



**BELONG, *believe*, ACHIEVE**  
**PERTHYN, CREDU, LLWYDDO**

**The Willows Way**

# Child Protection

## Policy and Procedures

### 2022/23

#### KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL – SEPTEMBER 2022/23

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

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The Designated Governor for Child Protection is: Ms. Camilla Lovelace

The Chair of Governor's is: James Ellis. [james.ellis@celsauk.com](mailto:james.ellis@celsauk.com)

## **KEY CONTACTS WITHIN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

Where the school has an urgent and immediate concern for the safety and welfare of a pupil, during office hours the school will contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of Cardiff Council on **029 2053 6490**

For pupils who already have an **allocated social worker** the contact will be with Cardiff Council Children's Services Intake and Assessment Team on **029 2053 6400**

For **urgent referrals** out of office hours the telephone number is **029 2078 8570**

The Cardiff Council's Education Safeguarding Team is able to provide advice and support.

Their contact number is **029 2233 0879** email [EducationSafeguarding@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:EducationSafeguarding@cardiff.gov.uk)

**POLICE (CHILD PROTECTION) Telephone 101 or in an emergency 999**

**ANY PERSON CAN REPORT A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN USING OUR ONLINE REPORTING SYSTEM**

<https://www.myconcern.education>

### **Our Policy Statement**

- At Willows High School the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment and to identify pupils who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- All pupils, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and are responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All adults involved in the life of school have a duty to report any concerns to one of the DSL.

### **Introduction**

"We all share a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, whether as a parent, or family member, a friend or neighbour, an employer or as a paid or volunteer worker. All members of the community can help to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and should act to do so if they have

concerns about a child's welfare" Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004

Willows High School has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils. We are committed to ensuring their safety and protection. Through the general ethos of the school, we encourage pupils in need of support to seek that support and we will take action to safeguard their wellbeing.

We work with multi-disciplinary partners within the statutory framework established by:

- Cardiff Local Safeguarding Children Board (CLSCB)
- The All-Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008
- Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 Section 28
- The Education Act 2002 Section 175 which places a statutory duty on schools to ensure arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and requires schools to take account of guidance issued by the Welsh Government (currently guidance document 158/2015 'Keeping Learners Safe' issued January 2015)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (relating to recruitment and selection of staff)
- The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 which embeds the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Welsh law
- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Allegations of Professional Abuse Procedures

This child protection policy applies to all adults involved in the life of Willows High School including teachers, supply staff, teaching assistants, midday supervisors, kitchen staff, administrative staff, support staff, community education staff, governors and volunteers. Any of these people may receive a disclosure by a pupil or be contacted by a concerned parent.

This policy and its procedures are reviewed annually taking into account the school's experience of child protection matters in the previous year, any changes in the law and any new policy documentation or guidance issued by Cardiff Council or the Welsh Government.

There are four main elements to our policy: -

**Prevention** through the teaching and pastoral support offered to pupils and the creation and maintenance of a safe environment where pupils know who to approach with any concerns about their welfare.

**Procedures** for identifying and reporting concerns about the welfare of a pupil

**Support for pupils** who have/may have been abused.

**Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children** through robust vetting and recruitment processes

## 1. Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, a supportive pastoral system and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to safeguard pupils. The school therefore:

- a) has established and maintains an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to;
- b) ensures pupils know that there are adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- c) includes in the curriculum, activities and opportunities for personal and social education, including internet safety, which equip pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse and the knowledge of who to turn to for help;
- d) includes in the curriculum, material which will help pupils to develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills;
- e) ensures that every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with parents and partner agencies.

## **2. Procedures**

We follow the **All-Wales Child Protection Procedures 2020** that have been endorsed by the Cardiff Local Safeguarding Children Board (CLSCB). These reinforce the principle that safeguarding is everyone's business and that the effective protection of children cannot be achieved by a single agency acting in isolation.

