



**Blaenau Gwent County
Borough Council**

**Safeguarding Children
and
Adults at risk**

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1. Corporate Policy Statement:

- 1.1 Blaenau Gwent 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 adults at risk are effectively met.
- 1.2 Safeguarding children and adults from abuse is everybody's business. We all share a responsibility, both corporately and individually, to ensure that all children and adults are treated with respect and protected from others who may abuse them. All Council employees and volunteers (referred to as practitioners in this policy), Elected Members and contractors who come into contact with children or adults at risk in the course of their duties are expected to understand their responsibility and wherever necessary, to take action to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- 1.3 As part of the Council's commitment to safeguarding, we work proactively with our partners under the auspices of Gwent Safeguarding to ensure that statutory guidance is followed, awareness and good practice is promoted and the children and adult's workforce practices safely and effectively. Helpful guidance on professional conduct and safe working practice can be found in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 This policy covers all practitioners, Elected Members, and contractors. Individual departments may have their own supplementary structured guidance to inform their staff. The Education Directorate Local Government Education Services (LGES) Safeguarding Policy covers **all** Educational settings within Blaenau Gwent.
- 1.5 While practitioners, Elected Members and contractors are likely to have varied levels of contact with children, young people and adults at risk as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns. It is important to remember that:

IT IS NOT the responsibility of any practitioner, Elected Member or provider of services to determine whether abuse or neglect is actually taking place.

HOWEVER,

IT IS the responsibility of the practitioner, Elected Member or contractor to take the actions set out in this policy if they are concerned that abuse or neglect may be taking place.

2. What is safeguarding?

2.1 Safeguarding means preventing and protecting children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.

2.2 The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect as:

‘Abuse’ means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place.

‘Financial abuse’ includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

‘Neglect’ means a failure to meet a person’s basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person’s well-being for example, impairment of the person’s health or, in the case of a child, an impairment of the child’s development.

A full glossary of terms can be found in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html>

Safeguarding Children and Young People

2.3 For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout this document. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under current legislation.

Safeguarding Adults at risk

2.4 For the purposes of this policy, an adult at risk is anyone over 18 years of age who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV)

- 2.5 The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender based violence, abuse and sexual violence. The protection of victims and support for people affected is underpinned by the 'Ask and Act' duty placed on public service staff to ask potential victims about the possibility that they may be experiencing VAWDASV and act so as to reduce suffering and harm.

Counter-terrorism and risk of radicalisation

- 2.6 Local authorities have a duty to identify vulnerable individuals and families at risk of radicalisation from all forms of extremism. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and its guidance, identifies that children and adults may be vulnerable to ideologies that place them, their families and the general public in danger should they be enticed to act upon extremist beliefs. Identifying individuals at risk and determining what action is necessary to support them is complemented by the 'Channel' multi-agency intervention process which deters continued involvement.

Modern Day Slavery

- 2.7 Modern slavery describes forced labour practices with the perpetrator – the slave master - trapping and controlling the victim. The most common form of modern slavery is sexual exploitation. Labour exploitation is the second most common form of slavery occurring most frequently in the agricultural, food, hospitality and construction sectors. Victims may be vulnerable UK or foreign citizens. Police, Local Authorities, the National Crime Agency and the Gang Masters Labour and Abuse Authority who encounter a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking have a duty to notify the Home Office under Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- 2.8 Modern slavery is a hidden, pervasive crime targeted towards those individuals most vulnerable. The Council and BAWSO are first responding organisations to cases of slavery. Contact details for BAWSO are included in Appendix 6.

Spotting the signs of harm, abuse or neglect

- 2.9 Some signs of abuse or neglect are easy to spot, while others are not. The signs of harm, abuse or neglect are not always obvious. The Wales Safeguarding Procedures include information to help practitioners recognise the signs of harm, abuse or neglect.

