

APPENDIX

YSGOL UWCHRADD CAEREINION HIGH SCHOOL

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

CYMUNEDAU, SGILIAU A DYSGU / COMMUNITIES, SKILLS AND LEARNING

GWASANAETH YSGOLION / SCHOOLS SERVICE

CHILD PROTECTION – DEFINITIONS AND PROCEDURES

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

What is child abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatments of a child. A child is abused and neglected when someone inflicts significant harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger.

Significant harm is defined in legislation as ill treatment or the impairment of health and development of a child.

Everybody should:

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

Classifications of abuse

- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Physical abuse

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. The definition of significant harm has been extended to include 'suffering

experienced by children who witness the ill-treatment of another person such as domestic violence' (Children and Adoption Act, 2002).

Possible signs and indicators of emotional abuse

- changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsession or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away
- Continual self-deprecation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Neurotic behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb sucking, and so on
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including over-eating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves 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. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Possible signs and indicators of sexual abuse

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Bruises, scratches, or bite marks on the body
- Excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia (these may indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming)
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown for example in drawings, vocabulary, games etc.
- Frequent public masturbation

- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends
- Pregnancy (in older young people)

Sexual Abuse: why children don't tell

- Threats
- Bribes
- Making the child feel guilty
- Persuading that what is happening is normal
- Being told that they will be taken away if they tell
- Hoping to protect a brother or sister if they put up with the abuse
- Being persuaded that this is how people show their love
- Being told that they asked for it because they acted seductively
- Fear of losing favours, such as a place on the team or squad
- Being told that they will be responsible for the abuser going to prison
- Fear of losing control of their lives
- How to put it into words

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Possible signs and indicators of neglect

- Hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness and non-attendance
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Tiredness

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or care-giver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Common sites for accidental injury

- Forehead

- Chin
- Spine
- Forearm
- Hips
- Shins
- Knees
- Elbows
- Nose

Common sites for non-accidental injury

- Eyes – bruising (particularly both eyes)
- Skull – fracture, bruising or bleeding under skull (from shaking)
- Cheek/side of face – bruising, finger marks
- Mouth – torn frenulum
- Neck/shoulders/chest/upper and inner arms – bruising, grasp marks
- Genitals – bruising
- Knees – grasp marks
- Back, buttocks, thighs – linear bruising, outline of belt/buckles, scalds/burns

Possible signs and indicators of abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if recurrent
- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Refusal to discuss injuries or improbable explanations
- Untreated injuries or lingering illnesses
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression / bullying
- Over-compliant behaviour or ‘watchful attitude’
- Running away
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation (these may also indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming)
- Cuts/scratches/substance misuse (these may also indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming).

Signs of abuse

The above lists are not exhaustive and there may be other indicators of abuse.

- What is important is to keep everything in context with the wider situation and not to jump to conclusions, and
- Talk to your Designated Teacher for Child Protection, or other appropriate professionals, if you have concerns.

Compromised Parenting

No single factor causes children to be abused. Many factors influence family life and the development of a child.

Parental problems such as mental illness, domestic abuse and substance misuse can make the task of parenting harder and may increase the risk of abuse or neglect.

These factors can affect children in a number of ways. They may directly affect the growing foetus, expose a child to stress or harm and limit the adult's ability to parent.

PROCEDURES

What to do if you are worried or concerned about a child/young person

Seek advice from the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection or their deputy.

If school staff are not available, advice can be requested from the following:-

Schools Service Designated Lead for Child Protection / Safeguarding

Mr John Mitson

Tel: 01597 826431

Fax: 01597 826475

Email: john.mitson@powys.gov.uk

In the event of the Child Protection / Safeguarding Lead being unavailable, the following officers, within the Schools Service, can be contacted:-

Mr Ian Roberts, Senior Education Officer, North Powys

Tel: 01686 614066

Mobile: 07867 908919

Fax: 01686 614009

Email: ian.roberts@powys.gov.uk

Mr Imtiaz Bhatti, School Effectiveness Officer, Working With Others

Tel: 01597 826401

Mobile: **awaiting new phone**

Fax: 01597 826475

Email: Imtiaz.bhatti@powys.gov.uk

Mrs Ann Thomas, School Effectiveness Officer, Working With Others

Tel: 01597 826425

Mobile: 07825 552262

Fax: 01597 826475

Email: ann.thomas@powys.gov.uk

In addition, advice can also be provided by any of the Authority's Education Welfare Officers i.e.

