

**CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD  
MULTI-AGENCY PROTOCOL AND PRACTICE  
GUIDANCE**

**RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION  
CONCERNS ABOUT INDIVIDUALS WHOSE  
WORK BRINGS THEM INTO CONTACT WITH  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**This document replaces all other previous protocols.**

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## **1. This Document**

This document is for statutory and voluntary organisations that work in Cwm Taf and need to know more about the local arrangements for responding to Child Protection concerns about those whose work, caring responsibilities, or volunteering, brings them into contact with children.

The arrangements set out in this document are endorsed by Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board (CTSCB).

The objective of this document is to:

- Safeguard children from individuals who are not suitable to work with children and young people
- Ensure that allegations and Child Protection concerns are dealt with in accordance with statute and procedures and that there is support and information for those affected
- Ensure that individuals who are not suitable to work with children and young people are prevented from doing so by notification to the Disclosure and Barring Service and other relevant bodies.

## **2. Other Sources of Information**

Guidance about how to respond to Child Protection concerns about those whose work or volunteering brings them into contact with children or young people can be found in the following important documents.

- Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006) [www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk), Chapter 12
- All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 [www.awcpp.org.uk](http://www.awcpp.org.uk) Chapter 4.3
- Disciplinary and Dismissal procedures for School Staff ( Welsh Government 2013) Section 10

CTSCB supports professionals in complying with the guidance that is identified above. This document will be reviewed in light of any future Welsh Government guidance or publications.

## **3. Scope**

Professionals should be mindful of the scope of work in this area and should use common sense and judgement in differentiating between poor professional practice and cases that give rise to child protection concerns. This is set out in more detail in Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 (Welsh Assembly Government 2006).

The framework for managing cases under this protocol applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm. It also caters for

cases of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position or in any capacity. It should be used in all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or that has a direct impact on a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

It can be difficult to determine what may fall into '**unsuitable to work with children**'. However, it may be useful for an employer to consider whether the alleged behaviour suggests an individual has:

- Been the subject of criminal procedures that indicate a risk of harm to a child or Child Protection enquires.
- Caused harm or possible harm to a child or vulnerable adult and there is a risk in the working, volunteering, caring environment.
- Contravened or continued to contravene guidance.
- Failed to understand or comply with the need for clear personal and professional boundaries in the work place.
- Behaved in a way in his/her personal life which could put children at risk of harm.
- Behaved in a way that undermined the trust placed by them in their position.

Practitioners should be aware of the need to refer to the Lead Manager for Adult Protection in cases where the alleged perpetrator of the abuse is working / volunteering / caring for a Vulnerable Adult.

#### **4. Local Arrangements**

##### Recognition and Referral

Any person who has a concern that falls within the scope of this document should:

- Make a referral to the Initial Assessment Team in the locality where the child is living;
  - Rhondda: 01443 431513
  - Cynon: 01685 888800
  - Taff Ely: 01443 486731
  - Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 724506

Outside office hours: Emergency Duty Team on 01443 **425012**

- Advise what risk assessment and safeguarding action has already been taken and discuss any concerns of confidentiality.

## Immediate Response

In cases where there is an identifiable child or young person who is raising the concern or has been subjected to possible abuse then an Initial Assessment will be carried out in accordance with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures in respect of any children who may be at immediate risk in association with the referral.

The receiving Team Manager will also immediately inform the Child Protection or Safeguarding Manager / Co-ordinator who will carry out an initial strategy discussion within 24 hours, with the Police Public Protection Unit and any other appropriate agencies / partners to consider the following:

- a) Whether the case is appropriate for consideration under this document.
- b) Plan the Professional Strategy Meeting and agree invitees.
- c) Ensure immediate safeguards are in place and request that the employer shares their risk assessment / management plan at the Professional Strategy Meeting.
- d) Agree any actions to be taken or further information needed prior to the Professional Strategy Meeting.
- e) Decide whether immediate briefings to management are required.

Where South Wales Police or Children's Services need to act unilaterally; or there are covert operations; there should be no delay.

