been shared with new school/setting?	Yes / No	If No, why not?

Name of DSP sending records		
Date file sent		
File passed to (name):		

This section to be completed by the receiving school if file delivered by hand.

Receiving School/setting	
Signed	
Print name and position	
Date	

This section to be completed by the sending school with the postage receipt reference if file sent via secure post as proof of sending.

Reference number of postage receipt	
Name and address of recipient	
Date of postage	

Community Cohesion – Preventing Extremism

Our school/setting is committed to providing a safe environment for all of our children, staff and any visitors. There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our school/setting.

Community cohesion is the term used to describe how everyone in a geographical area lives alongside each other with mutual understanding and respect. A cohesive community is where a person has a strong sense of belonging. It is safe, vibrant and able to be resilient and strong when tensions occur.

Those involved in supporting terrorism look to exploit and radicalise vulnerable people, including children and young people. Since July 2015, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a statutory duty on us ‘to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’

We are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age which spring from a variety of sources including the internet. At times students, visitors or parents may themselves reflect or display views that may be considered as discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language; this will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with.

Education is a powerful deterrent against this and we will strive to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and resilience to challenge and discuss such issues in a facilitated and informed way. This way our students are enriched, understand and become tolerant of difference and diversity where they can thrive, feel valued and not marginalised.

We have a clear safeguarding framework on how to manage and respond to issues where a pupil develops or expresses extreme views and ideologies, which are considered inflammatory and against the community cohesion ethos of our school. Where such cases are identified a Multi-Agency Referral Form is to be completed and submitted to Children’s Services. The Local Authority Lead Officer for PREVENT should also be contacted.

Safeguarding Channel Panel

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults is everyone’s responsibility. We are committed to working with our partners to protect and support our students, and where a Multi-Agency Referral Form leads to one of our Students needing safeguarding, we will support the Channel programme.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by identifying individuals at risk; assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about ensuring that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

Training

We are committed to ensuring that all staff in our school have access to the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) and are encouraged to make use of other counter-terrorism related training modules and the reference material below.

Key Points of Contact

..... School's/Setting's Safeguarding Lead

Helena Hunt

Prevent Lead for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Email: Helena.hunt@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk Tel: 07791 875737

Reference Material

[Respect and resilience: developing community cohesion | GOV.WALES](#)

Included within this guidance is a self assessment tool, to support schools to assess their levels of compliance with best practice in the creation of a safe learning community, and to keep learners safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Prevent Duty Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Channel Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance>

E-learning training on:

PREVENT Awareness:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>

PREVENT Referrals:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/preventreferrals>

Channel Awareness:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/channelawareness>

Website: <http://educateagainsthate.com> Resources for parents and teachers

Secure and Shelter Procedure (example)

Secure and Shelter (Lockdown) procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school)
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc.)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose

The school's secure and shelter plan is as follows:

Signal for secure and shelter	
Signal for all clear	

Actions - dependent upon the cause of the activation of Safe and Secure (amend as required)

- *Who sounds the alarm / other form of notification (specify)*
- **Pupils who are outside of the school buildings** are brought inside as quickly as possible and return to their *classroom / other location (specify)* (outside staff will be informed by a senior member of staff)
- **Those inside the school** should remain in their classrooms and check corridors and toilets for pupils or staff
- All external doors and, as necessary, windows are closed (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors must also be closed).
- If the cause of the secure and shelter is air pollution, close air vents and switch off extractor fans / air conditioning.
- Blinds should be drawn and pupils sit quietly
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for via the internal telephone system and instigate an immediate search for anyone missing
- Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm

- The school office will establish communication with the Emergency Services
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and the usual fire evacuation procedure will then take place
- Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable via Parentmail and the website (only when appropriate via guidance from Emergency Services)
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a safe and secure situation.

All situations are different, once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services.

This can then be communicated to staff and pupils. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

All Clear

Once the incident has been assessed as safe all classrooms will be either visited by a senior member of staff or via classroom telephone and told the situation is under control and the class can resume activities as normal.

Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the Lockdown.

Emergency Services and Corporate Communications will support the decision of the Headteacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents.

Safe and Secure Drill

It is of vital importance that the school's Safe and Secure procedures are familiar to all members of the school staff. To achieve this, a drill should be undertaken at least once a year.

Staff will ALWAYS have advance notice of a Safe and Secure drill, therefore if the signal occurs without warning staff must assume it is NOT A DRILL.

Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable of the drill via Parentmail and the website

Associated Policies, Guidance and Advice

- Wales Safeguarding Procedures – 2019
<https://safeguarding.wales/>
- [Keeping learners safe | GOV.WALES](#)
- Recruitment and selection policy
[http://intranet/organisational-development-\(hr\)/schools-hr/recruitment.aspx](http://intranet/organisational-development-(hr)/schools-hr/recruitment.aspx)
- [Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence \(VAWDASV\) educational toolkit | GOV.WALES](#)
[guidance-for-governors_0.pdf](#)
- <https://gov.wales/handling-allegations-abuse-against-teachers-and-staff>
[Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff | GOV.WALES](#)
- Blaenau Gwent Corporate Safeguarding Policy
http://intranet/media/130044/Corporate_Safeguarding_Policy_May_2017docxv3.pdf
- <https://gov.wales/whistleblowing-schools-guidance-governors>
Blaenau Gwent Whistleblowing policy
<http://intranet/media/92682/Whistleblowing-Policy-for-School-based-staff.pdf>
- Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004
https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/basw_14350-5_0.pdf
- Procedures for reporting misconduct and incompetence in the education workforce in Wales-Welsh Government 168/2015 (replaces 018/2009)
<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/23182/1/150608-reporting-misconduct-en.pdf>
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/safe-and-effective-intervention-use-of-reasonable-force-and-searching-for-weapons.pdf>
- <https://gov.wales/children-missing-education>
- <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/educational-records-school-reports-and-the-common-transfer-system-the-keeping-disposal-disclosure-and-transfer-of-pupil-information.pdf>
- Teaching Drama: guidance on Safeguarding Children and Child protection for managers and drama teachers- National Assembly for Wales circular 23/2006
<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/7299/1/clwych-drama-guidance-e.pdf%3Flang%3Den>
- The Control of School Premises (Wales) Regulations 2008
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2008/136/made>
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2008/136/note/made>

Gwent Safeguarding:

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>

Services for people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) backgrounds:

- [BAWSO](http://www.bawso.org.uk/) <http://www.bawso.org.uk/>

Domestic Abuse:

- <https://gov.wales/live-fear-free>
- <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/VAWDASV/VAWDASV.aspx>
- info@phoenixdas.co.uk

Modern Slavery

<https://gov.wales/live-fear-free/slavery>

Keeping learners safe and secure online

[Keeping safe online - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)

Sexual harassment and abuse in education settings

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-sexual-harassment-and-abuse-education-settings-guidance-for-education-settings-on-peer-sexual-abuse-exploitation-and-harmful-sexual-behaviour.pdf> (gov.wales)

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Safeguarding Data Protocol

Introduction

The governing body of a maintained school is responsible for the conduct and standards of the school; the Council shares the responsibility for standards in schools and discharges these responsibilities for the overall provision of education services in Blaenau Gwent.

The Council provides governing bodies with support through strategic support services that help to create a level of common policy planning and practices that schools share. As part of this, support is provided through the commissioned service known as the South East Wales Education Achievement Service (SEWEAS).

In order to manage the improvement process, there is a need to share information on a timely basis to ensure that appropriate monitoring, evaluation and reporting occurs and where appropriate timely intervention takes place.

The Council and its schools take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously and the purpose of this protocol is to articulate the timeframes in which the data will be shared

Background

This protocol sets out good practice for the exchange of safeguarding information between schools and the local authority in the discharge of statutory functions.

Principles

The Council has a dedicated Safeguarding in Education Manager who will manage the information and the return of the data from schools. Data is to be returned twice a year, **by end of October and April each year**. These exact dates will be communicated to schools by the Safeguarding in Education Manager at the commencement of the academic year

Protocol

The information required is detailed below. The request for information will be generated by a member of Business Support and all information will be sent to the Business Support officer using the return email address Timothy.Griffiths@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk by the dates specified.

The Safeguarding in Education Manager will maintain effective oversight of the information and use it to inform training and support programmes.

Any identified trend which requires immediate intervention will be managed by the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

Training:	<p><i>Dates of safeguarding training that have taken place since the previous data submission for the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school staff training – individual staff names to be confirmed • Designated and Deputy Designated Senior Person, including title of course • Chair of governors and lead governor for safeguarding • Individual governors <p><i>Date of PREVENT training and who received this training.</i> <i>Date of VAWDASV training and who received this training</i></p>
Policy adoption:	<p><i>Policy adoption dates will be required only where policies have been reviewed and distributed to schools since the previous adoption date:</i></p> <p>Safeguarding policy Online Safety Policy Internet and Social Networking policy Appropriate use of the internet Anti-bullying policy Physical Intervention Safer recruitment policy Volunteer Guidance Whistle Blowing Policy Time-out policy Strategic Equity Plan Partnership Agreement</p>
Governors	<p><i>Confirmation of DBS certificate number and issue date</i> <i>Date of safeguarding training</i></p>
Volunteers:	<p><i>Confirmation of DBS certificate number and issue date</i> <i>Reference details</i> <i>Date of safeguarding training</i></p>

Training

Any training requirements for reporting of the data should be made to the Safeguarding in Education Manager.

