

CASTLE SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Castle School is concerned to safeguard the wholeness and the well-being of every person in our community, of whatever age. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of every member of our community, and particularly the abuse of those most vulnerable among us, including children and young people.

It is the duty of all those who work with children and young people to prevent harm and abuse of every kind, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

It is the policy of Castle School that no-one shall work or volunteer to work with children and young people within or on behalf of the school who:

- has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933;
- has been required to register under the Sexual Offences Act 2003;
- has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children and young people.

This means that:

- all who work or volunteer to work unsupervised with children and young people under the auspices of Castle School will be required to be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS], and are expected at all times to conform with good practice in their work: and
- those responsible for the appointment of such workers and volunteers must take all reasonable steps, including obtaining Disclosures from the DBS, to ensure that persons who have been convicted or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not undertake work with young people under the auspices of Castle School.

Furthermore, Castle School will:

- Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
- Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
- When considering any such applicant, obtain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.
- Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
- Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
- Issue guidelines on how to deal with disclosure or discovery of abuse in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

- Train paid staff and volunteers supervisors in both the prevention of child abuse and the recognition of child abuse. This will involve attending LEA Tier 1 Child Protection Course and any other training deemed necessary.

All Wales Child Protection Procedures Guidelines

Castle School is committed to following the All Wales Child Protection Procedures that form a common set of guidelines for professionals working within Wales. Following these procedures increases effective safeguarding of children but also safeguards staff if things do go wrong. They are as follows:-

If someone tells you that they or another child or young person is being abused

- Show that you have heard what they are saying, and that you take their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions.
- Don't interrupt when the child is recalling significant events. Don't make the child repeat their account.
- Explain what actions you must take, in a way which is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.
- Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret, as you have a responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know.

Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust.

- Write down as soon as you can and no later than 24 hours what you have been told, using the exact words if possible.
- Report your concerns to your line manager or (if appropriate) the member of staff in your organisation with designated responsibility for child protection.
- Ensure that your concerns are immediately reported to the duty social worker in the Child Care Assessment Team. 014377 76444. Do not delay.
- Do not confront the alleged abuser.
- Do not worry that you may be mistaken. You will always be taken seriously by Social Services. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment.

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children or young people causes you concern

- Do not dismiss your concerns.
- Do not confront the person about whom you have concerns.
- If it is a person with professional responsibility for children or young people discuss you must act in accordance with your agency's professional abuse and whistle blowing policies.
- It is very important that you do not ignore or dismiss suspicions about another professional or colleague.
- If you require advice or support, ring the LADO [Local Authority Designated Officer] on 01437 77 6696.

Making Referrals

Referrals should be made to the Child Care Assessment Team (01437 776444) as soon as a problem, suspicion or concern becomes apparent, and certainly **within 24 hours**. Outside office hours, referrals should be made to the out of hours service (08708 509 508) or the police. Social services and Police must ensure that an appropriate level and deployment of trained staff are available to undertake child protection section 47 enquiries, including out of hours.

All telephone referrals or referrals made in person should then be confirmed in writing within two working days, using a standard form where possible.

The duty social worker taking the referral should be given as much of the following information as possible [where known]:

- the nature of the concerns;
- How and why these concerns have arisen;
- the full name, address and date of birth (or age) of the child;
- the names, addresses and dates of birth/ages of family members, along with
- any other names which they use or are known by
- the names and relationship of all those with parental responsibility, where known, should be recorded;
- The name, address and date of birth of the parent's partner;
- The name, address and date of birth of any other adults living in the household;
- the names of other professionals involved with the family, including the name of the child's school and GP
- Any information you have on the child's developmental needs and his/her parents or caregivers ability to respond to these needs within the context of the wider family and environment;
- any information affecting the safety of staff.

Individual employees, professionals and independent contractors, should be aware that they cannot remain anonymous when making a referral. However members of the public may remain anonymous, if they wish to.

After the referral has been made

The person making the referral may be asked to do any or all of the following tasks, and should be prepared and willing to do them:

- contribute to a strategy discussion
- assist in the child protection section 47 enquiries
- Attend the Child Protection Conference
- provide a written report for the Child Protection Conference
- Contribute to the initial and core assessments

It is the responsibility of each individual employees and professionals to ensure that their child protection concerns are taken seriously and followed through. Each individual employee and professional is accountable for his or her own role in the child protection process and if an individual employee or professional remains concerned about a child they should re-refer the child and/or bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Social Services senior manager with responsibility for child protection for the area. In their absence the Social Services team manager responsible for the child's case must be notified. In all such situations, the professional's own line manager and named professional for child protection should be informed.

If there is any doubt about whether to make a referral then the individual employee or professional should contact the Child Care Assessment Team to ask advice.

Keeping records

All child protection work depends on clear, accurate and complete recordkeeping.

Anyone with concerns about the welfare of a child should make a written record of their concerns and what they do about them, using the guidance below. This guidance should also be followed by those taking a lead in child protection enquiries and action following from enquiries.

Records should:

- use clear, straightforward language
- be signed, dated and timed
- be concise, legible and comply with professional, national and local agency standards and requirements
- be accurate in fact and in distinguishing between opinion, judgements and hypothesis
- be organised and comprise detailed recording and chronologies and summaries including all contacts;
- be comprehensive
- clearly record judgements that are made and action and decisions taken
- clarify where decisions have been taken jointly across agencies, or endorsed by a manager.
- Record both formal and informal supervision discussion, including telephone advice;
- Record directions given and agreements or disagreements made in consultation with Supervisors or Managers.

When an individual employee or professional who works with children in need is absent from the office for any reason the manager should ensure that arrangements are made for all paper and electronic correspondence to be checked.