



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 11TH JULY 2017

SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING

REPORT BY: CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update Members on the progress made in relation to Safeguarding in Education.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Safeguarding is a priority within the Directorate and has continued to underpin all activities in all key plans.
- 2.2 The Local Authority (LA) works with Children's Services, schools, parents, The South East Wales Consortium (SEWC), the EAS and other partners to ensure that there is a robust approach towards safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.3 The LA has a pivotal role in safeguarding activities at a national, regional and local level. This ensures that policy and practice are well informed.
- 2.4 In accordance with statutory guidance, all schools and settings have a Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection.
- 2.5 As well as the provision of good advice and support, there are effective safeguarding programmes relating to training, practitioner forums and audit. Estyn school inspection reports indicate that there are appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in schools in Caerphilly.
- 2.6 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. Scrutiny of the data indicates that there has been a downward trend in the number of incidents of physical intervention in schools and specialist resource bases since 2011/12.
- 2.7 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. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 There is a broad range of activities that the LA undertakes to ensure that we comply with the requirements of the Education Act 2002, Children Act 2002, Equality Act 2010, The All Wales Child Protection Procedures and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

- 3.2 Parts 7 and 9 of the Social Services & Well Being Act (Wales) 2014 relate directly to safeguarding and partnership working.
- 3.3 The Welsh Government Guidance Keeping Learners Safe (2015), sets out the legal obligations for employers and educational institutions in exercising their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Wales. Further information can be obtained via www.wales.gov.uk
- 3.4 The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Model Safeguarding Policy for schools will contribute to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:
- **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, wellbeing 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 wellbeing and safety of children and adults.
 - **A Wales of cohesive communities:** The Safeguarding Policies promote wellbeing 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 wellbeing and that good practice is embedded in schools and other service providers.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Safeguarding is a priority within the Directorate and has continued to underpin all activities in all key plans.
- 4.2 The Local Authority (LA) works with Children's Services, schools, parents, The South East Wales Consortium (SEWC), the EAS, The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and other partners to ensure that there is a robust approach towards safeguarding arrangements.

Children Boards

- 4.3 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) were introduced on a statutory footing by Welsh Government in October 2006 through the 2004 Children Act. This legislation responded to the recommendation of the Lord Laming Child Protection

Enquiry into the Death of Victoria Climbié. As a result, all agencies were expected to work together to ensure that children were better protected.

- 4.4 The Local Boards were set up with a number of statutory partners including Police, Health, Probation and the statutory Local Authority services are Children's Services, Youth Offending Service, Education and Housing. For a number of years they operated on a local authority boundary basis. In July 2013 the Caerphilly LSCB joined with the four other Boards across the South East Wales Region to form the regional South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB). Welsh Government grant funding was obtained for a three year period to enable the collaboration between the five Local Authority areas to be properly supported. The Children's Safeguarding Business Unit was established utilising this grant funding to develop the work of the Board and sub groups to ensure co-ordination of this agenda and develop and deliver a multi-agency training programme for practitioners across South East Wales.

- 4.5 The Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 specifies the objectives of Safeguarding Children's Boards as being:
- To protect children within its area who are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and
 - To prevent children within its area from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.
- 4.6 The LA makes an effective contribution to the work of the SEWSCB via representation at both the Board and relevant Sub-Groups. Regional and local developments in Safeguarding are significantly informed by the work of the Board. Information provided in **Appendix 1** illustrates the current SEWSCB structure.
- 4.7 The Board has developed effective protocols and resources linked to a ranged of priorities such as improving our work with adolescents who exhibit risky behaviours. In this respect, there has been very positive feedback from senior teachers in Caerphilly regarding a drama production activity for Year 8 pupils procured and funded by the Board, LA's and schools to raise awareness regarding Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 4.8 The Board has raised awareness of robust research relating to Adverse Childhood Experiences. This has placed LAs in a stronger position to target their resources in accordance with identified need.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

- 4.9 There is a regional VAWDASV Board. Education will be represented at a strategic delivery group to ensure that senior managers are well informed of the LAs responsibilities with regard to compliance with the VAWDASV Act (Wales) 2015.
- 4.10 The LA has promoted the SPECTRUM (Ty Hafan) project and NSPCC programmes for schools to effectively educate children with regard to Healthy and Safe Relationships. In this respect, The Healthy Schools Service has provided additional support for schools.
- 4.11 There is specific reference in schools policy to the responsibilities on schools and on those living in domestically violent situations.

