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# Lanesend Primary School

## Domestic Abuse Policy

Isle of Wight Policy  
School Staff Policy

**Signed:** ..... **Date:**  
**(Headteacher)**

**Signed:** ..... **Date:**  
**(Chair of Governors)**

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Governing Body

# 1 Document Information

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### 3 Introduction

- 3.1 The purpose of this policy is to make provision for appropriate support and help, whilst taking into account service delivery needs, to staff who have experienced domestic abuse. In addition, assistance will also be given to perpetrators who are committed to changing their attitude and behaviour and are engaging with services that can assist them.
- 3.2 This policy covers all employees of the Isle of Wight Council and volunteers, agency or contracted staff working on behalf of the Council.

## 4 Underpinning Principles

- 4.1 The Isle of Wight Council is committed to working with its recognised trade unions to ensure that appropriate support is made available to staff who have experienced domestic abuse. This support is extended to assistance being available to perpetrators who are committed to changing their attitudes and behaviours and are engaging with services that can assist them.
- 4.2 The Isle of Wight Council recognises the importance of staff wellbeing and the impact that domestic abuse may have on individual lives and the effects this may have within the workplace. The startling statistics that one in four women and one in six men have or will have suffered from domestic abuse and that domestic abuse accounts for 1 in 7 (14%) of all violent incidents in England and Wales (Walker et al., 2009<sup>i</sup>) is recognition that this is an important matter for staff well-being. The benefits of appropriate assistance to staff is recognised as a fundamental part of retaining valued employees, improving morale and performance of individuals as well as helping the Council to be recognised as a good employer.

## 5 Definition of Domestic Abuse

- 5.1 For the purposes of this policy, domestic abuse is defined as physical, sexual, psychological, financial or emotional abuse imposed by a partner, ex-partner, family member or extended family member or a person co-habiting. Domestic abuse includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so called 'honour based violence', female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (FM).
- 5.2 In 2009/10, women were the victim of over seven out of ten (73%) incidents of domestic violence<sup>ii</sup> although it does also occur against men in heterosexual relationships, in same sex relationships and against bisexual and transgender people.
- 5.3 Domestic violence / abuse is not a 'one off' occurrence but is frequent and persistent, aimed at instilling fear into and compliance from the victim. On average a victim of domestic violence / abuse is assaulted 35 times before they report the matter to the Police<sup>iii</sup>.
- 5.4 Domestic violence / abuse often has a dramatic impact on lives and often can go undetected where individuals frequently hide the circumstances.

## 6 General Measures

- 6.1 The Council will make facility for Unison and other recognised trade unions to make information available to staff about domestic abuse through noticeboards, the intranet, corporate staff communication newsletter - The Vine - and at other appropriate opportunities. The Council will also seek to make provision for information to be included in the Council's e-induction programme.
- 6.2 Staff will be made aware of the importance of the data protection legislation and the general duty under the code of conduct not to divulge personal details of other employees, such as addresses, telephone numbers or shift patterns and about the Domestic Abuse Policy as part of the e-induction pages for new staff. Should a manager be aware of a case of domestic abuse of a member of their team, they will be expected to remind staff of the importance of not divulging this information.
- 6.3 The Council in conjunction with Unison will make training available for managers and union representatives and encourage them to attend in responding to situations where domestic violence is suspected or reported. The extent of such provision will be determined by available resources and staffing commitments on an annual basis.
- 6.4 Staff who have experienced domestic abuse may report it to a union representative, line manager or Dignity at Work Options Advisor. Those who receive reports of domestic abuse should not attempt to counsel victims, but offer information, appropriate workplace support and signpost to other organisations who can provide professional assistance.
- 6.5 HR Advisors will be provided with awareness training on domestic abuse issues and will act as a source of advice and guidance to line managers and union representatives who are approached by staff who are being abused.
- 6.6 Staff will also have access to the Council's intranet resources for advice and guidance through factsheets and information that are available on line which can be accessed via the intranet using the following link:

<http://ppcworldwide5.com/ppconline/>

User name: Isle  
Password: Wight

Information is located under the personal life – relationships tab.

