VISION for EDUCATION .smart. teachers

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION UPDATE

WALES

ISSUE: 16 **April 2026**

We hope that you had a well-rested Easter break and have felt refreshed upon returning. As term is progressing, please read this issue of our termly Safeguarding and Child Protection Update. We hope you find the update useful, and we appreciate you taking the time to read it in full.

Online safety update

Advice for schools on preparing for and responding to viral online harmful challenges and hoaxes

Welsh government provide advice for schools and practitioners on understanding and responding carefully to online viral challenges and hoaxes to ensure learners are kept safe online.

In recent years, some online viral challenges and hoaxes have caused widespread concern about the potential to cause serious harm.

Understanding and responding carefully to these trends is essential to keeping learners safe online.

The advice also gives guidance on how to teach learners about online safety, and provides additional signposting and support resources.

LINK: https://hwb.gov.wales/keeping-safe-online/online-safety-policies-and-procedures/advice-for-schools-on-preparing-for-and-responding-to-viral-online-harmful-challenges-and-hoaxes

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Additional Learning Needs (ALN): Evaluation Update

The Welsh Government has published an early evaluation of the ALN system, based on feedback from schools, local authorities, and families.

The findings are broadly positive, highlighting improved collaboration between services and a stronger focus on person-centred support through Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

However, the report also notes some variation in how the system is being implemented, alongside ongoing pressures around time, training and resources.

As a supply member of staff, it is important to be aware of the ALN system, follow school guidance, and support inclusive practice, recognising that approaches may vary between settings. You can find a link to the report below:

LINK: https://www.gov.wales/evaluation-additional-learning-needs-aln-system-local-area-studies-wave-1-report

Additional funding for mental health and wellbeing support for every school

On 24th March, over £1.6m in new funding was announced to provide additional mental health and wellbeing support in schools over the next three years.

It will fund a mental health programme developed by Anna Freud, a mental health charity for children and young people, for primary and secondary schools across Wales.

Anna Freud uses the latest evidence to design new approaches to mental ill health prevention and intervention, including for schools, in partnership with children, young people, families and communities.

The funding will introduce the Strategies for Safety and Wellbeing programme, to learners in Year 5 and Year 7, to equip them with knowledge, skills and understanding around mental health, safety and how to access support.

LINK: https://www.gov.wales/additional-funding-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-every-school

Welsh government education news

Five principles that will drive improvements in Welsh literacy standards

Helping children across Wales improve their ability to read, write, listen and speak and improve their language skills in general is a subject that parents, teachers and education leaders across the country care deeply about. It is also a priority for the Welsh Government, who have made driving improvement in literacy standards central to their work on education more generally.

In the article below, Welsh government set out five agreed Principles for Language and Literacy in Wales.

LINK: https://educationwales.blog.gov.wales/2026/03/09/five-principles-that-will-drive-improvements-in-welsh-literacy-standards

Teaching Digital with Confidence programme

Through a range of professional learning courses, teaching resources and wider support, STEM Learning UK are supporting Wales-based primary and secondary schools to help increase practitioner confidence and understanding of computing and digital skills development in line with the Curriculum for Wales and the Digital Competence Framework (DCF).

You can browse and sign up for relevant courses using the HWB link below and their signposted partner website.

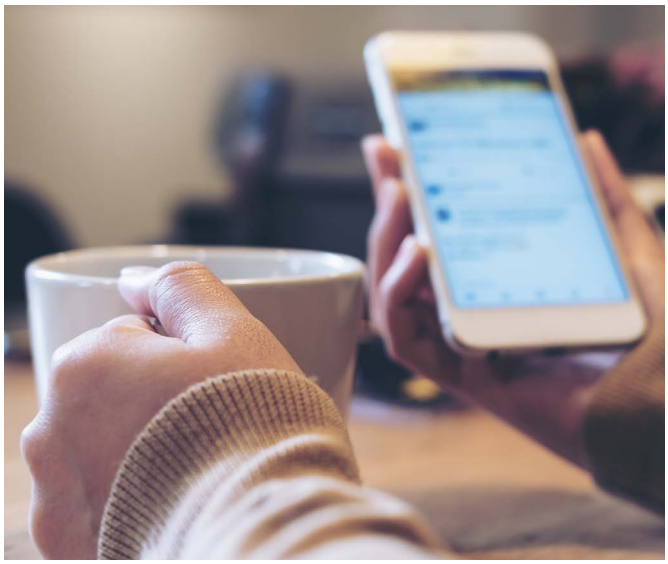
LINK: https://hwb.gov.wales/news/articles/dce97c51-ae5f-41c1-af01-afa235d59506