While child protection is the business of all adults involved in school life, Willows High School staff and governors have the specific responsibilities outlined below.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure that all child protection procedures are followed within the school and make appropriate and timely referrals in accordance with school procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ensure all staff, governors and volunteers are aware of the school's child protection procedures and that they have a personal responsibility for child protection and know the name of the DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should provide advice and support to individual staff, governors and volunteers as necessary.

The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the school follows safe recruitment processes.

The Designated Governor for Child Protection and the Governing Body as a whole must ensure that the school has effective policies and procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and monitor compliance with them.

The Designated Governor must maintain contact with the statutory authorities in relation to child protection staff disciplinary cases.

The DSL, Headteacher and Governing Body must review and update the policy and procedures annually.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher should ensure that Basic Level Child Protection Awareness training is undertaken by all staff and governors on appointment and thereafter annually; that there are arrangements in place for volunteers to receive training; and those records are kept of all training.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should attend the CLSCB Working Together to Safeguard Children course every three years and any other training that is required by the CLSCB.

The school should ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy including the role the school has in making referrals if there are concerns about a pupil's welfare.

## **Training**

All staff, Governors and volunteers should complete Basic Level Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness Training on an annual basis.

This training enables participants to:

- understand the Safeguarding Agenda for schools and where Child Protection fits in
- understand key roles and responsibilities in school and in the local authority
- recognise signs and symptoms of abuse
- know how to respond appropriately to a pupil disclosure of abuse
- know how to respond to abuse allegations against staff, Governors or volunteers
- know that they have a responsibility to report any concerns immediately as they arise
- understand the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with pupils and parents

## **Recognising Child Abuse**

Teachers and other adults in schools are particularly well placed to detect signs of child abuse. It is important that any case of suspected abuse is taken seriously and that there is a clear system of communication within the school, with the Local Authority Education Service, between schools and with other agencies such as Children's Services and the Police.

## **Definition of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and the All-Wales Child Protection Procedures 2020 define abuse as follows;

'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.'

The 2020 Procedures identify four categories of abuse:

### **Physical Abuse**

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm includes female genital mutilation (FGM). Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child they are looking after.

### **Sexual Abuse**

This encompasses forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. It may involve, physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; 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.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment or failing to ensure a child receives an adequate and suitable education and failing to support a child in their learning. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Emotional Abuse**

This involves the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and long-lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve ignoring or isolating a child, rejecting a child or conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children 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.

## **Financial Abuse**

Indicators of this could be not meeting a child's need for care or support which is provided by direct payments or evidence that a child's personal property is missing. Risks of actual or potential harm to a pupil may also arise from criminal exploitation such as county lines, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, modern slavery or teenage pregnancy.

## **Taking action**

Abuse or the suspicion of abuse may come to attention as a result of:

- A disclosure by a pupil
- Observation of bruises/burns etc. for which the explanation given is not plausible
- Information from another pupil/parent
- Observed changes in a pupil's behaviour that are worrying
- An instinctive feeling something is wrong
- Neglect issues

Where an adult involved in the life of the school has concerns about the welfare of a pupil, they must immediately log their concerns on 'My Concern' and if they feel the child is in immediate danger contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must consider the concern and what action, if any, should be taken. From April 2016 there will be a new duty in place under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 requiring schools and others to report instances where they have suspicions that a child may be at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect. Accordingly, existing requirements will be reinforced by a legal responsibility to report.

If there are concerns that the pupil may be in danger of immediate harm and the pupil is about to leave the school premises the Headteacher or a Deputy Headteacher should be informed. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will consult MASH on the next step to be taken.

## **If a pupil has an injury and there is reason to believe that it has been caused by abuse, the following action should be taken.**

If the injury is serious and warrants urgent medical attention, the child should be taken to the Accident and Emergency Department of the University Hospital of Wales. In an emergency the 999 service should be used.



The school must inform MASH of this course of action **IMMEDIATELY** as they may wish to make arrangements for the child to be examined by a paediatrician on arrival at the hospital. The notification to MASH should make clear that it is a case of suspected child abuse.

