

Cowbridge School



Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy

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Autumn 2022	Updated reference to AWCPP from 2017 version to 2021 App C - addition of financial abuse into categories of abuse App D - updated MARF form. App F - new appendix	SPW Committee 29.11.22
Autumn 2025	3.10 – changes incorporating Vale Family Compass 3.13 – changes to website, email and phone number 15.2 – Estyn SER safeguarding has been updated to 2024 framework. App D 0 updated MARF form	SPW Committee 28.01.26

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the Safeguarding Children Agenda, our school recognises that a Safeguarding Policy requires a broader view than that of the traditional child protection policy. The *Safeguarding Children in Education* model Child Protection Policy has been incorporated into this *Safeguarding Policy*. However, absolute focus is maintained that the aim of this document is the protection and welfare of children and young people.
- 1.2 At the outset, it is critical that definitions of the terms used within this policy are clarified. **Appendix A** includes definitions and concepts taken from the *Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004*, *All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008*, *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014* and *Keeping Children Safe* and are included here for ease of reference and to ensure that common terminology is used to assist in work undertaken between partners.
- 1.3 The underpinning policy principles ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all our children/young people are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children and young people have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, religion, sexuality or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. All staff have an equal responsibility (statutory duty from April 2016), to act if they have any suspicions that a child might be at risk of, or experiencing abuse or neglect (*Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014*).
- 1.4 Legislation forms the basis for this Policy and therefore the following legal documents have been considered: *The Education Act 2002* (see list of Governors Statutory Policies, Governors Wales):
- 1.5 Our aims are:
- i) to provide a safe environment for children/young people in which to learn;
 - ii) to establish what actions the School can take to ensure that children/young people remain safe at home as well as at school;
 - iii) to raise the awareness of all staff to these issues, and to define their roles and responsibilities in reporting possible cases of abuse;
 - iv) to identify children/young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm and provide high level support according to their needs;
 - v) to ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues;
 - vi) to set down the correct procedures for those who encounter any issue of child protection.
- 1.6 'Safeguarding', is not just about protecting children/young people from deliberate harm. It encompasses issues for schools including:
- pupil health and safety;
 - bullying/cyberbullying;
 - racist abuse;
 - harassment and discrimination;

- use of physical intervention / safe handling;
- meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions;
- providing first aid;
- drug and substance misuse;
- educational visits;
- relationships and sex education;
- child sexual exploitation;
- issues which may be specific to a local area or population e.g. gang activity;
- school security;
- the welfare of learners on extended vocational placements;
- radicalisation and extremism. Cowbridge School follows the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (2015). The Prevent duty is the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 on specified authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

- 1.7 At Cowbridge School, we have separate policies within which we aim to address many of the above areas. We have a *Health & Safety Policy* which addresses many of the areas including security, pupil welfare and educational visits; we also have a separate *Behaviour Policy* incorporating equality, safety and bullying.
- 1.8 Cowbridge School fully recognises the contribution it makes to Safeguarding Children and Young people.
- 1.9 There are three main elements to our policy:
- i) **Prevention** through the teaching and support staff offer to children/young people;
 - ii) **Procedures** which clearly outline the expectations of all parties within a Safeguarding agenda for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse, concern and or vulnerability. Because of our day to day contact with children/young people school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse; and
 - iii) **Support** to children/young people who may have been abused, give a cause for concern or are vulnerable.
- 1.10 This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working within the School. Additionally, this policy applies to all occasional workers, volunteers, contractors and governors. All adults on school site must be aware of the School's *Safeguarding Policy* as any adult, as well as teachers, can be the first point of disclosure for a child/young person. All staff working with pupils require a valid DBS.
- 1.11 Within this school the Headteacher retains overall responsibility for Safeguarding.
- 1.12 Key safeguarding personnel within the School are contained within the School handbook which is updated annually.

Designated teacher for child protection

1.13 All schools are required to have a senior member of staff with leadership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements ('Designated Person'). The Designated Person for Cowbridge School is reviewed annually and all staff made aware during annual training.

1.14 The main responsibilities of the Designated Person are:

- To be the first point of contact for parents/carers, students, teaching and support staff, external agencies and any other in all matters of child protection;
- To act as a source of advice and support within our school.
- To ensure all staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and know how to respond to a student who reports abuse;
- To coordinate the child protection procedures in the School;
- To ensure that Cowbridge School provides an on-going training programme for all employees;
- To monitor the keeping, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to Child Protection (using the MyConcern software);
- To ensure that all students are encouraged to talk and that students know who to approach with any concerns;
- To ensure that the duty of care towards students and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour and to assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice.

1.15 The Designated Person will:

- Advise and act upon all suspicion, belief and evidence of abuse reported;
- Keep the Headteacher informed of all actions unless the Headteacher is the subject of a complaint;
- Liaise with appropriate agencies on behalf of the School;
- Disseminate child protection information gained from training and other sources to all staff in our school and ensure that newly appointed staff and temporary staff are aware of their child protection responsibilities;
- If the Designated Person is unavailable or is the subject of a complaint, his duties will be carried out by Designated Deputy Safeguarding Officers.

Nominated Governor for Child Protection

A nominated governor for Safeguarding is appointed annually during the first Main Governing Body meeting of the academic year. The nominated governor's role is to ensure:

- That the School has a child protection policy in place;
- That the policy is reviewed in order to ensure its effectiveness;
- That designated and other staff have the opportunity to attend appropriate training;
- That parents are aware of our child protection responsibilities.

2. PREVENTION

- 2.1 We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to safeguard children/young people.
- 2.2 The School will therefore:
- a) establish and maintain an ethos where children/young people feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are **listened to**;
 - b) ensure children/young people know that there are adults within the School whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
 - c) include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for pupils' wellbeing, resilience and overall health which equip children/young people with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse or exploitation, both in their own communities and the cyber community, and to know to whom to turn for help;
 - d) include within the curriculum, material that will help children/young people develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills; and
 - e) Included in the curriculum is support and pastoral care, access to relevant support and educational agencies.
- 2.3 All staff demonstrate a total commitment to Safeguarding. They raise children's/young people's awareness of themselves through Health and Wellbeing lessons, Form Tutor time and RSE lessons, developing a trusting climate so that they feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings. We also help to develop appropriate attitudes in our children/young people and make them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.
- 2.4 In our school we respect our children/young people. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children/young people to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable them to take and make decisions for themselves.
- 2.5 We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children/young people make optimum educational progress.

