

53. The Contextual Safeguarding Scale up will support us to develop our action plan that is specific to Swansea and its response to Child Sexual Exploitation.

EMPATHY AND CONCERNS FOR CHILD VICTIMS

54. Swansea Local Authority has identified examples of victim blaming language used within Child Sexual Exploitation meeting minutes and recognises that development is needed around developing professionals' use of more appropriate language. Swansea Local Authority has built positive working relationships with the professionals who attend strategy meetings, which means that we can confidently challenge the language used. This is achieved by referring to and utilising the language guide provided by the Contextualised Safeguarding Network. There is a similar document produced by The Children's Society, which is useful to reference when guiding professionals.
55. For example when it was identified that a school has used the term "prostitution" when referring to a child the Practice Lead for the Disruption of Child Exploitation met with the Safeguarding Officer for Education to assist and develop a better understanding of the appropriate language to use and its impact on young people and also professional attitudes. This was addressed through active discussions with the school staff and disseminated and supported by training that the Education department developed. This training is provided to all schools.
56. All staff within our service have received a copy of the language guide in order to ensure consistent and appropriate language and value base are supported in practice.

Please refer to exhibit 2i

57. In regards to specific procedures around challenging victim blaming, social workers are trained to be child-centred, non-oppressive practitioners who are trained to challenge others within their working practice. Swansea Local Authority's policy and procedure is very clear regarding exploited children being viewed as the victim of child abuse and not as offenders. Furthermore, in our policy it clearly highlights there should be no scenarios where children are referred to as young men or women who are able to make choices in respect of an alleged abuse. When considering alternative safety arrangements we would not advocate moving a child away from the local area without very good reason and support them to manage any harmful response, we would be focusing on multi-agency working about targeting the perpetrators to increase safety in the area. Swansea Local Authority does not have a specific protocol to challenge victim blaming however, we are in the process of educating professionals around the use of appropriate language and how this impacts on victims. The Local Authority takes a holistic approach when supporting a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation. The Child Sexual Exploitation should not be seen in isolation of any other need or circumstances and all of the child's care and support needs should be highlighted in assessments, meetings and care and support plans.
58. As part of the Continued Professional Education and Learning for social workers, Swansea Children's Services cover the values and principles of social work. The person centred aspect is covered in the 'Matters and Voice of the Child' workshops. Safeguarding children and adults from exploitation is being included in the training programme that will be introduced during 2019 and 2020.