Where there is reasonable cause to believe that the injury has been caused by the parent or carer, the DSL should discuss this with the MASH Team or the Police who will make the decision as to when the parents/carers will be notified.

### Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

<p><b>DO</b></p> <p><b>Keep an open mind</b></p> <p><b>Reassure the pupil that they have a right to tell</b></p> <p><b>Listen carefully</b></p> <p><b>Work at the pupil's pace</b></p> <p><b>Ask only open questions – if you must ask them, clarify the facts, don't interrogate</b></p> <p><b>Explain what you need to do next</b></p> <p><b>Record accurately (use a Record of Concern sheet if possible) and quickly using the child's words</b> Pass on to DSL immediately &amp; give as much information about the pupil as possible</p> <p><b>Check that the notification is picked up</b></p>	<p><b>DO NOT</b></p> <p><b>Promise to keep secret what the pupils are telling you</b></p> <p><b>Interrupt</b></p> <p><b>Interrogate/investigate</b></p> <p><b>Assume e.g., this pupil tells lies</b> Make suggestions about what is being said</p> <p><b>Speculate or accuse anyone</b></p> <p><b>Show anger, shock etc... Tell the pupil to go and speak to someone else</b></p> <p><b>Forget to record accurately and/or pass on to DSL</b></p> <p><b>Confront an alleged abuser Stay silent for fear of being mistaken</b></p>
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### Making a referral

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead decides a referral is necessary, they should immediately telephone the MASH team and follow up within 48 hours by completing and returning forms CP1 and CS1 to Children's Services Intake and Assessment. A copy should be kept for school records. **There must be no delay in making the referral.** The referral should always clearly state the name of the person making it.

If the DSL decides a referral is not necessary and the individual reporting the concern disagrees with this, that person should make the referral themselves to the MASH team and notify the DSL that they have done this.

Parental consent is not required for a child protection referral however following consultation with the MASH team at the time of the telephone referral the DSL may be advised to seek parental consent.

Notification of concerns may not lead to immediate action but child welfare concerns can arise in many different contexts and recording and monitoring ensures a coherent picture exists and can form the basis for subsequent action by Social Services.



## Subsequent Action

- The Intake and Assessment Team of Children's Services will assess whether the pupil who is the subject of a referral is a Child in Need of Support or a Child in Need of Protection.
- The DSL should receive a written response to a referral from Intake and Assessment within 10 working days. If this does not happen the DSL should follow up with Children's Services to establish what decisions have been taken.
- Staff are informed of relevant information in respect of individual child protection cases on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be treated confidentially and not shared with others.
- If it is in the best interest of the pupil, the Headteacher can allow a pupil to be interviewed on the school premises at the request of the Police and/or Intake and Assessment. The pupil must be accompanied by the DSL and that person should sign off the interview record as an accurate record of what was said.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead must inform Children's Services or the pupil's social worker of significant changes in the pupil's family circumstances.

## Attendance at Child Protection Conferences & Core Groups

The DSL/Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the school is represented at any child protection conference for a pupil or any other child previously known to the school. The person attending will normally be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or nominated individual should be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and must present their report during the meeting. They must be prepared to contribute to any decision on the placement of the child on the child protection register.

When a pupil is placed on the Child Protection Register and is, therefore, a child with a child protection plan, it is the DSL's responsibility to ensure that the pupil is monitored regarding their school attendance, welfare, appearance and behaviour.

If the school is part of a core group monitoring a pupil, then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure that the school is represented at their meetings; and that there is a record of the school's attendance and the issues discussed.

Issues about the child protection plan and / or the pupil's welfare should be discussed at the core group meeting unless the school considers the pupil is at risk of further significant harm. In this situation the DSL must inform the pupil's social worker **immediately** and record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

## Attendance of Pupils on the Child Protection Register

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will notify Children's Services if:

- a pupil on the Child Protection Register is excluded, whether for a fixed term or permanently
- there is an unexplained absence from school of a pupil on the CP Register of more than 2 days

## Record Keeping

Any adult receiving a disclosure of abuse from a pupil or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse should log this onto 'My Concern' as soon as possible. This should set out what was said or seen, putting the scene into context, and giving the time and location. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide on further action.