## **5. Professional Strategy Meeting**

A Professional Strategy Meeting will be convened when child protection concerns have been raised about an individual's conduct with children in either a personal or professional capacity and the individual has wider contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults and is in a position of trust. This will include the possession of abusive images of children or other concerning behaviours related to the Internet or social networking sites

A Professional Strategy Meeting is also convened when the concern or allegation about an employee or volunteer is historical and there are no identified children or young people who may be at risk currently.

## **6. Who to Invite to the Professional Strategy Meeting**

The Professional Strategy Meeting will be chaired by the nominated Safeguarding lead manager, who will decide in consultation with Police who should be invited to attend. Given the sensitivity and nature of information, senior personnel will be invited from each organisation, and they will identify the most appropriate attendee from their agency.

In cases where a child protection concern is raised about a worker who is employed under the auspices of Direct Payments, the employer has the particular challenge of fulfilling the role of both employer and parent of the child who may have been harmed or at risk in association with the concern. The Chair in these cases should give particular consideration to how the parents / employer will be supported in contributing to the process. There

should be consultation with the parents / employer about the advantages of a third party who is informed about employment law duties / rights to represent parent as an employer at these strategy meetings.

Consideration should be given to inviting the following:

- Children' Services Manager with referral information.
- Police.
- Team Manager and Social Worker for the child .
- Fostering Team Manager or Registered Manager of Residential Unit where the allegation is against a foster carer or residential worker (including Voluntary sector or private agency) .
- Legal representative for the authority.
- Employer (where the employer is already aware of concerns, or disclosure of concerns has taken place).
- CSSIW (where the concern is about a Foster Carer, Childminder or Care Provider).
- Education representative when the individual concerned is working within this agency, and Chair of Governors when the allegation is against a Head Teacher.
- Human Resources or Personnel representative (who has authority to advise the employer about suspension).
- Representative of Voluntary organisation.

## **7. The Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting and Management of Cases**

The Professional Strategy Meeting should take place within 2 working days of receipt of the concerns. Broadly there are three key areas for consideration and these include:

- Whether there is to be a Police investigation.
- Whether there is to be a S.47 enquiry and assessment coordinated by Children's Social Services.
- The management of risk by the employer / voluntary organisation.
- The impact of the process upon the individual of concern and any requirements for support.

Professional Strategy Meetings take place in addition to the Strategy Meetings/Discussions that take place under Section 3 of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008.

The tasks of the Professional Strategy Meetings are to:

- Lawfully and appropriately share information.
- Ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded.

- Ensure the proper co-ordination of child protection, criminal and employment procedures.
- Ensure that those subject to the process or involved in the process have access to information and support.
- Ensure that risk assessments and safeguards are adjusted in light of new information and that individuals affected are continually appraised of progress with the case and provided with an appropriate level of support. This can include advising the individual to seek legal advice or trade union support.
- Record the tasks, those responsible for carrying them out and the timescales for achievement of the tasks.
- The meeting may make recommendations to agencies who are expected to carry out the actions or notify the Chair of any decision to change or not carry out an action.

All Professional Strategy Meetings should be recorded and a record of the meeting will be circulated.

The Appendices attached to this document aim to provide a framework that both informs and supports best practice in this area. More than one Professional Strategy Meeting is likely to be required to co-ordinate, monitor and review the process:

Appendix 1: Process map

Appendix 2: Professional Strategy Meeting Contact and Strategy Discussion Form

Appendix 3: Chair's Statement and Confidentiality Agreement

Appendix 4: Initial Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting Agenda

Appendix 5: Chair's letter to subject

Appendix 6: Review Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting Agenda

Appendix 7: Outcome Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting Agenda

Appendix 8: An example of an Employer's Risk Management Record

Appendix 9: CTSCB Guidance and Information for everyone who works with children and young people when an allegation has been made against you

Appendix 10: CTSCB Record of a Professional Strategy Meeting

## **8. Making a Disclosure to Employers / Voluntary Organisations and Registering Bodies**

Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004 (WAG 2006) advises that legal advice should be sought prior to sharing information with the employer, voluntary organisation or registering body. This may be necessary for the safeguarding of children and or vulnerable adults.

