



Penparcau Community Forum Ltd

Child Protection Policy

Date Reviewed	Reviewed By	Position
23.01.2023	SAM HUGHES-EVANS	Manager
23.01.2023	KELVIN JONES	Chairman

Next Review Date	23.01.2024
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funded
through



Canolfan Cymunedol Penparcau / Penparcau Community Centre,
Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 1RU
Ffôn / Tel: 01970 611099 e-bost / e-mail: contact@penparcau.cymru



*Penparcau Community Forum Limited is a company registered in England & Wales
(Reg. Number 9210780, Registered Office Address: As above)*

Introduction

The Penparcau Community Forum (the Forum hereon) recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

Abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The Forum is committed to practices that protect children from harm. All members of the Forum accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of issues that cause children harm.

A child is anyone who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday. They are referred to as 'children' or a 'child' hereon. The fact that a child has become 16 years of age and may be living independently does not change their status or their entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act, 1989.

We believe that all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have a right to:

- be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- protection from abuse, bullying and harm;
- experience good emotional wellbeing;
- feel valued and supported;
- have allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour taken seriously and responded to appropriately.
- have a positive image of themselves and a secure sense of identity, including cultural and racial identity.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers (including children) working on behalf of the Forum on any activity.

The Forum will ensure that:

- It will keep informed of changes to legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- It will undertake relevant development and training.
- It will hold a register of every child involved with the Forum and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.
- It keeps up-to-date with health & safety legislation.

The Forum has child protection procedures that accompany this policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Forum's Equal Opportunities and Health & Safety policies.

The Forum has a Designated Person, who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.

The Designated Person's name is **Sam Hughes-Evans** (Forum Manager)

She can be contacted on 01970 611099 (Forum office) or contact@penparcau.cymru.

Ceredigion Social Services: 01545 574 000

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Board of the Forum, and more frequently if necessary.

The Role of the Designated Person is:

- To be fully conversant with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and to ensure that all staff and volunteers know about these procedures;
- To have a clear understanding of how to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and when to make a referral;
- To understand the roles and responsibilities of designated agencies and how to respond to and work with them;
- The co-ordination of all child protection issues, acting as a source of advice and support for any staff member or volunteer that has concerns or information that a child may be suffering abuse;
- To take a lead with referrals to Children's Services;
- To attend training on a regular basis and cascade information to staff;
- To ensure that all current or new staff and volunteers have access to the relevant child protection documents and are clear about their own responsibilities;
- To ensure that a record of concerns is maintained. If there are concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- To ensure that all records are kept confidentially and in a secure way;
- To advise the Forum Board of developments and ongoing management of safeguarding matters, including those involving child abuse;
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding work carried out within the Forum;
- If unsure about whether a case should be referred or if there are genuine concerns re a child's health or development, to seek advice from appropriate agencies.
- To ensure that every member of staff and volunteer knows:
 - The name of the Designated Person and their role;
 - That they have an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns to the Designated Person within reasonable timescales;
 - That they need to be alert to signs of abuse;
 - What to do when they have observed abuse by staff members or volunteers;
 - What to do if there is an allegation against the Designated Person;
 - How to take forward concerns where the Designated Person is unavailable;
 - Not to contact parents if it would put the child at risk.
- Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the Forum and volunteers for child protection;
- Provide training for all staff and volunteers so that they know:
 - Their personal responsibility;
 - The agreed local procedures;
 - The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse;
 - How to make pupils feel encouraged and secure to discuss any concerns they may have;
 - How to support a child that discloses abuse.
- Work to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection;
- Keep full written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Services immediately;
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations;
- Ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are made in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government guidance circular 34/2002 "*Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from working with Children in the Education Sector*";
- Ensure that all staff are in possession of a current and valid DBS certificate.

Induction

- The Forum will make available to all new members of staff an induction handbook or document that will contain its procedures on child protection and safeguarding.
- New staff and volunteers will be given the opportunity to read the induction handbook or document and sign a caption confirming that they have read and understood it.