## 7 Individual Support

- 7.1 Managers and Unison representatives will work co-operatively to assist staff experiencing domestic abuse.
- 7.2 Managers are expected to respond considerately to staff who identify themselves as experiencing domestic abuse and maintain confidentiality of their situation unless circumstances dictate that the safety and welfare of the individual is such that it warrants intervention by professional services.
- 7.3 Employees who are experiencing domestic abuse may demonstrate poor punctuality, attendance, work performance and productivity. Managers should be aware that these may be symptoms of domestic abuse occurring and should therefore take appropriate steps to try and establish this and offer appropriate guidance and support before any formal action is taken.
- 7.4 There is a broad range of support that may be considered for employees experiencing domestic abuse which needs to be initiated in accordance with the respective Council policy and procedures for consideration and implementation. Giving due consideration to service delivery needs, this may include but not be limited to the following:
- Special paid leave for relevant appointments to manage their situation such as support agencies, solicitors, to re-arrange housing or child-care and for court appointments
  - Temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns where possible and in accordance with service delivery requirements.
  - Changes to specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role or if they are a fellow employee
  - Redeployment or relocation
  - Measures to ensure a safe working environment for example changing a telephone number to avoid harassing phone calls
  - Raising awareness of and getting places on any relevant training courses that will assist the employee to build confidence and assertiveness
  - Using flexible working option
  - Referral to occupational health for advice and guidance on adaptations that could be considered to support continued employment
- 7.5 Managers will respect the right of staff to make their own decisions on the course of action they take at any stage and to act with sensitivity at all times but will also need to ensure that the staff member understands the potential implications of any failure to improve on work performance concerns should they exist. We acknowledge that the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try different options during this process.

- 7.6 It can be difficult for someone experiencing domestic abuse to acknowledge their situation but any colleague can provide assistance to someone who they recognise to be experiencing domestic abuse with some basic actions such as:
- To approach the individual, express concern and offer support
  - Offering the opportunity for them to talk whilst you listen without them feeling pressurised to reveal more than they wish to, without assumptions being made regarding them or their relationship and without them feeling judged
  - Explain that domestic abuse can happen to anyone and that they are not alone
  - Help the person to report incidents to managers or professional services with their consent
  - For anyone who identifies to them that they are experiencing domestic abuse, it must be remembered that they are not counsellors and should not make any unrealistic promises about what can be done to resolve their situation. They should also be aware that they may be putting themselves at risk, should the abuser become aware of their supportive role.
- 7.7 Domestic abuse perpetrated by employees will not be condoned under any circumstances, nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. It is recognised that the Council has a role to play in encouraging and supporting its employees to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds. If an employee approaches their manager about their abusive behaviour, information will be provided about the services and support available to them and they will be encouraged to seek support and help from an appropriate source.
- 7.8 Where an allegation disclosure or conviction of a domestic abuse related offence is made, managers will consider the response required on a case-by-case basis with the aim of reducing risk and supporting change. Any individual cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence may, however, be subject to disciplinary procedures and the Council also reserves the right to consider an employee's activities outside of work that may have an impact on their ability to perform the role for which they are employed and / or be considered to bring the Council into disrepute.
- 7.9 Where a perpetrator is alleged to have harmed a child through domestic abuse and they are in a position where they work with children, a referral will need to be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO responds to allegations against adults who work with children and young people, and should be used in all cases where it is alleged that a person who works with children or young people has:
- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
  - Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or
  - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates she / he is unsuitable to work with children.

- 7.10 Managers will need to consider the work location of any employees if both the victim and perpetrator are employed by the Council at the same site. The manager or respective managers should consider, subject to the needs of the service, whether re-location of at least one, if not both employees to alternative sites is possible. However, both employees should be consulted prior to any such decisions being taken and in particular the needs of the employee experiencing domestic abuse should be carefully considered to ensure that they are not being penalised by the circumstances.
- 7.11 The Council's code of conduct sets out the standards of behaviour required as a Local Government employee. Staff are therefore expected to abide by these standards and demonstrate personal integrity. In return, the Council is committed to ensuring that:
- Allegations will be dealt with fairly and in a way that is supportive of the needs for the person who is the subject of the allegation or disclosure
  - Staff will be directed to advice, guidance and support that is available from specialist services
  - Confidentiality will be maintained and information restricted to only those who have a need to know
- 7.12 This policy is intended to be safety focused and supportive whilst taking into account service delivery needs, rather than punitive in its approach and therefore any alleged perpetrator will be:
- Treated fairly
  - Helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved
  - Kept informed of the progress and the outcome of any investigation undertaken together with the implications for any possible disciplinary action
  - Directed to sources of advice, guidance and help

## 8 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

8.1 This policy acknowledges the need for any information relating to domestic abuse situations experienced by staff to be shared within the requirements of the law. With this in mind, the following principles will be applied:

8.1.1 The Council and Unison will make sure that any records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential. Whilst sickness absences must continue to be recorded, any authorised absences relating to dealing with a domestic abuse situation will not be recorded and there will be no adverse impact applied to the employment record of a victim who has experienced domestic abuse.

Where domestic abuse in a same sex relationship is disclosed, due regard will be paid to the double disclosure of confidential information particularly where the individual recipient of abuse may not be 'out' at work.

8.1.2 Information about an employee experiencing domestic abuse will only be disclosed between the Council and Unison with the written permission of the individual concerned, unless there are any legal implications that would take precedence, (for example where domestic abuse is linked to child neglect or where a risk to children or vulnerable adults is identified) when the responsibility for public protection may lead to there being notification to relevant professional services. If such a situation does occur then it will be necessary for the individual to be informed of the action being taken.

8.1.3 Statistical information that is available to the Council or Unison in respect of the number of domestic abuse incidents or cases that have been raised or dealt with will be jointly reviewed on an annual basis by Unison and the Human Resource Service to determine what future policy developments if any are required.

## 9 Other Issues

- 9.1 Any sanctions against an alleged abuser are a matter for the criminal justice system. However employees are reminded of their duty under the code of conduct to inform their manager of any conviction who will then determine any necessary course of action should this impact on the exercising of their duties.
- 9.2 If a victim of domestic abuse and their alleged abuser are both employed by the Council, any incidents at work will be dealt with accordingly under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures. If a serious incident occurs, the Police should be called to deal with the matter. If necessary, and in consultation with their Unison representative should they be a member, the feasibility for work to be re-arranged subject to service delivery needs will be established to ensure the safety of the person experiencing the abuse.

The provisions of this policy are designed to support the protection of any employee who is experiencing or has experienced domestic abuse and any attempts to utilise the provisions of this policy for personal gain will be treated seriously and considered to be serious conduct and dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

## 10 Related Documents

- Sustainable Community Strategy - Eco-Island [www.eco-island.org.uk](http://www.eco-island.org.uk)
- Corporate Plan [www.iwight.com/council/documents](http://www.iwight.com/council/documents)
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures Sections 1, 2, and 3  
<http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-section-1-of-3>  
<http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-section-2-of-3>  
<http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-policy-and-procedures-section-3-of-3>
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards [www.4lscb.org.uk](http://www.4lscb.org.uk)
- Disciplinary Procedure <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/disciplinary-policy-procedure>
- Code of Conduct <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/employee-code-of-conduct1>

## 11 Appendix A - Contacts for National and Local Support Services

English National Domestic Violence helpline 0808 2000 247 (freephone)  
The helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Police 0845 045 45 45 (in case of emergencies 999)

Island Women's Refuge 825981  
The helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Samaritans [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk) 08457 90 90 90  
24-hour confidential emotional support for anyone in a crisis.

Victim Support [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk) 0845 30 30 900  
Offers information and support to victims of crime, whether or not they have reported the crime to the police.

Shelter [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk) 0808 800 44 44 (freephone)  
A national organisation which works at local level to improve the lives of homeless and badly housed people.