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Agenda Item 9

Date Signed off by Monitoring Officer: N/A

Date Signed off by Section 151 Officer: N/A

Committee: **Joint Social Services and Education and Learning (Safeguarding) Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **14th July 2021**
Report Subject: **Safeguarding Self-evaluation Outcomes**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr J Collins Executive Member for Education**
Report Submitted by: **Michelle Jones, Strategic Education Improvement Manager**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
24.06.21		04.07.21			14.07.21			

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise the findings of ongoing self-evaluation and business planning processes undertaken within the Education Directorate, across the Council and with key partners.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Blaenau Gwent Education Services are committed to self-review and self-improvement and view these processes as being fundamental to securing ongoing improvement in outcomes, quality and effectiveness. The Education Directorate has adopted a standardised approach for self-evaluation (SE) that is now embedded into the day to day practice. This has been reviewed to align with Estyn's new inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES).
- 2.2 This report looks at the emerging findings against the Safeguarding section (3.4) of the Estyn Framework for Local Government Education Services (LGES) requires inspectors to evaluate how well the authority fulfils its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding.
- 2.3 A comprehensive self-evaluation process helps identify those areas where progress has been made and where further improvement is required. Emerging findings, via ongoing self-evaluation is captured every Autumn and Spring time as well as via quarterly performance and finance reporting mechanisms. Moreover, it is the high-level points only, which are presented in the narrative in this report shown under Section 6.1 with the full report included as Appendix 1.
- 2.4 The self-evaluation period that this report covers is for the academic year 2019/20 and has informed the business planning priorities for 2021/22. It is important that the data within this report is understood in the context of a global pandemic and caution must be taken when drawing comparisons to previous academic years.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option 1

To accept the report as presented.

Option 2

3.2 Members are requested to scrutinise the information detailed within the report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee

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

4.1 Corporate Plan

Outcome Statement 2020/22	Corporate Plan activity
Support a fairer sustainable economy and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support all learners to achieve improved outcomes• To improve pupil outcomes, progress and wellbeing
To enable people to maximise their independence, develop solutions and take an active role in their communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater• To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 The safeguarding in education self-evaluation outcome statement and associated business process are cognisant of the ongoing austerity measures and its implementation is managed through existing resources.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies safeguarding risks for the Directorate and is informed by the findings from this and other processes. Such risks are monitored as part of the routine Directorate risk management business activity and the Directorate's quality assurance processes seek to test the robustness of safeguarding activities and inform the corporate risk register.

5.3 ***Legal***

Safeguarding arrangements comply with relevant legislation and guidance which includes the Welsh Government Keeping Learners Safe Guidance.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The self-evaluation and safeguarding business arrangements are managed through existing resources.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

6.1.1 **Areas where Good Progress has been made**

- The Safeguarding Matrix approach to capturing information is helpful and supports the ongoing improvement in practice in this area.
- The close working arrangements between Education and Social Services have developed well, further supporting a coherence of approach regarding safeguarding in schools and settings. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed and understood by key stakeholders.
- Recent work to respond to community safety issues, counter potential terrorism and extremist behaviours has progressed well, for example, the Safer School Partnership, and the Respect and Resilience Action Plan.
- The Operation Encompass work has progressed very well and supports schools in this regard.
- Quality assurance processes to test the robustness of safeguarding processes have been implemented and inform ongoing work in this area.
- The new Council Policy requiring all school Governors to be DBS cleared is being implemented.
- Most schools are now using MyConcern as a means of recording safeguarding incidents

6.1.2. **Areas requiring further improvement**

- Continue to develop policy and practice that is responsive to emerging school concerns in line with the Vision for Education of school led improvement in a contextual safeguarding approach.
- Full implementation of VAWDASV (Group 1) training needs to be achieved, as well as the implementation of Group 2 training across all LGES settings.
- The 360-degree safe Cymru Policy needs to be implemented in all schools.
- Digitalisation of the safeguarding matrix to be developed and streamlined to enable greater readability, including the roll-out of MyConcern to the few schools that are not currently using it, now that the Council has secured a revenue budget.
- Provide greater flexibility in the training offer to increase the uptake of safeguarding training by school governors