SEWC Safeguarding Education Group - Directors

- 4.12 Each of the LAs across SEWC is represented at the National Safeguarding Education Group (SEG). Engagement in this group will facilitate regional and local developments. The SEWC SEG meets to promote consistency, share good practice and contribute to national consultations.
- 4.13 The South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) SEG provides a forum for developing effective collaborative practice.

Corporate Safeguarding Group

- 4.14 The Assistant Director for Children's Services chairs the Corporate Safeguarding Group. Strong leadership provides clear direction regarding safeguarding requirements across the Council.
- 4.15 The LA plays an active role in the Corporate Safeguarding Group which is reflected in the quality of the activities linked to policy, process and training.
- 4.16 The Corporate Safeguarding Group provides an effective forum for discussion as to how the Council is best placed to comply with legislative requirements, for example those associated with the VAWDASV Act.

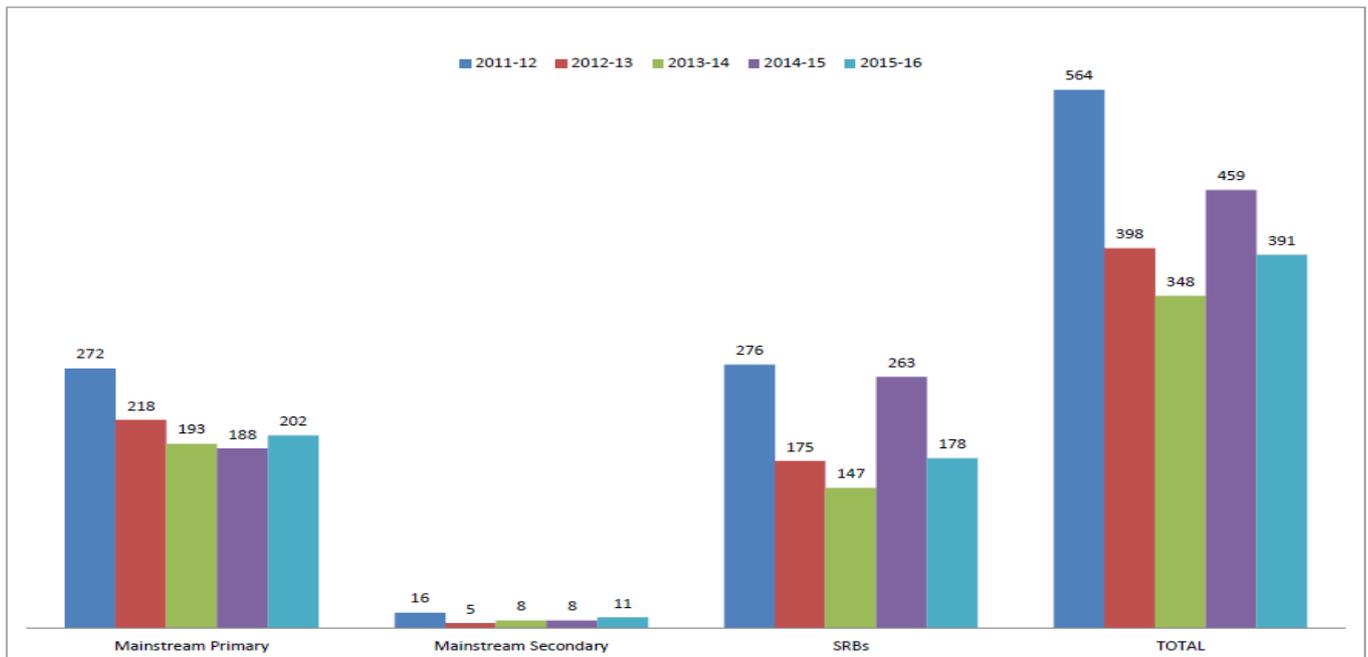
Training, Advice, Support & Audit

- 4.17 To ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding, high quality child protection training is delivered to all Directorate, teaching and non-teaching staff, governors and other partners.
- 4.18 The Education Safeguarding Manager provided training for members of Education Scrutiny during the Autumn Term 2016. This was well received but will need to be extended to other members as there was a low level of uptake.
- 4.19 The Education Safeguarding Manager is in the process of developing the LAs Training Strategy and is consulting with Headteachers regarding a range of options in terms of models of training delivery. This will be informed by the work of the SEWSCB. The revised model of delivery will enhance the capacity for schools to effectively manage safeguarding issues.
- 4.20 Schools and other partners have access to effective advice and support in relation to safeguarding including issues relating to threshold for referral to Children's Services and the completion of risk assessments relating to child and/or professional concerns.
- 4.21 The LA has a good system of audit for schools and maintained child care settings to examine their responses to safeguarding responsibilities. Within the context of national developments, the LA will be reviewing its audit processes as reflected in the SEWC Safeguarding Education Group Action Plan 2017/18.
- 4.22 Scrutiny of Estyn school inspect reports indicates that there are appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place in schools in Caerphilly.
- 4.23 Schools ensure that keeping children safe underpins all practice.
- 4.24 The LA has 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.

Effective Behaviour Management and Safe Physical Intervention

- 4.25 In order to ensure that there are robust safeguarding arrangements in schools, the LA promotes Team Teach as the effective model of behaviour management and safe physical intervention.
