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**Policies and Procedures**

# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

**Policy Last Updated: March 2022**

**Member of SLT responsible for this policy: P Logue**

# Introduction

**The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014**) outlines the collective responsibility of all services, professional bodies and agencies that provide child and or adult services to identify and actively consider potential risks to all children and young people. Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children live safely and can reach their full potential.

**The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014** places a specific duty on services to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of children and young people. It builds upon the principles set out in the **Children (Scotland) Act 1995** which places a specific duty on Local Authorities to investigate if it believes that a child is or is likely to suffer significant harm.

**Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is a much wider concept than child protection and refers to promoting the welfare of children. It encompasses: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcome. (**HIGIOS 4 - 4th Edition**)

**The Aims of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers within our school can:

* Carry out their responsibilities to protect our children and young from all forms of neglect, abuse and discrimination.
* Recognise a situation that presents a risk to children and young people and identify signs which may suggest a child or young person is:
* being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed, or put at risk of harm, abuse or exploitation;
* having their basic needs neglected or being cared for in ways that are not appropriate to their age and stage of development;
* being denied the sustained support and care necessary for them to thrive and develop normally;
* being denied access to appropriate medical care and treatment;
* being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development.
* Understand and implement procedures related to the reporting and recording of concerns as detailed in this Child Protection Policy.
* Ensure that all record keeping, including Child Protection Concern referrals and chronologies

Mearns Academy strives to educate all its pupils within an environment where the traditions of working together, honesty, fairness, communication and respect for all are promoted. We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care by being proactive:

* Positive whole school ethos
* Personal safety programmes increasing knowledge and developing skills
* Anti-bullying, Equalities policies and practices
* Health and well-being programmes
* Education for personal and social development
* Developing resilience
* Safe use of internet and other technologies
* Working positively with parents and carers

We recognise that every adult has a role in ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people and in educational establishments, staff are in a strong position to contribute to the safety and well-being of children and young people – acting to challenge, minimise or prevent harm, to provide on-going support, and to educate about risks and how these can be managed. All staff share the responsibility during both pupil hours and out of school activities.

“Child protection” means protecting a child from abuse or neglect. **Abuse or neglect need not have taken place;** it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a ***likelihood* or *risk* of significant harm** from abuse or neglect

**How do we recognise abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) or neglect?**

**Physical Abuse:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Definition:   * This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. * It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after. |  | Possible Indicators may include:   * Unexplained injuries or burns * Improbable explanation for an injury * Recurring ‘accidents’ * Untreated injuries * Reluctance to discuss injuries * Fear of returning home or chronic running away |

**Emotional Abuse:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Definition:   * It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. * It may involve the imposition of age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations on a child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting children. |  | Possible Indicators may include:   * Constantly being put down, ridiculed, scapegoated * Being treated differently from other children in the family * Extremes of passivity and aggression or outbursts * Lack of concentration * Low self-esteem * Running away * Self-harm |

**Sexual Abuse:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Definition:   * Involves any act involving the child or young person in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person |  | Possible Indicators may include:   * Behaviour changes eg withdrawn, anxiety, isolation, depression * Developmental regression * Anxiety associated with certain places or people * Lack of trust or over familiarity and attention seeking * Sexual knowledge and awareness beyond age * Sexualised acting out with other children or toys * Risk taking behaviours eg drug or alcohol misuse * Self-harm |

**Neglect:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Definition:   * Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs in an age and stage appropriate manner and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. * It may involve the failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. * In its extreme form children can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation leading to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children in particular, the consequences may be life-threatening within a relatively short period of time |  | Possible Indicators may include:   * Always hungry * Inappropriate clothing * Health needs not being met * Appointments not kept * Poor personal hygiene * Poor self-esteem * Social isolation * Left unattended or with inappropriate adults * Poorly supervised |

Increasingly we are seeing newer forms of child abuse which staff in schools may be well placed to identify:

* Harmful traditional practices, such as honour-based violence, forced marriage and FGM (female genital mutilation)
* Child Sexual Exploitation
* Children/young people who are missing
* Child trafficking
* Online and mobile phone safety

The school is committed to the continuing professional development of staff around child protection issues. We continue to develop awareness in all staff of the need for child protection and their responsibilities in identifying abuse through annual Child Protection training and ensuring that all staff are aware of referral procedures within the school.

* We monitor children who have been identified as ‘at risk’.
* We ensure that, where appropriate, outside agencies are involved.
* We ensure that key concepts of child protection are integrated within the curriculum, especially with Health & Wellbeing.
* We create an environment where children feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

**What staff should do if they have concerns about a child’s welfare or safety?**

The designated person for child protection is the Child Protection Co-ordinator, **Depute Head Teacher,**

**Mrs Logue**, and in her absence, any other member of SLT.

**Welfare concerns**

Any member of staff with an issue or concern relating to child’s welfare should immediately discuss it with a trained member of staff. The Depute Rector will then decide on an appropriate course of action.

**Remember**

**Observe**

**Record**

**Report**

Contact:

Child Protection Coordinator (CPC), P.Logue

or

Cover for the CPC - SLT

or

Senior Member of Staff / PTG

**Concerns about a child?**

**Do not take it home!**

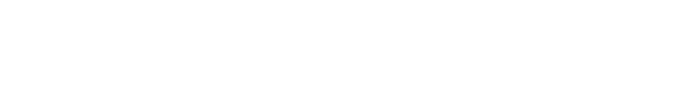
If unavailable

Contact Social Work Duty Worker:

01569 768390

Out of hours – 03456 081206

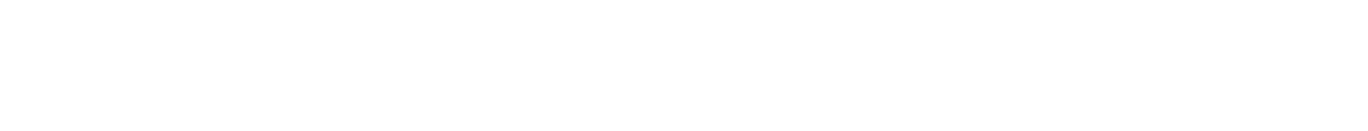
# Child Protection Procedure in Education Flow Chart Recognising actual or potential harm to a child



Child discloses concern

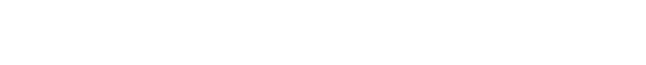
or

Staff member has a concern about a child

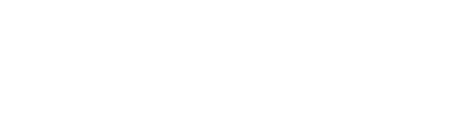


Staff member speaks to the Child Protection Co-ordinator Open GC1 form.

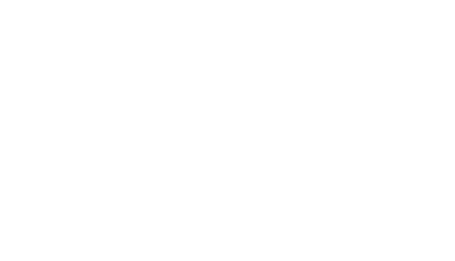
CPC gathers further information as appropriate



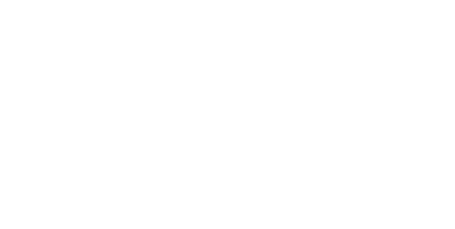
Child or Young Person is in need of protection without delay



Continue with referral to Duty Social Worker without delay and advise Head Teacher and QIO or Service Manager

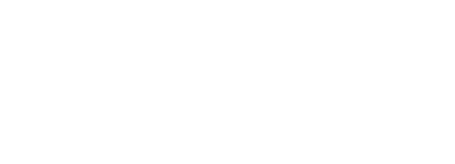


1. Telephone call using the referral checklist (RC1) (if necessary)
2. Follow up with record of child protection referral form (RR1) within 48hrs to social work Debrief referrer, HT and QIO or Service manager

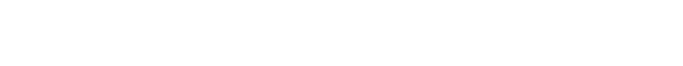


**Support Child or Young Person:**

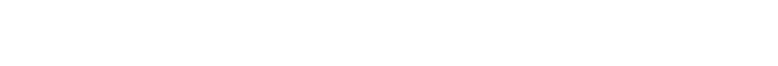
* Ensure child is in a place of safety within the establishment
* Await and act on Social Work advice



CPC (School) to open Child Protection Education Case File and include paper copy of referral form. Blue dot placed on child’s PPR.

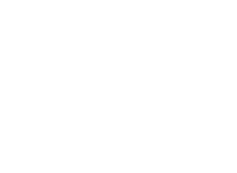


Child or Young Person is not in need of further protection at this time

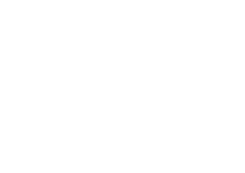


Senior Education staff informed and considers

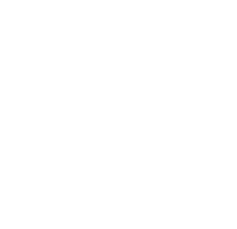
**GIRFEC single agency assessment**



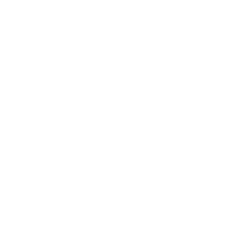
**IDENTIFIED NEED FOR SUPPORT FROM PARTNER AGENCIES**



**IDENTIFIED NEED FOR SUPPORT FROM WITHIN SCHOOL OR EDUCATION SERVICE**



Update chronology and begin GIRFEC multi-agency action planning process.



