



Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Cerebra's policy is to safeguard the well-being of children and vulnerable people, and to prevent their physical, sexual or emotional abuse. All children without exception have a right to protection from abuse.

The safety of children involved in any of Cerebra's events or activities is covered by this policy. It applies to Cerebra's staff, volunteers, and anyone else having a formal role in furtherance of the aims of the charity.

Cerebra endeavours to safeguard children by:

- reporting concerns to the authorities;
- procedures for recruitment and selection;
- effective management for staff and volunteers through support and training;
- reviewing its policies regularly;
- planning the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where abuse may occur.

All suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. Anyone reporting concerns in good faith will be supported by the organisation.

If you are concerned about a child or someone else's behaviour, you have a responsibility to report this to the DCP (see below) who will take action and refer to child protection agencies as appropriate. Any allegation or disclosure will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. All allegations must be reported to the Head of department and the Designated Child Protection Person. Upon conclusion of the investigation the outcome should be recorded in the personnel records held in Administration if the allegation is regarding a Cerebra employee and this information will remain strictly confidential.

The Children Act 1989 states that the "welfare of the child is paramount". This means that considerations of confidentiality that might apply to other situations should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

Cerebra's Child Protection policy, and its duty of care to children, will be referred to or included in recruitment, training and policy materials where appropriate, and made openly available within the organisation.

Anyone who could at any time have unsupervised access to a child or vulnerable person will be checked appropriately. Their line manager is responsible for obtaining feedback from the families they work with, and for training and appropriate general supervision.

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Code of Practice

Cerebra expects that all those working on its behalf will be aware of this Code of Practice and adhere to its principles in their approach to all children and vulnerable people.

There will be times that Cerebra staff will work with children along side parents, carers or professionals. During this time, Cerebra staff are not permitted to spend time alone with a child. It is the responsibility of the parent, carer or professional to remain with the member of Cerebra staff.

Parents/carers are informed clearly that they remain responsible for the welfare of their children at all Cerebra events, but Cerebra staff and volunteers are also responsible for working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard the welfare of their children.

It is not permitted to have physical contact with children when their parents/carers are not present, and this should in any event in general be avoided.

It is not permitted to take children alone in a car on journeys, however short. Where you are permitted to do so by virtue of being accompanied you must ensure the car is safe, you have an appropriate license for the vehicle you are driving, you must comply with traffic laws and have the requisite car seat (if necessary).

All meetings and contacts with parents, carers, professionals and children will be conducted on strict compassionate grounds, all comments and discussions will remain professional at all times, and a clear record of the meeting will be maintained and a copy can be provided to all persons present if required.

It is important not to deter children from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. If this gives rise to a child protection concern, follow Cerebra's procedure for reporting such concerns, and do not attempt to investigate the concern yourself.

Remember that those who abuse children can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnicity or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.

Good practice includes valuing and respecting children as individuals, and modelling by adults of appropriate conduct, which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism or discriminatory treatment of any kind.

Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice will be strictly applied at all times.

Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Child Protection Person (DCPP)

- Know which outside child protection agency to contact in the event of a child protection concern coming to the notice of Cerebra.
- Adjust the information and advice on child protection within Cerebra, as necessary.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover.
- Liaise with local social services and other agencies, as appropriate.
- Keep relevant people within Cerebra informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- Ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence.
- In the event that requests are received under the 2004 Children's Act to appoint a designated officer to oversee any members of Cerebra staff who may, from time to time, have allegations made against them (in connection with 2004 Children's Act matters), the DCPP will confirm the name of the designated officer. Unless otherwise precluded, the designated officer will be the member of staff's Line Manager.
- Any such appointments shall be recorded in writing and held by the Head of Research & Information.
- In the event that any such allegations are made the matter is to be referred to the DCPP at the earliest opportunity so that any appropriate measures can be taken.

Procedure for Reporting Concerns

Those who may have access to children in the course of their work on behalf of Cerebra are required to be aware of the issues which can cause children harm; and report concerns following the procedures set out in this document.

Workers could have their suspicion or concern of physical abuse, emotional abuse or sexual abuse, or neglect, raised by, for example:

- the conduct of a member of Cerebra's staff;
- a child 'disclosing' abuse;
- bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may or may not be accompanied by unusual behaviour by a child;
- disclosure or unusual behaviour of an adult, including members of staff from other agencies.

If anyone has such concerns they must be reported immediately by telephone to the DCPP and confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

The DCPP will consider the report and either refer this immediately to the authorities or, after taking appropriate advice, decide not to refer the concerns to the authorities but keep a full record of the concerns.



Responding appropriately to a child making an allegation of abuse

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets.
- Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it and that all complaints are handled in a sensitive and confidential manner.
- Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible - note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the DCP.

If you are unhappy with the action taken by the DCP then you must raise your concern with the DCP directly in the first instance. If you continue to be unsatisfied that sufficient action has been taken then the Care Inspectorate Wales is available to you to obtain advice. They can be contacted either by telephone on 0300 7900 126 or by email at CIW@gov.wales. Please also refer to the Whistleblowing Policy at section 72 of the staff handbook.

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

No-one shall have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable people who has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children; or has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people.

This means that:

- all who work or volunteer to work in this capacity (i.e. unaccompanied and/or unsupervised) for Cerebra will be required to be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service, are expected at all times to conform with good practice in their work;
- those responsible for the appointment of such workers and volunteers must take all reasonable steps, including obtaining Disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service, to ensure that persons who have been convicted or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not have unsupervised access to children and young people under the auspices of Cerebra.
- In accordance with the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, it is a criminal offence for a barred individual to engage in regulated activity from which they are barred. It is also a criminal offence without a reasonable defence to seek to or offer to engage in such activity. This includes employees, workers, the self-employed or volunteers as well as prospective employees or workers.

Cerebra's recruitment and selection procedures for such positions include:

- A clear definition of any role so that the most suitable appointee can be identified;
- Key selection criteria;
- Circulation of vacancies to ensure equal opportunities;
- Confirmation of the identity of the applicant including personal details obtained either through using an application form where appropriate, or through other means;
- Requirement of a declaration of previous convictions and submission to formal check, together with the issue of the Child Protection Policy for those candidates whose work may bring them into unsupervised contact with children or who will have a management responsibility in relation to those whose work does bring them into such contact;
- A guarantee that disclosed information will be treated in confidence and not used against applicants unfairly, including adherence to the Disclosure and Barring Service, code of practice and relevant case law;
- Documentary evidence of qualifications where relevant;
- Use of several selection techniques to maximise the chance of safe recruitment, e.g. interview, references, checks;
- At least one representative from Cerebra meeting personally with every applicant for such a position, and an exploration of their attitudes towards working with children; and
- Written references.

This policy may be shared with parents/guardians

(Designated Child Protection Person: Ralph Nicholls, Interim Chief Executive)

To contact please call 01267 244200 or 0800 328 1159 or email
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Working wonders for children with brain conditions

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