



## **EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 24TH SEPTEMBER 2019**

**SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND  
CORPORATE SERVICES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members regarding safeguarding developments in 2018/2019.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council and is embodied in the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- 2.2 The Local Authority (LA) has clear policies and procedures linked to safeguarding children in education services. Safeguarding underpins priorities within the Directorate Plan (2018 – 2023) and all related plans.
- 2.3 The LA works in partnership with Children’s Services, education providers, parents, The South East Wales Consortium (SEWC), the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and other partners to ensure that there is a robust approach towards safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.4 The LA has a pivotal role in safeguarding activities at a national, regional and local level for example the National Safeguarding in Education Group (SEG), and the regional South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) SEG. This ensures that policy and practice are well informed.
- 2.5 The LA Safeguarding Policy for schools directly reflects ‘Keeping Learners Safe’ Circular 158/2015.
- 2.6 The LA has a clear system of self evaluation in relation to safeguarding (linked to ESTYN guidance and broader self evaluation processes). This informs developments in processes and practice.

- 2.7 The LA provides robust advice and support and there are effective processes in place in relation to school audits, the monitoring of child protection referrals and professional concerns.
- 2.8 The LA has a revised model of training for schools and is reviewing practitioner forums.
- 2.9 There are robust monitoring arrangements in place with regard to the scrutiny of physical intervention forms. This ensures that the LA exercises its duty of care in relation to pupils and staff members.
- 2.10 There are robust systems in place regarding the recording and monitoring of discriminatory incidents. Guidance is updated to reflect any new categories as they are defined. The LA has been recognised by Stonewall as developing good practice in this area.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that an annual report is presented to Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.2 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 Safeguarding is a priority and it is important that Members are apprised of relevant work undertaken in this area.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council and is embodied in the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- 5.2 The LA has a clear Corporate Policy for Safeguarding outlining the clear intention of the council in relation to safeguarding. As part of the Council's commitment to safeguarding, we work proactively with our partners under the auspices of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) to ensure that statutory guidance is followed, awareness and good practice is promoted and the workforce practices safely and effectively.
- 5.3 Each of the LAs across South East Wales Consortia (SEWC) is represented at the National Safeguarding Education Group (SEG). Engagement in this group facilitates regional and local developments. The SEWC SEG meets to promote consistency, share good practice and contribute to national consultations.
- 5.4 The LA has a clear definition of safeguarding and clearly defined responsibilities as outlined in the Corporate Policy including areas such as Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV) and Counter-terrorism and risk of radicalisation (Prevent)

- 5.5 Safeguarding is a priority in the Education and Corporate Services Directorate with safeguarding central to priorities in the Education Plan for 2018 – 2023.
- 5.6 The management of Education Safeguarding and LAC team has returned to the Education Directorate as of May 2019. There is a clear plan for the service development which is reviewed annually in line with the broader Service Improvement Plan. This includes a review of roles and responsibilities linked to the Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act 2018 and the associated changes to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 Part 4. The role of the centrally employed education safeguarding officer will continue to ensure support to schools in relation to safeguarding and provide challenge where necessary.
- 5.7 There is excellent partnership working across Education and Children’s Services to ensure that there is a robust approach towards safeguarding arrangements.
- 5.8 The LA makes an effective contribution to the regional Gwent Safeguarding Board, and the Case Review Subgroup and Policies and Procedures Subgroup, as well as Corporate Safeguarding Board and the DSO practice development group. Education contributes to:
- actions plans developed to formulate the work of these groups for example review of policy and practice
  - collective oversight of arrangements for training (VAWDASV),
  - audits
  - progress reports
  - self evaluation
- 5.9 Designated managers (Lead for Inclusion and ALN and Service Manager) work closely together to ensure that there is consistency across the services in terms of advice, support, training and challenge. The managers also fulfil an auditing role ensuring an additional layer of evaluation and challenge where necessary, e.g. sampling school audits, monitoring child protection referrals and professional concerns.
- 5.10 The LA has a clear Safeguarding Policy for schools, adopted by all schools in the Borough. This directly reflects ‘Keeping Learners Safe’ Circular 158/2015. The existing policy is currently under review and following consultation with nominated Primary and Secondary Head teachers will be circulated at the beginning of the Autumn term (2019) for all schools to adopt. This will be followed up in the LA audit of schools.
- 5.11 The LA has a robust process of self evaluation and specifically follows the Estyn framework for self evaluation of safeguarding within education. There is also a recently developed Corporate safeguarding assessment tool and associated action plan. The LA’s contribution to this reflects the areas for development identified within the education self evaluation.
- 5.12 Within the broad remit of safeguarding there are several key areas of focus such as Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV) and Counter-terrorism and risk of radicalisation (Prevent). Education is represented at strategic groups to ensure that senior managers are well informed of the LA’s responsibilities and that information is cascaded to all staff. The safeguarding policy for schools also reflects this key information.

