



Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

We are committed to improving the life chances of children and young people. We acknowledge that the child's welfare and wellbeing are paramount and that we have a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding our children.

The following policy provides guidance for all setting staff and follows the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. The sole focus of this policy is the protection, safety and welfare of the child.

The Context for Child Protection

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014

The national guidance sets out common standards for child protection services in Scotland, making it clear how all agencies should work together, where appropriate, to respond to concerns early and effectively, ensuring practice is consistent and of high quality. It is supported by a suite of other policies and should be seen in the wider context of GIRFEC the Early Years Framework (2009) and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It is supported by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Responsibility

It is the duty of everyone involved in early years to safeguard the welfare and interests of the children. Child protection is the responsibility of everyone who works with children and families and having a skilled and competent workforce, along with relevant guidance and procedures, ensures that children can be protected. Everyone working with children and their families, including all professionals, volunteers and members of the community, need to appreciate the important role that they play in being vigilant and providing robust support for child protection.

We have a responsibility to recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child. Staff will be expected to identify and consider the child's needs, share appropriate and relevant information and concerns with other agencies, and work collaboratively with the family and other services to secure safer outcomes for the child.

In order to enable staff to fulfil their obligations, we will provide annual child protection awareness raising and training for all staff regardless of their role within the setting. We will ensure that there is a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) with overall responsibility for child protection. They will be responsible for ensuring all relevant procedures are followed when a child protection case arises. Confidentiality will be protected, but where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be at risk of harm, relevant information will be shared with key partner agencies. Staff will not investigate any concerns but will gather initial information and establish basic facts such as what happened, when, where and by whom. All concerns should be shared without delay.

Early years staff help all children build resilience, and where they are vulnerable, make sense of their situations and recover from trauma. Where staff in early years have a concern about a child's wellbeing, they may discuss this with the health visitor.

Where concerns about possible harm or abuse arise, these should always be shared with the appropriate agency (normally social work or police).

Practice guide to chronologies is available from the Care Inspectorate.

Types of Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. In a child protection context, there are four different types of abuse that can be identified:

- Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child.
- Emotional abuse is persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment of a child causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- Sexual abuse is any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented.
- Child neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Further information on types of abuse and neglect can be found in the Guidance p11-12 of this policy. Other indicators of risk that may affect some children include Domestic Abuse, Problem Alcohol Use and Parental Substance Misuse. For further information on these and other indicators of risk see the Guidance p112-162.

Procedures

All staff have a role in relation to child protection. It is imperative that the appropriate procedures are followed in relation to Reporting, Recording and External Agency Recording. Staff need to understand their own role and the roles of other services when responding to concerns about a child.

Reporting

Staff must report any concerns they have about a child to the designated CPO within the setting. Information can be disclosed in several ways including:

- When a child indicates or discloses harm.
- When a third party discloses the possibility of harm.
- When you are concerned that a child is or may be being harmed.
- When you have witnessed or heard something that causes you concern about a child's safety.

You will not be asked to investigate any concerns of potential harm whether they are reported to you by another person or are identified and raised by you personally. If a staff member has child protection concerns about a child these should be discussed with the CPO. All relevant information must be reported without delay and the CPO will decide subsequent action.

Initial information should be gathered, and basic facts established, that relate to the concern, namely what, where, when and by whom. This will include suspicions or indicators of significant harm and/or direct information of concern for a child. All information must be recorded on a Chronology Form. The Child Protection Report Form (CPRF) may be completed depending on the circumstances. This may be held in-house, or sent to external agencies, as deemed appropriate. Further information on sharing concerns and initial information gathering can be found on p88 of the Guidance.

Recording

It is important to record all information about children and their families within the Child Protection Chronology. This will ensure a record of all facts and procedures that have been followed, as well as agencies that have been spoken to or consulted, with as appropriate. When completing the CPRF form only facts will be recorded, including what has actually been said by a child or another person. The actual words used must be recorded, as well as details of the time, place and any other relevant information.

External Agency Reporting

The CPO will make the decision when to report to external agencies with regards to concerns relating to the safety of a child and child protection. Staff may be required to cooperate and work with multi-agency colleagues in responding to and supporting children and families, who may be subject to ongoing child protection procedures and responses. The process of responding to child protection concerns in diagrammatic form can be found on p85 of the Guidance.

NSPCC Helpline:

Tel 0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk

Child Protection:

Tel: