**Logo, company name

Description automatically generated**

**Grace House School**

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signed by:    Sam Thomas Senior Headteacher Date: September 2024 | | | |
| Cerasela Raducanescu | Education Director | Date: | September 2024 | |
| Natalie Moore | Regional Head  Teacher/ALNCO | Date: | September 2024 | |

Review Date: September 2025

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CONTENTS** | |
|  |  |
| 1. **Mission Statement** |  |
| 1. **Key Contact** |  |
| 1. **Actions to be taken at School in case of Professional Abuse and Child Safeguarding Concerns** |  |
| 1. **Principals** |  |
| 1. **Aims** |  |
| 1. **Objectives** |  |
| 1. **Definitions/Types of Abuse** |  |
| 1. **Scope** |  |
| 1. **Training** |  |
| 1. **Safer Recruitment** |  |
| 1. **Prevention** |  |
| 1. **Presentation** |  |
| 1. **Procedures** |  |
| 1. **Appendices:** |  |
| Appendix |  |
| Appendix 1 – Recognising signs of abuse |  |
| Appendix 2 – Allegations of professional abuse process |  |
| Appendix 3 – Child Safeguarding concerns raised |  |
| Appendix 4 - Procedure for dealing with Peer-on-Peer abuse |  |
| Appendix 5 - NSPCC guidance on child protection records retention |  |
| Appendix 6 - Procedures for dealing with incidents of sexting |  |
| Appendix 7- Educ8 Safeguarding procedures |  |

**Mission Statement**

Grace House School is part of Educ8. Educ8 is the operational name for the education services of Your Chapter Limited. Your Chapter is an organisation with a social purpose that seeks to transform the lives of children and young people who have experienced complex trauma and abuse. Your Chapter approach is grounded in the lived experience of the children and young people we support and by valuing their contribution. As experts by experience, Your Chapter ensures the services they receive are personal to them.

Our mission statement is supported by Your Chapter’s Essential Standards that set out the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare.

**Essential Standards**

* **Individualised care** - Children and young people will receive care and support tailored to meet their specific needs and any diverse needs.
* **Dignity and respect** – Educ8 will ensure children and young people have privacy when needed and appropriate, are treated as equals, are given appropriate support to help them be independent to fulfil their potential and be involved in their respective local communities.
* **Equality** - Educ8 is an inclusive organisation that works hard to ensure that children and young people are safeguarded and have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Your Chapter is committed to anti-discriminatory practice. In so doing, Your Chapter recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children, including the barriers they face.
* **Safety** – Educ8 will ensure that appropriate safeguarding practice is in place so that children and young people do not receive unsafe care or treatment or be put at risk of any potential harm. A robust risk assessment strategy will be in place to minimise harm during activities and delivery of care and support. Grace House School will also ensure staff has the appropriate knowledge, qualifications, experience, competence, and skills to keep children and young people safe.
* **Safeguarding from abuse** - Children and young people have an absolute entitlement to receive care and support without suffering any form of abuse or improper care. This includes disproportionate restraint, unnecessary or inappropriate restrictions on freedom, bullying, neglect, and free from abuse from their peers, carers, and all professionals involved in their education.
* **Complaints –** Grace House School will ensure that the systems in place for handling complaints are followed by staff to make sure that all complaints are monitored and considered seriously, handled, and responded to sensitively. Complaints investigation will be comprehensive and conducted in a timely manner, including informing the complainant about the outcome of their complaint. Any areas for learning will be identified and discussed so that appropriate action can be taken.
* **Whistleblowing -** Educ8 has a robust whistleblowing policy, and staff has a duty of care to raise and report concerns. It is known by all staff and is supported by staff training. We encourage the active reporting of any concerns raised by our staff, our children, and young people, and third parties, and we ensure that all such concerns are addressed in a timely manner. Any learning from such reports will be embedded in continuing professional development and will inform professional practice.
* **Good governance** - Your Chapter has an Independent Safeguarding and Quality Improvement Committee to ensure that a robust governance framework is in place, including scrutiny and oversight of internal and external service audits. Good governance will help to improve the delivery of services, as well as identify and minimise risk to children and young people's health, safety, and wellbeing.
* **Legislative framework –** Educ8 will ensure that it complies with regulatory standards, regulations, and government guidance that underpins its services relating to schools in England and Wales.
* **Staffing –** Educ8 will ensure that its staff complies with these essential standards through appropriate levels of support, culturally appropriate training, and reflective supervision, empowering, and insightful to effectively assist them in their role.
* **Fitness to practice -** Educ8 will seek to recruit and retain a staff team that can evidence their competence, knowledge, and professional practice to provide safe and appropriate care in line with their roles and responsibilities.

###### Whom to contact with any concerns regarding child protection and safety and how to contact them.

**Educ8 contacts**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Academic year  *2023-2024* | Designated Safeguarding Person | Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person | Designated Safeguarding Person | Designated Safeguarding Person |
|  | Sam Thomas | Colleen Hadfield  Sarah Philpott | Cerasela Raducanescu | Natalie Moore |
|  | Senior Headteacher  01588650569 | Teacher/Instructor  01588650569 | Education Director  07900670826 | Regional Head Teacher  07368922052 |

**Outside agencies contacts**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NAME** | **CONTACT DETAILS** |
| Powys Designated Lead Officer: Safeguarding in education. | Michael Gedrim. 01597 826431 |
| Powys Child Referrals | 01957 827666 |
| Powys Safeguarding out of hours | 0845 757 3818 or 0845 054 4847 |
| ESTYN Safeguarding Designated Safeguarding Officer | 02920 44 6482 |
| ESTYN Safeguarding Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer | 02920 44 6484 |
| PREVENT Officer Dyfed Powys | Helen Kay: 07976 792900 |

**ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AT GRACE HOUSE IN CASE OF:**

**PROFESSIONAL ABUSE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who?** | **Whom to inform/ report to?** |
| Staff member | Sam Thomas DSP  01588650569 |
| Sam Thomas | Cerasela Raducanescu 07900670826 |
| Natalie Moore | Cerasela Raducanescu 07900670826 |
| Cerasela Raducanescu | Brendan Kelly 07887676162 |

**CHILD SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Who?** | **Whom to inform/ report to?** |
| Staff member | Sam Thomas DSP  01588650569 |
|  | Colleen Hadfield/Sarah Philpott DDSP  01588650569 |
| Sam Thomas | Cerasela Raducanescu 07900670826 |
| Natalie Moore | Cerasela Raducanescu 07900670826 |
| Cerasela Raducanescu | Brendan Kelly 07887676162 |