- 5.13 Estyn have recently undertaken a thematic review in relation to Prevent and have visited the LA and schools in order to gather information to contribute to this review. Initial feedback indicates that information gathered may be used to support a case study.
- 5.14 Working with the Police the LA has engaged with Operation Encompass since 2019 and has a robust process of ensuring that schools receive daily information regarding incidents of domestic abuse. Initial feedback indicates that this is welcomed by schools. The LA contributes to the regional group to review current practice and identify areas for future development. The performance data available to the LA will be used to inform local developments.
- 5.15 High quality child protection training is delivered to all Learning education and Inclusions staff, teaching and non-teaching staff, governors and other partners. The LA has recognised the need to review the method of delivery to ensure that there is a sustainable model in place that will enhance the capacity for schools to effectively manage safeguarding issues. Working with partners in Social Services training materials have been revised and a train the trainer model for schools and education setting will be implemented from the Autumn term 2019. All schools are up to date with their safeguarding training.
- 5.16 The LA provides effective advice regarding individual needs via the Information, Assistance and Advice Team (IAA), Child Protection Coordinator, Lead for Safeguarding in Education and HR (where appropriate). Key managers in Education and Social Services regularly review decisions in order to ensure the appropriateness of decision making. Scrutiny of Estyn school inspection reports indicates that there are appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools in Caerphilly.
- 5.17 Allegations against professionals are managed robustly with engagement from education, social services and HR. Processes and decision making are reviewed on a regular basis.
- 5.18 The LA has a good system of audit for schools and maintained child care settings to examine their responses to safeguarding responsibilities. Additional checks are built into this process to ensure that the audits themselves are robust. Any actions arising from the audits are undertaken and checked by managers. 5% of schools across the LA were rated other than green and required follow up. All schools are now rated as green.
- 5.19 There is a robust system for recording and monitoring a range of discriminatory incidents requiring schools to submit returns to the LA on a termly basis which are scrutinised by LA officers. This is updated with any additional characteristics linked to discrimination as required. In Autumn 2018 8% of schools or providers indicated one or more incident. These related to homophobic, race, nationality and cultural issues. Restorative approaches were adopted as a result. In the Spring term 2019 23% of schools or providers indicated one or more incident. In addition to the issues identified in the autumn term nationality and religion were also identified. Restorative approaches, sanctions and awareness raising activities were undertaken.

- 5.20 There is a robust system for recording and monitoring physical interventions. During 2018 /19 the LA received 512 restrictive physical intervention forms. This is compared to 417 in 2017 /18.

Of these:

- 384 were primary (75%)
- 14 were secondary (2.73%)
- 66 were EOTAS (12.89%)
- 34 were SRB's (6.65%)
- 14 were special school (2.73%)

There were no Physical Intervention that resulted in safeguarding concerns regarding a member of school staff during the academic year. 8% of these were followed up with schools.

## 6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 In considering the recommendations the following assumptions have been made:

- Safeguarding children and young people is a key statutory duty of the Council and as such must be reported to scrutiny to ensure that members are kept informed.

## 7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- Caerphilly County Borough Council Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Corporate Policy.
- Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023
- Service Improvement Plans

## 8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 8.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Policy contributes to the Wellbeing Goals as follows and implementing the Council's responsibility for safeguarding children (and vulnerable adults) is consistent with the five ways of working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- **A prosperous Wales:** The Corporate Policy confirms that Caerphilly County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the Borough is safe and protected and that our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults are effectively met.
- **A resilient Wales:** Safeguarding means protecting individual's health, well being and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect (Care Quality Commission, 2014). This process will contribute to developing resilience.
- **A healthier Wales –A more equal Wales:** The Safeguarding Policies promote the importance of the well being and safety of children and adults.
- **A Wales of cohesive communities:** The Safeguarding Policies promote well being and preventative approaches which links to the development of safe communities.
- **A globally responsible Wales:** The aim of the Safeguarding Policies is to ensure that there is a focus on well being and that good practice is embedded in schools and other service providers

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 This report requires no specific equalities impact assessment.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The safeguarding manager post and the LAC support workers have moved from Social Services to the Education Directorate along with the budget. The manager post has been reconfigured as outlined in section 11.

## **11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The safeguarding manager post has been reconfigured to ensure that both safeguarding and LAC responsibilities (in line with the ALN Act 2018 and the social services and wellbeing Act) are appropriately addressed creating a Safeguarding coordinator and a LAC coordinator post.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 The report reflects the views of the consultees based on consultations undertaken to date.

## **13. STATUTORY POWER**

13.1 Social Services and Wellbeing Act  
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015  
Education (Wales) Act 2014  
Education Act 1996 - Equality Act 2010  
Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act (2018)

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Consultees:

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Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair Education for Life Scrutiny Committee  
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