Cyngor Gwynedd

Policy and Guidance for Safeguarding Children and Adults who are at Risk of Abuse and Neglect

(Referred to as the Safeguarding Policy for Cyngor Gwynedd)

Reviewed June 2026

Safeguarding children and adults is the responsibility of everyone who represents, or works on behalf of, the Council. Everyone has a responsibility to report any concern or suspicion that a child or adult is at risk of being abused and/or neglected.

PROCEDURE FOR REFERRING ANY CONCERN

1. The Police (999) should be contacted immediately and without delay if a child or adult is in imminent danger.

2. Any member of staff or Councillors who have concerns about the safety of a child or adult should contact the following immediately:

the Referrals Admission Team on 01766 772577

Select option 1 = Children
Select option 2 = Adults

For any concerns about the safety of a child or adult outside normal office hours, **after 5:00pm Monday to Friday and on weekends and Bank Holidays,** you should contact:

the Social Services Out of Hours Team on 01248 353551

3. Any member of staff who is unsure whether there is a child or adult safeguarding issue should discuss with the Department's Designated Safeguarding Person or their line manager. If they are not available, then the matter should be immediately referred to the Teams stated above.

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1. **"Safeguarding"** is broader than protecting children and adults. It means preventing abuse or harm, and promoting well-being, including encouraging:

- mental, physical and emotional health
- protection from harm and neglect

- education, training and leisure
- constructive contribution to society
- social and economic well-being.

1.2. **"Protection"** responds to the concerns about the likelihood of significant harm to an individual, meaning a person who is at risk of abuse and neglect. The arrangements for the protection of children and adults at risk of abuse are outlined in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures, and are implemented by Social Services and the Police.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. Cyngor Gwynedd's main priority is to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from abuse, neglect, radicalisation, slavery, domestic abuse and exploitation.

2.2. Everyone in Cyngor Gwynedd has a responsibility to create an environment that ensures that children and adults are less likely to be abused. These safeguarding arrangements are outlined in this policy and are the responsibility of all services within Cyngor Gwynedd.

2.3. Social Services hold the leading responsibilities to protect children and adults who may be suffering from harm and neglect.

2.4. Employees of Cyngor Gwynedd and Councillors are expected to act in accordance with the principles set out in this policy at all times, whether during working hours or otherwise.

3. LEGISLATION

3.1. Section 28 of the Children Act 2004:
Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to ensure that it undertakes its functions to safeguard and promote children's well-being.

3.2. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998:
Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to protect adults and prevent crime and disorder when undertaking 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 children and adults who need care and support. Well-being is defined in the Act as having eight common aspects, one of which includes 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 any child or adult deemed to be at risk of abuse, neglect and/or harm.

3.5. Children's Rights:
The principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provide the foundation for children's safeguarding by recognizing that every child has the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect, and they impose a clear duty on adults,

organisations and the State to promote their well-being, listen to their opinions, and act in their best interest at all times. Article 19 relates specifically to safeguarding.

3.6. Human Rights:

Under the United Nations human rights framework, every individual is entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms that the State must respect, protect and fulfil. Article 3, Article 6 and Article 8 are specifically relevant to safeguarding.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1. Safeguarding children and adults is the responsibility of everyone who represents, or works on behalf of, the Council.

4.2. Every child and adult has the right to be protected from harm, exploitation and abuse.

4.3. Cyngor Gwynedd places the safeguarding and well-being of children and adults at the heart of our policies and procedures.

4.4. All children and adults (whatever their background) have the right to participate in a safe society free from any violence, fear, abuse, exploitation, grooming, bullying or discrimination.

4.5. Cyngor Gwynedd operates in partnership with children, their parents, carers and adults, as well as other agencies to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and adults.

4.6. Cyngor Gwynedd recognises the importance of preventative work and early intervention to reduce the likelihood of abuse or harm occurring.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. All Councillors, members of staff, volunteers and contracted service providers are responsible for following the guidelines set out in this Policy.

5.2. THE FUNCTIONS OF OFFICERS AND KEY COUNCILLORS

5.2.1. Statutory Director of Social Services

Name:	Phone Number:	E-mail Address:
Huw Dylan Owen	01286 679387	DylanOwen@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

5.2.1.1. The Director of Social Services has the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding matters. He will ensure that the Council has appropriate safeguarding measures and arrangements and is responsible for reporting on these arrangements regularly to Councillors.

5.2.1.2. The Director must be aware of any potential conflict of interest between his role and the responsibility for corporate protection matters. Should such a conflict arise, the Director

should remove himself from one of the roles for the duration of that position, and the responsibility will transfer to the Chief Executive.