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
 The Directorate's self-evaluation processes are aligned with LGES framework. Established quality assurance processes inform the work of the Safeguarding in Education Manager who shares the high level learning at termly meetings which take place with the Safeguarding Leads from LGES representatives. More detailed information is shared with the individual establishment, at monthly meetings between the safeguarding team and lead education staff and on a regular basis with Education DMT and on a quarterly basis with CLT and Members of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee through the Performance Report.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
 The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) and self-evaluation process enables the Education Directorate to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the directorate is currently and where it needs to be in the future.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
 Through effective self-evaluation processes, support and monitoring of school performance, early identification of emerging areas for improvement can be identified with consequent early intervention to secure improvement. The effectiveness of the Council's monitoring, support, evaluation and intervention programmes ensure that preventative action is taken early in order to minimise the escalation of concerns coupled with the sharing of key areas across LGES settings.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
 The Council collaborates with a range of services to discharge its Local Government Education Service (LGES) functions. The Safeguarding in Education Manager participates in the local, regional and national safeguarding groups and shares learning with Safeguarding Leads from LGES settings.
- The South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.
- 6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***
 All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board.
- 6.8 ***EqIA***
 Not required for this report.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 Monitoring of the emerging findings of self-evaluation is an important mechanism for ensuring that Members of the Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee and the Executive are sufficiently informed to enable them to

make informed decisions regarding the safeguarding arrangements across LGES settings.

There are well-established processes in place to ensure that self-evaluation is used to inform business plans to secure further improvement and in doing so continue to keep learner safe through systems, processes and procedures responding to emerging concerns, risks and patterns of behaviours.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Arrangements

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3.4 Safeguarding Arrangements

The Local Authority's systems, practice and policy demonstrate that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements as detailed in the revised Keeping Learners Safe guidance. The Managing Director has overall strategic accountability for securing effective safeguarding arrangements across the Council. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy identifies key personnel and their deputies (including elected members) across all Council services with responsibility and accountability for safeguarding. The Council has a well-established Joint Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee in place that scrutinises safeguarding performance across the Council's services and also involves key partners. CLT monitors arrangements closely. The strategic leads group keeps safeguarding arrangements under close scrutiny and is responsible for the implementation of the action plan arising from the WAO report regarding safeguarding.

Clear lines of accountability and reporting are in place. Named officers with clear responsibilities and accountabilities are in place. At Directorate level the Strategic Safeguarding in Education lead (SSL) is Michelle Jones and the Deputy is Claire Gardner. The Safeguarding in Education Manager (SEM) is Sarah Dixon with responsibility for the operational management and oversight of child protection and safeguarding issues in education. This post is located within the Social Services Directorate and is line Manager by the Children Services Manager.

The Designated Senior Person for Youth Service is Claire Madden, for Early Years and Play Claire Smith. The matrix evidences that all schools have a designated senior person DSP, a deputy DSP and a designated governor for safeguarding. All of the above ensure that there are clear reporting structures in place for each of the settings aligned to the Safeguarding in Education policy. All schools have a designated Lead for Children Looked After (CLA) who work closely with the CLA Education Coordinator and Mentors. The contact information is reviewed every September to ensure appropriate structures are in place in each setting.

Monthly meetings between the Strategic Safeguarding in Education Lead and the Safeguarding in Education Manager provides the mechanism for support, a coherence in approach and consistency of practice. The Professional Lead for Community Safety, who is the Council's Community safety and Preventing Violent Extremism lead, joins for part of these meeting to ensure that any broader community safety issues are shared and a joint multi-agency approach implemented. Regular meetings with corporate officers supports a coherence of approach, for example, the Safeguarding in Education Manager meets regularly with the early years and play, youth service, home to school transport, and school DSP's.

The Education Safeguarding Policy is updated annually and most recently during the Autumn Term 2020 and includes a section on Covid. The Policy has been extended to cover all education settings. The most recent version is being adopted by all school governing bodies; the safeguarding matrix confirms this. The effectiveness and impact of policies is monitored through regular review of the findings captured in the safeguarding matrix. Since the pandemic the routine sharing of information presented to the Education and Social Services Joint Scrutiny Committee has been suspended as schools were not in routine operation at this time. Following the return to face to face learning in April 21 this work stream is being progressed with an expectation that the routine data collection recommences.

Monitoring of safeguarding procedures have been enhanced by the development of a Quality Assurance protocol for validating processes across education services and a reporting timeframe into DMT. Learning from these visits informs future policy and practice. This QA process has had to flex during the year in response to the pandemic and this information was reported to the Education and Social Service Scrutiny Committee in October 2020.