All relevant employers / voluntary organisations will be expected to attend strategy meetings at the discretion of the Chair.

The employer/voluntary organisation registering body may need to consider suspending the employee without prejudice, or putting in place support or other restrictions to safeguard vulnerable persons, to safeguard the employee against accusations of interfering with the enquiries and as a safeguard to the organisation. Further information can be found in Safeguarding children: Working Together under the Children Act and All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 as set out above.

It is important that where disclosure takes place, this is a decision that is subject to inter-agency consideration and legal advice, and the reasons for disclosure are recorded.

## **9. Concluding the Process**

Safeguarding children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004 and the All Wales Child Protection Procedures highlight the duties of the Outcome Professional Strategy Meeting to decide, whether on the balance of probabilities the concerns are substantiated. If the concerns are not deemed to be substantiated, then the outcome should be recorded as unsubstantiated, unfounded or deliberately invented or malicious. The following definitions will guide strategy meetings in determining which outcome applies;

Allegations will have outcomes within the following four categories:

**Substantiated** – a substantiated allegation is one which is established by evidence or proof.

**Unsubstantiated** – an unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as an allegation that is later proved to be false. It simply means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

**Unfounded** – this indicates that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. For an allegation to be classified as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation.

**Deliberately invented or malicious** – this means there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false.

The outcomes discussion would normally precede any decision by the employer to invoke disciplinary procedures. Where the concerns are substantiated, employing or volunteer agencies should consult with the Vetting and Barring Service and any other professional bodies (eg, Care Council, General Teaching Council or Nursing and Midwifery Council) about the requirement for a referral. (Further information and guidance from the DBS can be obtained from their website at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs)).

#### **10. Inter-Authority Working**

This is an area of work that is best supported by sound inter-authority working. Where child protection enquiries have been made in one area but the alleged perpetrator lives or works within other areas, there will be need for information sharing at an appropriate level in order to further safeguard children. The Local Authority and Police Authority for the location where the alleged abuse took place have responsibility for convening the Professional Strategy Meeting and inviting relevant personnel from other areas who may have a key role. If relevant personnel have not attended the first Professional Strategy Meeting then it should be agreed at that meeting what information needs to be shared and with whom and by whom.

#### **11. Confidentiality and Record of the Professional Strategy Meeting**

In view of the potential sensitivity of the information and the lessons of the Bichard Inquiry, ([police.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/.../bichard-inquiry-report](http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/.../bichard-inquiry-report)), care should be taken in recording the concern and the outcome of the process. The Chair should make a recommendation about whether the process for recording adults who pose a risk should be implemented.

A record of the meeting will be made and retained. Attendees representing the employer should receive a copy of the summary and recommendations of the meeting with the child's name removed. All other attendees will receive a copy of the summary and recommendations.

The Chair will consider any request for a full record of the meeting and ensure that in the event of disclosure, an appropriately redacted version of the Record is disclosed.

Where the data subject makes a request for access to the record of a strategy meeting, this request will be considered and the Chair of the meeting will redact the document; and will check with the legal representative prior to disclosure. Other meeting attendees will be made aware of the request and can be sent a copy of the redacted document where requested.

#### **12. Resolving Professional Differences**

Where there is a professional difference of opinion, reference should be made to the CTSCB Protocol 'Resolution of Professional Disagreements'.

### **13. Complex Abuse**

Where concerns arise that the individual may be acting in concert with others to abuse children, or using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse, the chair will consider implementation s. 4.5 of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008, Investigating Organised or Multiple Abuse and/ National Assembly for Wales Guidance in respect of Complex Child Abuse Investigations (2000).