Update chronology and begin GIRFEC single-agency planning process.

**NO FURTHER ACTION**

Update chronology.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Child Protection Coordinator | 01561 376522 |
| Local Social Work Office | 01569 690538 |
| Social Work Out of Hours | 03456 08 12 06 |
| Police Scotland | 101 |
| Police Emergency | 999 |

**Allegations of child abuse must always be given the highest priority and referred immediately to Mrs Logue or in her absence, another member of the senior leadership team.**

**Dealing with Disclosures**

**NB** The pupil must be advised, at the earliest opportunity, that confidentiality **cannot**

be guaranteed but support will be available.

**Receive**

· Reassure the pupils, but only so far as is honest and reliable for example,

don’t make any promises you may not be able to keep, like “*I’ll stay with you”*

· **Don’t promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer.**

· Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it. For example, you could

say: “*You’re not to blame”*

**React**

· React to the pupil only as far as it is necessary for you to establish whether or

not you need to refer this matter, but don’t ‘interrogate’ for full details.

· **Do not ask leading questions,** for example: “*What did he do next?”* (This

assumes he did) “*Did he touch your private parts?”* Such questions may

invalidate your evidence (and the child’s) in any later prosecution in court.

· Do ask open questions like: *“Anything else to tell me?”, “And?”, “Yes?”.*

· Do not criticise the perpetrator, the pupils may love him/her and reconciliation

may be possible.

· Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff.

· Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.

**Record**

· Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand

and write them up as soon as possible. **Do not destroy your original notes**

**in case they are required by a Court.**

· Record date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words

used by the child. If the child uses sexual ‘pet’ words, record the actual words

used rather than translating them. record the conversation accurately, using the child’s own language. Do not add comments or opinions.

· Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.

· Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or

assumptions.

· Child protection concerns need to be passed on immediately. Do not leave

until a free period. Seek class cover from SLT if required.

· Try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

**Pupils may make a disclosure to a member of staff with whom they have a good relationship. If this happens staff must follow the procedures below**

**What next?**

You must **not** attempt in any circumstances to deal with this yourself but you **must** report  
it immediately.

**What should you do if there are indications of abuse?**

You must not enter into any discussion with the pupil but you must report it immediately.

**To whom should you report your concerns?**

The Child Protection Co-ordinator, Mrs Logue, Depute Head Teacher.In Mrs Logues’s absence, all reports must be made to the Senior Leadership Team.

**The Role of the Designated Person (Child Protection Co-ordinator)**

* To ensure that all staff know that the Depute Rector is responsible (and in his/her absence the Rector) for child protection issues.
* To raise awareness and confidence on child protection procedures and to ensure new staff are aware of these procedures.
* To ensure that all staff know about and have access to guidelines.
* To refer promptly all cases of suspected child abuse to the local Social Services Department or the Police Family Protection Unit. If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived then it must be remembered that we have no right to prevent the removal of the child. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the police should be called.
* To co-ordinate action where child abuse is suspected.
* To attend case conferences or nominate an appropriate member of staff to attend on his/her behalf.
* Maintain records of case conferences and other sensitive information in a secure confidential file and to disseminate information about the child only on a ‘need to  
  know basis’.
* To maintain and update as necessary the Child Protection Monitoring spreadsheet.
* To keep up-to-date with current practice by participating in training opportunities wherever possible.
* To organise regular training on child protection within the school.
* To facilitate and support the development of a whole-school policy on child protection.
* To pass on records and inform the key worker when a child is on the Child Protection Register leaves the school. The custodian of the register must also be informed.

**Protection Professional Integrity**

All staff should be aware that allegations of abuse can be made against them. The following advice is offered:

* Do maintain appropriate professional relationships with children and young people. Be aware of professional boundaries
* Do not believe that it cannot happen to you
* Do not rely on your good name to protect you
* Do not arrange to see children on their own when there is no one else around, unless you are required to do so as part of your job
* Do not touch children except for care and safety
* Do not use suggestive or sexual language
* Be mindful of other relevant policies such as intimate care
* If you feel that a young person is becoming attracted to you, or that you are attracted to them, share this with your line manager or the school Child Protection Co-ordinator
* Similarly, if you are uncomfortable with what you are seeing or hearing in relation to a colleague, share this with your line manager or the school Child Protection Co-ordinator

**Scotland's Children and Young People**

“A Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of his or her family background, has the best possible start in life.”

*“*It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright” 2002

“Providing and ensuring a safe and secure environment for all learners within a caring and compassionate ethos and with an understanding of wellbeing” (GTCS – Standard for Registration, pg 6)

The following website is extremely useful for finding out additional information about Child Protection policy, procedure, paperwork, guidelines, CPD opportunities:

[www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/childprotection](https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/fa/GirfecFalkirk/child-protection/child-protection-policies-procedures-and-guidelines/)

**Policy Last Updated:** March 2022

**Key Sources Consulted:** National Framework for Child Protection (2012) and National Guidance for Child Protection (2014)

Protecting Children & Young People in Aberdeenshire – identifying and responding to concerns – August 2017