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse, Neglect and Harm in a Child <https://www.safeguarding.wales/chi/cp/c1p.p2.html>

Pointers for Practice: Signs and Indicators of Possible Abuse and Neglect in an Adult at risk <https://www.safeguarding.wales/adu/ap/a1p.p2.html>

3. Responsibilities for Safeguarding:

- 3.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk of harm.
- 3.2 The Council ensures that everyone working with or on behalf of children and adults at risk are competent to do so.
- 3.3 The Council promotes safer recruitment policy and practice and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken for employees and volunteers in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements and provisions contained within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Checks are also undertaken to ensure that staff are registered with relevant professional and other bodies wherever appropriate e.g. Social Care Wales and Education Workforce Council
- 3.4 Safeguarding responsibilities for all practitioners are emphasised from the point of recruitment and throughout their employment. There are clear lines of accountability, responsibility and support regarding safeguarding throughout the authority and these are achieved via relevant staff guidance, code of conduct (including disciplinary procedures) and specific policies and procedures which all staff must adhere to.
- 3.5 The Council has a range of policies and procedures available to promote and support staff to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk. These include the Whistleblowing Policy which provides guidance for staff to report concerns or suspicions about conduct or practice. The Whistleblowing Policy can be found in the Organisational Development (Policies and Procedures) section of the Council's Intranet <http://intranet/media/160180/Whistleblowing-Policy-September-2019.pdf>
- 3.6 The Council also hosts safeguarding information pages on the Council website in order to provide information to the general public. The Council intranet site has direct links to Gwent Safeguarding and the Welsh Safeguarding Procedures.
- 3.7 All practitioners will be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities as part of their induction to their employment. More specialist single agency and multi-agency training opportunities are available for practitioners who routinely work with children or adults at risk at levels appropriate to their role and responsibilities. The Blaenau Gwent corporate safeguarding training framework sets out the training expectations and all practitioners must ensure that they undertake training in line with the expectations within this document.

- 3.8 Elected Members have a responsibility to be aware of and support the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and to scrutinise how these are carried out in the planning and delivery of services.
- 3.9 The Council undertakes to ensure that through procurement processes, services commissioned and contracted on its behalf have safeguarding responsibilities built into contracts and that appropriate policies and staff training are in place. This includes an expectation that any person or organisation using Council resources or premises adhere to the Council's safeguarding standards.
- 3.10 The Council expects all practitioners to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of any child or adult at risk involved in any activity or interaction for which they are responsible. Guidance on professional conduct and safe working practice can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.11 Any person responsible for, or working with, children or adult at risk in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, is considered both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care. This includes a duty to behave in a manner that does not threaten, harm or put people at risk of harm from others.
- 3.12 All practitioners have a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children or adults at risk.
- 3.13 All practitioners must:
- Be alert to the possibility of harm, abuse and neglect
 - Participate in relevant safeguarding training and multi-agency working to safeguard children and adults at risk
 - Be familiar with local procedures and protocols for safeguarding children and adults at risk and follow the Council's Code of Conduct and any other Professional Codes
 - Report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or adults at risk. Please refer to Appendix 3; 'How to make a report'
- 3.14 All practitioners working for or on behalf of the Council have a duty to report any concerns they may have for the welfare and/or protection of children and adults at risk. The duty to report is a legal requirement and may have serious consequences for any employee who fails to report appropriately. The process to follow to make reports is contained in Appendix 3
- 3.15 Each directorate has a Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for safeguarding. The Lead provides advice and guidance and is responsible for ensuring procedures are followed regarding safeguarding concerns about a child or adult at risk including professional concerns. The Leads' responsibilities are detailed in Appendix 1.

- 3.16 Professional advice can also be sought from, and reports made to, the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Service.
- 3.17 For information, advice or assistance, or to report concerns in relation to:
- A person aged 18 or over, please contact Adult Services IAA service
 - A child or young person, under the age of 18, please contact the Children's Services IAA service

Telephone: 01495 315700

Email the Duty to Report form or the MARF (see appendix 3) to:

Adults: DutyTeamAdults@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

Children: Duty.Team@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

4. Governance Arrangements for Safeguarding within the Council

- 4.1 The Council is required to provide a clear governance structure and clarity on roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- 4.2 The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that national policies and procedures aimed at keeping children and adults who may have needs for care and support safe from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm remain relevant and fit for purpose. If issues or concerns about the national safeguarding policies are identified, then these will be escalated to the Regional Safeguarding Board and communicated to Welsh Government and the National Independent Safeguarding Board.
- 4.3 The Local Authority must have proper safeguards in place to protect children and adults at risk. Ensuring they are kept under review as to the usefulness and effectiveness is one of the core responsibilities of the Director of Social Services.
- 4.4 The lead member for safeguarding who is currently the Executive Member for Social Services is responsible for providing political scrutiny to the local authority to ensure it fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding.
- 4.5 Each Directorate is responsible for nominating a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead plus a Deputy Safeguarding Lead. The roles and responsibilities of the Managing Director, Lead Member for Safeguarding, Directors and Strategic Safeguarding Leads are clarified under Appendix 1.
- 4.6 Gwent Safeguarding brought together the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board. The aim is that