The statutory Partnership Agreement makes clear schools' obligations regarding safeguarding. Adoption is monitored via close scrutiny of the Matrix. The annual return from commissioned services demonstrated that all services have appropriate safeguarding policies and practice in place. (EAS, GEMS, Youth Offending, SRS, and Gwent Music).

Historically, evaluation of the joint quarterly report identifies any emerging trends which are used by the Safeguarding in Education Manager (SEM) to inform her work in schools. Evaluation of this has informed the ongoing work programme of the SEM. However, the arrangements for the collation of performance information were improving following the implementation of the WCCIS system and is changing to a more contextual nature, however, the school information reported to Safeguarding Scrutiny has been temporarily halted as a result of the Pandemic.

During the year the LA began the implementation of the MyConcern model across all school settings. Take up has been varied and has been impacted by the pandemic but despite this it is pleasing to note that the majority of schools are now using the system. There is however a need to ensure all schools are using it moving forwards, so that there is a consistent approach which will enable the LA to use the overarching dashboard facilities.

The safeguarding needs of the Gypsy Traveller population is undertaken by the GT Coordinator. This academic year many gypsy traveller pupils (82.4%) are educated in schools, with very few (17.6%) being electively home educated. During 2019/2020, many of the gypsy traveller population eligible to transition to KS3, didn't transfer (3 out of a possible 8 pupils (37.5%), as opposed to (2 out of a possible 3 pupils (66.7% the previous year)). COVID had a huge impact on this year's figure. School closures, restrictions and limited attendance have affected opportunities for transition work to be carried out, this has in turn affected their transition to secondary school. Initially the GT pupils was not engaging with on line learning due to poor digital and literacy skills levels from parents. A lot of work had to be done to engage and give parents the confidence to support their children with online learning. Covid has had a negative impact on our year 11 GT pupils with regards to their aspirations. Pupils who wanted to go on to college no longer want to, due to fear of another lockdown, and confidence in their own ability with learning.

Attendance was a concern for some, due to fear over Covid. Majority of GT pupils are now back in school. Motivation and lack of concentration is poor in many cases, this in turn is leading to poor behaviour. Restrictions in school i.e. bubbles in school means that GT pupils cannot interact at play times with their normal friendship groups. Support that is currently being provided, baseline testing of literacy levels are being carried out, to prioritise which pupils to work with. Additional funding has been secured at Blaen-y-Cwm primary school, where 13% of their population are GT pupils. This will provide additional support to our GT pupils.

A Children Missing in Education Policy has been implemented in all schools; with training being delivered to school clerks - monitoring and managing this area of work remains an important area. This work is undertaken by the Education Welfare Service who undertakes monitoring activity on a weekly basis. For those children who cannot be located processes are in place with HMRC etc. During the 2019/20 academic year there has been an increase in the number of children missing from education (88 compared to 44 the previous year). However, all pupils were located with 100% CTF being sent. To date this year there has been a decrease in the normal CME referrals being made (29 moving out and 12 moving in). However, as a result of the pandemic there has needed to be a large amount of work around reception admissions and transfer into secondary schools. The reason for this is two-fold, in that a transfer form had not been submitted or the pupil had moved out of the local authority since the live birth data had been received (102 reception and 34 secondary pupils).

The 2019/20 data shows that there has been a decrease in the number of pupils being EHE (10 less at the end of the 19/20 academic year) and also a further reduction in the number of pupils being withdrawn (13 less than the end of the 19/20 academic year). The EHE fade captures the detailed analysis of this and identifies the following trends:

- A high percentage have previously been enrolled in school
- The number of pupils becoming EHE is above the Welsh average. The rate in Blaenau Gwent equates to 8.3 EHE pupils per 1,000 pupils in reception to year 11, compared to 8.5 in 2019. This is above the Welsh average rate of 7.0 per 1,000 pupils (6.5 in 2019). Whilst the rate across Wales increased by 0.5% it is pleasing to see that the rate in Blaenau Gwent decreased by 0.2%
- In KS3 there were 10 pupils that were withdrawn in KS3 during 2019/20. 15 girls and 13 boys became EHE during 19/20
- The month which saw the highest number of withdrawal for EHE is at the start of the academic year
- There were more girls than boys EHE.

PLASC 2020, 79% of families in Blaenau Gwent had received a visit in the last 12 months compared to the Wales average of 45%. Systems to monitor EHE are described as good and a number of planned actions were implemented during the year.

In 2019/20 there were 44 statutory school age children (compared to 30 in 2018/19) referred to the Youth Offending Service for either preventative or statutory intervention. 6 of these children were referred twice meaning that there were referrals for 38 individuals (compared to 34 in 2018/19).