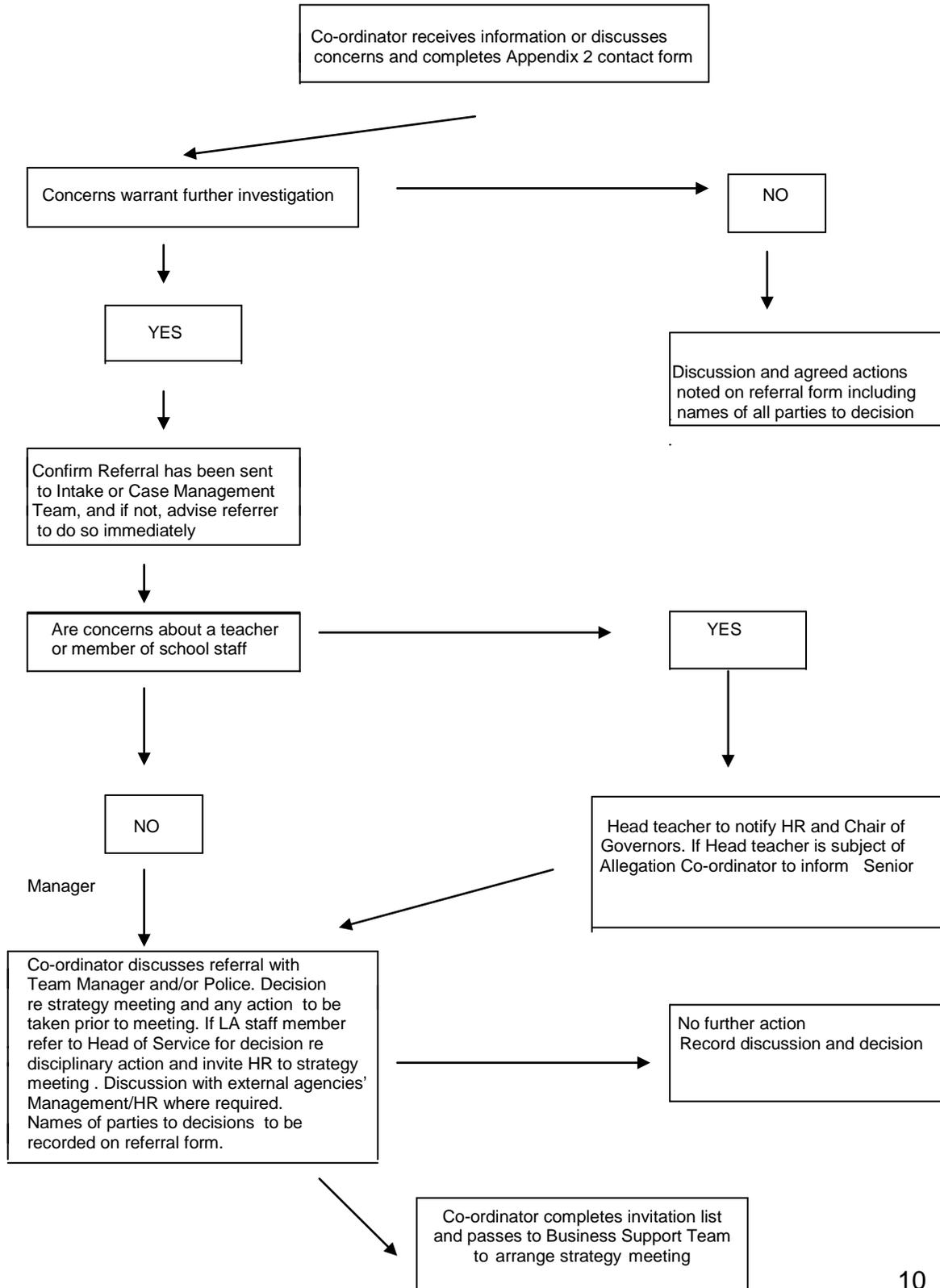
### **14. Quality Assurance of the Process**

Consideration of the overview and any lessons to be learnt will be carried out in the following ways:

- Inter-agency discussion on a case by case basis.
- Presentation of management information to CTSCB.
- Management information will be discussed at the Quality Assurance and Standards Group.
- Consideration of multi-agency audit in conjunction with the Quality Assurance and Standards Group where cases meet with its terms of reference.
- Consideration of review in compliance with Protecting Children in Wales (Welsh Government 2013) and in consultation with CTSCB.
- Multi-agency review of the Protocol 1 year and 3 years following its operational date.

# Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board

## Flowchart: Professional Abuse Referrals



## **Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

### **Contact and Strategy discussion form for allegations of professional abuse**

**Name of Child:**

**DOB:**                      **LAC: Yes**  **No**       **Legal Status:**

**Current Address:**

**Home Address (if different):**

**Name of Parent/Carer/Other Person with Parental Responsibility:**

**DOB:**

**Address:**

**Relationship to child:**

**Name of Person about whom the allegations are being made:**

**DOB:**

**Address:**

**Profession, Employer and place of work (including voluntary work or in any capacity which involves contact with children)**

**Name and ages of children in household, if known:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Age:</b>

**Details of incident/concerns:**

**Date and Time of Referral to Coordinator:**

**Referred by:**

**Designation:**

**Agency:**

**Tel:**

**Has referral been made to Initial Assessment Team:**

**Yes:**  **No:**

**Date:**

**By whom:**

**Date and Time of discussion with Team Manager and/or Police**

**Name:**

**Decision and reasons:**

**Further information/action required prior to strategy meeting:**

**Details of Immediate action to protect child:**

**Parties to this decision:**

**Signed:                   Coordinator**

**Date:**

**Strategy Meeting to be held on:**

**At:**

**am/pm**

**Venue:**

Participants to be invited:					
Tick to invite	Agency/Role	Name	Tel Number	Available on:	Invited by (initial)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Note Taker				
<input type="checkbox"/>	CP Safeguarding Coordinator				
<input type="checkbox"/>	IRO				
<input type="checkbox"/>	South Wales Police				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Team Manager				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Worker				
<input type="checkbox"/>	TM Fostering/Adoption				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster/Adoption Link Worker				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Head of Service/Service Manager				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered Manager Residential Unit				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employer (Public, private or voluntary sector)				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Head Teacher (Chair of Governors if Head is subject of meeting)			Chair of Governors to meet chair and HR at end of meeting	
<input type="checkbox"/>	LHB Safeguarding Team				
<input type="checkbox"/>	CSSIW	Government Buildings Rhydycar Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1UZ <b>Telephone:</b> 0300 0628888 <b>Fax:</b> 0300 0628548 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:cssiw.mid&amp;south@wales.gsi.gov.uk">cssiw.mid&amp;south@wales.gsi.gov.uk</a>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transport				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Manager Voluntary Organisation				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safeguarding Lead for Education				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other				
<input type="checkbox"/>					
<input type="checkbox"/>					
<input type="checkbox"/>					
<input type="checkbox"/>					
<input type="checkbox"/>					

## Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board

**Date:**

**Time:**

### Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting

#### **Introduction and Confidentiality Statement**

This meeting has been convened under the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 and the local CTSCB Protocol.

- The content of this meeting and the records are confidential and should not be shared outside of this meeting without the permission of the Chair.
- The Record of the Meeting may be subject to requests for disclosure under the Data Protection Act 1998. Each request will be considered on its merits. The Chair will consider any request for a full record of the meeting and ensure that in the event of disclosure, an appropriately redacted version of the Record is disclosed.
- All agencies should ensure that the minutes are retained in a confidential and appropriately restricted manner.
- The Record of the Meeting will reflect that all individuals who are discussed are treated fairly, with respect and without improper discrimination.
- The meeting may make recommendations to agencies who are expected to carry out the actions or notify the Chair of any decision to change or not carry out an action.

#### Adult details (against whom concern raised)

Name.....DOB .....

Address.....

Organisation and Profession .....

Place of Work .....