3. **PROCEDURES**

3.1 Cowbridge School follows the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* and all local protocols in relation to safeguarding that have been endorsed by Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Local Safeguarding Children Board.

3.2 Cowbridge School has:

- a Designated Senior Person for Child protection (DSP), who has undertaken the appropriate training and at least one deputy, who will substitute in the designated person's absence/not being available;
- appropriate arrangements are in place for the support and training of both the Designate and the Deputy Designate. In the event of the DSP and Deputy DSP not being available to deal with an emergency involving Safeguarding issues, the member of staff with the concern should follow procedures laid out in this policy;
- provided training for all staff regarding:
 - i. their personal, statutory responsibility;
 - ii. the agreed local procedures;
 - iii. the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse;
 - iv. how to support a child /young person who discloses abuse; and
 - v. record keeping.

This should take place annually for existing staff and immediately for new staff;

- identified a specific governor who is a designated Safeguarding link and who will oversee the School's Safeguarding policy and practice;
- ensured that every member of staff and every governor knows:
 - i. the name of the designated person and their role; and the deputising arrangements in place;
 - ii. that they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the appropriate channels and within the timescales laid down in the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2021*; and
 - iii. the expectations of the School in regard to the recording and reporting of concerns.
- ensured that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the School and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the School brochure or website;
- issued a pupil friendly version of Keeping Learner's Safe via Parentmail;
- a clear understanding that the local Children & Young People Service (CYPS) team must be contacted immediately if:
 - i. a child/young person who is on the Child Protection Register (CPR) is excluded either for a fixed term or permanently; and
 - ii. a child/young person who is on the CPR has an unexplained absence.
- worked to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operated as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences, core groups, and submitted written reports to such meetings as required and MARAC reports (**Appendix E**);
- ensured that members of staff are aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect (**Appendix C**), and the need to be alert to signs of abuse.

3.3 **What to do if a child tells you that they or another child/young person is being abused:**

- Show the child that you have heard what they are saying, and that you take their allegations seriously;
- Encourage the child to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions;
- Don't interrupt when the child is recalling significant events. Don't make the child repeat their account;
- Explain what actions you must take, in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child;
- Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential, as you have a responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust;
- Write down as soon as you can and no later than 24 hours what you have been told, using the exact words if possible. Keep rough notes;
- Report your concerns to your line manager or (if appropriate) the member of staff in your organisation with designated responsibility for child protection;
- Do not confront the alleged abuser;
- Do not worry that you may be mistaken. You will always be taken seriously by CYPS. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment;
- Make a note of the date, time, place and people who were present at the discussion.

Records of concern/significant event/disclosure

3.4 Whenever a member of staff has concerns, or when a child presents with a marked change of behaviour, a record of Concern will be made in the confidential MyConcern safeguarding software which is a simple, safe and secure solution for recording and managing all safeguarding concerns for schools and groups of schools. It enables schools to evidence the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and drive improved outcomes for children.

3.5 All staff should be aware of the following paragraph from *AWCPP*:

If any person has knowledge, concerns or suspicions that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to be at risk of harm, it is their responsibility to ensure that the concerns are referred to social services or the police, who have statutory duties and powers to make enquiries and intervene when necessary.

NB If a referrer disagrees with a decision made by the DSP, who decides not to pass on concerns, it is the referrer's responsibility to make that referral.

Storing records

3.6 All storing of physical and historical records must be kept secure and in locked locations and children's/young people's files must be kept individually and separately in line with the Pupil Information Record System as supplied by the Directorate of Learning and Skills. Concerns will be shared with relevant professionals involved with the child, but records will not be available without the

authority of the Designated Senior Person (DSP) or the Headteacher. As of September 2017 all records will be stored digitally on MyConcern.

Transfer of files

- 3.7 All Safeguarding information must be transferred to a new school immediately when a child/young person on the Child Protection Register, or who has a diagnosed mental health difficulty, or who is known to CYPS, leaves. CYPS must be informed of the child's/young person's transfer. The DSP will ensure that the receiving school is fully aware of any Safeguarding concerns and that the file is copied and transferred separately in a secure, appropriate manner. Copies of key documents in the file must be copied and kept in school. (Child Protection records should be kept until a child reaches the age of 25) If the School is unable to ascertain what school/educational setting the child/young person is transferring to, the School must inform the Named Senior Officer for Safeguarding in the Learning and Skills Directorate.

Procedures for school based staff

- 3.8 All staff and volunteers working with children and young people are well placed to observe outwards signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop and have a duty to report concerns to the DSP or Deputies. They therefore have a duty to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of pupils and comply with the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* and the *National Assessment Framework*.
- 3.9 These procedures are consistent with the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures* and the *National Assessment Framework* which should be referred to for greater detail according to specific circumstances.
- 3.10 When a member of staff, teaching or non – teaching, is alerted to signs of abuse or neglect they should:
- Discuss the issue with the School's DSP or in their absence the Deputy DSP, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher immediately. If the decision is taken that the incident needs to be referred, the DSP should make a telephone referral to CYPS by telephoning the Duty Officer on 0808 2816727, or out of hours on 02920 788570. If necessary, this must be followed within two working days by completing the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) either in writing or via e-mail to: **dutymarfs@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk** or to the relevant Duty Team of the appropriate Local Authority. If the 'Child in Need' referral box is ticked, it must be accompanied with parental consent. No parental consent is needed for the 'CP' referral box. The 'Information Only' referral box will be logged by CYPS and only acted upon if it is considered a CP matter. The address of the VoG Duty Officer is:
The Duty Officer
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Dock Office
Barry
CF63 4RT
 - The DSP should ensure that parents are informed and made aware of the referral, **other than in circumstances when doing so would put the child at further risk of harm;**

- The DSP or Deputy should add significant events to MyConcern to enable the School to build up a picture of what might be going on for the child/young person.
- Vale Family Compass provide a range of information, advice, support and protection for children, young people and their parents and carers and families in the Vale of Glamorgan and helps to meet Section 17 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014.

(Advice may be sought prior to referral from the above asking for the duty desk, or the Local Authority on –0808 2816727 – option 3).

For children who do not live in the Vale of Glamorgan staff should contact the following numbers to gain advice and support and/or make a referral:

Cardiff - call 029 2053 6490 (outside of office hours then call the Emergency Duty Team on 029 2078 8570)

Rhondda Cynon Taf - call 01443 425 006

Bridgend - call 01656 642320 (Emergency Out of hours contact number is 01443 743 665)

3.11 Following the referral, the School must:

- be kept informed of the strategy discussions and attend strategy meetings / case conferences / core group meetings as required;
- record the date, event, action taken and result of suspected child abuse and keep records confidential, separate and secure;
- contribute to the coordinated approach to Child Protection by developing effective liaison with other agencies and support;
- provide written reports, using **Appendix E**.

Procedures for the learning and skills directorate staff

3.12 Staff who visit schools (both centrally based staff such as the SIIS, Challenge Advisers and those providing commissioned services) may also receive pupil disclosures or gain evidence of possible abuse including neglect.

3.13 They should share the information with the School's DSP, or in their absence, the Deputy DSP, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. If, following discussion, the decision is taken that the incident needs to be referred, the DSP should make the referral to CYPS, by telephoning the Duty Officer on 0808 2816727 or out of hours on 02920 788570. This must be followed up within two working days by completing the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) either in writing or via email familycompass@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk . For children who do not live in the Vale of Glamorgan staff should contact the numbers in paragraph 3.10 above.

As the adult who first raised the concern, it is the visiting member's responsibility to ensure that the School has acted upon the concerns raised. The responsibility for taking procedures further lies with the visiting member if they are not satisfied with the School's response. If this is the case, concerns should be shared with the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer.

It is not the responsibility of staff in school, staff visiting the School or those working with children and young people, or in youth settings, to investigate suspected child abuse, only to report any disclosure or apparent evidence.

4. SUPPORTING VULNERABLE PUPILS AND THOSE WHO ARE AT RISK

- 4.1 Cowbridge School recognises that children/young people who are at risk, suffer abuse, neglect or witness violence may be deeply affected by this.
- 4.2 This School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children/young people at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.
- 4.3 The School will endeavour to support the child/young person through:
- a) the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation (see Section 3 on Prevention);
 - b) the School ethos which:
 - i. promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
 - ii. gives children/young people a sense of being valued (ref. Section 3 on Prevention).
 - c) the School's behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable children/young people in the School. All staff have agreed on a consistent approach which focuses on the behaviour of the offence committed by the child/young person but does not damage their sense of self-worth. The School will endeavour to ensure that the child/young person knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any issue which has occurred;
 - d) liaison with other agencies who support the student such as CYPS, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services and the Education Welfare Service (Barnardo's);
 - e) keeping up to date records, using MyConcern and notifying CYPS as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.
- 4.4 When a child/young person on the Child Protection Register leaves, we will transfer information to the new school immediately and inform CYPS.

5. BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

- 5.1 Cowbridge School's policy on bullying is set out in the School's *Behaviour Policy* and is reviewed annually by the governing body. The Local Authority monitor bullying incidents through MyConcern. Internally this is recorded by the Achievement Team through Google Forms.
- 5.2 Under the *Education and Inspection Act 2006*, there is a specific duty to take measures to promote good behaviour and to prevent all forms of bullying. In Cowbridge School we operate a number of supplementary programmes which seek to eliminate bullying. The School has well established protocols for dealing with bullying, physical and verbal abuse. The School's bullying code is "Stop it. Solve it. Sort it" and is circulated and promoted through the whole school by the

School Council. The School have fully trained peer mentors in Years 12 and 13 which pupils can speak to if they feel that they are having problems with bullying.

6. PUPILS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

- 6.1 MyConcern should be used to record any concerns relating to a child/young person's mental health. All referrals/discussions with mental health professionals or other agencies should be documented in the safeguarding file. All acts of violence or threats of violence committed by the child/young person should be reported to the police unless a clear directive not to do so is given by mental health professionals.

7. PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

- 7.1 Cowbridge School's adopted Behaviour Policy includes guidance on physical intervention and this circular also references the WG Safe and Effective Intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons.
- 7.2 Any allegation of inappropriate physical intervention involving a child/young person must be reported in line with the guidance in this policy (Allegations Against Staff Section 11).
- 7.3 The School will ensure that every physical intervention is appropriately recorded on the Physical Intervention form and reported to the Local Authority in line with Welsh Government policy '*Safe and Effective Intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons*' No: 097/2013. Records of physical interventions are kept and sent to the LA termly.

8. CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

- 8.1 We recognise that statistically children/young people with learning/behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and/or emotional and behaviour problems need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

9. SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

- 9.1 Cowbridge School recognises that in a modern learning environment, use of the Internet, multimedia devices and digital imaging facilities are part of everyday requirements. However, a child/young person's safety will remain the priority of the School.
- 9.2 All staff are aware that any items that have capability for use of the Internet or the creation of digital images must be used by children/young people under appropriate supervision. All pupils must agree to the School's *Acceptable use of*

ICT Policy when signing in and those who breach this will have their privileges removed.

- 9.3 If there is any suspicion that any digital device or computer contains any images or content of an inappropriate nature, the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Officer should be informed immediately.

Social Networking

- 9.4 Social Networking is part of everyday culture within the online environment and all staff will promote safe use of the internet to all children/young people. Staff are strongly advised not to have contact with young people and parents/carers on Social Networks. Staff will ensure that any personal use of Social Networking does not in any way impinge upon the School or their professional standards. Any concerns regarding a staff member's conduct should be brought to the immediate attention of the Headteacher or the DSP.
- 9.5 Any attempt by a child/young person to contact staff via such internet sites will immediately be reported to the Headteacher or DSP in order that appropriate advice can be given to the child/young person and their parents/carers regarding professional boundaries and the safety of the child/young person.
- 9.6 The School uses Google Classroom for online Learning. All staff are expected to follow and adhere to the Blended Learning Policy which incorporates Revised Keeping Safe online: Live Streaming and Video Conferencing.

Permission for the creation of digital or media images

- 9.7 Every parent/carer must be requested to give specific consent for any image of their child to be recorded in school when they join us in Year 7. Permission slips will clearly identify the range of images i.e. Photographs or digital filming/video images. In addition, the permission will also be specific in listing the use of any digital or multimedia images, i.e. Photographs in a local newspaper, school leaflets or posters or DVDs for sale to parents and others.
- 9.8 Cowbridge School staff will inform parents/carers that they can only record photographic or digital images of children in school based activities, i.e. school concerts, with the permission of the Headteacher. The School will never condone the posting of children's/young people's images on the internet or social networking sites. The School cannot control the use of such images taken by parents/carers after school events, and therefore could not assure other parents/carers of the appropriateness of that use.

10. CONTACT WITH CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

- 10.1 All staff, volunteers and Governors will maintain an awareness of the position they hold with the School and the perceived power of their position. All contact with children/ young people outside the School environment must be managed appropriately and be clearly communicated within school and to their parents/carers. If there is a requirement to contact a child/ young person via

telephone, parents/carers will be informed prior to contact being made with the child/young person;

- 10.2 **All school staff will ensure that their personal telephone numbers and contact details are not known to or used by the children/young people unless absolutely necessary.** Should they gain access to any such details the member of staff will inform the DSP or the Headteacher as a matter of urgency. Should any staff member, volunteer or governor become aware that outside of school time there is direct contact between adults within school and any of the children/young people and that it is not for school purposes, the DSP or Headteacher is to be informed immediately. This may result in the instigation of procedures in relation to Allegations Against a Professional.

11. **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

- 11.1 All personnel working within a school will require the appropriate safeguarding checks as outlined in the School's *Recruitment and Selection Policy* and the *Safer Recruitment Policy*.
- 11.2 Staff involved in the recruitment process **must** ensure they read and fully comply with both documents.
- 11.3 For new employees, this will include an enhanced DBS check (with the appropriate barring list check) and two satisfactory references one of which must be from the current or most recent employer/colleague. Additional safeguarding checks will also be required which are outlined in the safer recruitment policy. **All checks must be in place before a start date can be arranged.** Separate arrangements may apply for existing employees where appropriate checks are recorded on file. Further guidance is outlined in the School's *Safer Recruitment Policy*.
- 11.4 In exceptional circumstances, the applicant may start employment without the necessary safeguarding checks in place but only in cases where any delay in starting the applicant will cause risk of harm to a child/young person or adversely affect the delivery of education of the children/young people of the School. In such circumstances, the risk assessment process, as outlined in the safer recruitment policy will be followed and suitable safeguarding measures put in place. This arrangement will only be valid for 2 weeks (maximum) from the start date. In the event of a member of staff starting without a DBS, an emergency risk assessment must be carried out by the Headteacher.

12. **ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF**

- 12.1 Welsh Government guidance circular 9/2014 *Safeguarding Children in Education: Handling Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff* sets out specific advice to be followed where a child protection allegation is made against a member of staff.

- 12.2 The Teacher Unions, the Association of Directors of Social Services and the Association of Chief Police Officers, have agreed to join NEOST Guidance on practice and procedure in cases where there has been an allegation against a member of staff of abuse of trust. Guidance can also be found in chapter 4.3.6 *All Wales Child Protection Procedures*.
- 12.3 When a member of staff witnesses or receives an allegation of professional abuse against another adult who is working with children/young people: this could include staff, volunteers, governors, occasional workers or contractors, and those staff that are not on school site but come into contact with children/young people, i.e. those who transport children/young person to and from school, school crossing patrol etc., they should report the matter immediately to the Headteacher, who should:
- obtain details of the allegation in writing, signed and dated;
 - keep a record of dates, times, location and names of potential witnesses;
 - not investigate the allegation, or interview pupils, or discuss the allegation with the member of staff, (but should consider, in consultation with the Safeguarding Officer and the Child Protection Unit, whether the allegation requires further investigation and if so by whom);
 - inform the Chair of Governors;
 - contact the **Local Authority Safeguarding Officer 01446 709180** who, together with the Principal Officer for Child Protection, will give urgent consideration as to whether or not there is sufficient substance to the allegation to warrant an investigation: The outcome will either be:
 - i. without foundation
 - ii. internal disciplinary procedures
 - iii. a referral under the Child Protection procedures.
- N.B.** if the latter is the case the Principal Officer will discuss the allegation with the Police Child Protection Unit. This discussion may lead to a decision to hold a strategy meeting.
- 12.4 Should the case be referred under the Child Protection Procedures the investigation will be informed by the guidance in 'Working Together' and the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures*, which recommend that there should be a strategy discussion to plan the investigation and any subsequent action.
- 12.5 If the Headteacher is unsure about whether a case should be formally referred they may seek advice and support from the Designated Lead Officer.
- 12.6 If the Headteacher is the person against whom the allegation is made, the member of staff must consult with the Chair of the Governing Body who will then contact the **Designated Lead Officer 01446 709184** who will discuss the allegation with the Child Protection Unit.
- 12.7 Governing bodies are responsible for dealing with staff disciplinary matters in all maintained schools. A governing body is required to adopt rules and regulations to regulate the conduct and discipline of all staff it employs or has day-to-day responsibility for (except certain ancillary staff).

13. SCHOOL SITE SECURITY

- 13.1 Cowbridge School is a safe place for pupils to learn and develop learning and social skills. The physical safety of pupils when on school site is of paramount importance. There are procedures in place should an intruder enter the School site. Two way radios are issued to all Senior staff. Access to the School site is strictly monitored and reviewed, for example via the site CCTV, in line the Health and Safety Policy. The School's *Health and Safety Policy* is available on the School's website or by contacting the School.
- 13.2 All daily visitors, external agencies and contractors to our site are required to sign in and out of school premises using the Invenry System which requires the visitor to read and accept relevant safeguarding information. They will clearly state who they are visiting and the reason for their visit. All daily visitors require supervision at all times within the published school day. The exception to this are supply teachers, supply agency staff and LA peripatetic teachers, all of which require full DBS in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Policy.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 14.1 We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat it accordingly. We pass information on to appropriate persons only.
- 14.2 We comply with the government requirements set out in DHS Circular LA 83/14, and by the Vale of Glamorgan, with regard to confidentiality. The Child Protection information is held in a secure, locked location. This contains information about confirmed and suspected cases of child abuse.
- 14.3 Information from third parties will not be disclosed without their prior knowledge and consent. Access to these files may be withheld in certain prescribed cases where there are instances of actual or alleged abuse (see DfES Circular 16/19). Working notes are not subject to disclosure but will be summarised and then kept on file. These guidelines are in line with the safeguards on disclosure of information set out in the Education (School Records) Regulations 1989.

15. MONITORING AND REVIEWING

- 15.1 The Governing Body has a senior member of staff designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with child protection issues. The Governing Body also recognise their responsibility with regard to Safeguarding and Child Protection and will ensure that it is always an annual agenda item for their meetings. The Safeguarding Governors must undergo Enhanced DBS checks.
- 15.2 Cowbridge School will use the Estyn 'Self - Evaluation form for Safeguarding and Child Protection' (updated 2024 for the new framework) to monitor and review our policy and practice on an annual basis.

KEY DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Extract from *All Wales Child Protection Procedures*

Child in need	<p>A child is a child in need if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● he/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority; ● his/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or ● he/she is disabled.
Child protection	<p>Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.</p>
Children	<p>A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout. The fact that a child has become sixteen years of age is living independently or is in Further Education, or is a member of the armed forces, or is in hospital, or in prison or a young offenders institution does not change their status or their entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.</p>
Development	<p>Physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.</p>
Harm	<p>Ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.</p>
Health	<p>Physical or mental health.</p>
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Protecting children from abuse and neglect; ● Preventing impairment of their health or development; and ● Ensuring that they receive safe and effective care, so as to enable them to have optimum life chances.
Significant harm	<p>Section 31(10) of the Children Act 1989 states that “where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child’s health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child”.</p>
Welfare and Well-being	<p>There is no statutory definition. The Children Act 1989 introduced the welfare checklist that a court shall have regard to in certain circumstances. The 1989 Act states that a “court shall have regard in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child concerned (considered in the light of his age and understanding); ● his physical, emotional and educational needs; ● the likely effect on him of any change in his circumstances; ● his age, sex, background and any characteristics of his which the court considers relevant; ● any harm which he has suffered or is at risk of suffering; ● how capable each of his parents, and any other person in relation to whom the court considers the question to be relevant, is of meeting his needs; ● the range of powers available to the court under this Act in the proceedings in question.”

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL'S
SAFEGUARDING PERSONNEL**

The Designated Senior Person Child Protection (DSP) will coordinate child protection arrangements within the School. The School has a nominated, overall DSP however, in addition, there are also a number of Deputy Designated Officers.

All schools must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements. The local authority maintains a list of all designated senior persons (DSPs) for child protection.

The DSP:

1. is appropriately trained;
2. acts as a source of support and expertise to the School community;
3. has an understanding of LSCB procedures;
4. keeps written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file;
5. refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate;
6. notifies CCYPS if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two days without explanation or is excluded;
7. ensures that when a pupil with a child protection plan leaves the School, key documents are copied, their information is passed to their new school and the pupil's social worker is informed;
8. attends and/or contributes written reports to child protection conferences (**Appendix G**);
9. coordinates the School's contribution to child protection plans;
10. develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies;
11. ensures that all staff sign to indicate that they have read and understood the child protection policy;
12. ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually;
13. liaises with the nominated governor and Headteacher (where the role is not carried out by the Headteacher) as appropriate;
14. keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training;
15. makes the child protection policy available to parents/carers.

The deputy designated person(s) is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, will carry out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The governing body ensures that the School has:

1. a DSP for child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training;
2. a child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with LSCB requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request;
3. procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the Headteacher;
4. safer recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks;

5. a training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Headteacher, receive child protection training, with refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSP should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals;
6. arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the School's arrangements for child protection.

The governing body nominates a member (normally the chair) to be responsible for liaising with the local authority and other agencies in the event of an allegation being made against the Headteacher.

An annual report will be submitted to the local authority about how the governing body's duties have been carried out. Any weaknesses will be rectified without delay.

The Headteacher:

1. ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff;
2. allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings;
3. ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the whistleblowing procedures;
4. ensures that pupils' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum;
5. listens to the views and experiences of pupils through the School Council.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Extract from the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures*

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

‘A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts 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. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan (taken from *All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2021*).

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are five categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse and neglect.

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 caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after. (For further details related to Fabricated Illness, please see the *All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008*)

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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. 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. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

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, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

Financial abuse

This category will be less prevalent for a child but indicators could be:

- not meeting their needs for care and support which are provided through direct payments; or
- complaints that personal property is missing.

Neglect

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. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing 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. In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.'

Indicators of Abuse: Signs and Symptoms

This is intended as a guide. Please remember that presence of one or more factors does not necessarily give proof that child abuse has occurred.

It may, however, indicate that investigation should take place:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual exploitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Incompatible explanations | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexualised drawings and play |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained bruising | <input type="checkbox"/> Sudden poor performance in school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bite Marks | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor self-esteem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burns and scalds | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-mutilation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cigarette burns | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General physical disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Running away |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unresponsiveness in the child | <input type="checkbox"/> Reluctance to return home after school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soiling and wetting | <input type="checkbox"/> Resistance to school medicals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change in behavioural patterns | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in forming relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 'Frozen look' | <input type="checkbox"/> Confusing affectionate displays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attention seeking | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor attendance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apprehension | <input type="checkbox"/> Major changes in behaviour |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-social behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> FGM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unkempt appearance | <input type="checkbox"/> Cruelty to Animals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexually precocious behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunger |



Multi Agency Report (Referral) Form (Child Safeguarding)

Date of referral:			
Is the Parent/ Carer aware of the referral:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Has consent been obtained to make this referral:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	Verbal or Written Consent	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
If No, give reason:			

CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON'S DETAILS				
Surname:		Forename:		Gender:
D.O.B: or E.D.D.		Age:		Social Services Number (if known):
Address:		Postcode:		Telephone Number:
Current address if different from above:		Child's first language or preferred means of communication :		Is an interpreter/signer required:
Child's Religion:		Child's Ethnicity:		Child's Nationality (if not British):
Is the child an asylum seeker:		Child's immigration status (if known):		Home office registration number (if known):
Is the child "looked after":		Is the child named on the child protection register:		Does the child have a disability?
Is the child a traveller:		Is the child a young carer:		Any other information about the child's identity:

BIRTH PARENT DETAILS/ MAIN CARERS/ PERSONS WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY (PR)							
Mother's Name:		Mother's address if different from child:		Is an interpreter required:		Mother's First Language:	
Mother's DOB:		Mother's Ethnicity:		Parental needs (learning difficulties, physical disabilities)		Telephone Number:	
Father's Name:		Father's address if different from child:		Is an interpreter required:		Father's First Language:	
Father's DOB							
Father's Ethnicity:		Parental needs (learning difficulties, physical disabilities)		Telephone Number:		Does father have PR:	

Name and DOB:		Relationship to child:		Does this person have PR:		Is an interpreter required:	
Name and DOB:		Relationship to child:		Does this person have PR:		Is an interpreter required:	
OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (including NON-Family members)							
Name:		D.O.B:		Relationship to Child:			
Name:		D.O.B:		Relationship to Child:			
Name:		D.O.B:		Relationship to Child:			
Name:		D.O.B:		Relationship to Child:			
Name:		D.O.B:		Relationship to Child:			
Are all children in this household subject to this referral:		<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO					

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS WHO ARE <u>NOT</u> MEMBERS OF THE CHILD'S HOUSEHOLD <i>(i.e. alleged offender; other family members you consider relevant to this referral; fathers of half/ step siblings; partners of parent-carer)</i>							
Name:		D.O.B:		Address:		Relationship to child:	
Name:		D.O.B:		Address:		Relationship to child:	
Name:		D.O.B:		Address:		Relationship to child:	

REFERRAL INFORMATION <i>(Guidance notes have been produced to assist the person submitting this referral)</i>					
Referred by (name):		Agency/ relationship to child:		Does the referrer wish to remain anonymous:	<i>(please note a professional cannot refer anonymously)</i>
Address:		Telephone Number:		Email:	
Reason for report:	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Physical Abuse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Sexual Abuse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Emotional Abuse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Neglect</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Financial Abuse</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other - please specify below (e.g. contextual safeguarding, CE, CSE, FGM, Forced Marriage, parental substance/alcohol misuse, parental learning disabilities, parental mental ill health, parental physical ill health, domestic abuse)</i> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%; margin-top: 5px;"></div>				
Request for services:	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Initial advice and assistance</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Care and support needs</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Child with disabilities</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Child protection</i>				

What has already happened and what are the circumstances now: include any Harm Statements	<i>Detail the reasons why you are contacting/referring including any details of the date, time and place where any alleged harm occurred. State concerns and impact on child/ren. Include any past incidents that add context and are relevant to the referral.</i>
What are you worried about now? (What are the risks or vulnerabilities?):	<i>State actual concerns, and impact on child / ren. Young person not understanding the risk; escalation of risk if not supported; short term and long term risks to overall wellbeing PLEASE ALSO DETAIL ANY RISK WHICH MAY AFFECT THE SAFETY OF STAFF</i>
What is working well and what are the strengths?:	<i>Positive/ protective relationships; family are keen to engage; good family network, trusted adults;</i>
What are the barriers:	<i>Reluctance to engage with support; financial difficulties; child care issues; communication issues (language/ hearing/ visual impairment)</i>
What action/ support has already been undertaken in yours and other agencies to address these concerns:	<i>Include details of referrals to other services i.e. Early Help. Also include information where referrals have been made to other agencies, ie. Preventions</i>
What other assessments have been undertaken by other agencies (if known):	<i>e.g. DASH; Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool; MIRAF; Routine enquiry and CSERQ4, Recent medical examinations (including child protection medicals); any health assessments</i>
What are the expected outcomes of this referral:	<i>Safeguarding assessment undertaken to assess potential risk; services are put in place to support the child/ family; information is recorded for the child</i>
Any other relevant information:	<i>Are you aware of the child previously being named on the child protection register or being "looked after" previously; aware of previous convictions/ safeguarding concerns in relation to the alleged abuser</i>

KEY AGENCIES			
Agency:	Name:	Address:	Telephone Number:
GP			
Health Visitor/Midwife			
Nursery/ School			
Other Agency (please specify)			

SUBMISSION OF THE REFERRAL	
Cardiff	CSMASH@cardiff.gov.uk
Vale of Glamorgan	familycompass@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

OUT OF HOURS/ EMERGENCY DUTY
<p>Between the hours of 17:00pm - 08.30am Monday to Thursday, Weekends and Bank Holidays. Friday 16:30pm – 08:30am</p> <p>YOU MUST PHONE your concerns through to the Emergency Duty Team 029 2078 8570</p> <p>then complete the Multi Agency Report (Referral) Form (MARF) and send to the appropriate Local Authority</p>

Guidance notes on the completion of the Multi Agency Report (Referral) Form (MARF)

This Multi Agency Report (Referral) Form (MARF) has been reviewed in order for the content to align and be compliant with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, (SSWB 2014). The new legislation has brought about changes to culture and practice in how we work with people in achieving “what matters to them” and that assessments and the care and support they need as a person are founded on a strengths based approach resulting in clear, outcome-orientated personal goals/ outcomes. By referrers also using this approach in their information sharing it allows for a better understanding of the child within their own context and assists in the decision making in how best to safeguard and promote their well-being.

The key differences in this document are based within the **“Referral Information”** section where the referrer presents the information based on the five elements of assessment as defined in the SSWB 2014, these are based on a person’s circumstances; strengths; barriers; risks and personal outcomes. The referrer is also asked to describe what interventions their own agency may have undertaken and to share their knowledge in respect of any other assessments they may be aware of which have been undertaken previously or currently. There is also a specific section for any other relevant information which the referrer feels is pertinent for Children’s Services to be aware of when considering the referral information holistically.