5.2.2. Councillors

5.2.2.1. All Councillors should act in accordance with the procedures of this Policy and follow the guidelines and procedures attached to the Policy to safeguard children and adults from harm and abuse.

5.2.2.2. All Councillors are expected to undertake training on safeguarding children and adults every three years. A register is kept of those who have completed the training, and this is reported as part of the performance monitoring arrangements coordinated by the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.2.3. Cabinet Members

Name:	E-mail Address:
Councillor Menna Trenholme *Cabinet Member - Children and Families*	Cynghorydd.MennaTrenholme@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Councillor Dilwyn Morgan *Cabinet Member - Adults*	Cynghorydd.DilwynMorgan@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Councillor Dewi Jones *Cabinet Member - Education*	Cynghorydd.DewiJones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

5.2.3.1. The Cabinet Members for Adults, Education and Children and Families will keep an overview of safeguarding matters across the Council.

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

5.2.4. Care Scrutiny Committee

5.2.4.1. Members of the Care Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise and receive information about the Strategic Panel's work programme through the Annual Report.

5.2.5. The Full Council

5.2.5.1. Each Councillor will receive an Annual Report on the work of the Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel.

5.3. FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL'S DEPARTMENTS, MANAGERS AND STAFF

5.3.1. All Departments within the Council should take full ownership of their safeguarding responsibilities and promote procedures to report any concerns to the Social Services and/or the Police.

5.3.2. All Members of Staff

5.3.2.1. All members of staff and volunteers have a responsibility to exercise their duties in a manner that safeguards and promotes the well-being of children and adults.

5.3.2.2. All staff must undertake training on safeguarding children and adults **every three years.** A register is kept of those who have completed the training, and this is reported as part of departmental performance monitoring arrangements and the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.3.3. Heads of Department

5.3.3.1. Responsibility for safeguarding and implementing this Policy within each Department rests with the Head of Department.

5.3.3.2. Every Head of Department should ensure that all members of staff in relevant posts are vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and that their staff comply with this Policy. Compliance in this area will be recorded and scrutinised by the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.

5.3.3.3. Safeguarding will be on the agenda of every Corporate Management Team meeting.

5.3.3.4. All Heads of Department should ensure that safeguarding features regularly on the Departmental Management Team agenda.

5.3.4. Line Managers

5.3.4.1. Every Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that their teams have received at least the mandatory safeguarding (Group A) training they require and that the training is up-to-date and relevant to their responsibilities.

5.3.5. Designated Safeguarding Person

5.3.5.1. Each Council Department has nominated a "Designated Safeguarding Person" who is responsible for:

- familiarising themselves with this Policy and with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures;
- acting as the primary source for safeguarding advice and support for other staff in the Department;
- ensuring that there are effective internal procedures for dealing with concerns within the Department;
- attending the relevant training for a "Designated Safeguarding Person";
- maintaining an overview of staff compliance with the relevant training within their Department.

5.3.5.2. The Designated Safeguarding Person for each department will be a member of the Safeguarding Operational Group, which is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.3.5.3. Each Department has a responsibility to ensure that all Members of Staff are aware of who the Designated Safeguarding Person is.

5.3.6. Organisations commissioned by Cyngor Gwynedd

5.3.6.1. All organisations commissioned by Cyngor Gwynedd are required to:

- Arrange and carry out appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all relevant members of staff.
- Ensure that their staff comply fully with the principles and requirements of Cyngor Gwynedd's Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults.
- Ensure that all members of staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and regular refresher training, so that they understand their roles, responsibilities and the expectations.
- Promptly inform the relevant Council managers of any safeguarding concerns or protection matters that arise.

5.3.6.2. It is the responsibility of the contract manager to ensure that the organisation complies with all the above requirements.

5.3.6.3. The requirements set out in paragraph 5.3.6.1 must be included in all:

- tender documents
- service agreements
- relevant contracts

6. THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Strategic Safeguarding Panel

6.1.1. Responsibility for maintaining an overview of child and adult safeguarding arrangements has been delegated by the Cabinet to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

6.1.2. The Panel's main responsibilities are to ensure that:

- there are robust corporate and departmental arrangements in place to safeguard children and adults in Gwynedd.
- there are clear and unambiguous communication arrangements in place across the organisation, including information on the key officers in each service who are responsible for child and adult safeguarding matters.
- elected members have a clear understanding of the policies and guidance for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm and/or abuse.

6.1.3. The Panel meets three times a year. See further information about the Safeguarding Strategic Panel in its terms of reference (**APPENDIX 1**).

