



# **Whitmore High School**

## **Safeguarding Policy**

**2021**

## Document Version Control

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|----------------------|---|
| Document             | <b>Safeguarding Policy</b>              |
| Reference            |   |
| Version              | 2021                                    |
| Previous Document    | Safeguarding Policy 2020                |
| Associated Documents | Keeping Learners Safe 265/2020 WAG 2021 |
| Classification       |   |
| Circulation          |   |
| Author               | Welsh Government Guidance               |
| Reviewer             | V Browne                                |
| Directorate Lead     | Jason Redrup                            |
| Consultation         | Governing Body                          |
| Approval             | Governing Body                          |
| Date of Approval     | October 2021                            |
| Date of Review       | October 2022                            |
| Date of Publication  | October 2021                            |

## Document Version History

| Version Number | Date Review Approved | Date Published | Summary of Amendments |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                |                      |                |                       |
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# Safeguarding Policy for Whitmore High School

## 1. Introduction

Whitmore High School fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding and child protection and that children have a right to be safeguarded and protected from harm.

Our policy is informed by a children's rights approach to safeguarding as a principled and practical framework for working with children, grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There are three main elements to our policy:

- Prevention through the culture, teaching and pastoral support offered to learners.
- Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse – because of our day-to-day contact with children our staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse.
- Support to learners who may have been abused

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the school and governors. Learning support assistants, mid-day supervisors, caretakers, secretaries as well as teachers can be the first point of disclosure for a child.

Our policy should be read in conjunction with Welsh Government guidance document no: 265/2020 *Keeping Learners Safe*.

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-10/keeping-learners-safe-the-role-of-local-authorities-governing-bodies-and-proprietors-of-independent-schools-under-the-education-act.pdf>

## 2. Prevention

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

Our school will therefore:

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- ensure children know that there are adults in the education setting whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- include in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for Relationships and Sexuality Education which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and to know to whom to turn for help.
- include in the curriculum, material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- Build relationships with other agencies and ensure early and appropriate referrals for support and intervention are made before risks escalate.
- Take a whole school (setting) approach to wellbeing which will incorporate safeguarding and preventative measures to support children and families.

### 3. Procedures

We will follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures that have been endorsed by 58 Safeguarding Children Boards. Our school will:

- ensure it has a Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) for safeguarding who has undertaken the appropriate training.
- recognise the role of the DSP and arrange support and training.
- ensure every member of staff and every governor knows:
  - the name of the DSP and their role and the designated governor for safeguarding.
  - that they have an individual responsibility for reporting children at risk and protection concerns to social services, or to the police, within the timescales agreed with the Regional Safeguarding Board; and
  - how to take forward those concerns where the DSP is unavailable.
- ensure that all members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of abuse and neglect and know how to respond to a learner who may disclose abuse or neglect.
- When a member of staff, teaching or non – teaching, is alerted to signs of abuse or neglect s/he should:
- Discuss the issue with the school’s DSP or in their absence the Deputy DSP. If the decision is taken that the incident needs to be referred, **the DSP in the case of an emergency where there are immediate child protection concerns must without delay make a telephone referral to CYPS** by telephoning the Duty Officer on 01446 725202, or out of hours on 02920 788570, in the unlikely event that they are unable to contact CYPS then the referrer needs to dial 999 and report the matter to police as an emergency. This must be followed within two working days by completing the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) via e-mail to: [dutymarfs@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:dutymarfs@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) . Cases which do not require immediate child protection can be referred through submission of a MARF. If the “Child in Need” referral box is ticked, the MARF must be accompanied with parental consent. No parental consent is needed for the “CP” referral box.
- Advice may be sought prior to referral by discussing concern with CYPS duty desk, or the [Safeguarding Officer for Learning & Skills](#) –01446 709867.
- ensure that members of staff who are Education Workforce Council of Wales registrants are aware of the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for Registrants with the Education Workforce Council and the expectation within the Code that registrant has regard to the safety and well-being of learners in their care and related content.
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for safeguarding and child protection by setting out its obligations in the school brochure.
- provide training for all staff so that they:
  - understand their personal responsibility.
  - know the agreed local procedures and their duty to respond.
  - are aware of the need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse and neglect.
  - know how to support a child who discloses abuse or neglect; and

- understand the role online behaviours may have in each of the above
- notify the local authority's social services team if:
  - a learner on the child protection register is excluded, either for a fixed term or permanently; or
  - there is an unexplained absence of a learner on the child protection register of more than two days duration from school (or one day following a weekend).
- work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at initial review and child protection conferences and core groups and the submission of written reports to the conferences.
- keep written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to the local authority immediately.
- ensure that all safeguarding records are kept securely in locked locations or managed securely on an approved safeguarding software platform(electronic).
- adhere to the procedures set out in the Welsh Government 's Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for School Staff.
- ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Government 's Keeping Learners Safe guidance; and
- designate a governor for safeguarding who will oversee the school's child protection policy and practice.

#### **4. Supporting those at risk**

We recognise that children/young people who are at risk, suffer abuse or experience violence may be deeply affected by this.