## Principles

* All students have an **absolute right** to a childhood free from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
* All students have an **equal right** to protection from abuse, neglect, or exploitation and a responsibility not to abuse or exploit others.
* **All teachers, teaching support, carers** have a **responsibility** to be aware of the issues of child abuse/neglect and a **duty** to report and refer any concerns.
* Students are best kept safe when professionals work effectively together and share responsibility for protective action.
* Where there are concerns about a student's safety, unconditional confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and should not be offered. When a student has suffered abuse, neglect, or exploitation in the past, information on this should be shared only on a 'need to know' basis.
* Teachers, teaching support, and carers should be proactive and take positive steps to inform students of their rights to safety and protection and the options available to express their fears or concerns.
* When students make allegations of abuse or neglect, or exploitation, they should always be listened to, have their concerns taken seriously, and where appropriate, thoroughly investigated.
* All teaching, teaching support, and carers charged with the responsibility of safeguarding children have a right to training and appropriate levels of supervision and support.
* All staff ensure that children are growing up in the circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
* Safeguarding is paramount in all practices at our school. Throughout the curriculum the safety and safeguarding of our students is addressed. This can be done in focused sessions around IT safety and safety in the community as well as in PSE lessons around drug abuse and gang related topics. As part of our three phased 'Wellbeing for Life' programme safety and safeguarding are addressed throughout via modules such as 'Keeping Safe' (Phase 1), Maintaining Safety (Phase 2), 'Taking Responsibility for My own Safety' (Phase 3) and 'Contributing to the Safety of Others' (Phase 3).

# Aims

* To ensure that the students educated, at our school are properly protected and that their welfare is promoted.
* To ensure that our policy meets the expectations of Welsh Assembly Government circular 007/2013 'Safeguarding Children in Education: The role of local authorities and governing bodies under the Education Act 2002' and the non- statutory guidance 009/ 2014 'Safeguarding Children in Education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff' and is compliant with the All-Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 as well as ['Keeping Learners Safe](https://www.gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe) 283/2022'. This policy furthermore takes guidance from Working Together to Safeguard Children, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2), 'Sexting in schools and colleges 2016'.
* To ensure that our school complies with the policies and procedures of the North Wales Safeguarding Children Board.

**Objectives**

* To ensure that the safety and welfare of students looked after or educated at our school is paramount.
* To clarify for staff at all levels their responsibilities in relation to child abuse and to ensure that concerns/allegations are effectively managed.
* To reassure teachers, teaching support and carers, those with parental responsibility and Placing Authorities that our School takes the issue of child protection seriously and will always respond quickly and positively to keep students safe.
* To ensure that all students educated at our school are aware of their unconditional right to be kept safe and free from harm.

#### Definitions / Types of Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing 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 for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult/s, or another child/children.

**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 carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet or electronic communication). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Criminal Exploitation**

“*County line exploitation can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years; any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years; can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. That it can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and young people or adults; and is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.”*

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
* protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
* ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
* provide access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

A student is deemed to have been abused or neglected if they have suffered significant harm due to their experiences.

The Children Act does not define significant but refers to it as being 'considerable,' 'noteworthy' or 'important.' It defines harm as ill-treatment (physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect) or impairment of health (physical or mental) and/or development (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, or behavioural).

## Sexual Exploitation (definition developed by the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (N.W.G.)

Sexual Exploitation of children and students under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts, and relationships where students (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (for example, food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing sexual activities and/or another performing sexual activities on them. Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phone with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/student have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion, and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or student's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

All students involved in sexual exploitation are to be regarded as 'children in need' some of whom might have additional child protection needs. (Cross reference 'Child Sexual Exploitation Policy')

#### Scope

The procedures outlined in this policy apply to all students (under the age of 18 years) educated at our school and must be followed where there are concerns that a student has suffered or may be at risk of suffering harm and the person responsible is one of the following:

* A teacher, teaching support or another adult employed by the school.

* An adult known to the student (relative, family friend, neighbour)
* A professional person who has contact with the student through their employment.
* Another student (sexual abuse/exploitation concerns)
* People involved in organised abuse.

These procedures apply when a student is assaulted by any adult, whether they are known to the student or to Educ8. We have a duty of care in certain circumstances we will need to act on behalf of the child/children. Parents / carers / Social worker / legal guardian and the police will be informed in all instances to protect the welfare of the student/young person. All instances should be discussed with the Senior Headteacher who will decide in consultation with the Education Director/Regional Head Teacher on the next steps to be taken to safeguard the child and how to involve all other stakeholders.

**Training**

We will ensure that all adults in the school community attend regular awareness training on a wide range of safeguarding topics and that both Designated Safeguarding Person undertake two-yearly training in their role.

Training organised by the Your Chapter HR Training Department will take place for school staff.

* on induction to Your Chapter / Educ8, and the school
* throughout the academic year

All school staff:

* Have equal chances of training, career development, and promotion.
* Receive training on induction, which specifically covers:
* All aspects of this policy
* School Staff Code of Conduct
* Keeping Learners Safe/ Keeping Children Safe
* Working Together to Safeguard Children
* Female Genital Mutilation
* Prevent Awareness
* Safeguarding pupils who are vulnerable to extremism.
* Child Sexual Exploitation
* Radicalisation and Extremism
* Listening to Pupils
* The Safe Use of the Internet and social media
* Equal opportunities
* Inclusion
* County Lines
* Safe Handling Medication in Education

All staff are also required to:

* Read Keeping Learners Safe (Summary Guidance) and confirm that they have done so. *Each time Keeping Learners Safe is updated by the Welsh Assembly Government, staff will be updated on the changes via email and/or in-person training.*
* Complete Modules 1-4 Keeping Learners Safe from the Hwb website:
* *Keeping Learners Safe: Module 1 on Hwb* ***Introduction to safeguarding - Keeping learners’ safe module 1*** *Everyone in education should share a common goal of keeping learners safe. This module will help you understand safeguarding and your responsibilities. It is the first module of three available in this package and appropriate for all staff.*
* *Keeping Learners Safe: Module 2 on Hwb* ***Safeguarding roles and responsibilities -***

***Keeping learner’s safe module 2*** *In this module, you will learn more about your role and responsibilities when it comes to keeping learners safe.*

* *Keeping Learners Safe: Module 3 on Hwb* ***Safeguarding practice case studies - Keeping learners’ safe module 3*** *In this module, we will look at some case studies. These will help you to put what you now know about keeping learners safe into practice.*
* *Keeping Learners Safe: Module 4 on Hwb* ***Online safety for practitioners - Keeping learners’ safe module 4*** *In this module, you will learn what online safety means, and about the important role you have when it comes to keeping learners safe online.*

All school staff must undertake appropriate annual renewal training in:

* Child protection issues
* PI training (CPI)
* Recognising signs of abuse
* Handling disclosures

All school staff must attend additional awareness training in the following:

* What to do if a child is being abused
* Peer-on-Peer abuse
* Honour-based violence
* Understanding and knowing how to overcome the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities of learners with ALN.

**Safer Recruitment**

* To ensure a safer recruitment process is in place.
* To prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children.
* To check staff who work with children.
* To take proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required.
* To ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.