- 4.26 Figure 1 below indicates that there has been a downward trend in the number of incidents of physical intervention in schools and specialist resource bases since 2011/12. There are good monitoring arrangements in place with regard to the scrutiny of the physical intervention forms. This ensures that the LA exercises its duty of care in relation to pupils and staff members.

Figure 1 – Trends in the Use of Physical Intervention



5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in 3 above. The ongoing review and implementation of relevant policies, guidance and training materials should facilitate further development of robust safeguarding arrangements.
- 5.2 The Safeguarding Policies are consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act. They focus on both the short term need to address reported concerns that may require immediate action and on measures to build capacity within schools and other organisations to improve safeguarding arrangements.
- 5.3 Prevention is a key area within the Safeguarding policies. For instance, the LA supports schools to help them to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- 5.4 Collaborative work between the LA, schools, parents, SEWC, the SEWSCB and the EAS will drive further progress in relation to protecting children and improving their levels of wellbeing.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The LA is committed to ensuring that all children gain maximum benefit from their education regardless of ethnic origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment (transgender issues), religious belief or non-belief, use of Welsh language, British Sign Language or other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.
- 6.2 The LA ensures, in line with current Welsh Language and Equalities legislation, that all parties involved in any Safeguarding issues have their language of choice and individual characteristics respected and taken into account at every stage.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 All responses are reflected in the report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Members are requested to note the contents of this report.

10.2 It is recommended that there is an Annual Safeguarding Report provided to the Education Scrutiny Committee for information purposes.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Safeguarding is a priority and it is important that members are apprised of relevant work undertaken in this area of activity.

12. STATUTORY POWER

12.1 Social Services & Wellbeing Act.

Author: Sarah Ellis, Manager Inclusion and ALN
Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Helen West, Education Safeguarding Manager
Senior Management Team
Cllr Philippa Marsden, Cabinet Member, Education and Achievement
Cllr Wynne David, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee
Education Achievement Service (EAS)
Anwen Rees, Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)
Melanie Roach Business Manager SE Wales Children's Board

Appendices:

Appendix 1 SEWSCB Structure.

Appendix 2 How Schools Keep Children Safe – Presentation.