Hidden Hurt - Domestic Abuse Information [www.hiddenhurt.co.uk](http://www.hiddenhurt.co.uk)  
The site has been written by a survivor of domestic violence, and provides advice and information to those who are in an abusive relationship.

Break the Chain [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)  
General information from the Home Office on domestic violence and where to find help and support.

Womens' Aid [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk) 0808 2000 247  
National charity working to end Domestic Violence against women and children. It supports a network of over 500 domestic and sexual violence services across the UK. The helpline is run in partnership between Womens' Aid and Refuge. It is available 24 hours, 7 days a week

Rights of Women [www.rightsofwomen.org.uk](http://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk) 020 7251 6577  
Rights of Women is a women's voluntary organisation committed to informing, educating and empowering women concerning their legal rights, as they are in England and Wales. The adviceline is available on Tuesdays-Thursdays 2pm-4pm or 7pm-9pm and Fridays 12noon-2pm.

Jewish Women's Aid [www.jwa.org.uk](http://www.jwa.org.uk) 0800 59 12 03 (freephone)  
Jewish Women's Aid (JWA) is a registered national charity run by Jewish women for Jewish women and their children who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse.

Muslim Community Helpline 020 8904 8193/020 8908 6715  
The helplines are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ManKind Initiative [www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk) 01823 334244

Provide support for Male victims of Domestic Abuse. The helpline is available Monday-Friday 10am-4pm and Monday-Thursday 7pm-9pm.

Men's Advice Line [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk) 0808 801 0327

Provide advice and support for men in abusive relationships. The helpline is available Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm.

Male Advice & Enquiry Line 0845 064 6800

Broken Rainbow [www.broken-rainbow.org.uk](http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk) 08452 60 44 60

Provide support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people experiencing Domestic Abuse. The helpline is available Monday 2pm-8pm, Wednesday 10am-1pm & Thursday 2pm-8pm.

Stonewall [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk) 08000 50 20 20

Campaign for Equality and Justice for Lesbians, Gay men & Bisexuals. The helpline is available Monday-Friday 9.30am-5.20pm

PPC [www.ppconline.info](http://www.ppconline.info) 0800 282193

Provide confidential employee assistance offering expert advice, counselling and support on a range of subjects. The helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Citizens Advice [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) 0845 120 2959/529853

The Citizens Advice Service helps people by providing free information and advice on their legal, money and other problems in order to assist them finding a resolution. The helpline is available Monday-Friday 9.30am-3.30pm

Law Centre [www.lawcentres.org.uk](http://www.lawcentres.org.uk) 524715

Provide an independent legal advice and representation service. They employ specialists in areas of 'social welfare' law and help individuals and local groups with problems.

Community Legal Advice [www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk](http://www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk) 0845 345 4 345

Provide independent advice about debt, education, benefits and tax credits, employment and housing problems. The helpline is available Monday-Friday 9am-6.30pm

Rape Crisis Federation [www.rapecrisis.co.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.co.uk) 0115 900 3560

A referral service for women who are seeking advice and/or support around the issues of rape and sexual abuse/assault.

NSPCC [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) 0808 800 5000

UK's leading charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of cruelty to children.

Child Protection 814374

Adult Protection 520600

Friends of the Animals [www.friendsoftheanimals.co.uk](http://www.friendsoftheanimals.co.uk) 616144

UNISON [www.unison-iow.org](http://www.unison-iow.org)

## 12 Appendix B - References

<sup>i</sup>Walker, A., Flatley, J., Kershaw, C., and Moon, D. (2009). Crime in England and Wales 2008/09: Findings from the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime (Volume 1). Home Office Statistical Bulletin, No. 11/09. Home Office: London.

<sup>ii</sup>Figures derived from 2009/10 British Crime Survey data <http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/>

<sup>iii</sup> 31. Yearnshire S (1997), 'Analysis of Cohort', Chapter 5 in Bewley S, Friend J and Mezey G (Eds) (1997).