It is hoped that this revised referral will result in stronger multi agency collaboration and an improved information sharing process between the referrer and Children’s Services to effectively safeguard and support children and their families within this region.

For the purpose of this document a child is a person under the age of 18 years

1. Referral date and consent

The date of the referral must be recorded by the referrer.

It is always important to work with children/ young people and their families with their informed consent and knowledge wherever possible. The referrer should work from the principle that consent from the parent/ carer to submit a referral should always be sought UNLESS there are child protection concerns that may place the child at risk of harm if the parent/ carer were to be approached about the referral content. Examples where a referral is submitted without parental/ carer consent may be due to an allegation/ disclosure of abuse by the child about their parent/ carer; agency witnesses inappropriate behaviour by the parent/ carer towards the child. If in doubt whether consent to make the referral should be sought the referrer should seek advice and guidance from their designated safeguarding lead for their organisation or contact the local authority’s children’s services duty team for advice. **PLEASE NOTE- a referring agency should NEVER delay in contacting the Police and Children’s Services if they have immediate concerns for a child’s safety or well-being.**

2. Child/ Young Person’s Details

This section should be completed within its entirety wherever possible. In the section **“Any other information about the child’s identity”** the referrer should consider and provide any additional relevant information about the child’s identity, this may include a brief physical description of the child to assist the person making an initial visit being assured they have seen the correct child (All Wales Child Protection Procedures, 2008).

3. Other household members including non-family members

This section should clearly detail ALL people, both Adults and Children, residing in the home. The referrer should provide as much detail as possible about all other household members including names, ages and their relationship to the child so that as clear a picture as possible of who is residing in the household with the child (subject) can be gathered.

If the referral raises concern for the well-being of ALL children residing in the **SAME** household this should be clearly indicated by selecting YES, however, where there are other children/ young people who DO NOT reside in the same household there is a requirement for a referral to be made for each child. An example of this may be where the referrer is notifying about an alleged child on child assault, although the referral content about the incident may be recorded verbatim for both children a separate referral form requires to be completed for EACH child as they are not residing in the same household.

4. Main Carers/ Persons with Parental Responsibility (PR)/ Birth Parents

It is essential to provide as much information within this section as possible. Remember that the child may not necessarily be residing with their birth parents and therefore for decision making purposes it is vital for agency decision makers to have as much information about the child and their care givers as possible within the referral. The “*Relationship to child*” and “*Does this person have PR*” questions should always be completed by the referrer where the information is known, for example, if you are aware that the child is residing with maternal aunt who has a Special Guardianship Order or you are aware that the child is “looked after” and resides with Foster Carers this should be detailed within this section.

5. Significant others who are NOT members of the household

This section should be used to provide information about the child’s network beyond the immediate household where relevant to the referral. Examples may include the alleged offender; other family members you consider relevant to this referral (i.e. maternal grandmother who provides a lot of support to the family/ collects the children from school regularly); fathers of half/ step siblings; partners of parent/ carer.

6. Referral Information

The referrer must provide all of their contact details and define their role/ relationship in respect of the child. A professional CANNOT refer anonymously. Sometimes a professional is told information by a person/ member of the public who does not wish to be identified regarding the information they have shared, therefore, the professional should protect the anonymity of the person (i.e. do not disclose in the referral their name/ relationship to child) when submitting the referral but the professional cannot refer anonymously and must complete their details as they have received the information and therefore have a duty to report. In such circumstances the professional should report that the information has been shared with them directly by a person who wishes to remain anonymous/ cannot be identified and detail the account as reported to them.

Reason for Referral/ Request for Services

This is a tick box section. The categories of abuse have been listed in addition to “*safeguarding concerns*” and “*request for service*” options. The referrer should consider the reasons why they are making the referral and select an appropriate field, it is acknowledged that alleged/ suspected abuse may often be linked to multiple categories and it is also acknowledged that the referrer may feel dubious about defining a particular category however the referrer should indicate the reason for the referral in this section by highlighting the predominant category they feel is the issue.

Outline the Circumstances

Detail the reasons why you are contacting Children’s Services. This section should include any details of the date, time and place where abuse is alleged to have occurred. In the case of a disclosure, the referrer should always try to record verbatim what the child/ young person has said using their exact words.

Details and examples within this section are vital. Wherever possible the referrer should try to illustrate what their concerns are beyond using stock statements/ phrases. For example, saying

that “the child presents as unkempt”, what does “unkempt” mean or look like? By reporting the exact details of your concerns, i.e. the child’s hair is matted; the school uniform is visibly dirty and appears to have been worn on a number of occasions without being washed; hygiene is an issue and there is a distinctive body odour smell on the child and their clothing, etc., this descriptive information provides a more detailed account to inform the decision making rather than a reliance on stock phrases with the assumption that all professionals will have the same context/ understanding.

Describing the family’s circumstances and context is also important in this section, for example, have the family recently moved into the area; have they been known to social services previously.

What are the Strengths?

Sometimes the focus on sharing information is based solely on the difficulties or problems the child or family is facing and the “What’s working well” or “What’s acting as a positive factor” to keep a child safe can be overlooked. By considering what strengths there are within a family or available to the child can aid decision making in being able to identify realistic and viable options to support and safeguard in the immediate context but also in the longer term support for the child. The referrer should attempt to identify strengths and positive factors in respect of the information they are sharing, for example, if the family are keen to engage with support services; or the child has a positive relationship with a specific person in the school who they may be confident to talk openly with. Other things to consider may be, what would/ does the child say are the best things about their life/ family; what do they do well or what is good enough; etc.

What are the Barriers?

The referrer is asked to consider if there are any barriers which are impacting on the child and their family. Remember that barriers may be time limited or situation specific, for example, the parent may be recovering from an illness/ operation and their ability to meet the needs of the child for a certain period may be a barrier currently but this may not be the case in the long term.

The referrer should consider if there are any complicating factors which are making the situation more difficult for the child/ their family at this time, i.e. are there financial difficulties; child care arrangements/ issues.

Other barriers may be in relation to communication or how the child/ family has engaged with services/ interventions previously.

What are the Risks?

The referrer should attempt to identify what they feel are the risks both “to” and “from” the child/ family. For example risks “to” the child/ family may be in relation to them experiencing abuse or being placed at risk of harm; the child doesn’t identify their behaviour/ situation as worrying or concerning; if the situation with the parent is not addressed at this specific time the risk could escalate further.

Examples of risk “from” the child/ family may include physical or verbal aggression; non-compliance or lack of co-operation (known history or pattern of refusing to engage). The referrer should also identify any risks for Children’s Services to be aware of in respect of visiting/ working with the child or family, for example if the agency has a 2:1 or no lone working practice model in place then this should be clearly detailed. Also please highlight other risks which may be present including environmental factors, e.g. dogs at the property; known offender attending the property.

What are the expected outcomes of this Referral?

The referrer is asked to consider what they expect to be achieved as a result of the referral, for example, if the referrer has the expected outcome that an assessment is completed rather than diverting/ signposting to an alternate agency they should stipulate this.

What action/ support has already been undertaken in your agency to address these concerns?

If the referrer/ agency has already undertaken specific actions or work with the child/ family this should be clearly recorded, for example, if referrals have previously been submitted to preventative services and the family have not engaged then this should be clearly noted.

What other assessments have been undertaken by other agencies (if known)?

If the referrer is aware that an assessment has been undertaken by their own or other agency in respect of the child/ family this information should be noted. If the child has had any recent medical examinations (including child protection medicals) and the referrer is aware they should share this information (AWCPP, 2008). Examples of assessments may include; Missing Individual Risk Assessment Framework MIRAF, family has been discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC); child has a Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework (SERAF) score of 20 so is already known to be at significant risk of child sexual exploitation; the alleged perpetrator is known to be supported/ on an order with Probation Services.

Any other relevant information

The referrer should provide any other known and relevant information. For example are you aware of the child previously being named on the child protection register or being “looked after” previously? If the referrer is aware of previous convictions/ safeguarding concerns in relation to the alleged abuser this information should also be recorded in this section in addition to the “outline the circumstances” or “what are the risks” sections.

7. Key Agencies

The referrer should complete this section where the information is known.

8. Submission of the referral

The MARF should be submitted to the appropriate Children’s Services local authority. The referrer MUST be notified that their referral has been received and must be notified of the outcome to the referral within a maximum of 10 working days, this process of notification and outcome response is managed via varying methods by the different local authorities, it is recommended that you establish with the Children’s Services team for the area in which you are submitting the referral how this process will be managed or confirm with your designated safeguarding lead for your agency.

RESTRICTED AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Headteacher
Vale of Glamorgan

Dear Headteacher,

The pupil(s) listed below are due to be discussed at the forthcoming Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for **high risk** cases on (date)

Pupil	DOB	SA/SA+/SEN	Address

It is vital that the MARAC members receive as much information as possible to assist in targeting the necessary intervention for the family. Could you therefore, please provide comments below:-

<p>Attendance:</p> <p>Personal Presentation:</p> <p>Level of Achievement and brief comment on progress:</p> <p>Any Involvement with other agencies:</p> <p>Changes in Behaviour:</p> <p>Areas of concern:</p> <p>Perception of any risk:</p>

Please send or email to:
Caroline Cleary
Public Protection Unit
Central (East) BCU - Serving Bridgend & the Vale

Cowbridge Police Station
Cowbridge, CF71 7AR.
Email: central-bcu-domestic@south-wales.pnn.police.uk

LA Safeguarding Officer
School Improvement and Inclusion Service
Vale of Glamorgan Council

Yours sincerely
Safeguarding Officer
School Improvement and Inclusion Services

Cowbridge School

Aberthin Road, Cowbridge, CF71 7EN

Tel: 01446 772311

Email: enquiries@cowbridgeschool.co.uk



Headteacher: Mrs Thomas MA

Deputy Headteachers: Mr Ling

Acting Deputy Headteachers: Mr Griffiths & Mrs Williams

Assistant Headteachers (3-19): Mr Coates & Mr Francis

Assistant Headteachers Lower, Middle & Senior School:

Mr Burgum, Mrs Leftley & Mr Lewis,

CONFIDENTIAL

Report for consideration at Initial Child Protection Conference

Ref:

Education:

Internal testing scores e.g. CATS:

Description of engagement in education e.g. attitude to learning, behaviour for learning, homework etc.

Attendance:

Exclusions:

Emotional and Behavioural Development:

Family and Social Relationships:

Social Presentation:

Self-care Skills:

Health:

SAFEGUARDING

WHEN RESPONDING TO A CHILD MAKING A DISCLOSURE:

DO:

- **Stay calm**, try not to be shocked;
- **Reassure** the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling you;
- **Listen carefully**. At this stage there is no need to ask questions;
- **Take what the child says seriously** and accept it;
- Allow the child to continue **at his/her own pace**;
- **Record** factually what the child has told you or what you have observed as soon as possible. Aim to use the exact words that the child has used. Ensure records include the date, time and place of disclosure, behaviour and words used by the child;
- Let him/her know that you will need to **tell someone** and make sure the child understands what will happen next with this information. You may want to use a prepared response such as *“I’m really concerned about what you have told me and I have a responsibility to help ensure that you are safe. To help make sure you are safe, I have to tell Mr Francis (Safeguarding Lead) who will know how to help .”*;
- **Report** your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

DON'T:

- Promise confidentiality or keep secrets. You have a duty to report;
- Ask leading questions. If you need to clarify what is being said and whether the child is at risk ask open ended questions (what, when, who, how, where, tell, explain, describe, Is there anything else you want to tell me?) but only for the purpose of clarification;
- Confront the abuser;
- Ask the child to repeat what has been said;
- Investigate further, or interview other children or parents.
- Write down your ‘interpretation’ of the child's account. Failure to accurately record information may lead to inadmissible evidence.

Mr K. Francis - Designated Safeguarding Lead
 Mrs R. Williams - Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Sixth Form)
 Mr R. Burgum - Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Senior School)
 Mr O. Lewis - Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Middle School)
 Mrs A. Leftley - Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Lower School)