**Disclosure and Barring Service Checks**

* To ensure Disclosure and Barring Service checks are undertaken for everyone working with children in the school.
* To complete prohibition checks for everyone in teaching work and to check that no one is restricted from working as a teacher in another EEA country.
* To ensure all visitors are suitably checked and monitored.
* To ensure Disclosure and Barring Service checks are undertaken for who volunteers to run an after-school sports club such as football, netball, rugby etc.
* To ensure Disclosure and Barring Service checks are undertaken for any adult employed by the school from a sports agency who coach children either in school or as an after-school club.

**Single Central Record**

* To ensure a Single Central Record is in place, up to date, and fulfils all statutory requirements that cover everyone who works in regular contact with children such as all:
* school staff
* clinical psychologist
* other staff working in school.
* Proprietors/Directors

The following information will be recorded for all school staff:

* an identity check.
* a barred list check.
* an enhanced DBS. check/certificate.
* a prohibition from teaching check
* a check of professional qualifications
* a check to establish the person's right to work in the U.K.
* a section 128 check for those in school management positions
* checks on those who have lived or worked outside the U.K.

**Prevention**

It is not appropriate for students to be given sole responsibility for their own safety. However, through the help and support they receive at our school it is possible to make abuse and exploitation less likely through a proactive prevention programme.

Teachers/teaching support at our school will ensure that all students are aware of their absolute unconditional right to be kept safe and free from harm. Teachers/teaching support will work with individual students on their personal safety and protection and provide them with advice, assistance, guidance, and support on how to keep themselves safe in future.

Keyworkers, teachers, foster carers and support workers and others will also act as 'Safe Adults' to whom students can turn for help if they have been harmed or fear they may be harmed in future. They will also inform students of other safeguarding options including the names and phone numbers of the Designated Officer for Grace House School, local Children's Rights Officer, CIW inspectors as well as Child Line and the local police. Contact details will be displayed in classrooms.

It is important for Senior Headteachers/teaching support to also emphasise with each student their responsibilities not to harm or exploit any of the other students with whom they study and to treat them with dignity and respect (cross reference 'Preventing Bullying Policy')

To minimise the risk of abuse, teachers/teaching support must:

* Make full assessments of children's histories and any experience of abuse
* Observe contacts between children, look out for concerns and share observations with other staff (staff meetings, seniors meetings, line manager supervisions)
* Supervise children at all times, where possible
* Observe and minimise physical contact between staff and children ('Safe Caring')
* Risk assess one to one time alone by staff with children
* Recognise the possible involvement of children in eexploitation and look out for the signs
* All staff will be vigilant at all times about students accessing social media and the Internet. During school hours all use of IT equipment will be fully monitored, risk assessed, and young person will have no access to social media. Staff will be vigilant against any form of cyberbullying, grooming, inappropriate relationship building, mental health, gambling, online sexual violence and harassment, self- worth, child development, criminal eexploitation, device addiction, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, and reputation damaging.
* 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.

• include in the curriculum material that will help children 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.

**Presentation**

Safeguarding concerns about students who are educated at our school can arise from one of three sources:

* From their contact with people, they know in the community (family, friends, relatives, organised perpetrators – see 'Child Sexual Exploitation policy')
* From their contact with professionals who are involved in their care and education (Residential and Field Social Workers, Teachers, Psychologists, Foster Carers, etc)
* From their contact with other students with whom they live

Concerns can emerge either through a direct allegation by the student him / herself or through an allegation/disclosure or observation by a third party (another student / a teacher/teaching support/ carer / other professionals / non-professional people).

Teachers, teaching support and carers will always be available to listen to students who want to express concerns about their own or other students' safety. Whoever the students choose to tell of their concerns has a **personal** responsibility to take the appropriate action to promote the student's safety (See Appendix III).

If ever a student chooses to disclose their own abuse or express concerns about another student's safety **inaction is not an option.**

All allegations or concerns in relation to abuse, neglect and / or sexual Exploitation will be taken seriously and managed in line with North Wales Safeguarding Children Board Procedures (See Appendix I).

Each member of staff is required to familiarise him/herself with the contents of the North Wales Safeguarding Children Board guidance.

All teachers/teaching support receive training in Safeguarding Children at Induction and on an ongoing basis to ensure that they remain competent and are equipped to meet the safeguarding needs of the students they look after. All teachers/teaching support receive regular supervision in which issues in relation to the management of child safeguarding concerns can be addressed and any training needs identified.

# Appendix II and III should be shared with all teachers/teaching support, case scenarios should be given to gauge their understanding of managing concerns.

**Dealing with Disclosure**

The following procedures should be followed when a young person makes a disclosure to a member of staff.

Staff must not give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to those who report possible significant harm to them, but they should guarantee that the information will only be passed to the minimum number of people who need to know to ensure proper action is taken to sort the problem out. Below are a list of Do’s and Don'ts to help staff understand their role in dealing with Safeguarding Concerns.

**DO**

* Listen to the young person attentively and maintain eye contact.
* Allow the young person to talk, but don't press for information.
* Tell the young person that they are not to blame for anything that has happened.
* Reassure the young person that they were right to tell.
* Let the young person know that other people will have to be told so that the abuse can stop.
* Try to explain in a way that the young person can understand.
* Report the disclosure to the DSP, following correct policy and procedure.

**DON'T**

* Promise to keep secrets or make any promises that you can't keep.
* Interrogate the young person or ask leading questions.
* Cast doubt on what they have said or made the young person feel responsible for what's happened.
* Show anger or panic and act hastily.
* Talk to the alleged abuser or attempt to conduct their own investigation.

# Recording

If students choose to disclose their abuse, neglect, or exploitation to teachers/teaching support, this should be managed in line with the guidance above (Dealing with disclosure) and fully recorded on Cpoms.

The record must include details of the date, time, location, and circumstances in which the disclosure was made in addition to as near as possible a verbatim account of what the student said. Teachers/teaching support will not 'translate' the student's account into adult language, nor censor it nor put their own interpretation on what has been alleged. In addition, it should be legible, clear, concise, and free from jargon and abbreviations, separate fact from opinion and signed.

The record should be made as soon as practicably possible after the information has been received, and at the latest by the end of the school day on which the situation arose.

The member of staff to whom the disclosure was made should inform the designated safeguarding officer or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding officer as soon as possible. The designated safeguarding officer will make a same day referral to Children's Services, if required inline with Welsh Safeguarding policies.

**Dealing with concerns about Professional Abuse**

If staff become concerned about possible abuse/exploitation through their observations of students in contact with other adults (professional or otherwise), they should record the details of the date, time, location, and circumstances in which the concerns arose and what it was about the interaction that caused concern. Again, this record should be made as soon as possible after the incident causing concern, and no later than the end of the school day. The information should be passed immediately to the Senior Headteacher.

The Senior Headteacher should contact the senior Safeguarding Manager for Powys for advice and, if appropriate, make a referral. The senior Safeguarding Team can be contacted on:

Powys People Direct - 01597 827666. Out of Hours – 0345 054 4847.