North Powys

Mrs Margaret Jones

Tel: 01686 626395

Mobile: 07974 141281

Fax: 01686 614009

Email: margaret.jones@powys.gov.uk

Mr Geraint Thomas

Tel: 01686 626395

Mobile: 07774 764710

Fax: 01686 614009

Email: geraint.thomas@powys.gov.uk

Mid/South Powys:

Mr Chris Davies

Tel: 01874 612211

Mobile: 07785 761569

Fax: 01874 610279

Email: christopher.davies@powys.gov.uk

Mr David Evans

Tel: 01874 612211

Mobile: 07831 834021

Fax: 01874 610279

Email: david.thomas.evans@powys.gov.uk

Advice can also be provided by any of the Authority's School Effectiveness Officers, Leadership and Management, and School Effectiveness Officers, Teaching and Learning.

Further to the above, advice can be requested from the Council's Safeguarding Manager and her contact details are as follows:-

Ms Ali Davies

Tel: 01597 827325

Email: alison.davies1@powys.gov.uk

In addition, advice can be requested from Social Services Officers (contact telephone numbers below) and Family Protection Officers within the Dyfed Powys Police – telephone number 101 or 0845 330 2000.

If the child is in immediate danger, the police should be called. If the child is not in immediate danger, Children's Services should be called and a written referral must be submitted within two days.

Always seek advice and support.

It is essential that all agencies work together to protect children. To delay reporting a suspicion of abuse could be disastrous.

Referrals should be made to Children's Services as soon as a problem, suspicion or concern becomes apparent, and certainly within 24 hours. Referrals to Children's Services in Powys should be made to the Duty Officer based at:-

- Neuadd Maldwyn, Welshpool 01938 552017
- The Park, Newtown 01686 617520/1
- 1 High Street, Llandrindod Wells 01597 827325
- Neuadd Brycheiniog, Brecon, 01874 624298
- Hendreladus, Ystradgynlais, 01639 844595
- Out of Office Hours 0845 757 3818

The referral should be clear, legible, factual (rather than opinions) and contain as much information as possible.

What to do if a child discloses to you

- If a child discloses to you, do not further question the child but ensure that the child is safe. Don't interrogate or ask 'leading' questions, for example, 'What did he/she do next?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution. You may ask an open question, for example, 'Is there anything else you want to say?' but nothing more. Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving the opportunity for the child to talk in private but making sure that others are aware that the conversation is taking place.
- Remain open to the disclosure: do not appear shocked or disbelieving (even if you feel like it). Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking. Above everything else, listen without interrupting. Allow the child to feel secure and give them time. Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling somewhat different. Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator and do not ask the pupil to repeat what they have said for another member of staff.

- Never promise that you will keep what they say secret but do reassure them that you will act on their behalf to ensure only those who need to know are told. **REMEMBER** the procedures after disclosure can seem more frightening to a child than the alleged abuse. They may have been threatened that something bad will happen to them if they tell.
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Only speak of the allegation to those to whom you must refer. **Only discuss this with those who need to know to safeguard the child** – confidentiality is still essential except for the line of referral.
- **RECORD** accurately everything you have been told, observed and/or have actioned, by whom, where, when, time – using the child's own words (do not interpret what they have said). Brief notes should be written immediately with the record written up as soon as possible afterwards. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
- **Remember** overall that **the CHILD'S WELFARE IS PARAMOUNT.**

Helpful responses:

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

Don't say:

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure that this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else.