

ARDUTHIE SCHOOL & NURSERY



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)

Mrs Christeen Seward - Head Teacher

Depute Child Protection Coordinators

Miss Lyn McGibbon – Depute Head Teacher
Miss Nicola Smith – Depute Head Teacher

Introduction

Child protection is part of our approach to Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Curriculum for Excellence. Every child or young person has the right to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. They have the right to be protected and be safe from harm. They have the right to be listened to and to have their views taken into account. They should expect to get the help they need, when they need it and be able to access help close to where they live.

Every child or young person has the right to be safe and protected, and to feel safe and protected from any avoidable situation or acts which might result in that child:

- Being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed in any way.
- Put at risk of physical, sexual or emotional harm, abuse or exploitation.
- Having their basic needs neglected or experiencing that their needs are met 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 treatment.
- Being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development.

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

All staff working in the school have a part to play in ensuring that children are safe. It is therefore essential that everyone in the school is aware of the safeguarding and child protection policy and the part they need to play to protect children.

Staff and volunteers in schools are well placed to observe physical, psychological or emotional changes in children that may indicate some form of child abuse. Also because of the close and trusting relationship that frequently exists between staff and pupils it may be that a child who is experiencing some form of abuse will share information in some way with them.

It is vital that all staff know what action to take should they have any concerns about a child, or should they receive information which suggests that the child may be experiencing some form of abuse. The procedures outlined in this policy are designed both to safeguard the wellbeing of the child and to ensure that all school staff know how to respond if they are concerned or become aware that a child may have been abused.

The following guidance is based on the Aberdeenshire Council GIRFEC document "*Protecting Children and Young People in Education: Book 3 Practice Guidelines*." This policy aims to provide clear and unambiguous guidance for staff. Should any aspect of the policy or the guidance within it be unclear to you then please contact **Mrs Christeen Saward, Head Teacher** who is the designated **Child Protection Coordinator**.

The policy and associated procedures will be reviewed regularly. All staff working within the school will receive a regular annual briefing on the policy, its operation and any amendments to it. This will normally take place at the first in-service day in August and will form part of each new member of staff's and any volunteer's induction program.

Child Protection Measures

Formal child protection measures can be broadly divided into a number of different stages, of which only the first two apply to all staff:

- Recognising actual or potential harm to a child.

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- Sharing concerns and initial information-gathering.
- Joint investigation/assessment.
- Medical examination and assessment.
- Child Protection Case Conferences.
- Developing a Child Protection Plan.

Recognising Actual or Potential Harm to a Child or Young Person

Concerns about actual or potential harm to a child or young person may arise over a period of time or in response to a particular incident. Concerns may arise as a result of direct observation or reports from the child or young person themselves, from a third party, or from concerns raised anonymously.

A child who has been abused and/or neglected may show obvious physical signs of injury or maltreatment. However, an assessment of whether a child is experiencing, or likely to experience, harm should also look closely at the child's behaviour and development. Some common behaviours which may indicate a cause for concern are detailed in the appendix section of this document.

Significant Harm and the Nature of Risk

Harm means the ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Significant harm is determined by comparing the health or development of a child in relation to what might be reasonably expected of a similar child.

Risk is part of everyday life. From a child protection perspective, it is the risk of significant harm that is central. There are no absolute criteria for judging what constitutes significant harm; sometimes, it can be a single traumatic event, such as a violent assault or poisoning; often, it is a combination of significant events which can interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. The challenge for practitioners is identifying which children require protective measures.

Where concerns are raised about the potential significant harm to a child, they must be considered child protection concerns. Failure to properly identify risk can lead to serious, and even fatal, outcomes for children.

Key Questions When the Safety of a Child is Raised

When considering the immediate needs of a child or young person once a concern about their possible safety is raised, it is essential that practitioners consider the following questions:

- Is this child at immediate risk?
- What is placing this child at immediate risk?
- What needs to happen to remove this risk now?

