



Heronsbridge School Policy: Protocol for Child Protection 2024

Coordinators: J Evans, R Owens

As a Rights Respecting School, we are committed to embedding the principles of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This policy enables our pupils to access and enjoy the following articles of the convention.

Article 1- Every child under the age of 18 has all the rights in the convention.

Article 2 -All children have these rights.

Article 19 - Every child has the right to feel safe

Article 28- Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29-Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Article 42- Every child has the right to know their rights

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1. INTRODUCTION

At Heronsbridge School all staff and governors are responsible for the protection of vulnerable children. Their welfare both at school and home is a prime objective. This policy sets out the guidelines for Child Protection and how the school deals with it.

2. STATUTORY BASIS FOR CHILD PROTECTION.

The work of staff in child protection is governed by a number of statutory frameworks, circulars and guides to good practice. The main ones are: -

1. Welsh Assembly Government Guidance - 158-2015 Keeping learners safe
2. Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019
3. Welsh Assembly Government Guidance - Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004
4. The Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Wales) Regulations 2006 as Amended in 2012.
5. The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (Department for Health 2000)
6. Welsh Assembly Government Circular 002-2013 Disciplinary and dismissal procedures for school staff.
7. Welsh Assembly Government Circular 009/2014 Safeguarding children in education.
8. Welsh Assembly Government - Protecting children in Wales: guidance for arrangements for multi-agency child practice reviews.
9. Bridgend Corporate Safeguarding Policy
10. Education Act of 2002
11. Childrens Act 1989 & 2004
12. Social services and well-being (Wales) Act of 2014
13. Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2006 amended by The Staffing of Maintained Schools. (Wales) (Amendment No 2). Regulations
14. Human Rights Act of 1998
15. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The GDPR regulations 2018 for the purposes of keeping children safe do not apply when: -

- It does not prevent or limit the sharing of information for keeping children safe.
- Legal and secure information sharing between schools, social care and other agencies is essential for keeping children safe and ensuring they get the support they need.
- Information can be shared without consent if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of promoting welfare and protecting the safety of children.
- As with all data sharing, appropriate organisational and technical safeguards should still be in place.

3. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

To safeguard children and young people the school will adhere to the All-Wales Child Protection Procedures in force at the time. These procedures have legal backing in law and have been endorsed locally by the Western Bay Safeguarding Children's Board and the Local Authority.

This applies to all departments within the school.

4. THE PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. To create an ethos within the School that helps children to feel secure and able to talk freely, in the belief that they will be listened to and that their point of view will be valued.
2. To raise the awareness of all staff about their responsibility to identify and report possible cases of abuse.
3. To provide a systematic means of monitoring children thought to be at risk.
4. To provide suitable support and guidance for staff so that children have a range of adults whom they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulty.
5. To develop a structured internal procedure to be followed by all members of staff in cases of suspected abuse.

6. To promote good communication between staff over concerns about children and young people.

Staff within School identify strongly with the key principles on which to base their work with children, young people and their families. These key principles are found in the Children Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the UK is a signatory. All children and young people deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Staff should be enabled to understand the importance of reporting any concerns they have that a child may require protection and the process of referral.

5. DESIGNATED PERSONNEL FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The School must have a designated teacher and deputy with responsibilities for dealing with child protection issues and providing advice and support to other staff. The School must also have a nominated 'child protection governor' who should ensure that the school has an effective child protection policy that is consistent with the All-Wales Child Protection Procedures (2008.)

1. The Headteacher, [Mr Jeremy Evans \(01656 815725\)](#) is the Designated Officer for Co-ordinating action within the School and for liaison with other agencies as required.
2. All staff and governors should know the correct procedures and location of documentation for child protection.
3. If a member of staff or governor has any worries or suspects child abuse either within the school or at home, they should contact the designated officer immediately.
4. If the designated officer is not available the Deputy Headteacher, [Ms Lisa James-Smith \(01656 815725\)](#) or Assistant Headteachers, [Dr Sylvia Fowler](#) or [Mrs Alana Harries \(01656 815725\)](#) is to be informed immediately.