6.2. Safeguarding Operational Group

6.2.1. The Safeguarding Operational Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and operates in accordance with that Panel's guidance and requirements, and independently.

6.2.2. The Safeguarding Operational Group will monitor performance across the services from a child and adult safeguarding perspective. The Safeguarding Operational Group reports to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel at each panel meeting, clearly outlining any concerns or barriers.

6.2.3. The Safeguarding Operational Group will ensure that:

- There is clear understanding in the Council's workplace, and amongst those working on behalf of the Council, of the policies and guidance for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm and/or abuse.
- Members, staff and volunteers receive appropriate and timely information and training on safeguarding.
- Safe recruitment takes place and that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is used consistently.

6.2.4. See further information on the Safeguarding Operational Group in its terms of reference (**APPENDIX 2**).

7. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING

7.1. The Annual Report of the Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults reports on the Council's performance in complying with the Safeguarding Policy and Guidance. The Annual Report is presented to the Corporate Management Team, the Cabinet and the Full Council.

7.2. This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every two years or if changes are made to the legislation or when considering changes in working practices that may arise from incidents or allegations.

APPENDICES

- **APPENDIX 1:** Terms of Reference of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.
- **APPENDIX 2:** Terms of Reference of the Safeguarding Operational Group.
- **APPENDIX 3:** Recording a Concern.

USEFUL LINKS

- **Signs of Abuse:** Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- **Workforce Code of Conduct and Practice:** Document
- **Mandatory Safeguarding Training (Group A):** E-learning Portal
- **Disclosure of Offences and Checking Criminal Records:** Recruitment and Appointment Procedure
- **Departmental Designated Safeguarding Person:** Who's who
- **Referral Form:** Document (for professional/agency person only)
- **Safeguarding Role for Councillors:** Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) website
- **Dealing with Allegations in Positions of Trust**: Wales Safeguarding Procedures (Section 5)
- **Safeguarding children from online abuse:** Wales Safeguarding Procedures: Online Abuse

APPENDIX 1

Terms of Reference of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Safeguarding children and adults is a priority for Cyngor Gwynedd. To ensure that suitable and appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place, the Statutory Director of Social Services convenes a Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults, which represents Members and senior management from all Council departments.

1.2. The Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel is expected to lead and advise on the safeguarding requirements contained in paragraphs 64-69 of Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

1.3. All agencies must also establish internal arrangements for ensuring that the counter-terrorism agenda, prevention of radicalisation and community safety matters are given the appropriate attention.

1.4. For the purpose of this Panel, the term 'safeguarding' applies to adults, children and young people and it means preventing them from being abused or neglected and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers. Safeguarding, and promoting individuals' well-being, is a broader term than 'protecting' individuals from being abused. It's about individuals and services identifying the risk factors and taking steps to prevent vulnerable individuals from being abused. Protection is part of the work of safeguarding and promoting well-being. It refers to the activity of protecting children, young people and adults who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm because of abuse or neglect.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIC PANEL

2.1. The aim of the Panel is to provide assurance to Members and to the Statutory Director of Social Services, as the senior officer within the Council with full and ultimate accountability for safeguarding children, young people and adults, that suitable arrangements and procedures are in place at a corporate level to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. The Panel will exercise 3 statutory duties, namely:

- a general corporate duty to safeguard,
- Social Services statutory duty,
- community safety duty.

2.2. In order to fulfil these duties, the Panel is expected to:

- Identify any gaps in relation to safeguarding at a corporate level and approve work programmes to respond to these. Work with the Safeguarding Operational Group to respond to any gaps identified.
- Identify lessons to be learned, at a corporate level, from serious case reviews and from other relevant reviews and ensure that these are implemented. (Adult Practice Review, Child Practice Review and Domestic Homicide Review).
- Identify lessons to be learned from external and internal audits and ensure that these are implemented.

- Notify the relevant lead members of key matters/developments in the area of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Act as a medium for raising awareness among all Council staff and all elected members of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Be a means of ensuring that members of staff and elected members receive appropriate training (for example the two mandatory VAWDASV and Prevent) in a timely manner and to monitor attendance at this training.
- Ensure inter-departmental working relationships and effective communication within the Council in the area of safeguarding.
- Ensure that the Council's arrangements comply with the legal requirement to ensure that staff are qualified to work in regulated posts.
- Ensure an overview of broader Safeguarding matters including counterterrorism, modern slavery, domestic violence and community safety.

3. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

3.1. The Safeguarding Strategic Panel will have a responsibility to monitor and challenge performance relating to the area of Safeguarding.