Staff conduct reminders

Social Media

Social media can be a brilliant and powerful tool for learning and communication, but it is important to remember that online conduct is equally as important as real-life conduct for those in the education sector. It is crucial that you remain professional online. You can learn more about our expectations for appropriate boundaries online in our Social Networking Policy, which is found within the Staff Code of Conduct (Appendix 2)

https://www.visionforeducation.co.uk/view_pdf/code-of-conduct



Privacy settings

We would encourage you to review your social media profiles and privacy settings at regular intervals to ensure that you portray yourself online in the most appropriate way. Different platforms can be used for different purposes, eg LinkedIn for your professional life and Facebook for your personal life. You should consider how you use each platform and make sure that your privacy settings align.

The South West Grid for Learning Trust provide some great social media checklists to help you manage your settings on popular apps

www.swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists.

It's important to remember that even with a limited friends list, anything you post online can be turned into a lasting record via a screenshot (also known as a 'screengrab' or 'screencap'). This is a record that can then be saved, duplicated and shared by another user. This also applies to encrypted messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp, where you may assume that your content is private. Your photos, thoughts and words may reach a wider audience than you intend, including the school that you are working in.

Just as with social media platforms, it is also important that you maintain professional boundaries in relation to gaming profiles. You should adhere to the same rules as you would

Physical contact

We operate a no-contact policy for supply staff with students, which should always be adhered to except in the following circumstances:

- If a student is at risk of harming themselves or others.
- When providing personal care as part of your agreed job role. You should always carry out the task with sensitivity and respect, and ensure another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and aware of the task to be undertaken.
- Supply staff who are Team Teach trained or equivalent (please provide your consultant with proof of qualification if you have not already done so).
- Supply staff who are first aid trained and, in a situation where first aid is required (please provide your consultant with current proof of qualification if you have not already done so).

If physical contact is necessary, always be mindful that physical contact and/or close physical proximity with a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted and may leave you open to scrutiny.

Generally, you should never be alone with a child. If unavoidable, make sure you keep the classroom door open and do not block any exits.

Communication in the classroom

Teaching is all about communication and teachers must communicate well to teach effectively and build rapport with students. We understand that this can be a tricky balance to strike. Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in educational settings offers the following advice regarding language in schools:

- Staff should not use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils.
- The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable.
- Avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation.

Training resources

It's important to keep your training record with us up to date. If you have completed any recent safeguarding or child protection training via schools, voluntary roles or other agencies, please email copies of your certificates to your agency at: visionadminbox@visionforeducation.co.uk

If you haven't completed a safeguarding course within the last 12 months, please see below for available courses:

FREE training courses available: Safeguarding Training

WEB LINK: Vision for Education: https://www.candidatego.com/take/pUdjTghJ

Behaviour Management Training

WEB LINK: Vision for Education: https://www.candidatego.com/take/kbTdEbKT

PREVENT training

Learn how to support people susceptible to radicalisation. At the end of the course, you will be provided with a certificate of completion which you should forward to your consultant to be added to your training record.

WEB LINK: .GOV website: PREVENT training online course https://www.support-people-susceptible-to-radicalisation.service.gov.uk/portal

Online CPD sessions

Visit our website for more information on our upcoming training sessions. Led by experienced practitioners, the training is free of charge, but spaces are limited. Please ensure that any sessions you wish to attend are relevant to your role and the needs of the students you work with before signing up.

WEB LINK: **Vision for Education:** https://www.visionforeducation.co.uk/training-and-events

GDPR

Protecting your data is important to us. Find out more about how we comply with legislation in the Privacy section on our websites.

- www.visionforeducation.co.uk/privacy-policy

Please note that some of the resources detailed in this bulletin are from third-party providers which are not part of Edwin (Vision for Education/ABC Teachers/Smart Teachers) and should be used at your own discretion.