## **Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

### **Initial Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting Agenda**

1. Opening remarks by Chairperson
2. Confirmation of basic information
3. Reason for Strategy Meeting
4. Information sharing
  - The concern
  - Information relating to child/ren
  - Information relating to adult against whom concern raised
  - Contact with other children
5. Discussion and analysis of information
6. Summary
7. Decisions and recommendations
  - Child's needs, risk of harm
  - Need for s.47 and/or criminal investigation
  - Risk of harm to other child/ren
  - Disciplinary issues
  - Needs of adult against whom concern raised
  - ISA/notifications
8. Date of next meeting as required

#### **Notes**

Where the subject of the meeting is a Foster Carer there are additional considerations:-

- Consideration of risk to all children in placement
- Service Manager to be consulted about arrangements for those in placement and endorse any decision for children and young people to remain in placement.
- Consider the safeguards for children of the Foster Carer.
- No new placements should be made during Child Protection enquiries

## Appendix 5: Chair's letter to subject

# Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board

### **An example of the Chair's letter to subject:**

*The letter should be composed by the chair and individualised to meet the unique requirements of each case.*

Dear

I am writing to you further to a recent strategy meeting held on xxxxx(date)

The meeting was held under the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

I am writing now to inform you:

#### Chair's notes

- Include information that can be disclosed now about the allegation or concern or indicate when there will be more information available?
- Is there to be an investigation?
- If so, which agency will lead the investigation.
- If this is the outcome letter, inform the subject of:
  - a) outcome of investigation.
  - b) there is to be no further action under child protection conference procedures
  - c) any recommended referral to DBS or professional body
- I enclose an information leaflet for you and hope that this is leaflet (Appendix 8)

Your employer will be in touch with you to discuss:

#### Chair's notes

- The plan of safeguards.
- The support that you will receive.
- Your point of contact.

Either:

I will write to you again following the next strategy meeting which will take place on xxxxxxxxxxxx

Or:

This letter concludes the child protection process.

I understand that the process can be stressful thank you for your cooperation in this matter; I can be contacted on xxxxxx

Yours sincerely

## **Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

### **Review Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting Agenda**

1. Opening remarks by Chairperson
2. Confirmation of basic information
3. Reason for strategy meeting-allegation and risk identified
4. Minutes of previous meeting:
  - a) Accuracy
  - b) Outcome of any actions taken
5. Information sharing
  - The concern or any new concerns
  - New information relating to child/ren
  - New information relating to adult against whom concern raised including views about the allegation or concerns
  - Contact with other children
  - Identified risks
  - Wishes and feelings of child and/or parent
6. Discussion and analysis of information
7. Summary
8. Decisions and recommendations
  - Child's needs, risk of harm
  - Need for s.47 and/or criminal investigation
  - Risk of harm to other child/ren
  - Disciplinary issues
  - Needs of adult against whom concern raised
  - ISA/notifications
9. Date of next meeting as required.

## **Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

### **Outcome Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting Agenda**

1. Opening remarks by Chairperson
2. Confirmation of basic information
3. Reason for strategy meeting
4. Minutes of previous meeting:
  - a) Accuracy
  - b) Outcome of any actions taken
5. Information sharing
  - New information relating to adult against whom concern raised including views about the allegation or concerns
  - New information and outcome of enquiries
6. Discussion and analysis of information
  - Establish key facts.
  - Distinguish fact from opinion.
  - Those present consider whether on the balance of probability the concerns are substantiated
7. Summary
8. Decisions and recommendations
  - Child's needs, risk of harm
  - Need for further s.47 and/or criminal investigation
  - Risk of harm to other child/ren and actions needed
  - Disciplinary issues
  - Needs of adult against whom concern raised
  - Recommendation regarding referral to any regulatory body (e.g. CSSIW, DBS, Teaching Council).
  - Planning for Foster Care Review and consideration by Panel in the case of a Foster Carer.
  - Information to IRO in the case of a Looked After Child
  - Chair's letter to subject advising of outcome:

### **Outcomes from the strategy meeting**

Allegations will have outcomes within the following four categories:

**Substantiated** – a substantiated allegation is one which is established by evidence or proof.

**Unsubstantiated** – an unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as an allegation that is later proved to be false. It simply means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

**Unfounded** – this indicates that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. For an allegation to be classified as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation.

