

Cyngor Gwynedd

Policy and Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk of abuse and neglect

(Referred to as the Safeguarding Policy for Cyngor Gwynedd)



Reviewed October 2023

Safeguarding children and adults is the responsibility of everyone who represents or works on behalf of the Council. We are all responsible for reporting any concern or suspicion that a child or adult is at risk of being abused and/or neglected.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Every individual has a right to be kept safe from harm.
- 1.2. Cyngor Gwynedd's main priority is to ensure that children and adults at risk are safeguarded from abuse, neglect, radicalisation, slavery, domestic abuse, and exploitation.
- 1.3. The whole of Cyngor Gwynedd has a responsibility to create the environment that assures this, making it less likely that a child or adult is abused. These are the safeguarding arrangements that are outlined in this policy and are the responsibility of every service within Cyngor Gwynedd.
- 1.4. In contrast, Social Services has the lead responsibilities for protecting children and adults who may be suffering harm and neglect.
- 1.5. Employees of Cyngor Gwynedd and elected members are expected to act according to the principles set out in this policy at all times, whether during work hours or otherwise.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. "**Safeguarding**" is a wider concept than the protection of children and adults. It is the prevention of abuse or harm, a general function that deals with promoting:
 - physical, emotional, and mental health
 - safeguarding from harm and neglect
 - education, training, and leisure
 - their contribution to society
 - social and economic well-being
- 2.2. "**Protection**" is the response to concerns about the likelihood of significant harm of an individual, meaning a person at risk of abuse and neglect. The arrangements for protecting children and adults from abuse are outlined in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

3. LEGISLATION

- 3.1. Section 28 of the Children Act 2004:

Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to ensure that it undertakes its functions from the perspective of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.2. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998:

Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to ensure that every reasonable step is taken to protect adults and prevent crime and disorder when it undertakes its functions.

3.3. Section 7 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014:

Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to promote the well-being of people who require care and support. The Act defines well-being as something which has eight common aspects, one of which involves protection from abuse and neglect.

3.4. Section 2 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020:

Cyngor Gwynedd employees and volunteers have a duty to report about any child or adult considered to be at risk of abuse, neglect and/or harm.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. Safeguarding children and adults is the responsibility of everyone who represents or works on behalf of the Council.
- 4.2. It is never acceptable for a child or adult to be abused or be harmed in any way.
- 4.3. Every child and adult (whatever their background, culture, age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religious belief) has a right to participate in a safe society without any violence, fear, abuse, exploitation, bullying and discrimination.
- 4.4. Every child and adult have the right to be safeguarded from harm, exploitation, and abuse.
- 4.5. Cyngor Gwynedd will put the safeguarding and well-being of children and adults centrally in our policies and procedures.
- 4.6. Cyngor Gwynedd will work closely in partnership with children, their parents, carers and adults and other agencies to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and adults.
- 4.7. Cyngor Gwynedd recognises the importance of preventative work and early intervention to reduce the likelihood that abuse, or harm may occur.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1. All Councillors, members of staff, volunteers and contracted service providers are responsible for adhering to the guidance and guidelines noted in this Policy.

5.2. FUNCTIONS OF OFFICERS AND KEY MEMBERS

5.2.1. Statutory Director of Social Services

Name:	Telephone:	Email address:
Huw Dylan Owen	01286 679387	DylanOwen@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

- 5.2.1.1. The Statutory Director (Social Services) has the final and indivisible responsibility for safeguarding issues. The Statutory Director of Social Services will ensure that the Council has appropriate safeguarding measures and arrangements and is responsible for reporting to Councillors regularly on these arrangements.
- 5.2.1.2. The Statutory Director (Social Services) must remain aware of any potential conflict of interest between their role within social services' investigations and their responsibility for corporate safeguarding issues. If such a conflict arises the Director should recuse themselves from one of the roles for the duration of the situation which causes the conflict of interest.

5.2.2. Lead Director for Children and Young People

5.2.2.1. The Statutory Director of Social Services also holds the role of Lead Director for Children and Young People. This role, created by The Children Act (2004) is responsible for offering leadership and promoting a partnership when planning for implementing the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child across the Council and with partners.