The designated person must receive specific training to carry out this role. Ultimately it is for every member of staff to have responsibility for the welfare of children and young people.

Training on safeguarding children is required by staff and the designated governor to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively, together with refresher training to keep knowledge and skills up to date. The School has a comprehensive training program in place to enable this to be achieved.

6. RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

Definition of an Abused Child (All Wales Child Protection Procedures)

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional 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."

There are five categories of abuse:

1. Neglect

A failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the child's well-being for example an impairment of the child's development.

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

2. Physical

The hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

3. Emotional

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development

It may involve conveying to the 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 and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example 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.

4. **Sexual**

Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

The activities 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.
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

5. **Financial**

Includes:

- Having money or other property stolen.
- Being defrauded.
- Being put under pressure concerning money or other property.
- Having money or other property misused.

7. **CHILD ABUSE AND THE INDIVIDUAL**

Child abuse may come to the attention of staff in a number of ways:

1. A child or young person may make a direct disclosure to staff
2. Staff may observe bruises/burns or injuries for which there is no plausible explanation
3. Another child, young person or parent/carer may tell staff something which causes concern
4. Staff may observe changes in behaviour that are a cause of concern
5. Staff may instinctively feel something is wrong
6. There may be neglect issues.

8. INDIVIDUAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Extract from All Wales Child Protection Procedures)

"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 duty and powers to investigate and intervene when necessary."

Staff should first discuss their concerns with the designated member of staff who will then make the appropriate referral. Staff should not worry about being mistaken about concerns regarding a child/young person's welfare, as they will always be taken seriously by the statutory agencies.

Under the 2014 Social Services and Well-being Act - Part 7, you have to report any suspicions of a child at risk to the designated person.

It is imperative that staff do not conduct their own investigations as this can have serious implications for any subsequent Police or Social Services enquiry. The initial referral should be made by telephone in the first instance to the Children's Services duty desk on 642320 and followed up within 48 hours with a written referral. Copies of the referral forms are available from the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher. Throughout this process advice and support is available from the Child Protection Team on 815270.

9. DISCLOSURE

The School places great emphasis on effective communication between staff and children/young people and their parents/carers. However staff must recognise that where there are child protection concerns they must deal very differently with both the child or young person and their parents/carers. If someone discloses that they or another young person has been, or is being, abused, staff should:

1. Always believe what the child is saying or conversely try not to show disbelief. Show that you have heard what they are saying and that their allegations will be taken seriously.
2. Encourage the child or young person to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions. Staff should not interrupt when the child or young person is recalling significant events or make the child or young person repeat themselves.
3. Explain what actions must be taken, in a way appropriate to the age and understanding of the child or young person.
4. Do not promise to keep what has been disclosed confidential. Staff have a duty to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is NOT a betrayal of trust.
5. Write down what has been said, using the child's own words. Keeping an accurate record is essential.
6. Make a note of the date, time, place and those present at the discussion.
7. Report concerns immediately to the designated member of staff.
8. Do not confront the alleged abuser.
9. Do not inform the parents until advice has been given by Children's Services' duty desk.

10. CONCERNS ABOUT COLLEAGUES

The abuse of a child or young person by a fellow member of staff can be a particularly difficult and potentially damaging matter to deal with. If there are concerns regarding a colleague, STAFF MUST be prepared to "Think the Unthinkable".

1. Any doubts or uncertainties about a colleague must be raised immediately, with the Headteacher, who must then discuss the matter with the Child Protection Co-ordinator for Education who will be able to offer further advice.
2. The Headteacher or department heads must not inform the member of staff who is the subject of a concern or undertake their own enquiries. Such complex issues must involve the Police and Social Services.
3. If the allegations are against the Headteacher the Chair of Governors: [Mrs Mari Major MBE \(07808 843526\)](#) must be informed, who will progress the allegation in line with this policy without reference to the Headteacher.

11. CHILD PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

To safeguard children and young people all agencies must work together, with the designated officer for the school as the co-ordinator.

All members of staff and governors are responsible for ensuring these procedures and policies are carried out correctly under the law to alleviate any legal issues at a later date.