**Deliberately invented or malicious** – this means there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false.

Appendix 8: An example of an Employer's Risk Management Record

**Risk Assessment Template**

**The following are examples of factors that may need to be considered:**

<p><b><u>Alleged Incident:</u></b></p> <p>Duration and frequency of alleged abuse          Degree of threat or coercion          Extent of premeditation          Degree and nature of harm</p>	
<p><b><u>Information regarding staff member:</u></b></p> <p>Previous recorded concerns          Previous allegations (including outcomes)          Response to incident/allegation          Contact with pupil          Teaching duties          Experience          Training          Last CRB outcome          Outcome of section / references</p>	
<p><b><u>Information regarding the child:</u></b></p> <p>Age and level of understanding          Special needs and vulnerability          Impact on health and development          Previous allegations made</p>	
<p><b><u>Information regarding the parent/carer:</u></b></p> <p>Response to allegation          Previous allegations made</p>	

**Once completed please use the information to populate/inform your risk analysis/management plan**

**Name and signature of manager completing form:**

**Date:**

## Risk management Plan/Review

Potential Risks and supporting evidence	Protective/reassuring factors and supporting evidence	Agreed Action	Responsible officer	Timescale for Review

Date of plan

Name and signature of responsible manager:

Name and signature of employee:

Any areas of disagreement/comments:

Copy to: Manager/Headteacher;  
Employee; Human Resources; Chair of professional strategy meeting

## **Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

# **Guidance and Information for everyone who works with children and young people when an allegation has been made against you**

## **1. Introduction.**

This leaflet aims to provide you with information about what happens if an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against you.

It is always important that such allegations are taken seriously and investigated properly, as there are occasions when children are abused by people who are working with, or caring for them.

Becoming the subject of an allegation is very stressful for the individual and their family, and everyone involved in an investigation will work to ensure that children are safeguarded whilst at the same time treating you fairly. You will be provided with support during an investigation and kept informed about what is happening.

## **2. What happens when an allegation is made?**

The complaint may have been made by a child, parent, carer or another worker. All employers are required to tell Social Services (Children's Services) about any child protection allegations against their staff and your organization's own policies will explain this in more detail. However anyone who has concerns about a person who works with children must report their concerns to Children's Services.

If a child protection concern has been raised about you outside of your work, it is your duty to tell your employer immediately. This concern may lead to further enquiries about your work and any contact you may have with children outside your working life (e.g. as a volunteer, parent, carer or family member).

When Children's Services receive a referral they are required to arrange a Strategy meeting with the Police and other professionals who know the child involved, and yourself, to look at the information and make recommendations about further action. This process is outlined in the 'All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

## **3. Who will be at the strategy meeting?**

The meeting will be chaired by a senior member of Children's Services and may include;

- Children's Services staff
- Police
- Your employer / Manager
- Human Resources or Personnel staff
- Head Teacher or Senior Education Officer if the child involved is of school age
- Senior Health professional
- Someone from the regulating body (as defined in the Care Standards Act 2000) e.g. if you are a foster carer, residential worker or child minder
- If you work with vulnerable adults then someone from the council's Protection of Vulnerable Adults team will be asked to attend.
- Representative from Voluntary Organization

## **4. What will happen at the strategy meeting?**

The strategy meeting will decide whether further enquiries will need to be made and what safeguards will be in place while those enquiries are happening.

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The strategy meeting will also plan how you (and anyone else affected) will be supported through the enquiries. It is very important that you get the recommended support and advice so that you are prepared for and informed about what will happen.

You (or your representative) will not be invited to the meeting, but the nature of the concern will be explained to you and you will be told if your employment will be affected. A decision may be made to suspend you from your work, but this is a neutral decision and does not imply guilt.

## **5. What are the possible outcomes from the strategy meeting?**

- The meeting may decide that there will be no further action. If this is the case you will be provided with information and support and the Chair will write to you and confirm the outcome.
- The meeting may recommend that Section 47 enquiries and/or a criminal investigation will take place. (Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on every local authority to make enquiries when it has 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.)
- The meeting may decide that child protection enquiries and/or a criminal investigation are not warranted, however your organisation may decide to implement its own disciplinary procedures.
- If you are a foster carer, a review of your status as an approved foster carer will be completed and a report presented to the Fostering Panel whatever the outcome of the investigation. This is a requirement under the Fostering Regulations and is detailed in your Foster Carer Handbook.
- The meeting may decide to reconvene when they have more information or there are further actions to be completed. There may be a number of strategy meetings held before the final decisions and recommendations are made. You will be given as much information as possible and kept informed where appropriate of the progress of the investigation.