Where the concern/allegation is against the Senior Headteacher, the member of staff should report this to the Education Director, Cerasela Raducanescu 07900670826 [cerasela.raducanescu@educ8.org.uk](mailto:cerasela.raducanescu@educ8.org.uk)

**Record keeping in respect of allegations against staff / carers.**

The organisation will keep a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and details of any action taken, and decisions reached, on a person's confidential personnel file and give a copy to the individual. Such information will be retained on file, including for people who leave the organisation, at least until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that will be longer. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where a future DBS reveals information from the police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or a conviction. It will also prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, allegations re-surface after a period.

All allegations or concerns about abusive or potentially abusive behaviour of professionals will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. If the allegation is in relation to staff who work for our school, the 'staff allegation management form' must be completed by the Senior Headteacher and forwarded to the Education Director for further completion/management.

In the event that a teacher/teaching support receives an allegation by a student or a third party or observes behaviour that causes them concern, they should follow the procedure in line with Appendix II.

Upon receipt of this information, the Senior Headteacher will decide how the concerns should be progressed (in line with the Your Chapter's Whistleblowing Policy). If the Senior Headteacher is unclear about whether what has been alleged constitutes abusive behaviour, they **must** consult with the Senior Manager Safeguarding and keep a record of this consultation.

If it is agreed that the matter will be progressed as a Safeguarding concern, it will be managed in line with North Wales Safeguarding Children's Board procedures. In this circumstance the designated member of staff will inform the Placing Authority, the Senior Manager Safeguarding verbally, and confirm the information in writing by the end of the next working day.

N.B. In using these procedures, if the person to whom concerns should be reported is not available, then the information should be passed directly to the designated member of staff. Under no circumstances should there be any avoidable delay in progressing concerns about student's safety and protection.

The paramount consideration in managing allegations or concerns about professional abuse is the safety and welfare of students. This consideration must be tempered, however, with the need to treat teachers/teaching support fairly and respect for the principles of natural justice.

Because of the students' vulnerability at our school, it is necessary to take a "safety first" approach to any expressions of concern about professional misconduct. Therefore, this policy acknowledged the need to act based on allegations and that any action taken by the school in the short term to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is done without prejudice (i.e., no presumption of guilt). No disciplinary or any other action will be taken without a full and proper investigation, in the course of which the accused member of staff will be given the opportunity to respond to any allegation which has been made.

In managing allegations of professional abuse this policy distinguishes between those relating to sexual abuse and those relating to physical abuse.

**Allegations of Sexual Abuse – Red Allegations**

In the event of a red allegation – the teacher/teaching support or carer who receives the allegation informs the alleged perpetrator that a red allegation has been made. This person then leaves the school without trying to obtain any further information about the content of the allegation from either colleague(s) or student. If the alleged perpetrator does attempt to obtain further information, this constitutes an act of misconduct which will attract a disciplinary response – irrespective of the outcome of the investigation. Similarly, a refusal to leave the school would be deemed to be misconduct, and a disciplinary response would follow.

At this stage, the Designated Safeguarding Officer must be consulted to decide the way forward.

The alleged perpetrator will be contacted by the Senior Headteacher (who is also the Designated Safeguarding Officer) within 24 hours to be informed how matters are to be progressed.

**Allegations of Physical Abuse – Blue Allegations**

In the event of a blue allegation – the teacher/teaching support or carer who receives the allegation informs the alleged perpetrator that a 'Blue Allegation' has been received. This person then removes themselves from the "shopfloor" and has no further contact with the student making the allegation (or any other or colleague) or leaves the school, pending a decision by the Senior Headteacher on how the matter is to be progressed. This decision will be made as soon as possible, **but no later than one hour** from the information being brought to his/her attention by the person receiving the allegation.

A failure on the part of the alleged perpetrator to abide by this policy is an act of misconduct and will lead to disciplinary action.

**Additional Considerations**

Parents/carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not know about it already (the placing authority social worker can decide who will do this). They should be kept informed about the progress of a case and told the outcomes where there is not a criminal prosecution. That includes the outcome of any disciplinary process.

The Your Chapter HR department will nominate an officer to keep the person who is subject to the allegation informed of the progress of the case and arrange to provide appropriate support to the individual while the case is ongoing. If the person is suspended, the employer should also make arrangements to keep the individual informed about developments in the workplace.

Where the concern or allegation has come from a member of staff, the whistleblowing procedures apply in respect of the concern being raised (cross-reference 'Whistle Blowing Policy').

Concerns may arise that a person who works with children has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:

* a police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
* enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or need of services; and
* consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Some cases will also need to be referred to the DBS for consideration of including the person on the DBS barred lists or for consideration by professional bodies or regulators.

# There is written guidance available for staff, which makes clear how teachers/teaching support and carers who are the subject of an allegation will have access to information and support whilst an investigation continues. (Please refer to the Disciplinary policy for full details). In brief, the following actions will be undertaken:

**Suspension**

Teachers/teaching support who are the subject of an allegation will, in consultation with the Senior Manager Safeguarding, be suspended and the children in placement removed from their care and placed with different carers if this is agreed to be the most appropriate course of action. In some cases, it may be agreed that children remain in placement while the investigation is completed.

A suspension in itself should not be taken as a disciplinary sanction but a precautionary measure to protect all concerned and, in particular, where allowing the employee to continue working during an investigation may compromise the integrity of the investigative process.

During suspension, employees are prohibited from attending the workplace other than for the purpose of attending meetings/hearings concerning the matter and should not make contact with any work colleagues or students in the Company's care with the exception of their nominated representative, in most circumstances this will be a member of the HR Department. Whilst each case will be dealt with depending on the circumstances, any period of suspension necessary will be as brief as possible and kept under review.

Where the matter under investigation is in relation to a child protection or safeguarding matter, it may not be possible to divulge the details of the specific allegations that have been made on initial suspension so as not to jeopardize the investigation or lead to further allegation. Full details of the allegations under consideration will be presented at the investigation meeting and the individual given an opportunity to consider the matters being raised.

**Re-deployment pending an investigation.**

In some cases of physical abuse allegations (such as where there are no visible injuries to children, but the allegation has been made with no 3rd party witnesses), following consultation with the Senior Manager Safeguarding (SMS), a staff member may be re-deployed into another school/department and undertake supervised duties not entailing one to one time with children. Each case will be looked at individually, with a clear record being maintained by the School's Designated Safeguarding Person as to how the decision has been reached and who has been involved. The Senior Manager Safeguarding will be made aware of all allegations that may arise that a person who works with children has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If there is caused to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion should be convened by the designated safeguarding officer. N.B. In these cases, the strategy discussion should include a representative of the organisation (unless there are good reasons not to do that) and take account of any information we can provide about the circumstances or context of the allegation.

In cases where a formal strategy discussion is not considered appropriate because the threshold of 'significant harm' is not reached, but a police investigation might be needed, the SMS should nevertheless conduct a similar discussion with the police, the employer, and any other agencies involved with the child to evaluate the allegation and decide how it should be dealt with.