Our school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, when at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

- Our school will endeavour to support the learner through:
  - the content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation
  - our school ethos which:
    - promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment; and
    - gives learners a sense of being valued (see section 2 on Prevention)
- Our school behaviour/relationship policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. All staff will agree on a consistent approach which focuses on needs of the child. The school will endeavour to ensure that the learner knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but s/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- liaison with other agencies who support the learner, underlying the following:
  - Educational Psychology Service, Engagement Services or the Education Welfare Service

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and advocacy services.
- keeping records and notifying the local authority as soon as there is a recurrence of a concern.
- when a learner on the child protection register leaves, we will transfer information to the new provider immediately and inform Social Services.
- having a suitable secure email address in order for notifications to be received as part of Operation Encompass, and to support the child subject of that notification

## 5. Anti-Bullying

We have an anti-bullying policy which is set out in *the school anti-bullying policy*, reviewed annually by the governing body and consistent with Vale of Glamorgan Directorate of Learning and Skills *Policy and updated Guidance on Anti-Bullying in Schools/Educational Settings* (2014) and the Welsh Government Guidance document No: 050/2011 *Respecting others: Anti-bullying overview* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/respecting-others-anti-bullying-overview.pdf>.

## 6. Physical intervention

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

## 7. Children with Additional Learning Needs

We recognise that statistically children with learning difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and or social emotional and mental health difficulties need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

## 8. Prevent Duty

Our policy to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism complies with the *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (2015) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales> and Welsh Government guidance document No: 045/2011 *Respect and resilience* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/respect-and-resilience-developing-community-cohesion.pdf> and informed by the *Respect and resilience Self-assessment tool 2016* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/self-assessment-tool-respect-and-resilience.pdf>

## 9. Online Learning

As a school we will take the guidance and advice laid out in the *Revised Keeping Safe Online: Live streaming and video conferencing safeguarding principles and practice* <https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/keeping-safe-online/live-streaming-and-video-conferencing-safeguarding-principles-and-practice>, to ensure that our whole school community is kept safe whilst learning online.

## **10. Recruitment and Selection**

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all employees, agency workers, contractors and volunteers to share this commitment.

Safer Recruitment is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our school by the implementation of a policy and procedures that help deter, reject, prevent or detect people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to working in a school environment.

Our policy on safer recruitment complies with the with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's *Safer Recruitment Policy* (2013) <https://staffnet.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Schools/Safer-Recruitment/Safer-Recruitment.aspx> and *Safer Recruitment Guidelines* and Welsh Government guidance document no: 265/2020 *Keeping Learners Safe*.

## **11. Safeguarding Responsibilities in Other Specific Circumstances**

Our school is aware of the duty and responsibility to safeguard pupils in specific circumstances and has adopted statutory and good practice guidance, consistent with Welsh Government guidance document no: 265/2020 *Keeping Learners Safe* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-10/keeping-learners-safe-the-role-of-local-authorities-governing-bodies-and-proprietors-of-independent-schools-under-the-education-act.pdf>.

## **12. Self-Evaluation and Audit**

Our school maintains an up-to-date safeguarding self-evaluation report which is reviewed annually by the governing body and consistent with the Estyn *Self-evaluation form for Safeguarding and Child Protection* <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2020-07/SER%2520For%2520Schools%2520RE%2520SFG%2520%25202017.docx> or the Welsh Government safeguarding self-evaluation *Audit Tool and Guidance* <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-11/annex-3-safeguarding-audit-tool.docx> that accompanies *Keeping learners safe (Annex 3)* as tools for continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

## **13. Allegations Against Employees and Volunteers**

Any allegation of abuse made by or on behalf of a child will be taken seriously and the child will be listened to and dealt with sensitively.

Our school also has a duty of care to our employees and volunteers and will support individuals subject to an allegation to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process.

Our school has procedures set out that adhere to the procedures set out in Welsh Government circular no: 009/2014 *Safeguarding children in education: handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff*.

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-11/safeguarding-children-in-education-handling-allegations-of-abuse-against-teachers-and-other-staff.pdf>

and the *Wales Safeguarding Procedures: Section 5, allegations/concerns about practitioners and those in positions of trust* [Social care Wales \(safeguarding.wales\)](http://socialcare.wales).

#### **14. Safeguarding Training**

Our school is committed to ensuring that all staff (permanent and non-permanent) and volunteers undertake the appropriate training to equip them with the knowledge and skills that are necessary to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children effectively, which is kept up to date by annual refresher training, this is known as Level 1 training.

Our school ensures that the Designated Senior Person (DSP), Deputy Designated Senior Person (DDSP) for safeguarding, the Designated Safeguarding Governor and the Chair of Governors undertake training in inter-agency working that is provided by, or to standards agreed by the Regional Safeguarding Board and refresher training to keep their knowledge and skills up to date, in addition to basic safeguarding training.

All Governors also receive appropriate training on their safeguarding responsibilities and in handling allegations of abuse against school staff.

Records are kept by the DSP of the dates of training, details of the provider and a record of staff attendance at the training.

It is a requirement that the DSP, DDSP and relevant Governors undertake an annual refresher training, known as level 2. As well as full multi agency training as per the requirements of *Keeping Learners safe*, every 3 years, in relation to their safeguarding duties.