4. CHAIRMANSHIP

4.1. The Panel will appoint a Chair and Vice-chair every two years.

5. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

5.1. The Panel will meet three times a year.

6. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

6.1. The Safeguarding Strategic Panel is accountable to the Cabinet. An Annual Report will be presented to the Cabinet every year. That Report will also be submitted to the Full Council annually.

6.2. Business management [i.e. drawing up a work programme, meeting agendas, the secretariat, a central point of communication, arranging additional professional advice if required)] is the responsibility of the Corporate Support Department.

7. MEMBERSHIP

Title
Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being
Cabinet Member for Education
Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Safety
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Chief Executive
Corporate Director

Statutory Director of Social Services
Head of Children and Supporting Families Department
Head of Education Department
Head of Adults Department
Head of Corporate Services Department
Chair of the Safeguarding Operational Group
Head of Legal Service
Manager of the Anglesey and Gwynedd Safety Partnership
Senior Manager for Quality and Safeguarding, Children and Supporting Families
Senior Manager for Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Mental Health

APPENDIX 2

Terms of Reference of the Safeguarding Operational Group

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Safeguarding children and adults is a priority for Cyngor Gwynedd. To ensure that suitable and appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place, the Statutory Director of Social Services convenes a Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults, which represents Members and senior management from all Council departments.

1.2. The Safeguarding Operational Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and works to its guidance.

1.3. For the purpose of this Group, the term 'safeguarding' applies to adults, children and young people and it means preventing them from being abused or neglected and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers. Safeguarding, and promoting individuals' well-being, is a broader term than 'protecting' individuals from being abused. It's about individuals and services identifying the risk factors and taking steps to prevent vulnerable individuals from being abused. Protection is part of the work of safeguarding and promoting well-being. It refers to the activity of protecting children, young people and adults who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm because of abuse or neglect.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SAFEGUARDING OPERATIONAL GROUP

2.1. The Safeguarding Operational Group operates in accordance with the guidance and requirements of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

2.2. The Safeguarding Operational Group will monitor performance across the services from a child and adult safeguarding perspective. The Group will report to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel at each meeting, clearly outlining any concerns or barriers. The Panel will work with the Group to respond to any gaps identified.

2.3. The Safeguarding Operational Group will ensure that:

- There is clear understanding in the Council's workplace, and amongst those working on behalf of the Council, of the policies and guidance for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm and/or abuse.
- Each department in the Council has its own safeguarding procedures, which are properly documented and used and are compatible with the Council's Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff and volunteers receive appropriate and timely information and training on safeguarding.
- Safer recruitment takes place and that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is used consistently and effectively.

2.4 The Designated Safeguarding Person will undertake the role of raising awareness within their departments.

3 CHAIRMANSHIP

3.4 The Panel will appoint a Chair and Vice-chair every two years.

4 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

4.4 The Group meets four times a year.

5 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5.4 The Safeguarding Operational Group is accountable to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel.

5.5 Business management [i.e. drawing up a work programme, meeting agendas, the secretariat, a central point of communication, arranging additional professional advice if required)] is the responsibility of the Corporate Support Department.

6 MEMBERSHIP

6.4 The Membership of the Operational Group is the Designated Safeguarding Person for safeguarding children and adults in every Department within the Council.

6.5 A list of the Designated Safeguarding Person for each Department can be found on the staff self-service.

APPENDIX 3

Recording a Concern

If there is an immediate danger ...

If you believe an individual is in immediate danger of harm, **call 999 immediately.**

If there is concern but no immediate danger...

If you are concerned that a child (under 18) or a vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected, you should record the concern immediately.

If it is easier, call **01766 772577** for a conversation. It would be desirable for you to record this on paper in writing, or the easiest way to record it would be to e-mail your manager / senior employee or the Designated Safeguarding Person with the following information:

- **The names and addresses of the individuals you are concerned** about. If additional details are available (date of birth for example) you should note them, but you are not expected to go and enquire about these.

You should note...

- **What happened?**
- **What did you see?**
- **What did you hear?**
- **What were you told?**
- **Where and when did the incident happen?**
- **Why are you concerned?**

Keep the record factual, without including personal opinions. The exact words used can be cited if you remember them.

You should also note...

- **Your name and role**
- **Date and time of the record**

You should sign the record if it is on paper, this is not necessary if it is an e-mail to your manager/senior employee or the Department's Designated Safeguarding Person.

What will happen next?

- Your manager/senior worker or the *Department's Designated Safeguarding Person* will consider whether the information should be forwarded immediately to the social services referrals admission team.
- This is done through a Safeguarding Referral Form, which is available on the Council's intranet.

This information should be treated confidentially and only shared with the appropriate individuals.