The types of educational establishments and provisions for these children include alternate provision, OOC, Special school, EHE or mainstream provision. However, there is an increase within year of the number of children accessing alternative provision 36.8% in 2019/20 from 16.6% in the previous year.

When looking at the different types of placements for children from Blaenau Gwent, 36.8% of children (5 children) were attending an alternative provision compared to 16.6% in 2018/19. There were 38 referrals for children in Blaenau Gwent receiving intervention from YOS in the period covered by this report. Of those:

- 71% (27 children) were offered full time opportunities (25 hours) compared to 79.4% in 2018/19
- 23.7% (9 children) were offered part time opportunities compared to 14.7% in 2018/19
- 5.3% (2 children) had no provision in place as they were electively home educated (EHE)

Information about pupils who are subject to, or are witness to police attended incidents of domestic abuse, continues to be shared through Operation Encompass, in addition to the usual reporting mechanism. Information about pupils who experience / or who are affected by high risk domestic abuse is shared via representation by Education Welfare Service on MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference). From the data for the academic year September 2019 to August 2020 there were 518 occurrences involving 544 children and young people. The data suggests a greater incidence to children aged 4,5,6,7,10 and 17 being subject to such incidents. Accuracy of reporting requirements by the Police has been improved since implementation 71.3% of all details being recorded to enable Op encompass reports. Despite media coverage of increased domestic incidents during the pandemic and lock down, the data per month when compared to the previous year does not demonstrate consistency with the national trend that has been reported. Further work is needed to better understand how schools utilise this information to inform daily practice in supporting children affected by such incidents

Education officers attend most case conferences (83%). This represents a slight decrease from 90% last year. This will continue to be monitored by the Safeguarding in Education Manager on a termly basis. Any non-attendance is addressed immediately with the school concerned and has been followed up within DSP meetings. Any identifiable actions are implemented to support attendance.

There was a reduction in the number of reports being provided with only a minority being provided. A new case conference report template has been provided to education and this features in the safeguarding refresher training for DSPs.

In late 2015 new legislation (the Children (Performances and Activities) (Wales) Regulations 2015) regarding child performances came into force in Wales. Whilst Blaenau Gwent was compliant with legislation for those pupils that performed for larger companies, more work needed to be done, particularly with local amateur dramatics groups etc. A lot of this work has now been completed and companies contact the local authority for training and licenses. The data indicates through the increase in number of licences being issued that there appears to be a growing awareness of the legislative requirements under these regulations and the associated work undertaken to identify the range of amateur dramatic groups.

In 2019/2020 0 work permits were issued but that was mainly due to lockdown. There was however one refusal due to poor school attendance. There was no child employment campaign during COVID 19 as all schools and many businesses were closed. There were 2 investigations undertaken as a result of illegal child

employment and both were unaware of the legislation. Both premises were informed that the children were unable to work until the correct paperwork was in place. A site inspection was done on one of the companies that employ children and all appropriate safeguarding and health and safety measures were in place.

In the academic year 2019-20, Estyn judged KQ 4 (Care support and Guidance) as good in the two schools and adequate in one school that was inspected. A further detailed review of school inspections for the last three years demonstrated that for KQ 4 the majority (55%) of educational establishments were judged as good, 1 (9%) school judged as Excellent and none as unsatisfactory during 2017-20 and therefore the arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirement and give no cause for concern.

A quality assurance or system test protocol has been developed and the information from this is included in the Performance report to the joint Safeguarding Committee. However, there is a need to re-establish the routine reporting of information to this committee as we recover from the pandemic and move back to business as usual.

During 2019/2020, 15 visits were planned, six of these for the Autumn term. 5 of these 6 visits took place during the Autumn term. From the visits during the Autumn term, evidence has been gathered which has provided reassurance that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place in schools and other education services. Learning from these visits informs future policy and practice and is included in the Directorates self- evaluation process. In line with the agreed protocol the outcome of these visits are reported to DMT on an exception basis in the form of a FADE. The onset of COVID impacted directly on this process and no visits took place in either the Spring or Summer term. This protocol has been reviewed in light of COVID to enable visits to recommence from the Autumn term 2020.

At the onset of COVID, there was direct communication with schools regarding mechanisms for maintaining contact with vulnerable learners. A communication protocol was established. A safeguarding in education bulletin was developed to provide regular safeguarding information to schools and education staff. Referral pathways are regularly reinforced and relevant contact information shared.

Blaenau Gwent's anti-bullying strategy and toolkit provides support to schools when tackling alleged bullying in Blaenau Gwent schools. The local authority has a clear Behaviour Strategy, based on inclusive principles which underpin process and procedure, written within the context of a range of policies, provided by Welsh Government. Monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place to ensure the local authority is able to respond appropriately to incidents of bullying in schools. Bullying incident data is incomplete for 2019/20 due to COVID. Data from the Autumn term indicates that the number of incidents was of a similar level to the same period in the previous year. As in 2018/19, the majority of the incidents related to verbal/emotional bullying. In 2019/20 there was one exclusion as a result of bullying but again this figure should be understood in the context of COVID school closures.

During 2019/20, there were 56 occurrences of the use of RPI reported to the LA. The majority of those were from the two special schools, which accounted for 89% of occurrences. The remaining 6 occurrences were reported by two mainstream schools. This is a decrease on the number of incidents reported for the comparable period of the academic year 2018/19 where there were 114 occurrences reported to the LA from September 2018 to 20th March 2019, where nearly all were reported by the two special schools with two mainstream schools reporting a very small number of occurrences. Reported incidents of RPI are considered

in the first instance by the Safeguarding in Education Manager. Any concerns with the content of the report are then discussed with the school involved. On a half termly basis the Safeguarding in Education Manager and the Service Manager – Inclusion meet to review referrals and consider any specific trends that need responding to. The RPI policy was updated in February 2021 and circulated to schools. The policy contains a model school policy which includes the appropriate processes and procedures for all schools to follow.

Processes dealing with allegations against professionals are managed by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit in Social Services in accordance with All Wales Child Protection Procedures. The systems are embedded and AWCPP, Welsh Government guidance. The work of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board guidance underpins this work. The Safeguarding in Education Manager reports the current position to DMT which is then shared by the Corporate Director with CLT. In BG there were 16 cases involving 16 professionals between September 2019 and August 2020 56% of cases resulted in no further action with 25% resulting in an investigation and, 19% leading to disciplinary action. During the year a tender exercise was successfully completed to secure competent investigating officers to undertake any disciplinary investigations. This process has secured the appointment of 2 companies who have confirmed their professional status and GDPR compliance in handling data.

The Recruitment and Selection Policy, Safer Recruitment for Schools is cognisant of safe recruitment principles for supply staff. This policy has been adopted by school Governing Bodies. The process for managing DBS compliance is embedded across education services and schools. DBS compliance is managed by Organisational Development and any non-compliance is escalated and managed by Directors and senior managers in all departments. In 2019/20 DBS checks were processed for school and education staff. Of these, very few (60, 15%) were for new employees and most (336, 85%) were part of the rolling programme for renewing applications. Escalation processes implemented by managers are effective at dealing with any non-compliance. CLT receive quarterly DBS position statement and this is also shared with Corporate Safeguarding Leads.

At the end of the 2018/19 academic year a policy was developed that proposed that all governors undergo a DBS check on a four year rolling programme in line with their date of appointment. This policy is in place and referred to in the safeguarding policy which has been shared with schools for adoption. The implementation of this policy has been impacted by Covid but arrangements are in hand to resurrect the implementation of this policy.

Early years, Childcare and Play have established a safeguarding quality assurance tool which all centres are required to complete. This is a feature of the regular safeguarding meetings with this service which confirms that safeguarding arrangements are appropriate in these settings.

Safeguarding processes are well established in the Youth Service and fit for purpose. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, with robust records kept on all safeguarding matters including Multi-Agency Referrals to Social Services, feedback and staff training. Regular meetings are held between the Youth Service and the Safeguarding in Education Officer, and any areas of concern outside of child protection are escalated through this process.

During the 2019-2020 academic year the Youth Service submitted 44 safeguarding referrals for 37 young people to Children's Services, and 4 referrals to adult services for 4 young people. There was one referral to children's services and one to POVA for the same young person as they turned 19 during the reporting period.

A training programme has been implemented ensuring that all contractors have timely access to training, however, this year, the training programme has been interrupted by COVID. There are 12 operators that needs to fully complete the training which will account for 27 staff. Mop up training was arranged but implementation was delayed due to COVID. In addition, when the Council procures transport, potential operators are provided with the home to school transport policy which has a safeguarding statement contained within it. A QA visit was completed during the Autumn term following the return to face to face learning which confirmed safeguarding arrangements were fit for purpose.

The Corporate Safeguarding Leads group has been developing a Corporate training framework to ensure clarity and consistency in safeguarding training across the Council.

Regular evaluation of the Matrix reveals that all schools have updated their whole school safeguarding training within the last 3 years. Safeguarding training is now offered on a virtual platform to ensure continued compliance. The matrix reveals that at the end of the academic year 2019/2020, 3 DSPs required refresher training. A DSP training session will take place on 6th October 2020. DSP training is also supplemented through regular updates provided during termly DSP meetings. In addition, all other education settings have updated their safeguarding training with all DSPs in these settings being trained.

There are 227 childcare staff across the maintained & non-maintained settings, 201 have received the safeguarding training for practitioners. 104 Childcare Providers have Safeguarding Level 2. COVID meant that the Prevent Training is on hold, however all Schools have received details on how to access free online training modules relating to Prevent. These are HO approved. Details are shared via the Safeguarding in Education Briefing and a special school's Prevent Briefing.

Training for governors is offered through the BG specific EAS training programme and upon direct request from schools. COVID has impacted on the availability of this training during 2019/20. Plans are now in place to provide this training through virtual platforms.

Group 1 Training for VAWDASV was rolled out to educational settings in early 2018. The position at the end of August 2020 evidenced that the majority of Local Authority staff employed in schools, youth services and central education had undertaken the training (73% schools and 78% education central staff). Two dates were agreed for the Group 2 Ask and Act training specifically for Blaenau Gwent education staff. These were impacted by COVID. Dates have now been agreed to deliver these through a virtual platform.

Community Safety matters continue to be raised from time to time. However, COVID has restricted the ways we engage with the schools. As a result, the development of Safer School Partnership approach has been somewhat limited. Nevertheless, community safety advice, guidance and support on two cases during the reporting period led to an effective school-led mainstreamed response.

All DSPs have previously received WRAP training with an ongoing training online training modules communicated through the Safeguarding in Education Briefing. This specific focus and positive joint work between the education directorate and the community safety officer has resulted in the development of a Respect and Resilience action plan which further supports a multi-agency approach to tackling aspects of community safety impacting adversely on school life and is actively being progressed through business as usual activities.

The latest data available identifies that nearly all of the schools (96%) have registered, with many (71%) of these having completed all aspects. There is one school that is not registered. There is further work to be done to promote the ongoing use of the tool. During the year the Council agreed that the 360-degree safe policy template is to be agreed by the Executive and implemented in Blaenau Gwent schools. At the end of the year 2019/20, 72% of Blaenau Gwent schools had used the Welsh government funded Hafan Cymru Spectrum project to support their approach to healthy relationships. The Spectrum project had delivered 80 sessions to 947 pupils across seven settings. There were 79 members of staff in these pupil sessions.

The Local Authority has a comprehensive range of Health and Safety policies, procedures and guidance in place, which clearly sets out the management of Health and Safety, both at a Corporate, Directorate and school management level.

All schools have competent persons such as first aiders and educational visits coordinators to manage any risks. The Local Authority and schools meet the standards set out in HSE and WG guidance for Educational Visits. Arrangements for educational visits are effective and improving because: the revised Educational Visits Policy (2017) is in line with the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance (OEAPNG); the Outdoor Advisers monitor all trips and visits and reports to Head of Service, indicating the level of authorised school visits on a monthly basis; and, all schools are complying with the EVOLVE system. School visits to high footfall areas now include the terrorist threat risk assessment as part of the EVOLVE process. Due to COVID, during the year very few visits took place.

3.4 Safeguarding Arrangements: Areas where progress has been made

- The Safeguarding Matrix approach to capturing information is helpful and supports the ongoing improvement in practice in this area.
- The close working arrangements between Education and Social Services have developed well, further supporting a coherence of approach regarding safeguarding in schools and settings. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed and understood by key stakeholders.
- Recent work to respond to community safety issues, counter potential terrorism and extremist behaviours has progressed well, for example, the Safer School Partnership, and the Respect and Resilience Action Plan.
- The Operation Encompass work has progressed well and supports schools in this regard.
- Quality assurance processes to test the robustness of safeguarding processes have been implemented and inform ongoing work in this area.
- The new Council Policy requiring all school Governors to be DBS cleared is being implemented. Presently, very few are compliant.

3.4 Safeguarding Arrangements: Areas requiring further improvement

- Continue to develop policy and practice that is responsive to emerging school concerns in line with the Vision for Education of school led improvement in a contextual safeguarding approach.
- Full implementation of VAWDASV (Group 1) training needs to be achieved at school level, as well as the implementation of Group 2 training across all LGES settings.
- The 360-degree safe Cymru Policy needs to be agreed by the Executive and implemented in all schools.
- Digitalisation of the safeguarding matrix to be developed and streamlined to enable greater readability, including the roll-out of My Concern now that the Council has secured a revenue budget.
- Provide greater flexibility in the training offer to increase the uptake of safeguarding training by school governors

Risk Considerations

- There is a risk that the roll-out of the safeguarding package MyConcern is not implemented fully across the school estate.

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