



SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Policy Statement:

Cardiff Consultancy Services provides therapeutic interventions to children, young people and adults with a view to improving their emotional well-being. Therapists (employees & volunteers) will work on a 1:1 basis as well as providing group work.

This work will take place in schools within the Local Authority, offices of Cardiff Consultancy Services and pre-approved premises by all parties.

Cardiff Consultancy Services has a duty to safeguard as detailed in the Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act, 2004 and the All Wales Child Protection Procedures, 2008. **Cardiff Consultancy Services also adheres to the Local Safeguarding Board Policies and Procedures for Children and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA).**

This will be achieved by ensure all staff fully understand the safeguarding policy and their role, responsibility and duty within that as detailed in the Code of Conduct. All employees and volunteers must understand the need for inter-agency co-operation and sharing of information in order to meet the needs of the child/young person. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working for Cardiff Consultancy Services.

We recognise that they may be barriers for some minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, in engaging with the safeguarding process and clear and sensitive support will be given throughout the process BUT the priority will be in safeguarding and promoting the well-being of the child and young person.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and in light of changes in legislation and the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards. In addition the partners will review the effectiveness and implementation of the policy and procedures by:

- Monitoring compliance with the policy and procedures;
- Providing reports to the Partnership

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- Carrying out case reviews following the conclusion of any child protection case;

Recognising Abuse

Children and young people can be abused either through someone inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to the child or (more rarely) by a complete stranger, and by men, women or other young people. It is not always easy to recognise abuse, especially as many of the indicators can have other reasonable explanations.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a child at any age and its impact can be so damaging that, if not treated, it may follow the individual into adulthood. It is important that everyone understands what constitutes abuse, indicators of abuse, what to do, and where to seek advice if abuse is suspected or alleged.

Working Together to Safeguard Children under the Children Act 2004 provides the following definitions of abuse:

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or, the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non contact activities, such as involving children in

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looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

Identifying significant harm

The [Children Act 1989](#) introduced **the concept of significant harm** as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in order to protect children. Significant harm is defined in the legislation as ill treatment or the impairment of health and development. It describes the effects of sexual, physical, emotional abuse or neglect, or a combination of different types. Local authorities have a statutory duty under *the Children Act 1989 section 47 (1) (b)* to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in their area is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. A single, serious event of abuse, such as an incident of sexual abuse or violent assault, might be the cause of significant harm to a child. However, more frequently significant harm occurs as a result of a long-standing compilation of events, which interrupt, change or damage a child's physical and psychological development. The significant harm resulting from the corrosive effect of long-term abuse is likely to have a profound impact on the future outcomes for the child. At the time of referral it might not be clear whether a child is in need or is suffering significant harm. The initial assessment should ensure that sufficient information is obtained by social services to make a judgement about the nature of the need and/or harm and what action is required. This requires the sharing of information between agencies, structured assessment and analysis, including taking into account the child's own view about his/her circumstances according to his/her age and understanding.

A good assessment is an essential basis for deciding what are the concerns for the child; what needs to change; and which services and interventions are needed to achieve the planned changes.

To understand and establish significant harm, it is necessary to consider:

- The family context;
- The child's development within the context of their family and wider social and cultural environment;
- Any special needs, such as medical condition, communication difficulty or

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- disability that may affect the child's development and care within the family;
- The nature of harm, in terms of ill treatment or the failure to provide adequate care;
- The impact on the child's health and development; and
- The adequacy of parental care.

Indicators of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent;
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them;
- another child or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a child;
- unexplained changes in a child's behaviour, e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper;
- inappropriate sexual awareness;
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- difficulty in making friends;
- being prevented from socialising with others;
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite;
- losing weight for no apparent reason;
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

The above list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators should not be accepted as proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working for Cardiff Consultancy Services to decide that child abuse is occurring. However it is **everyone's** responsibility to be vigilant and act on any concerns.

Bullying

Bullying may be perpetrated by another young person or group of people, or by an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be split into the following categories:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

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- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera & video facilities

Signs of bullying include:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down,
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

How to Respond to signs or suspicions of abuse

- discuss with Line Manager in Cardiff Consultancy Services immediately
- following above discussion record decision on “key decision” sheet
- liaise with School Child Protection Officer (as per our Service Level Agreement) who will then follow the Local Authority Procedures and refer to Social Services as appropriate.

How to respond to a child who may disclose abuse

- reaffirm boundaries and levels of confidentiality
- listen and do not prompt the child/young person
- reassure the child/young person that you have heard them and that you need to write down what they are saying
- explain clearly and sensitively to the child/young person the next process
- where appropriate inform and include the child/young person on the whole process

Historical Abuse

this type of disclosure is to be processed as a current situation and the above process applies.

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Allegations and safeguarding concerns regarding staff & volunteers

Children and young people have the right to have any allegations they or others make on their behalf against Cardiff Consultancy Services employees and volunteers investigated thoroughly and independently.

Allegations that a Cardiff Gate Counselling Service employee or volunteer has caused harm to a child or young person:

- Allegations to be reported to Senior Partner
- Senior Partner to refer to Social Services
- Support to be given to child or young person, the person making the allegation and the member of staff/volunteer involved.
- Decision about suspension without prejudice of the member of staff/volunteer involved.
- If the member of staff/volunteer has contact with children as part of their role within Cardiff Consultancy Services all contact will be stopped at once and their suspension should be considered immediately. Suspension will be seen as a neutral act which is designed both to protect children and/or the worker (s) concerned.
- If following an investigation by Social Services/Police there is no further action Cardiff Consultancy Services may nevertheless still need to process the matter through internal Disciplinary Procedures.
- All information will be retained on the employees/volunteers Personnel file in line with legal and data protection guidelines.

A suspicion of or finding inappropriate or illegal material on equipment.

NOTE the above procedures will also be followed if there is suspicion of or finding inappropriate or illegal material on equipment. This equipment includes emails, files, computers, mobile phones & memory sticks; this list is not exhaustive.

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Making a referral

- if the decision is made to refer to Social Services that will be actioned the same day by the worker. This will be done initially via the telephone and by submitting a CP1 by fax.
- **Cardiff Gate & the Local Authority referral process will also be followed to ensure the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA)**
- Confirmation of receipt of fax to be obtained the same day.
- *If the decision is not to refer this will be recorded on the key decision sheet*
- All documentation to be completed, signed by worker and Line Manager within 24 hours.
- The worker will follow up the referral the next day and obtain a clear indication of the next course of action from Social Services.
- Once paperwork submitted and signed this will be filed in a locked cabinet in the office of Cardiff Consultancy Services.
- The information will be archived and stored in line with the Information Commissioners Offices recommendation and as is legally required.
- Note that Cardiff Consultancy Services is registered with the I.C.O.

Confidentiality

Sharing information is a critical element of safeguarding and protecting children/young people. Consent would normally be sought for information to be shared, but in the interests of child protection it may be necessary for information to be shared with relevant workers and agencies. This will be done without consent if there is reason to believe that seeking consent could place a child/young person at risk of significant harm

Contact Numbers to be used:

Cardiff Consultancy Services: 07511 724693

Intake and Assessment Team

029 20536400 - during office hours (open cases)

029 20536490 - during office hours (new cases)

Emergency Duty Team

029 2078 8570 - out of office hours

Appendix 1
Cardiff Consultancy Services