5.2.3. Elected Members

5.2.3.1. Every Councillor must act in accordance with the principles of this Policy and must follow the guidelines and procedures attached to the Policy in order to safeguard children and adults from harm and abuse.

5.2.3.2. Every elected member (Councillor) is expected to undertake training on safeguarding children and adults. A register will be kept of those attending and this will be reported as part of the performance monitoring arrangements co-ordinated by the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.2.4. Cabinet Members

5.2.4.1. The Cabinet Members for Adults, Health and Wellbeing; for Education; and for Children and Families will lead on safeguarding across the Council.

Name:	Email address:
Cllr Elin Walker Jones <i>Cabinet Member - Children and Young People</i>	Cynghorydd.ElinWalkerJones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Cllr Dilwyn Morgan <i>Cabinet Member - Adults Health and Wellbeing</i>	Cynghorydd.DilwynMorgan@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Cllr Beca Brown <i>Cabinet Member - Education</i>	Cynghorydd.BecaBrown@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

5.2.4.2. These Cabinet Members will be standing members on the Safeguarding Strategic Panel. Cabinet Members will report on the work of the Strategic Panel to the Care Scrutiny Committee, to the Cabinet and to the Full Council annually.

5.2.5. Care Scrutiny Committee

5.2.5.1. Members of the Care Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise and receive information regarding the work programme of the Strategic Panel.

5.2.6. Full Council

5.2.6.1. All Members of the Council will receive an Annual Report on the work of the Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel.

5.3. FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL DEPARTMENTS, MANAGERS AND STAFF

5.3.1. Every Department within the Council must take full ownership of their safeguarding responsibilities and have clear arrangements and procedures in place to ensure that enquiries to allegations / concerns that children and adults may be suffering harm and/or neglect receive due consideration.

5.3.2. The Council is committed to train all staff in the field of safeguarding.

5.3.3. All Members of Staff and Volunteers

5.3.3.1. All members of staff and volunteers are responsible for undertaking their duties in a manner which safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and adults. They must also act in a way which protects them against false allegations of abuse as far as possible and in accordance with this Policy. They must bring issues of concern regarding the safety and welfare of children and adults to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Individual within their Department.

5.3.4. Line Managers

5.3.4.1. Every Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that the staff for which they are responsible receive the safeguarding training they require and that the training is proportionate to their responsibilities. There are guidelines regarding which members of staff should receive training and to which level available by the Corporate Support Department.

5.3.5. Designated Safeguarding Individual

5.3.5.1. Every Department within the Council has nominated a "Designated Safeguarding Individual" which are responsible for:

- acting as a key source of advice and support for other staff in the Department on all safeguarding issues;
- familiarising themselves with Cyngor Gwynedd's Policy and Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Adults along with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Child Protection Guidelines;
- ensuring that there are effective internal procedures for dealing with concerns within the Department, working in close collaboration with Social Services to achieve this;
- representing the Department on the Council's Operational Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults;
- ensuring that the process of conforming with this Policy and Procedure is monitored by reporting regularly to the Departmental Management Team;
- attending the relevant training for "Designated Safeguarding Individuals";
- ensuring that staff within their Department are compliant with all relevant training.

5.3.5.2. The Designated Safeguarding Individual for each department shall be a member of the Operational Safeguarding Group, which is aligned to the Strategic Safeguarding Panel. A list of all Designated Safeguarding Individual is available on Cyngor Gwynedd's intranet.

5.3.6. Heads of Department

5.3.6.1. Every Head of Department – through their Management Teams – will be jointly responsible for an understanding of, and compliance with all statutory requirements in terms of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults. This includes quality, content and frequency of the training provided and maintaining sufficient staff training records.

5.3.6.2. Every Head of Department must ensure that all staff members in relevant posts are checked by means of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and that their staff conform

with the Policy and Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Adults. Every Head of Department must establish arrangements to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Council's Disclosure of Offences and Checking Criminal Records Policy. Every Head of Department must ensure that records are kept of every check undertaken by the DBS. Compliance in this area will be reported and scrutinised by the Safeguarding Strategic Panel

5.3.6.3. Every Head of Department must ensure that this Policy is employed, and that appropriate departmental procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults are adopted. These procedures are expected to be prepared to highlight the Department's arrangements to respond to issues that could arise in the safeguarding field. The procedures will be required to fully comply with the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines.