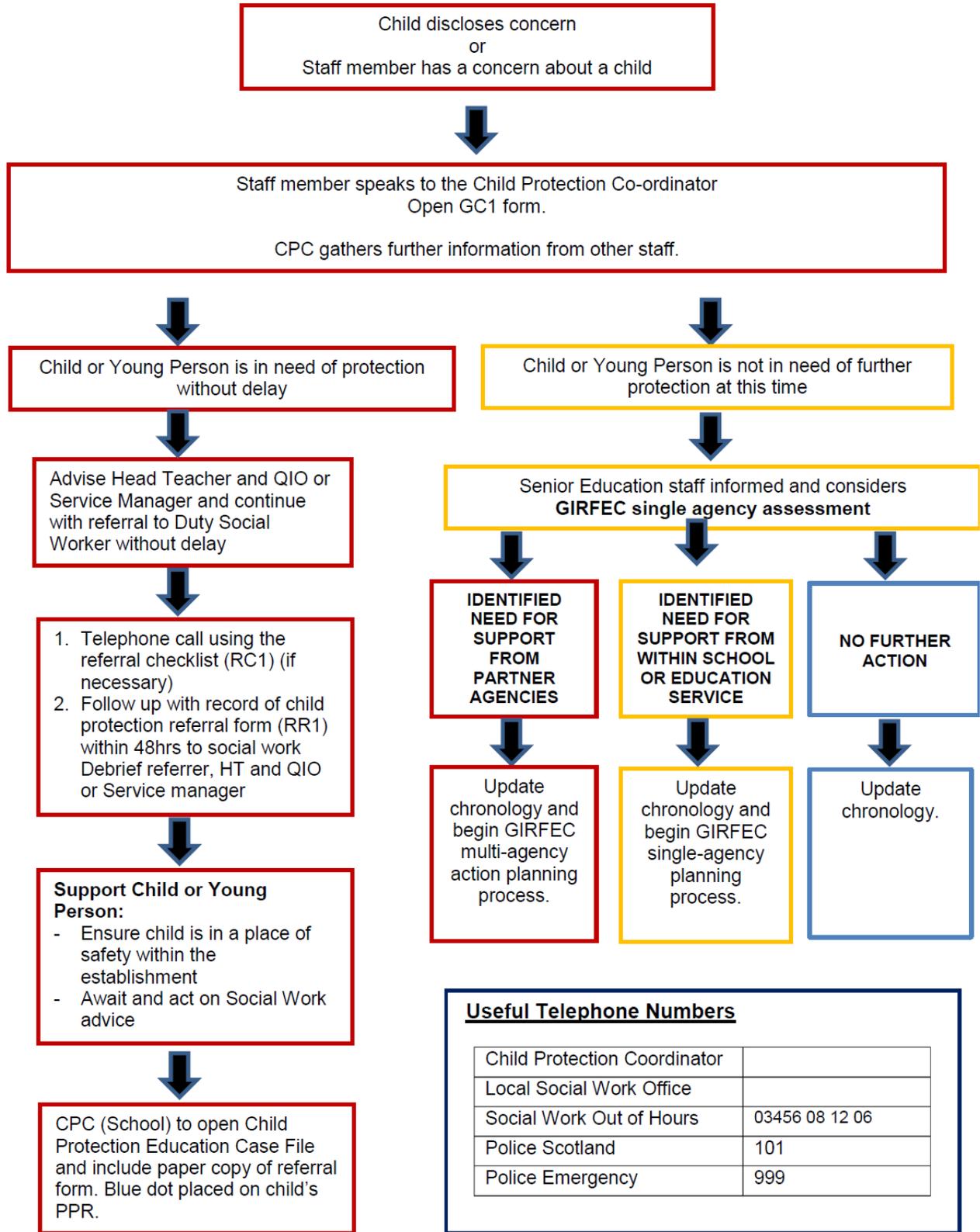
Responding to Concerns

All notifications of concerns about children or young people should be taken seriously. Staff responsible for responding to these concerns should be aware that even apparently low-level concerns may point to more serious and significant harm.

The process of responding to child protection concerns in diagrammatical form is shown in the following flowchart.

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



Useful Telephone Numbers

Child Protection Coordinator	
Local Social Work Office	
Social Work Out of Hours	03456 08 12 06
Police Scotland	101
Police Emergency	999

If any member of staff has a concerns relating to a child or young person at risk from any form of abuse, the procedure in outline below, and detailed in the Child Protection Procedure in Education Flow Chart shown above, must be followed. Members of staff must:

- Remember that the role is to observe, record and report. **Do not investigate.**
- Discuss your concerns immediately with the Child Protection Co-ordinator or if she is unavailable one of the Depute Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- Ensure that the information you have is accurately recorded using form.
- Be aware that the CPC will consider this information and may gather further information, dependent upon the situation.
- **Maintain confidentiality at all times.**
- If the incident occurs out of hours, or it is not possible to speak to the CPC or Depute, then it is important that you do not wait. Immediately contact the Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service on 03456 081206 or if you believe a crime has taken place the Police, directly.

Responding to a Disclosure and Guidance on Making Notes

The following points should be noted when responding to any disclosure.

- Stay calm.
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Tell the child or young person that you might have to let someone else know, but you will tell them who it is and what you are going to say.
- Listen to the child or young person and let them know you take what they say seriously.
- Give the child or young person time to say what they want to say.
- Try not to show alarm no matter how difficult the information.
- Do not ask any leading questions or suggest who might be responsible, no matter that clues may be contained in the information.
- Reassure the child or young person that they are doing the right thing by telling someone.
- Tell the child what action you are going to take.
- Do not ask the child to repeat their disclosure to another person.
- Remember that you too may need support as listening to an abused child is difficult.

As soon as practicable, using the language used by the child or young person, make a handwritten note in detail of the information shared with you. Record the date and time of the disclosure and sign the note. Share your information with the Child Protection Coordinator immediately.

Guidance on Making Notes

Notes should be made carefully, accurately and factually and as soon as practicable after the event. Hand written notes are acceptable.

- All notes must be signed and dated, with name and post held printed clearly.
- Signs of physical injury should be described in detail and/or sketched. **At no time should photographic records be taken.**
- Any relevant comment by the child or by an adult who might be the abuser, should be recorded, preferably quoting the words actually used.
- Opinion should be restricted to the demeanour of the child.
- The personal opinions of members of staff must not be included

Possible Signs of a Cause for Concern

<p>Physical abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injuries, particularly if they are recurrent. • Improbable excuses given to explain injuries. • Refusal to explain and discuss injuries. • Untreated injuries or delay in reporting them. • Admission of punishment which appears excessive. • Fear of parents being contacted. • Fear of returning home. • Fear of medical help. • Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather. • Withdrawal from physical contact. • Self-destructive tendencies. • Aggression towards others. • Chronic running away. 	<p>Emotional Abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of parents being contacted. • Admission of punishment which appears excessive. • Physical, intellectual and emotional development lags. • Significant decline in concentration. • Sudden speech disorders. • Over-reaction to mistakes. • Continual self-deprecation. • Fear of new situations. • Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations. • Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, constant hair-twisting, excessive thumb-sucking). • Self-mutilation. • Extremes of passivity or aggression. • Drug/solvent abuse. • Compulsive stealing/scavenging. • Indiscriminate friendliness. • Socio-emotional immaturity.
<p>Sexual Abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hint about secrets they cannot tell. • Say that a friend has a problem. • Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you. • Seem to be keeping secret something which is worrying them. • Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught. • Have unexplained sources of money. • Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn or regressing to younger behaviour patterns. • Stop enjoying previously liked activities, such as music, sports, art, scouts, brownies. • Be reluctant to undress for gym. • Become fearful of or refuse to see certain adults for no apparent reason. • Having terrifying dreams. • Act in a sexual way, inappropriate to their age. • Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse. • Start wetting themselves. • Have urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital, anal or throat areas. 	<p>Neglect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant hunger. • Emaciation. • Constant tiredness. • Poor personal hygiene. • Poor state of clothing. • Untreated medical problems. • Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school; • Low self-esteem. • Destructive tendencies. • Neurotic behaviour e.g. rocking; constant hair-twisting; excess thumb-sucking. • Limited social relationships. • Chronic running away. • Compulsive stealing or scavenging. • Significant lack of growth. • Weight loss. • Hair loss. • Poor skin or muscle tone. • Circulatory disorders.



Article 3 (*best interests of the child*)

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children

Article 19 (*protection from violence, abuse and neglect*)

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 24 (*health and health services*)

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 33 (*drug abuse*)

Governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs.

Article 34 (*sexual exploitation*)

Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

If you have any concerns relating to a child at risk from any form of harm, Child Protection Protocol must be followed immediately.