The organisation will inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the SMS. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or it is clear that police or children's social care may need to be involved, that will not be done until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the person. If the person is a member of a union or professional association, she/he should be advised to seek support from that organisation.

**Decision making**

If the complaint or allegation is such that it is clear that investigations by police and/ or enquiries by children's social care are not necessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the Senior management Safeguarding (SMS) should discuss next steps with the organisation. In those circumstances, options open to us, the organisation, will range from taking no further action to summary dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in the future. The nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available will determine which range of possible options is most appropriate.

In some cases, further investigation will be needed to enable a decision about how to proceed. If so, the Senior Manager Safeguarding should discuss with us, the organisation, how, and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. This should normally be undertaken by us as the employer. However, in some circumstances, if appropriate resources may not be available in the organisation or the nature and complexity of the allegation might point to us commissioning an independent investigation.

**Resignations and 'compromise agreements.'**

The fact that a person tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, must not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process. Wherever possible, the person should be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it, but the process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence and reaching a judgement about whether it can be regarded as substantiated on the basis of all the information available should continue even if that cannot be done or the person does not co-operate. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion in those circumstances, and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete, but it is important to reach and record a conclusion wherever possible.

By the same token so-called 'compromise agreements' by which a person agrees to resign, the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference must not be used in these cases. In any event, such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where appropriate. Nor can it override an employer's statutory duty to make a referral to the DBS where circumstances require that.

The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

1. **Substantiated**: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
2. **False**: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
3. **Malicious**: there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive, and the allegation is entirely false.
4. **Unfounded**: there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they may not have been aware of all the circumstances.

**Dealing with allegations/observations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation which arise in the community.**

If information is received either directly or via a third party that a student has been abused by a person known to them in the Community, this will be taken seriously and dealt with in line with Appendix III.

If the Senior Headteacher has any doubt about whether the information received constitutes a child safeguarding concern, he/she **must** consult with a more senior designated member of staff. If following this consultation, it is still unclear whether the situation requires a safeguarding response, then the designated member of staff **must** consult with the Senior Manager Safeguarding for Wrexham to agree a way forward. The designated member of staff will keep a record of this consultation.

If the allegation relates to sexual exploitation, the above procedure applies **except** that the Senior Headteacher will consult with the Senior Manager Safeguarding to agree an appropriate level of response (either via Safeguarding Children Procedures or through the student's ongoing placement plan /PEP).

**Dealing with allegations of Peer Abuse / Exploitation**

In the event of information being received either directly or via a third party that one student is being physically or emotionally abused by a student, this will be taken seriously and dealt with through the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy.

If allegations relate to sexual abuse or Exploitation, these should be managed in the same manner as the procedures for concerns that arise in the Community. (Cross-reference – CSE Policy)

In these circumstances, it is important to recognise that both the victim and alleged perpetrator are both children in need and that both sets of respective needs must be taken into account in the course of any subsequent investigation / police enquiry.

If it emerges that a student is being physically or emotionally harmed by a sibling this information must be brought to the attention of the student's parents or social worker and agreement reached on how the concern should be progressed (either via Safeguarding Children Procedures or the ongoing PEP).

In this event the person who raises the matter should record the date and time of the discussion and the conclusions reached:

* racist, sexist, homophobic, disablist language or behaviour
* if the Senior Headteacher is uncertain whether the information received amounts to an allegation of sexual abuse / exploitation then he / she **must** consult with the Education Director and agree a way forward. If following this consultation it is still unclear whether a Safeguarding response is required the designated member of staff **must** consult with the Senior Manager Safeguarding. The designated member of staff must keep a record of the outcome of this consultation.

**Confidentiality**

If teachers/teaching support receive information from any source that a student has experienced abuse or exploitation or may be at risk of such, then they have a **duty** to pass this information to the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection who in turn will pass the information to the Senior Manager Safeguarding. If the concern is in relation to the designated safeguarding person, then the concern must be reported to the Education Director/Regional Head Teacher, who will contact the Senior Manager Safeguarding.

If students or non-professional adults wish to share such information with teachers/teaching support, they need to be made aware that it will not be possible to guarantee confidentiality. Teachers/teaching support can reassure informants; however, if the allegation is from a third party, that the source of the information can remain anonymous. The reason for the decision to share (or not share) information must be recorded in writing and maintained by the designated member of staff.

When there are historical or current safeguarding concerns about a student this information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis with the minimum number of people necessary to ensure the student's safety and welfare. People who are informed will receive only the minimum amount of information necessary to enable them to implement the student's childcare plan or PEP.

All our teachers/teaching support will take steps to ensure that confidentiality of information is maintained by refraining from talking indiscreetly about the student's past history and by keeping records in a safe and secure place with access strictly limited.

##### Partnership

Educ8 believes that the best outcomes for students are achieved when professionals can work effectively together and with parents/carers. Our school staff believe in open and honest communication and will always share with parents/carers any causes for concerns they have about their children at the earliest opportunity. The only exception to this would be where it was felt such communication might compromise the student's safety.

Educ8 will be responsible for reviewing these procedures annually, or sooner if there has been a legislative change.

Educ8 recognises that local safeguarding arrangements may vary. As such the Education Director/Regional Head Teacher are responsible for submitting this policy for consideration and comment to the Safeguarding Children's Board (MWWSCB) and to the Senior Manager Safeguarding (or other senior officers responsible for child protection matters in that department) and are consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the NWSCB. Any conflicts between locally agreed procedures and those of other responsible authorities are discussed and resolved as far as possible.

Children and young people educated at Grace House School will be made aware of the safeguarding procedures in an age-appropriate manner and format through the children's guide.

**SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO EXPLOITATION, FORCED MARRIAGE, FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, OR TRAFFICKING**

Our safeguarding policy through the school’s values, ethos and behaviour policies provides the basic platform to ensure children and young people are given the support to respect themselves and others, stand up for themselves and protect each other as well as feel safe and secure.

Our school keeps itself up to date on the latest advice and guidance provided to assist in addressing specific vulnerabilities and forms of Exploitation.

Our staff are supported to recognise warning signs and symptoms in relation to specific issues, include such issues in an age-appropriate way in their curriculum,

Our school works with and engages our families and communities to talk about such issues,

Our staff are supported to talk to families about sensitive concerns in relation to their children and to find ways to address them together wherever possible.

Our Designated Safeguarding Person knows where to seek and get advice, as necessary.

Our School brings in experts and uses specialist material to support the work we do.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM involves cutting, and sometimes sewing the girl's genitalia, normally without anaesthetic, and can take place at any time from birth onwards. It is sometimes referred to as 'female circumcision' but this misnomer belies the invasive and irreversible nature of the procedure. It is now more correctly termed female genital mutilation. The procedure has a cultural, rather than religious, origin and is practised by disparate ethnic communities in many countries, including Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, Yemen, and Iraq.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it a criminal offence, not only to carry out FGM in England, Scotland and Wales on a girl who is a U.K. national or permanent resident but also to take a girl out of the U.K. to have FGM performed abroad, even to countries where FGM is still legal.

The indicators of FGM may initially mirror those of sexual abuse. You may notice, for example, that a girl or young woman shows signs of pain or discomfort, needs to visit the toilet constantly, has vaginal blood loss or is unable to sit comfortably. She may make excuses to avoid P.E. and other physical activity or refuse to use the school showers. She may also become evasive or fearful if you enquire if she is unwell and assure you that she is fine when she clearly is not. If she is a B.M.E. child and has recently arrived back from a 'holiday' abroad or a period of absence from School, seems to be in pain and has not been taken by her family to see a doctor, you should consider FGM, alongside other possible explanations.

Staff will complete the online training on the subject via SSS Learning Platform and refresh their knowledge through Hwb site.

**Forced marriage.**

The subject of forced marriage is also highlighted in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education. Forced marriage occurs when a young person is forced into a marriage that they do not want with someone they have not chosen, following coercion, intimidation, threats, and possibly physical and sexual abuse. It is very different from an arranged marriage, where both young people can make the decision to accept or decline the partner chosen for them by their parents. Once again, schools can be seen as being in the front line in protecting young people from this type of abuse. A pupil who fears that they are likely to be forced into a marriage may disclose to a member of staff. Their initial approach, in common with many disclosures of abuse, maybe seemingly innocuous, such as talking about taking a holiday abroad. Their fear that the proposed holiday will result in a forced marriage may only become apparent after several conversations.

These young women may also become victims of what is termed honour‐based violence. This type of violence is described in 'The Right to Choose' guidance: 'A variety of crimes of violence (mainly but not exclusively against women), including assault, imprisonment, and murder where the person is being punished by their family or their community.

**Prevent Programme**

All staff will complete the online Prevent training via SSS Learning Platform /<https://www.foundationonline.org.uk/course/index.php?categoryid=14> and may attend annual Prevent training as delivered by the local police team(s).

In addition to this, YOUR CHAPTER staff, Education and Care, may be trained by Dean Coady O.B.E. via Urban Pure Solutions.

**WHAT WE DO WHEN WE ARE CONCERNED**

Where risk factors are present, but there is no evidence of a particular risk, then our DSP. advises us on preventative work that can be done within school to engage the pupil into mainstream activities and social groups. The DSP may well be the person who talks to and has conversations with the pupil/student's family / carers / social workers / legal guardians, sharing the school’s concern about the young person's vulnerability and how the family and School can work together to reduce the risk.

The school will review the situation after taking appropriate action to address the concerns.

Incidents will be logged in the Incident Log and Cpoms.

**Sharing nudes and semi-nudes**

Our school takes guidance from the Welsh Government statutory guidance: Keeping Learners Safe

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery should be responded to in line with the school’s safeguarding and child protection policy.

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to school attention:

* The incident should be referred to the DSP as soon as possible.
* The DSP. should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff.
* There should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved (if appropriate)

Parents / carers / social workers / legal guardians, should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm. At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.

**Upskirting** **(see Mobile Phone Safety and Acceptable Use policy),** which is now a new criminal offence following the introduction of the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019, typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them giving their consent, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm (We must be aware that a very young pupil or one with ALN may be aware that she has been the victim of this act but might be intimidated or unaware of her right to complain).

**Disclosure**

Disclosures about youth produced sexual imagery can happen in a variety of ways. The young person affected may inform a class teacher, the DSP in school, or any member of the school staff. They may report through an existing reporting structure, or a friend or parent may inform someone in School or college or inform the police directly.

All members of staff (including non- teaching) should be made aware of how to recognise and refer any disclosures of incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery. This should be covered within staff training and within the school or college's child protection policy. Any direct disclosure by a young person should be taken very seriously. A young person who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure in school is a last resort, and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves.

**Initial review meeting**

The initial review meeting should consider the initial evidence and aim to establish:

* Whether there is an immediate risk to a young person or young people
* If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care
* If it is necessary to view the imagery in order to safeguard the young person – in most cases, imagery should not be viewed.
* What further information is required to decide on the best response?
* Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown.
* Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services
* Any relevant facts about the young people involved which would influence risk assessment.
* If there is a need to contact another school, college, setting, or individual.
* Whether to contact parents or carers of the pupils involved - in most cases, parents/ cares should be involved.

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care should be made if at this initial stage:

1. The incident involves an adult.
2. There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to additional learning needs)
3. What you know about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent
4. The imagery involves sexual acts.
5. You have reason to believe a pupil or pupil is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery; for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming

If none of the above applies, then a school may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care (a school can choose to escalate the incident at any time if further information/concerns come to light).

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSP is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to pupils involved and the risks can be managed within the school’s pastoral support and disciplinary framework and if appropriate local network of support.

The decision should be made by the DSP. with input from the Senior Headteacher and input from other members of staff if appropriate. The decision should be recorded in line with school policy.

The decision should be in line with the school’s child protection procedures and should be based on consideration of the best interests of the young people involved. This should take into account proportionality as well as the welfare and protection of young people. The decision should be reviewed throughout the process of responding to the incident.

If a young person has shared imagery consensually, such as when in a romantic relationship or as a joke, and there is no intended malice, it is usually appropriate for the school to manage the incident directly. In contrast, any incidents with aggravating factors, for example, a young person sharing someone else's imagery without consent and with malicious intent, should generally be referred to police and/or children's social care.

If you have any doubts about whether to involve other agencies, you should make a referral to the police.

**ALN**

All staff will be extra vigilant where students with ALN are concerned, as they might not be able to clearly demonstrate or communicate that they would be a victim of abuse, bullying, exploitation, or other safeguarding issues.

**ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP)** and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person (DDSP)

There are four DSP/DDSP’s, their names and contact details can be found on page 5.

The DSP’s role is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the school.

The DSP’s responsibility is as follows:

* make sure they 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).
* provide support to staff members to carry out their safeguarding duties.
* maintain an overview of safeguarding within the school.
* be the first point of contact for parents/carers, students, teaching and non-teaching staff and external agencies in all matters of child protection (except where an allegation of abuse involves a member of staff)
* works with the Education Director and Regional Head Teacher to review and update the school’s safeguarding and child protection policy.
* co-ordinate the child protection and safeguarding procedures in the school and will ensure sufficient account of the nature and age range of the school and its students.
* manage referrals of all cases of suspected abuse to the Local Authority Children’s Social Services and other external agencies, such as the Disclosure and Barring Service and Police, as appropriate
* maintain an ongoing training program for all school employees from induction and throughout their employment.
* help promote educational outcomes by sharing the appropriate information about welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues with teachers and school leadership team.
* monitor the keeping, confidentiality, and storage of records in relation to child protection.
* liaise closely with the Local Authority Education Safeguarding Officer and other external agencies as appropriate.
* MUST liaise with the Education Director/Regional Head Teacher to inform them of issues such as ongoing police or safeguarding investigations (unless the allegation involves them)
* discuss any potential safeguarding issues in line with Local Authority Children’s Social Services procedures.
* ensure that parents/carers see copies of the child safeguarding policy.
* keep parents informed of actions to be taken under these procedures in relation to their child.
* monitor records of students in the school who are subject to a child protection plan to ensure that this is maintained and updated as notification is received.
* liaise with other professionals to ensure that children who are subject to child protection plans and/or social workers are monitored.
* where appropriate, to take part in child protection conferences or reviews/core groups.
* inform the Local Authority Children’s Social Services in writing when a child who is subject to a child protection plan moves to another school and to inform the new school of the child protection plan as advised by the Children's Social Care department.
* monitor the effectiveness of the school’s safeguarding policies and procedures and should ensure the education setting’s safeguarding policy is updated and reviewed annually, and work with the senior leadership team regarding this.
* be involved in monitoring the effectiveness of other school policies as required, to ensure there is consistency and coherence in the way the school effectively safeguards their children, as part of tracking ‘the golden thread’ of safeguarding throughout the school
* consider how safeguarding more widely can be addressed and ensure preventative measures are adopted in the education setting.
* ensure, together with the senior leadership team that all staff receive appropriate training to help them understand the risk of radicalisation and what to do if they have any concerns that a child may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism, radicalisation and/or extremism.
* keep and maintain records and attendance of staff training on child protection, PREVENT and safer recruitment procedures; and
* ensure that, where a child leaves the school, the child protection file is copied for any new school or college as soon as possible but transferred separately from the main student file. The DSP will ensure secure transit and obtain confirmation of receipt.
* complete the Keeping Learners Safe: Safeguarding Audit Tool, Annex 3, annually Keeping learners safe | GOV.WALES
* The DDSPs have equal status and access to the same training as the DSP.
* If the Senior Designated Safeguarding Person is unavailable, all their duties will be carried out by one of the Designated Deputies. During term time, the DSP or one of the DDSPs will always be available for staff in the school to discuss any safeguarding concerns. For out of hours/out of term activities, another designated member of SLT will be the first port-of-call.
* Ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSP and this responsibility should not be delegated. Full details of the DSP’s role can be found in Keeping Learners Safe (283/2022) paragraph 2.15.
* The DSP will attend strategy meetings if the meeting is in regard to a student or a teacher below the level of the DSP.
* If the meeting concerns the DSP or the Senior Leadership Team then it will be the Education Director/Regional Head Teacher who attends, if it concerns the Education Director then the CEO will attend.

**Senior Headteacher (who is also a DSP)**

* The Senior Headteacher has the responsibility to foster a nurturing culture within the school and promote open communication between staff and students on safeguarding matters.
* They will ensure all staff (including supply teachers and volunteers) fully implement and follow the safeguarding policies and procedures adopted by Council of Management
* Have both time and access to sufficient resources to enable them to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings as well as contributing to the assessment of children.
* Understand the procedures for safeguarding children, feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, and be confident that such concerns will be addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with Welsh Government’s Procedures for Whistleblowing in Schools (see Whistleblowing in schools: guidance for governors | GOV.WALES)

**Appendix I**

**Recognition and Signs of Abuse**

Within North Wales Safeguarding Children Board Procedures file), there is a list of warning signs of abuse and neglect. All teachers, teaching support, and carers should make themselves aware of these. They should, however, bear in mind that such lists are not exhaustive, and all staff has a responsibility to seek out further reading material and training opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in recognising and dealing with child abuse. Training needs should be brought to supervision such that they can be appropriately met and reviewed.

Below is a list of some of the signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and the impact of emotional abuse:

***Physical Abuse***

* Multiple bruising to various parts of the body
* Outline bruises- hand marks/ slipper prints straps.
* Bi-lateral black eyes
* Symmetrical bruising

***Sexual Abuse***

* Sexually transmitted diseases
* Severe and persistent self-harming
* Genital injuries- alleged accidents with bikes, spikes, fences, self-inflicted- with attendant damage- bruising, tears, etc
* Pregnancy where the identity of the father is vague or secret.
* Itching/ soreness and bleeding to genital/ anal areas

***Impact of Emotional Abuse***

* Low self-esteem/self-worth
* Behavioural difficulties (overly passive, overly aggressive, promiscuous attachment, etc.)
* Poor educational attainment
* Depression and anxiety
* Disassociation and detachment

**Appendix 2**

**Allegations of professional abuse process**

This process is to be followed for all allegations against any professionals including carers within schools and residential services:

* Allegation received
* Reported to senior managers immediately
* Recorded in writing on pro forma

**Written report from Senior Headteacher to DSP**

Leader informs the DSP who considers allegation and consults with Education Director or Regional Head Teacher and then **SPoA**.

If concern is in relation to the DSP, report to the Education Director or Regional Head Teacher, if about the ED/RHT then contact the CEO, if CEO, report to the Board of Directors (follow whistleblowing policy)

**Considerations:**

Employee has behaved in a way that has:

* Harmed/may have harmed a child
* Committed a criminal offence related to a child
* Indicates he/she may pose a risk of harm to children

**Discussion / Outcome:**

**Criteria met**

* **SPoA** record made

**Discussion / Outcome:**

**Criteria not met**

* No further Action
* record made.

**Fact Find**

Onsite visit from a member of SLT to fact find, with a witness.

**Your Chapter/Educ8**

Investigation with HR involvement.

**Fact Find to SPoA**

Call/report fact finding and make decisions for next steps together.

**MULTI AGENCY STRATEGY MEETING – Chaired by SPoA/DSP**

Possible actions

* Police investigation
* Section 47/Pt 4 inquiry
* Suitability/Internal Management investigation – Share findings with SPOA after investigation.

**Final Strategy Meeting /Outcome of Investigations**

**See Next Page**

**Outcomes of investigations**

Relevant investigation completed.

**Allegation 1 of the following.**

Unfounded

Unsubstantiated

False

Malicious

**Allegation Substantiated**

* Police Prosecution
* Multi agency meeting / relevant referrals discussed.
* Notify SpoA
* Consider DBS referral.
* Consider EWC referral.
* **Police investigation discontinued**

Concerns remain about the employee



* No further police action
* Multi-agency meeting / relevant referrals discussed.
* Consider DBS referral.
* Consider EWC referral.

Follow internal disciplinary process

Outcomes:

1. No further action
2. Issue formal letter of warning
3. Written warning
4. Terminate employment

Update SPoA if required

Or

No further action

KEY

SPoA Single Point of Access (Wales)

DSP Designated Safeguarding Person

YOUR CHAPTER DSP Designated Safeguarding Person at Head office

**Appendix 3 - Your Chapter Safeguarding Reporting Process**

This process is for all safeguarding concerns and allegations apart from those of professional abuse (i.e., allegations on staff)

**Child safeguarding concerns raised**

Ensure safety of young person, offer complaints process, provide first aid if needed.

Inform Senior Headteacher and DSP/ who will then inform Regional Head Teacher/Education Director will discuss the course of action to be taken.

Follow any advice given by the person informed with regards to future action to be taken.

Senior Headteacher to inform Education Director or Regional Head Teacher. Complete Child Protection / Safeguarding form and begin chronology of all action taken.

Following advice given from ED / RHT/ DSP inform the following people: Parents (depending on individual situation), Children’s Social Care team, or EDT if out of hours, House manager, SPoA if required.

Manager to peruse all written documentation at earliest opportunity, discuss with the Senior Headteacher and DSCO and send copies of paperwork to DSP. A plan for future action will be decided which may include some or all of the following:

Updates to social worker, updates to parents (if applicable), updates to SPoA, updates to risk management plans and other Educ8 documents.

Complete immediately before the end of school

Complete within 24 hours, following guidance from management.

Follow up

**Appendix 4 - Procedure for dealing with Peer-on-Peer abuse.**

When an allegation is made by a chid/young person against another, members of staff should consider whether the allegation is a complaint or whether it raises a safeguarding concern. If there is a safeguarding concern the DSP should be informed.

The DSP must alert and report the allegation to the respective social workers of both children and young people involved to assess and determine the way forward. If the allegation indicates a potential criminal offence has taken place, the police should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and parents (if applicable) informed.

The information and situation should be assessed. This assessment should consider the risks pose and whether the risks are significant, whether, to keep children and young people the alleged perpetrator must be moved from the placement. Any such decision must be risk assessed and handled sensitively being mindful of the need to support both victim and perpetrator.

The Senior Headteacher and DSP must consider completing a risk assessment including a safeguarding risk assessment to take account of any preventive strategies needed. This should be used to inform an interim supervision plan. Any supervision plan must address the resources necessary to keep all children and young people safe including increased staffing. The supervision and or care plan must be monitored and updated as necessary and should include evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan and risk assessment.

A record of the allegation must be made but no attempt at this stage should be made to investigate the circumstances. The records should include details of the date, time, location, and circumstances in which the allegation was made. The record, should, as far as possible, be a verbatim account of what the child/young person said. Staff should not 'translate' the child/young person's account into adult language or censor it or put their own interpretation on what has been alleged. In addition, it should be legible, clear, concise, and free from jargon and abbreviations.

The Senior Headteacher, DSP, social worker with the child/young person's involvement(victim) makes decisions about the support they need as well as the action necessary in respect of the alleged perpetrator.

Where neither Children's Social Care nor the police accept the allegation, the Senior Headteacher and DSP must nevertheless review the situation to identify whether any additional safeguards and support is necessary to promote all children and young people's welfare.

It is important that the child or young person is kept informed and updated of all action and progress of the concern/allegation. At conclusion, the child and or young person must be informed of the outcome verbally and confirmed in writing. With a copy of the records placed on their case file.

**APPENDIX 5**

**NSPCC guidance on child protection records retention (England & Wales) states:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Guidance on Retention Periods Type of record** | **Retention** |
| Child welfare concerns that your organisation refers on to children's social care or the police.  For example, this would include concerns about physical, sexual, emotional or neglect of a child, disclosures from a child about being abused or information from a third party which might suggest a child is being abused; concerns about a parent or another adult that uses your organisation, or a young person who has been abused by another young person. | The referral should be acknowledged in writing by children's social care and your organisation keeps this on file.  Records should be kept for 6 years after the last contact with the service user unless any of the exemptions apply (listed above) or if your organisation is required to comply with any other statutory requirements. |
| Child welfare concerns that your organisation decide, after consultation, do not necessitate a referral to children's social care or the police. In such circumstances the organisation should make a record of the concern and the outcome. For example, where a child has been bullied, overly pushy parents or a very distressed child where the distress is unrelated to child abuse. | Destroy the record a year after the child/adult concerned ceases to use the service unless the child or adult are continuing to use your organisation. |
| Concerns about people (paid and unpaid) who work with children and young people, for example, allegations, convictions, disciplinary action, inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people. For example, where an employee has breached the code of conduct, a record of the behaviour, the action taken, and outcome should be recorded. | Personnel files and training records (including disciplinary records and working time records) - retain for 6 years after employment ceases. However, the records should be retained for a longer period if any of the following apply:  There were concerns about the behaviour of an adult who was working with children where s/he behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child.  The adult possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child.  The adult behaved towards a child in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.  In such circumstances, records should be retained at least until the adult reaches normal retirement age, or for 10 years if that is longer. |
| **Disclosure and Barring Service** (DBS.) disclosures obtained as part of the vetting process. | The actual disclosure form must be destroyed after 6 months. However, it is advisable that organisations keep a record of the date of the check, the reference number and decision. |

**Appendix 6**

**Appendix 6 - Procedures for dealing with incidents of sexting.**

Disclosures about sexual imagery can happen in a variety of ways. The child or young person affected may inform a class teacher, a friend, member of staff, social worker, DSP etc. They may report through a parent or fostering household or directly to the police if they are confident to do so.

All members of staff should be made aware of how to recognise and refer any disclosures of incidents involving sexual imagery. This will be supported through training.

Any direct disclosure by a child or young person must be taken very seriously. A child or young person who discloses they are the subject of sexual imagery is likely to be embarrassed and worried about the consequences. It is likely that disclosure is a last resort, and they may have already tried to resolve the issue themselves. Care must be taken to reassure and support the child or young person.

**Initial review meeting**

The initial review meeting should consider the evidence and aim to establish:

* Whether there is an immediate risk to the child/young person
* If a referral should be made to the police and/or children's social care
* If it is necessary to view the imagery to safeguard the child/young person – in most cases, imagery should not be viewed.
* What further information is required to decide on the best response?
* Whether the imagery has been shared widely and via what services and/or platforms. This may be unknown.
* Whether immediate action should be taken to delete or remove images from devices or online services in consultation with DSP, police, and others.
* Any relevant facts about the children/young people involved which would influence risk assessment.
* Whether to contact parents

An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care should be made if at this initial stage if:

* The incident involves an adult.
* There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to special educational needs)
* Whether the imagery suggests from information obtained that the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage or are violent.
* The imagery involves sexual acts.
* You have reason to believe a child/young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the imagery, for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

Decision not to involve the police and children social care should only be made if the DSP is confidently that:

None of the above factors applies. If this is the case, the Senior Headteacher and or DSP may decide to respond to the incident without involving the police but should alert the social worker to the concern for their consideration. However, all staff and fostering household must be mindful that if further information/concerns come to light the incident could be escalated.

The decision to respond to the incident without involving the police or children's social care would be made in cases when the DSP is confident that they have enough information to assess the risks to children and young people involved and the risks can be managed with support and activation of the behaviour management procedures.

The decision should be made by the DSP with input from the Senior Headteacher and input from other members of staff where appropriate. The decision should be recorded in line with Your Chapter reporting and recording policy, but it is important that the information is recorded on the children/young people's case file.

**Cross Reference**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Code of Conduct

Whistle-Blowing Policy

Disciplinary Policy

Child Sexual Exploitation Policy

Safer Recruitment and Retention Policy