

## **Saving Futures: Cross Party Group on Child Sexual Abuse**

### **Minutes of meeting 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Location: Virtual**

#### **Speakers**

Professor EJ Renold – Cardiff University  
Professor Carlene Firmin – Durham University  
Jayne Bryant MS

#### **Attendees**

David Hopkins - guest  
Lowri Williams – Youth Justice Service  
Faith McCready – South Wales Police  
Rachel Williams – Stepping Stones North Wales  
Sara Evans - Crime Services, North Wales Police  
Katie Ellis - Crime Services, North Wales Police  
Nia Henman – NHS Corporate Safeguarding Team  
Mel Gadd – Sex Education Company  
Tom Lewis-White - Senedd Commission Staff  
Gillian Jones – Lucy Faithful Foundation  
Nici Evans – CSA Centre  
Kate Rothwell- Digital Learning Division, Welsh Government  
Helen Middleton - CAVC  
Sarah Walton-Jones – Lucy Faithful Foundation  
Daisy Williams – Lucy Faithful Foundation  
Sarah Witcombe-Hayes – NSPCC Cymru  
Philip Walker – Survivors Trust  
Ross Walmsley – NSPCC Cymru  
Sian Garstang - Equity in Education

Karen Bamford - Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer  
Sarah Keefe - guest  
Caryl M Davies – school safeguarding, Carmarthen  
Shannon Orritt - Member Support Staff, Senedd  
Nicola Giles – Curriculum, Welsh Government  
Elizabeth Flowers – Children’s Commissioners Office  
Berni Durham-Jones – Stepping Stones North Wales  
Mandy Gibbs – Multi-agency CSA Centre  
Hannah Evans-Price – PCC Office, South Wales Police  
Cecile Gwilym – NSPCC Cymru  
Brody Anderson - Member Support Staff, Senedd  
Claire Short – Lucy Faithful Foundation  
Deborah Sargent - Digital Learning Division, Welsh Government  
Eleri Griffiths - Member Support Staff, Senedd  
Joanna Williams - NHS Wales Health Collaborative  
M Matthews - St Teilos CiW High School  
Catrin Simpson - Cardiff and Vale UHB - Child Health  
Linda Elias – Dyfed Powys Police  
Sian Erickson – Safeguarding  
Fflur Emlyn – RASAC

#### **Apologies**

Llyr Griffith MS  
Peredur Owen Griffiths MS  
Keli Evans - RASASC

#### **Minutes**

Welcomes and introductions from Jayne Bryant MS, including a trigger warning of difficult topics and for attendees to look after themselves first and foremost.

## Key points from speakers

### **Professor EJ Renold – Cardiff University “*We don’t tell the teachers*”: unboxing peer-to-peer sexual harassment in primary and secondary schools.**

- Welsh Government have responded to issues of peer-on-peer harassment prior to the Estyn report on sexual harassment in secondary schools.
- A collective/online movement, including ‘Everyone’s Invited website’ was the catalyst for the Estyn engagement
- There has been a normalisation of sexual harassment in schools – incidents are so common – it is reported that it can be normalised or trivialised by teachers and young people therefore keep it to themselves
- This work must also be carried out in primary schools
- A response to sexual harassment must be embedded into a whole school approach
- Wales has the potential to address these issues in a holistic way – with an emphasis on the rights of children
- It is vital that professional learning is central to work to tackle harassment in schools

### **Professor Carlene Firmin MBE, Durham University ‘*Developing a Contextual Safeguarding approach to child sexual abuse in Wales*’**

- There is a mismatch between where harm is experienced and where social work is focused, traditionally this has been the assessment of the family, rather than the contexts.
- We need to form partnerships with sectors/individuals who are responsible for young people and collaborate and work alongside young people, ensuring that work is strengths based.
- Targeting the individual child/family and moving them on can create ‘victim vacuums’ where the context causing the harm isn’t challenged.
- Currently four areas in Wales adapting contextual safeguarding model – Swansea is a formal contextual safeguarding test site. Newport, Cardiff, and Neath Port Talbot implementing in parallel test sites – planned champions network across Wales.
- It is everyone’s responsibility to work collectively to safeguard children, not just to refer into safeguarding.
- ‘Context weighting’ – important to consider the most significant context that is most vulnerable for the child. For example.
  - o Mapping activities around the school site
  - o Assessment of a peer group and building the school’s capacity to be protective
  - o Implementation of change led by the school such as staff attitudes and safety mapping

## Discussion from the floor

We need an investment in professional learning if children are not feeling safe, this must be addressed with investment from Welsh Government.

Jayne Bryant reminded colleagues that the CYPE Committee current inquiry is focused on peer-on-peer harassment <https://business.senedd.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=38554>

Nicola Giles from Welsh Government updated on plans following the Estyn report – early plans include a multi-agency response, including developing an action plan and engaging with stakeholders on this. Early stages of what this plan will look like but likely to include.

- o A focus on prevention

- New curriculum
- Whole school approach

EJ suggested contextual safeguarding must be central to a new action plan and be central to the new curriculum.

### **Actions**

- Write to Welsh Government on behalf of the CPG
- Develop a briefing informed by what young people want
- Arrange a solution focused round table, based on the briefing, which considers.
  - Professional learning
  - RSE
  - Why young people are not telling their teachers
  - The context around schools – context weighting
  - Online harm
  - The cross-over between relevant action plans/strategies (CSA, VAWDASV, anti-racism, LGBTQ+)

Jayne thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.