## **6. Where can I get support and advice?**

You will be given support from your Manager where appropriate and can get more support from your human resources department, professional body, union or legal adviser.

Your organization may also have access to a counselling service that may help you.

You are always entitled to legal advice, information and support.

## **7. Can I complain?**

Yes. If your complaint is about an individual you need to contact their Manager who will deal with your complaint. If you are not happy with the conduct of the investigation you should contact the Chair in the first instance.



**Record of Professional Abuse Strategy Meeting**

This provides a record of the decisions of a strategy meeting. These minutes are strictly confidential and should not be shared without the permission of the Chair. All agencies should ensure that the minutes are retained in a confidential and appropriately restricted manner.

**DETAILS OF PERSON ABOUT WHOM ALLEGATIONS ARE BEING MADE**

<b>Family name</b>	<b>Given names</b>	
<b>DoB</b>		
<b>Gender: Male</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Female</b> <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Postcode</b>	<b>Tel.</b>	
<b>SWIFT ID:</b>		
<b>Profession, Employer &amp; place of work</b> <i>(including voluntary work or in any capacity which involves contact with children)</i>		
<b>Names and ages of children in household</b>		
Name	DOB	Relationship to person about whom allegation made



Agencies who were invited but did not attend the Strategy Meeting			
Name	Agency	Role	Tel No

All allegations of abuse of children by a professional (including a professional in training), staff member, carers or volunteer should be taken seriously and treated in accordance with this procedure which is compatible with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008.

This section applies to all staff employed by, or volunteers used or accredited by any public, voluntary or private agency, whose work brings them into contact with children. This section also applies to professionals who abuse in their private capacity and, in such circumstances, careful consideration needs to be given to whether the employee presents a risk in the professional context.

When considering allegations against staff or volunteers, any potential risk to vulnerable adults should also be taken account of and contact made with the Coordinator for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults.

**REASON FOR AND PURPOSE OF STRATEGY DISCUSSION – details of the initial allegation or concern raised and of any previous meetings re this concern.**

**INFORMATION SHARING**

**(a) The concern, details of allegation**

**(b) The child**

**(c) Other children potentially at risk or involved, including the children in the family of the person against whom the concern has been raised.**

**OUTCOME OF ANY ACTIONS TAKEN FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**INFORMATION SHARING – person about whom allegations are being made**

## ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION

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## SUMMARY

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## DECISION(S) (Please tick appropriate box(es))

S47 Enquiries as part of Core assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Core assessment (s17)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police investigation(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Referral to other agency	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initial Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	No further action	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

If 'Other' please state.

**Medical examination required:** Yes  No

### OUTCOME MEETING ONLY

<b>Substantiated</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unsubstantiated</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Unfounded</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Deliberately invented or malicious</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A core assessment should be commenced when, following a strategy discussion, s47 enquiries are initiated (paragraph 3.11, Assessment Framework).

Where there are allegations of abuse made against a professional, foster-carer or volunteer, s47 enquiries, a police investigation and disciplinary procedures may be taking place concurrently (paragraphs 6.13-6.22, *Working Together*).

**Outcomes from the strategy meeting**

Allegations will have outcomes within the following four categories:

**Substantiated** – a substantiated allegation is one which is established by evidence or proof.

**Unsubstantiated** – an unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as an allegation that is later proved to be false. It simply means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

**Unfounded** – this indicates that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. For an allegation to be classified as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation.

**Deliberately invented or malicious** – this means there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false.

**FURTHER ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (include any further actions required, by whom and within what time scale)**

Action(s) to be taken	Person/agency responsible	Date for completion

Name and signature (Coordinator responsible for Strategy Meeting)
Date