All documentation/records relating to child protection concerns should be placed on the pupil's individual Child Protection file and securely stored by the DSL. **The documentation must not be placed on or stored with the pupil's education file.** The file must be retained for the period of date of birth of the pupil + 25 years.

## Pupil Transfer

If a pupil with a Child Protection file moves school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will

- inform the new school of the child protection concerns
- copy the Child Protection file and retained the copy at Willows High School (retention period DOB + 25 years)
- securely transfer the original Child Protection file to the new school (separately from the pupil's education file);
- advise Children's Services of the change of school if the pupil is on the Child Protection Register.

**Both schools involved in the pupil transfer have an equal responsibility to ensure appropriate and relevant documentation/information is shared in a prompt and timely manner.**

Parents/carers should be notified when information is shared between schools in this way.

## 3. Support for Pupils

Children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. 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.

We recognise that some children actually adopt abusive behaviours and that these children must be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

The school endeavours to support all pupils, whilst recognising the particular needs of those suffering due to abuse, through:

- The content of the curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment, and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents whenever this is in the pupil's best interests.
- Liaison with other agencies within a multi-agency pupil support framework which includes Children's Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Services, Pupil Support Services and voluntary organisations.
- Ensuring that pupils with additional needs are identified and given appropriate support.

### **Vulnerable Groups of Pupils**

The school recognises that the following groups of pupils are especially vulnerable to abuse:

- Children with a disability
- Looked After Children
- Asylum Seekers
- Children who live in a household where there is domestic abuse
- Children who live in a household where parenting is compromised by substance misuse.

## **4. Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children**

Willows High School operates recruitment and management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard pupils. These include arrangements for appropriate checks on staff, Governors and volunteers that comply with locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

We follow Cardiff Council's procedures for advertising, interviewing and recruiting staff including the requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service checks in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and guidance contained in chapter 5 of Welsh Government Guidance Document 15/2015.

### **Allegations against staff**

Pupils cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff need to be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

When it is alleged or suspected that a pupil has been abused by a member of staff the following procedures must be followed.

- The Headteacher or a Deputy Headteacher in the Head's absence must be informed immediately by the member of staff who receives the allegation or has a suspicion. The member of staff must not engage with any pupil or pupils involved or with the alleged perpetrator or any other staff member.
- All suspected or alleged abuse must be reported by the Head, Deputy Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead to the Child Access Point or the Police without delay. The Education Service Safeguarding Team should also be informed.
- The Head, Deputy Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from the Education Service Human Resources Team regarding the member of staff's continued presence in school, and an immediate risk assessment will be undertaken and recorded in writing.
- In the event of the allegation being made directly or indirectly about the Headteacher, the staff member should report it promptly to the Chair of Governors.
- The questioning or interviewing of pupils or staff about the alleged incident must not happen.
- A member of staff reporting an alleged incident or suspicion must keep the matter strictly confidential and not discuss it with the alleged perpetrator or any person other than the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate.
- The school will follow established procedures for dealing with allegations against staff which can lead either to Police investigation and possible prosecution or consideration under staff discipline procedures which in the case of allegations of child abuse involve an independent investigation.

### **Extended Schools and Out of School Hours Provision**

When Willows High School provides out of hours or off-site activities under the supervision of school staff, this policy and its procedures apply.

Where services or activities are provided by a separate organisation, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must seek assurance that the organisation has appropriate policies and procedures in place for child protection and that there are arrangements to liaise with the school on safeguarding and child protection issues.

### **Other Relevant School Policies**

The school has other relevant policies which are available on the school website. These include:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Well-being and Attendance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Internet Access Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Strategic Equality Plan (equality policy)