5.3.6.4. Every Department in the Council will be expected to report on their safeguarding procedures to the Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel. The Council's Management Group will convene all Heads of Department, Directors, and the Chief Executive on a monthly basis. There will be an opportunity at these meetings for any of the Heads to refer to safeguarding issues.

5.3.7. Contractors, Sub-contractors or Other Organisations funded by or on behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd

5.3.7.1. Contractors, sub-contractors or other organisations funded by or on behalf of the Council are responsible for arranging checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and ensuring that their staff comply with the appropriate Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults. They are also responsible for informing relevant managers of the Council about any concerns they may have and to refer to protection issues. It is the responsibility of the manager of the contract to ensure compliance with these requirements.

5.3.7.2. This responsibility, as set out in 5.3.7.1 should be included within all tender documents, agreements and contracts.

6. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Safeguarding Strategic Panel

6.1.1. The responsibility for undertaking an overview of the children and adults safeguarding arrangements has been delegated to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel by the Cabinet.

6.1.2. The main responsibilities of the Panel are to ensure that:

6.1.2.1. there are robust corporate and departmental arrangements in place to safeguard children and adults in Gwynedd.

6.1.2.2. there are clear and unambiguous communication arrangements in place across the organisation, including information about the key officers in each service who are responsible for children and adult safeguarding issues.

6.1.3. The Panel meets three times a year. Further details on the Safeguarding Strategic Panel can be found within its terms of reference.

6.2. Operational Safeguarding Group

6.2.1. The Operational Safeguarding Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and acts in accordance with the guidance and requirements of that Panel.

6.2.2. The Operational Safeguarding Group will monitor performance across the services from the perspective of safeguarding children and adults. The Operational Safeguarding Group reports to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel at each of panel's meetings, highlighting any concerns or obstacles clearly.

6.2.3. The Operational Safeguarding Group will ensure that:

- There is a clear understanding amongst the Council's workforce, elected members and those working on behalf of the Council, of the policies and guidelines for the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of harm and/ or abuse.
- Each department within the Council has its own safeguarding procedures documented and utilised appropriately, aligned to the Council's Safeguarding Policy.
- Members, staff and volunteers receive appropriate and timely safeguarding information and training.
- Safer recruitment is undertaken and that the Disclosure and Barring Scheme is used consistently and effectively.

7. PROCEDURE FOR REFERRING A CONCERN

7.1. The Police must be contacted immediately if the child or adult is in immediate danger.

7.2. It is crucial not to delay.

7.3. Any member of staff or Elected Member with concerns regarding the safety of a child or adult should immediately contact:

The Children Services Duty Team on 01766 772577 (press option 1)

Or

The Adults Service Advice and Assessment Team on 01766 772577 (press option 2)

7.4. For any concerns regarding the safety of a child or adult outside usual office hours, **after 5.00 pm Monday to Friday and on weekends and Bank Holidays**, they should contact:

The Social Services Out of Hours Team on 01248 353551

7.5. If a member of staff has concerns regarding the behaviour of a colleague or needs advice about a concern/doubt about the safety of a child or adult, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Individual in their Department. If the Designated Safeguarding Individual is unavailable, then the matter must be referred immediately to the Teams noted above.

8. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING

8.1. The Annual Report of the Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel will report on the Council's performance in complying with the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines. The Annual Report will be submitted to the Corporate Management Team, the Cabinet and to the Full Council.

8.2. This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually or if any amendments occur in legislation or in consideration of changes in working practices which may stem from events or allegations.

ATTACHMENTS (TO BE REVIEWED BY THE OPERATIONAL SAFEGUARDING GROUP)

- Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel Terms of Reference
- Signs of Abuse
- Code of Conduct and Safe Working Practices
- Training on Safeguarding
- Disclosure of Offences and Checking Criminal Records
- List of Departmental Designated Managers
- Good Practice Guidelines for Councillors: Safe Contact with Children and Vulnerable Adults
- The Referral Process
- Dealing With Allegations of Professional Abuse
- Measuring Effect and Monitoring
- All Wales Safeguarding Procedures