“All Children and Young People in South East Wales are protected from abuse and neglect live in safe homes and communities and are supported to achieve their full potential” and to protect adults in Gwent from becoming *“adults at risk”* and to protect adults who have been abused or neglected or are at risk of it.

- 4.7 Each Authority in the South East Wales Region is required to have a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Network Group which sits under Gwent Safeguarding. The purpose of the Group is to ensure the Local Safeguarding Agenda within each Authority is progressed. The Service Manager with responsibility for Safeguarding, chairs this Local Group and representatives from the Education Department, Schools, Health, the Youth Service, Probation, Families First, Police, Youth Offending Service, Adult Services and the voluntary sector sit on this Group. There are a number of other joint sub groups that sit under and report to Gwent Safeguarding.
- 4.8 Social Services are inspected by the CIW. Their Inspection criteria includes safeguarding of children. Social Services have mechanisms in place to evidence the work undertaken in relation to this area of work which is presented to the CIW in the Directors Annual Report to them.
- 4.9 The Education Department are inspected by Estyn. Part of their inspection criteria includes safeguarding. This includes practice relating to safeguarding within schools and other education settings plus how safeguarding is managed corporately
- 4.10 Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children and Adults at Risk irrespective of their individual role within the Council.
- 4.11 Our priority is for all practitioners to be responsible for implementing this Policy and reporting concerns if they become aware of the following situations:
- Any allegation or concern about actual or suspected situations of abuse, involving a child or adult at risk.
 - Any allegation or concern about actual or suspected practitioner misconduct, and/or criminal activity involving the abuse of a child or adult at risk.

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Appendix 1

Governance Structure and Arrangements for Safeguarding within the Local Authority



Managing Director

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>Ensure safeguarding of children and adults at risk is effective across the Local Authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All serious Safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Director of Social Services via email with the Managing Director cc'd in. • The Director of Social Services will, in consultation with the Managing Director, agree an appropriate response to serious Safeguarding concerns raised. • The Managing Director will have monthly one to one meetings with all Directors who can raise general Safeguarding issues specific to their Directorate. • Safeguarding is a standing item on the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) agenda and shall actively promote and develop good practice in the safeguarding arrangements in use across the council. • The Managing Director sits on the Local Service Board, where strategic partnership work takes place. • The Risk Register of the Council which includes safeguarding is reviewed regularly at CLT meetings which are chaired by the Managing Director. • The Managing Director can meet with the Lead Member for Safeguarding at any time to discuss immediate or general concerns. • The Managing Director can raise safeguarding issues with the Leader of the Council at their one to one meetings. • The Managing Director has access to any papers produced by the Director of Social Services, including reports submitted to Gwent Safeguarding Gwent Safeguarding and Social Services Scrutiny Committee. • The Managing Director will receive updates on an exception basis on the activity of the Gwent Safeguarding Board at G7 meetings when necessary. These meetings consist of the five Chief Executives and Leaders of the South East Wales Region, the Chair of the ABUHB, the Police Commissioner and the CEO of the Fire Service. • The Managing Director will have sight of the quarterly Safeguarding Reports presented to Social Services and Education Joint Scrutiny Committee.

Lead Member for Safeguarding

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>The Lead Member for Safeguarding is responsible for providing political scrutiny to the local authority to ensure it fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lead Member will scrutinise the quarterly performance information provided by Social Services and provide any necessary challenge. • The Lead Member will receive monthly briefings from the Director of Social Services on all aspects of Social Services including safeguarding. • The Director will inform the Lead Member of any sensitive cases that may be considered for a Child Practice Review or may become a matter of public interest. • The Lead Member will raise safeguarding issues within Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee when necessary. • The Lead Member will attend the Local Safeguarding Network Group as a 'participant observer'. • Where urgent Safeguarding issues arise across the Directorate these will be shared immediately with the Lead Member by the Director of Social Services.