Suspicion of Abuse

- If a member of staff or a volunteer witnesses or suspects the abuse of a child while in the care of the Forum, they should make it known to the Designated Person as soon as practicable. If they suspect that the Designated Person is the source of the problem, they should make their concerns known to the Chairman of the Board, or another Director should the Chairman be the Designated Person.
- The witness should make a note for their own records of what they witnessed as well as their response in case there is follow-up action in which they are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of staff or volunteer of the Forum, that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. That includes any visits to premises controlled by the Forum unless supervised and for a specific purpose.
- Where a member of Forum staff or a volunteer is being investigated for alleged abuse, that person will be informed in writing of the content of the allegation. 'In writing' can include by email.

Disclosures of Abuse

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to speak at their pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the Designated Person for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- If at all possible, speak immediately to the Designated Person for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the Police.
- If the Designated Person for child protection is unavailable, contact another member of the Board who is not subject of the allegation. Failing that, refer it to the appropriate department within Social Services or ring the Police on 101 and ask for Aberystwyth Police Station. Ceredigion Social Services' Contact Centre is available on 01545 574000.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, make a note of what was said using the child's own words. Note the date, time, names that were mentioned and whom you passed the information on to. Make sure you sign and date your record if on paper.

Recording

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident should be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note should be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties

involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken, e.g. suspension of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.

- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of the Forum, he or she will be made aware of his rights under the Forum's disciplinary procedures.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the victim have the right to confidentiality. Any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through information being released inappropriately.
- In criminal law the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Responsibilities of the Forum and Its Members

At the outset of any Forum-related activity involving children or vulnerable adults the adult members present will:

- Undertake a risk assessment of the event and ensure that all activities are dynamically risk assessed throughout.
- Engage sufficient DBS-checked chaperones.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the Designated Person or another Director in case they need to report a concern.

Unsupervised Contact

- If possible, there should be two adults present when working with children.
- If this is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with an open door.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to carry out unsupervised contact with children, he or she will require an enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) certificate.

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Managing sensitive information

- The Forum has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children.
- Permission will be sought from the parents for any use of photographic material featuring

children for promotional or other purposes.

- The Forum's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The Forum will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as DBS disclosures and details of any activities involving staff or volunteers.

Accidents

- To avoid accidents, staff, volunteers and children will be advised of health and safety issues.
- If a child is injured while in the care of the Forum, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the Forum's accident book. The office co-ordinator or the Designated Person for child protection will countersign this record.
- If a child joins a Forum activity with a pre-existing injury a record of this will be made in the accident book or on paper somewhere else. It will be countersigned by the person in charge of the activity and, if necessary, by the Designated Person for child protection. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will be a record that the child did not sustain the injury whilst participating in the Forum activity.

Criminal Record Disclosures

- If the Forum believes it is in its best interests to obtain DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) criminal record disclosures for staff members or volunteers, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required.
- A Standard disclosure will apply for anyone with supervised access to children.
- An Enhanced disclosure will be required for anyone with unsupervised access.
- The Forum will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

Procedures

These should be followed in the event of a child protection disclosure or concern.

We will follow the All Wales Child Protection Procedures that have been endorsed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The Forum will:

Ensure it has a Designated Senior Person for child protection who has undertaken the appropriate training.

The person is **Mr Sam Hughes-Evans** (Forum Manager)

Supported by the Chair of Trustees, presently **Kelvin Jones**.

We will ensure that every member of staff and volunteers are made aware of this.

They have responsibility for referring child protection concerns using the proper channels within the timescales agreed with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This is usually as soon as practicable.

How to take forward those concerns where the Designated Senior Person is unavailable:

- Ensure that members of staff are aware of the need to be alert to the signs of abuse and know how to respond to a young person who may disclose abuse.
- Ensure all staff undertake any approved local authority child protection training relevant to their

role.

- Provide a child protection briefing for all staff so that they know:
 - Their personal responsibility
 - The agreed local procedures
 - The need to be vigilant in identifying cases of abuse
 - How to support a child who discloses abuse
 - Any new child protection issues or changes in procedures
- Work to develop effective links with agreed agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at strategy meetings, initial/review child protection conferences and core group together with the submission of written reports to the conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children (nothing to date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to social services immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept secure and in locked locations.

Making a child protection referral

Ceredigion Children and Families Assessment Team Contact Centre

01545 574000

Ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker

Or

Out of Hours

0845 6015392

Named Officer for Child Protection, Learning Services, Ceredigion County Council

01970 633624

Police

101 or 999 in an emergency

Copies of all referrals must be sent to the Named Officer, Child Protection, Learning Services, Ceredigion County Council