## 13 Appendix C – Children’s Centres Contacts

Centre	Address	Manager	Contact Number / Emergency Contact	Email	Opening Times	Provider
The Bays Shanklin Main Site	Albert Road Shanklin PO37 7LY	Jill Wade-Smith	Centre 01983 867310	<a href="mailto:jillwadesmith@hotmail.co.uk">jillwadesmith@hotmail.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:thebayschildrenscentre@btconnect.com">thebayschildrenscentre@btconnect.com</a>	Open 50 weeks a year 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday	Furzehill Childcare
The Bays Sandown Satellite Site	Fairway Lake PO36 9EQ	Jill Wade-Smith	Centre 01983 408718	<a href="mailto:jillwadesmith@hotmail.co.uk">jillwadesmith@hotmail.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:thebayschildrenscentre@btconnect.com">thebayschildrenscentre@btconnect.com</a>	Open 50 weeks a year 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday	Furzehill Childcare
Cowes	Love Lane Cowes PO31 7ET	Laura Villa	Centre 01983 291719	<a href="mailto:laura.villa@childrenssociety.org.uk">laura.villa@childrenssociety.org.uk</a>	Open 51 weeks per year, Monday – Friday 8.30-5pm and first Saturday of month 9am-11am and second Saturday 10-12am	The Children’s Society
Ryde	George Street Ryde PO33 2JF	Claire Steen	Centre 01983 617617	<a href="mailto:claire.steen@childrenssociety.org.uk">claire.steen@childrenssociety.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:rydechildrenscentre@childrenssociety.org.uk">rydechildrenscentre@childrenssociety.org.uk</a>	8.30 to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday 50 weeks	The Children’s Society
West Newport	Wellington Road Newport PO30 5QT	Suze Keynes	Centre 01983 537390	<a href="mailto:suze.keynes@childrenssociety.org.uk">suze.keynes@childrenssociety.org.uk</a>	8.30 am – 4.30 pm 50 weeks per year plus one Sat am per month and one evening per month groups	The Children’s Society

Centre	Address	Manager	Contact Number / Emergency Contact	Email	Opening Times	Provider
East Newport	TBC c/o Albert Street Ventnor PO38 1EZ	c/o Kathy Whitewood (Head of Centres)	Centre 01983 529208	<a href="mailto:kwhitewood@spurgeons.org">kwhitewood@spurgeons.org</a> <a href="mailto:rhunter@spurgeons.org">rhunter@spurgeons.org</a>	9.00am- 5.00pm 50 weeks per year	Spurgeons
Ventnor	Albert Street Ventnor PO38 1EZ	c/o Kathy Whitewood (Head of Centres)	Centre 01983 857372	<a href="mailto:Kwhitewood@spurgeons.org">Kwhitewood@spurgeons.org</a> <a href="mailto:pcooley@spurgeons.org">pcooley@spurgeons.org</a>	9.00am- 5.00pm 50 weeks per year	Spurgeons
East Cowes	Osborne Middle School site Beatrice Avenue East Cowes PO32 6PA	Sue Gleaves	Centre 01983 294701  Work Mobile: 07715510845	<a href="mailto:Sue.gleaves@childrenssociety.org.uk">Sue.gleaves@childrenssociety.org.uk</a>	Office hours 48 weeks a year Monday to Friday 10 – 2pm	Local Authority (The Children's Society from April 2011)
West Wight	West Wight Youth and Community Centre Moa Place Freshwater PO40 9XH	Jane Leigh	Centre 01983 756935	<a href="mailto:jane.leigh@childrenssociety.org.uk">jane.leigh@childrenssociety.org.uk</a>	Monday – Friday 9.30 – 1.30. 50 weeks per year	Local Authority (The Children's Society from April 2011)
All Children's Society Children's Centres		Jane Leigh	Work mob: 07507503932  Home: 01983 566598	<a href="mailto:jane.leigh@childrenssociety.org.uk">jane.leigh@childrenssociety.org.uk</a>		Children's Society

HomeStart Telephone Number - 533357 : email: [homestartiw@btconnect.com](mailto:homestartiw@btconnect.com)