Director of Social Services

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>Oversee and report to Councillors and the Managing Director on the operation, monitoring and improvement of safeguarding systems across the Local Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director will be the point of contact within the Authority for all other Directors to report serious safeguarding concerns which develop within their own service areas. • The Director of Social Services will take responsibility for reporting these concerns immediately to the Managing Director and agreeing an appropriate response. • The Director will take responsibility for reporting serious Safeguarding concerns as necessary to the Lead Member for safeguarding and the Lead Member for the Directorate involved as appropriate. • The Director will meet monthly on a one to one basis with the Managing Director where general Safeguarding concerns can be raised. • The Director will review the Social Services Risk Register on a quarterly basis and inform the Managing Director and Lead member for safeguarding of any changes. • The Director will brief the Lead Member for Safeguarding on safeguarding activity within Social Services during formal briefing sessions. • Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be provided with performance management information which will include Safeguarding information. • The Director will present a Safeguarding report jointly with the Director of Education to Scrutiny Committee. • The Director will inform the Managing Director and Lead Member of significant Safeguarding matters arising from CIW Inspections • The Director will designate the Head of Children’s Services as Strategic Safeguarding Lead. • The Director will have monthly one to one sessions with the Heads of Children’s and Adults Services with Safeguarding as a standing agenda item. • The Director is responsible for providing an Annual Report to CIW and the Council on the progress and performance of Social Services which includes safeguarding.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure representation either locally or regionally on all regional and national reviews of policies, guidance and protocols required by the Safeguarding Board. • To ensure that any request for additional regional guidance is agreed by the Safeguarding Boards and based on a clear rationale for how it will assist practitioners to achieve better safeguarding and / or child protection outcomes • To ensure that there is full consultation across partner agencies and practitioners regarding the development or review of documents, and to ensure that whenever possible children, young people, parents and carers participate in consultation processes • To ensure any new policies agreed regionally are shared widely both within and across all partners. • To support effectiveness of the Safeguarding Boards through the use of appropriate tools. • To ensure adherence to all Welsh Government reporting frameworks • To oversee the production of annual reports and plans • Ensuring local authority participation in the local safeguarding networks via the local authority safeguarding leads • To contribute to and participate in annual development days for each statutory board
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Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Social Services

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To support the Director to monitor and improve Safeguarding systems across the Local Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) will in their monthly one to one meetings with the Director raise relevant Safeguarding issues. • The SSL Lead will bring to the Directors immediate attention serious Safeguarding concerns as they arise. • The SSL will ensure the Director receives copies of the minutes of the Local Safeguarding Network which sits under Gwent Safeguarding. • The SSL has a seat on the Gwent Safeguarding and is responsible for ensuring Blaenau Gwent is represented on the sub groups of this Board. • The SSL is responsible for ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to staff in relation to managing Safeguarding issues. • The SSL is responsible for scrutinizing performance information relating to Safeguarding and putting corrective measures in place to improve performance when necessary. • The SSL will brief the Director on progress of action plans resulting from Child Practice Reviews within Blaenau Gwent. • The SSL will keep a Deputy Safeguarding Lead Officer briefed to deputise in their absence.

Director of Education

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>The Director is responsible for ensuring systems are in place to ensure children and adults are safeguarded, staff are appropriately trained and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse safeguarding issues and prompt action when required within the Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director will report any serious safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director will agree an appropriate response. • The Director will keep briefed their Lead member for Education on general performance issues relating to Safeguarding within their service area. • The Director will present a Safeguarding report jointly with the Director of Social Services to Scrutiny Committee. • The Director will in Corporate Leadership Team meetings review the Corporate risk register which includes Safeguarding. • The Director will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL). • The Director will have monthly one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document. • The Director shares with Corporate Leadership Team, strategic information regarding safeguarding allegation/concerns about Practitioners and those in a position of trust within education, on a monthly basis.

Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Education

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To support the Director in ensuring systems are in place to safeguard children and adults at risk. Staff are appropriately trained and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse safeguarding issues for prompt action when required across the Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding. • The SSL will sit on the Local Safeguarding Network which sits under Gwent Safeguarding. • The SSL will, in their monthly meetings with the Director, raise any general Safeguarding issues. • The SSL will monitor Safeguarding performance information via their one to one meetings with the Safeguarding in Education Manager, whose role is to work directly with Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to implement the Welsh Assembly Government’s circular 265/2020, “Keeping Learners Safe”. • The SSL will monitor Safeguarding performance. Information to be monitored will include; training of practitioners across the Directorate, safe recruitment of practitioners, ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to practitioners. • The SSL will ensure Safeguarding performance information is regularly presented to the Directorate Management Team • The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead who will deputise in their absence.

Safeguarding in Education Manager

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>To support the Director, the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Education, Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to ensure systems are in place to safeguard Children. That staff are appropriately trained, and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse Safeguarding issues to prompt action when required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will receive their one to one supervision from the Deputy Safeguarding Lead in Social Services. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will meet with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Education to discuss relevant Safeguarding issues across the Directorate. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will report safeguarding information to the Education Directorate Management Team and contribute to the termly Safeguarding Report to be presented to Scrutiny Committee. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will sit on the Local Safeguarding Network and other relevant Sub Groups of Gwent Safeguarding. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will attend regional and national Safeguarding in Education meetings. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager is responsible for supporting schools and the Local Authority to ensure compliance with the Welsh Government circular 265/2020 <i>“Keeping Learners Safe”</i>. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager, covers the responsibilities laid out in WG circular no 009/2014, <i>“Safeguarding children in Education: - Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff”</i>. • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will coordinate and manage Safeguarding performance information held on the Safeguarding matrix • The Safeguarding in Education Manager will contribute to the Education self-evaluation process

Director of Regeneration & Community Services

Chief Officer Resources

Chief Officer Commercial

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
To ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Director/Chief Officer will report any serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc in the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director agree an appropriate response.• The Director/Chief Officer will in Corporate Leadership Team Meetings review the Corporate Risk Register which includes Safeguarding.• The Director/Chief Officer will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL).• The Director/Chief Officer will have one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document.

Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for the:

- **Director of Regeneration & Community Services**
- **Chief Officer Resources**
- **Chief Officer Commercial**

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
<p>The Strategic leads will support Gwent Safeguarding Board by delivering on the statutory function to engage with people (children and young people, parents and carers, adults at risk, the general public and professionals) to promote and raise awareness of safeguarding issues across the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Designated Strategic Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding • The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead will ensure all staff members have been briefed and are aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. • To co-ordinate and facilitate engagement opportunities for staff which may include a wide variety of methods and mechanisms • To co-ordinate, develop and review relevant leaflets and other material to ensure the communication of key safeguarding messages • To develop links with communication, participation and engagement officers throughout the Council. • The SSL will ensure all new staff as part of their induction are made aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. • The SSL will ensure those staff who have an interface with Children and Families receive the appropriate training in Safeguarding commensurate with their role. • The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to deputise in their absence. • The SSL will report serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director/Chief Officer of their service area, who will in turn email the Director of Social Services and cc the Managing Director. • The SSL will in their one to one sessions with the Director/Chief Officer discuss general Safeguarding issues relevant to the Directorate. • The SSL will respond to requests for information to contribute to the termly Safeguarding reports which will be presented to Scrutiny Committee. • The SSL can and should contact the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Social Services if they need advice/support in relation to Safeguarding matters.

Appendix 2

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Corporate Safeguarding Policy
Professional Conduct and Safe Working Practice

This document provides a description of the professional standards of practice that are required from all Council staff, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors when undertaking their day to day duties. For Elected Members and officers, it must be read in conjunction with the Council's 'Code of Conduct for Employees' and the 'Social Media Policy'.

[http://intranet/organisational-development-\(hr\)/policies-procedures/policies-managers-guides.aspx](http://intranet/organisational-development-(hr)/policies-procedures/policies-managers-guides.aspx)

http://intranet/media/95636/INFOSEC-DOC-SMPLY-001_BG_Social_Media_Policy_v2_2.pdf

Any breach of the following conditions will result in an investigation and possible disciplinary action which could, if serious, result in dismissal and the possibility of criminal investigation if there is evidence of illegal activity.

You MUST:

Set a good example in terms of behaviour to ensure that children and adults are safeguarded and protected.

Keep yourself safe through adherence to any agreed plan of intervention/care plan where applicable, through relevant risk assessments including Health & Safety and checking the Employee Protection Register database and through compliance with the Council's Policy for Lone Working.

Be open and transparent when meeting and/or working with children and adults at risk and where not required to do so as part of your role and function, you should try to avoid any situation where you may be alone with a child or adult at risk out of sight or sound of another officer or colleague.

Respect an individual's rights to privacy, equality and dignity and a safe and positive environment.

Prioritise the welfare and safety of the child or adult at risk before concerns about performance and service delivery.

Ensure you are familiar with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

All Departments must identify a Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS). You must take responsibility to identify the Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS) for your respective Service area.

Ensure you access the appropriate safeguarding training relevant to your role and responsibility.

Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to any concerns you may have in respect of a child or adult at risk.

Follow the required process for reporting incidents and concerns.

Advise line managers of any issues in your private life that may have safeguarding implications in your work.

If the child or adult at risk does not want a practitioner to disclose, the practitioner has an overriding duty to report to their manager but must also tell the person that they are doing so.

Adults at risk have the right to give or withhold their consent to a report to adult services being made. Unless the adult at risk has been assessed not to have the mental capacity to make this decision, their decision must be respected unless there are reasons for it being overridden.

The reasons for overriding the decision include when a crime has been committed and when there are risks to other people, including children. In these circumstances the report should proceed.

If an adult at risk does not have the mental capacity to make this decision, a Best Interest Decision must be made that reflects the best interests of the person and the wider public interest.

Use the internet and social media responsibly.

Maintain confidentiality.

You MUST NOT:

Use force, threats or inappropriate language.

Make suggestive sexual comments or behave in a sexualised manner.

Touch inappropriately or allow inappropriate touching in any way.

Use any behaviour management methods that are not authorised by Council policy and procedure.

Ignore allegations made by a child or adult. All allegations must be reported to Social Services and/or the Police.

Undertake tasks of a personal nature for a child or adult which they could do for themselves.

Invite a child or adult at risk to be alone with you where this is not part of your role and function.

Breach confidentiality or share sensitive information relating to an individual inappropriately.

NB: this is by no means an exhaustive list and all actions must be determined by application of professional judgement and decision making.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Corporate Safeguarding Policy

How to make a report?

LISTEN

If you are concerned because of something a child or adult at risk is saying, you should not attempt to take any action directly but **you should**:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully, do not directly question him or her, instead use open questions; what, where, when, who?
- Never stop them talking if they are freely recalling significant events
- Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform (see below)
- Never promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record what was said, when and where it happened and who else was present

SHARE

Any safeguarding concerns should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the respective service area. With the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead the decision to report a concern to Social Services will be made and responsibility for reporting will be agreed i.e. the staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make the report.

Should the concerns relate to a professional, the same procedure will apply.

Reports in relation to a concern about a child, young person or adult should be made to Social Services as soon as possible and certainly **within 24 hours**.

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on **01495 315700**.

Outside office hours, reports should be made to the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team or if there is immediate risk, to the Police.

The Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on: **0800 328 4432**

Elected Members, practitioners and providers should be aware that they **cannot remain anonymous** when making a report.

The Duty Worker taking the report should be given as much information as possible if it is available to the reporter. This will include the following:

- Full name of the subject of the concern
- Their date of birth or age
- Their address
- The nature of the concern
- Who may be responsible
- Their name and relationship (if any)
- What happened
- When and where
- What has been done in response
- Whether or not the Police have been informed
- The names and relationship of those with caring responsibility
- The names and ages of any other adults living in the household
- The names of any professionals known to be involved e.g. school, GP
- Any information affecting the potential safety of staff
- The allocated social worker or team if known/if applicable

RECORD

All telephone reports should be confirmed in writing within two working days.

For children a Multi-Agency Report Form (MARF) should be used:
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx>

For an Adult report a Duty to Report form should be used:
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>

LISTEN, SHARE, RECORD

Appendix 4

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Corporate Safeguarding Policy
Useful Contacts

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on 01495 315700.:

- **Legislation:** [SS&WB \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)
- <https://safeguarding.wales/>

Gwent Safeguarding:

<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Home.aspx>

Services for people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) backgrounds:

- <https://bawso.org.uk/>

Domestic Abuse:

- <https://gov.wales/live-fear-free>
- info@phoenixdas.co.uk

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Policies and Statutory Guidance:

PLEASE REFER TO THE CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING ON THE INTRANET FOR THE MOST ACCURATE AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION.