



Child Protection Policy



Introduction

Swansea College fully recognises the contribution it makes to child protection.

There are three main elements to our policy:

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

This policy applies to all staff, Teachers, College Board members and volunteers working in the school. Our school will annually review the policy and is committed to following any new guidance received from ERW.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality issues need to be understood if a child discloses information they are being abused. A child may only feel confident to confide in a member of staff if they feel that the information will not be disclosed to anyone else. However, education staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with the designated statutory agencies when a child is experiencing child welfare concerns.

It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the child that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to be able to help. They should reassure the child and tell them that their situation will not become common knowledge within the school. Be aware that it may well have taken significant courage on their part to disclose the information and that they may also be experiencing conflicting emotions, involving feelings of guilt, embarrassment, disloyalty (if the abuser is someone close) and hurt.

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

The Designated Senior Person for child protection (DSP): Neah Gill – Exams Officer and Pastoral Officer
The Deputy Designated senior person (DDSP) Aisha Rasul – Director and Principal

Prevention

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

The school will therefore:

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

Procedures

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

We will follow the [All Wales Child Protection Procedures](#) that have been endorsed by the [Local Safeguarding Children Board](#) and the guidance on [Keeping learners safe](#). The school ensures it has a Designated Senior Person (DSP) for child protection who has undertaken the appropriate training.

This person is:

The Designated Senior Person for child protection (DSP): Neah Gill – Exams Officer and Pastoral Officer

The Deputy Designated senior person (DDSP): Aisha Rasul – Director and Principal

The school recognises the role of the DSP and DDSP and arranges sufficient support and training and ensure every member of staff and all members of the College Board know:

- the name of the DSP and DDSP and their roles.
 - that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels and within the timescales agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children Board
 - how to take forward those concerns where the DSP is unavailable.
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- ensure that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a pupil who may disclose abuse and complete their level 1 safeguarding training
 - ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the Induction
 - Ensure all staff undertake any agreed local authority child protection training relevant to their role
 - provide a child protection briefing on inset day(s) and/ or as and when required for all staff so that they know:
 - their personal responsibility
 - the agreed local procedures
 - the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
 - how to support a child who discloses abuse
 - any new child protection issues or changes in procedures
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- notify local social services if:
 - a pupil on the child protection register is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently
 - if there is an unexplained absence of a pupil on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend)

- work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters; including attendance at strategy meetings, initial/review child protection conferences and core group together with the submission of written reports to the conferences.
- keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to social services immediately • ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations
- adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government safeguarding guidance <https://gov.wales/safeguarding-guidance>
- ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government guidance: keeping learner's safe <https://gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe>

Making a child protection referral

In the event of a member of staff having a potential child protection concern about a pupil, or a pupil makes a potential child protection disclosure to a member of staff, then that concern or disclosure must be passed on to the DSP without delay.

The DSP will then contact the local Social Services department on 01792 635700 and discuss the concern and then follow the advice that has then been provided.

Definitions of child abuse, protecting children in specific circumstances:

The definitions of abuse are found in the [All Wales Child Protection Procedures](#)

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

Dealing with a disclosure made by a child

Receive

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

Reassure

Provide the child with plenty of reassurance. Always be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep, for example: "I'll stay with you", or, "Everything will be all right now".

- Alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it. For example, you could say: "You're not to blame. This is not your fault".
- Do not promise confidentiality. You will be under a duty to pass the information on and the child needs to know this.

React

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

- Do not criticize the perpetrator as the pupil may still have a positive emotional attachment to this person.
- Do not ask the pupil to repeat their allegation to another member of staff. If they are asked to repeat it they may feel that they are not being believed and/or their recollection of what happened may change.

Record

- Take notes as soon as it is practical to do so. Record the actual words spoken by the child – do not re-translate them into the way that adults speak or try to make sense of the structure of what was said). Do not be offended by any offensive language or words used to describe the abuse).
- Time and date your notes and do not destroy them in case they are required by a court.
- If you are able to do so then draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising but do not ask the child to remove any clothing for this purpose.
- Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions

Final Steps

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

Our school follow the [Good Practice Guide](#) set by Estyn.

Managing allegations against adults who work with children

In the event of a child protection allegation being made against a member of staff, the person in receipt of that allegation must immediately pass details of the concern to the DSP or in their absence the DDSP. The DSP/DDSP will then contact the Local Authority Education Safeguarding officer to discuss the next steps in accordance with local arrangements.

If a potential child protection allegation is made against the Principal the member of staff in receipt of that allegation must contact the DSP and email complaint@swanseacollege.com, this will be passed to the College Board. The DSP will then contact the Local Authority Education Safeguarding Officer to discuss the next steps in accordance with local council arrangements.

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

Abuse of position of trust

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

Supporting the pupil at risk

Child abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved. We recognise that children who are at risk, suffer abuse or witness violence may be deeply affected by this. This school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
- nominating a link person who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact.
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a pupil, separate link people will be nominated to avoid any conflict of interest
- responding sympathetically to any request from pupils or staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety

- managing allegations against adults who work with children Supporting the pupil at risk
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
- keeping records and notifying Social Services as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern
- storing records securely
- offering details of helplines, counselling or other avenues of external support
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

As a school we will endeavour to support pupils through:

- the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
- the school/college ethos which:
 - promote a positive, supportive and secure environment
 - give pupils a sense of being valued

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

Our school endeavour to ensure that pupils are aware that some behaviour is unacceptable but the pupil is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred;

- All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the pupil but does not damage the pupil's sense of self-worth.
- liaison with other agencies who support the student such as Social Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services, the Education Welfare Service and advocacy services

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

Anti-bullying

Our policy on anti-bullying is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually.

Use of physical intervention

Our policy on physical intervention is set out in a separate document and is reviewed annually and is consistent with the Welsh Government guidance on Safe and effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons. <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/safe-and-effective-intervention-use-of-reasonable-force-and-searching-for-weapons.pdf>

External agencies

<p>Barnardo's works with vulnerable children and young people, helping them and their families to overcome problems like abuse, homelessness and poverty. www.barnardos.org.uk Tel: 020 8550 8822 (national rate, 8am-6pm Mon - Fri)</p>	<p>BBC Radio 1 Advice This website provides advice for young people on sex and relationships, alcohol and drugs, bullying, health and wellbeing, money, the law, studying and work. www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/advice</p>	<p>Family Lives Bullying Online Bullying Online is a website that provides information and support for a wide range of parents, pupils, teachers and youth organisations. www.bullying.co.uk</p>
<p>BAWSO BAWSO supports people from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds who are affected by domestic abuse and other forms of abuse, including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, human trafficking and prostitution. Its</p>	<p>Childline A free 24-hour advice line offering counselling and support to young people suffering from abuse. The call won't show up on your phone bill. Freephone: 0800 11 11 www.childline.org.uk</p>	<p>Children's Commissioner for Wales The Children's Commissioner for Wales' job is to stand up and speak out for children and young people. He works to make sure that children and young people are kept safe and that they know about and</p>

<p>free helpline is open 24 hours a day. www.bawso.org.uk Freephone: 0800 731 8147</p>		<p>can access their rights. The lines are open from 9am to 5pm (Monday to Friday). www.childcom.org.uk Freephone: 0808 801 1000 Text: 80800 (start your message with COM)</p>
<p>Talk to Frank Talk to Frank provides friendly, confidential advice about drugs. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It also has live online chat every day between 2 – 6pm. www.talktofrank.com Free phone 0800 77 66 00 Text 82111 Email frank@talktofrank.com</p>	<p>Dan 24/7 A free and bilingual telephone drugs helpline providing a single point of contact for anyone in Wales wanting further information or help relating to drugs or alcohol. www.dan247.org.uk Freephone: 0808 808 2234 Text DAN to 81066</p>	<p>Wise Kids Wise Kids is a website that provides information and support on internet literacy, proficiency and knowledge of the intranet and related technologies. www.wisekids.org.uk</p>
<p>Get Connected Get Connected provides a free, confidential helpline that gives young people in difficult situations support and information. 0808 808 4994 www.getconnected.org</p>	<p>Kidscape Kidscape works with children and young people under the age of 16, their parents/carers and those who work with them to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse. www.kidscape.org.uk 08451 205 204</p>	<p>MEIC A free, confidential, anonymous helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales. Open 24hrs a day, 7 days a week, you can contact MEIC by phone, SMS text and online instant messaging, and in Welsh or English. http://meiccymru.org Freephone: 0808 80 23456 Text (free): 84001</p>
<p>NSPCC A free phone line offering support and advice to young people in abusive or difficult situations. The lines are open 24 hours a day and the calls won't show up on your phone bill. www.nspcc.org.uk Freephone: 0808 800 5000</p>		

Updated
October 2023
This policy is reviewed annually

