

Child Protection Policy



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

"All children and young people in Scotland have the right to be cared for and protected from harm and to grow up in a safe environment in which their rights and needs are respected. The welfare of children is paramount."

"Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children live safely and can reach their full potential."

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland outlines the collective responsibility of all agencies, professional bodies and services that deliver adult and or child services to recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child¹.

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 places a specific duty on the local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area, and places a duty on the local authority to investigate if it believes that a child is or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Aberdeen City Council's Protecting Children Policy (2007) states that '*the Council must work with its partners to make the city a safer place for children and young people through prevention, protection and support.*' The policy covers the services that the authority provides, all services commissioned by the local authority and all services delivered in buildings owned by the authority. It applies to all paid employees, volunteers and contractors.

¹ In the context of this guidance child refers to a child or young person under the age of 16.

This policy endorses and takes account of the National Guidance on Child Protection and the N.E.S.C.P.C. guidelines. The policy was prepared on the 18 January 2016 and consulted upon with professional associations during January 2016. The policy was agreed by the Senior Management Team on 10 February 2016 and is displayed at the front of school. Individual copies may be obtained from the school office.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

We aim to:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers within Northfield Academy are aware of their responsibility to protect our pupils from all forms of neglect, abuse and discrimination as far as is possible;
- ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of our child protection guidelines;
- ensure all child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures reflect current legislation and guidance;
- ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the indicators of neglect and the different categories of abuse and are familiar with some common signs linked to the categories;
- ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the steps taken once issues of neglect are recognised and child abuse is recognised or disclosed;
- ensure that our pupils, through our health and wellbeing, have experience of appropriate life and social skills to make them aware of how to resist or avoid abuse and how they can seek the support of the known adults within school;
- ensure that all parents and pupils are aware of and understand the child protection policy and the information which a variety of agencies hold and with whom they may be shared;
- ensure that all parents' views are taken into account with regard to information sharing with or without their consent;
- ensure that all child protection reports are recorded and stored securely, in accordance with the guidance on record keeping located in the folder Child Protection in the Education Service;
- ensure that all child protection reports contribute to the child's assessment and any plan which will regularly be reviewed in order to ensure that it meets the child's needs.

We will achieve these aims by:

- reviewing our policy annually to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and any new legislation;
- ensuring that all staff are briefed on local authority and school policy regarding child protection and have their knowledge updated and refreshed at the beginning of the school session in August;
- ensuring that all new staff and students will receive child protection training within 2 weeks of their appointment;

- ensuring that all staff complete the online training which can be accessed at www.oil.net;
- ensuring that all members of staff and volunteers have a copy of Northfield Academy's Child Protection Policy and know where to access the N.E.S.C.P.C. guidelines and the Protecting Children and Young People Framework for Standards. Folders containing these documents are available and held by the Lead Child Protection Officer, Principal Teachers of Guidance and the Library;
- issuing all members of staff and volunteers with the school child protection policy which outlines the categories of abuse and details the steps which a member of staff must take if child abuse is suspected or disclosed;
- issuing all members of staff with a poster outlining what to do with concerns, suspicions and disclosures for posting in every classroom and office;
- monitoring our Health and Wellbeing programme to ensure appropriate life and social skills are being taught and that pupils are aware of how to resist or avoid abuse and how to approach the known adults in school;
- ensuring standard records are kept in a consistent manner and stored securely within school in line with the advice from Aberdeen City Council.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

“All individuals working with children have a duty and responsibility to share any suspicions or concerns of a child protection nature, which come to their attention.” (NESCPC, p23)

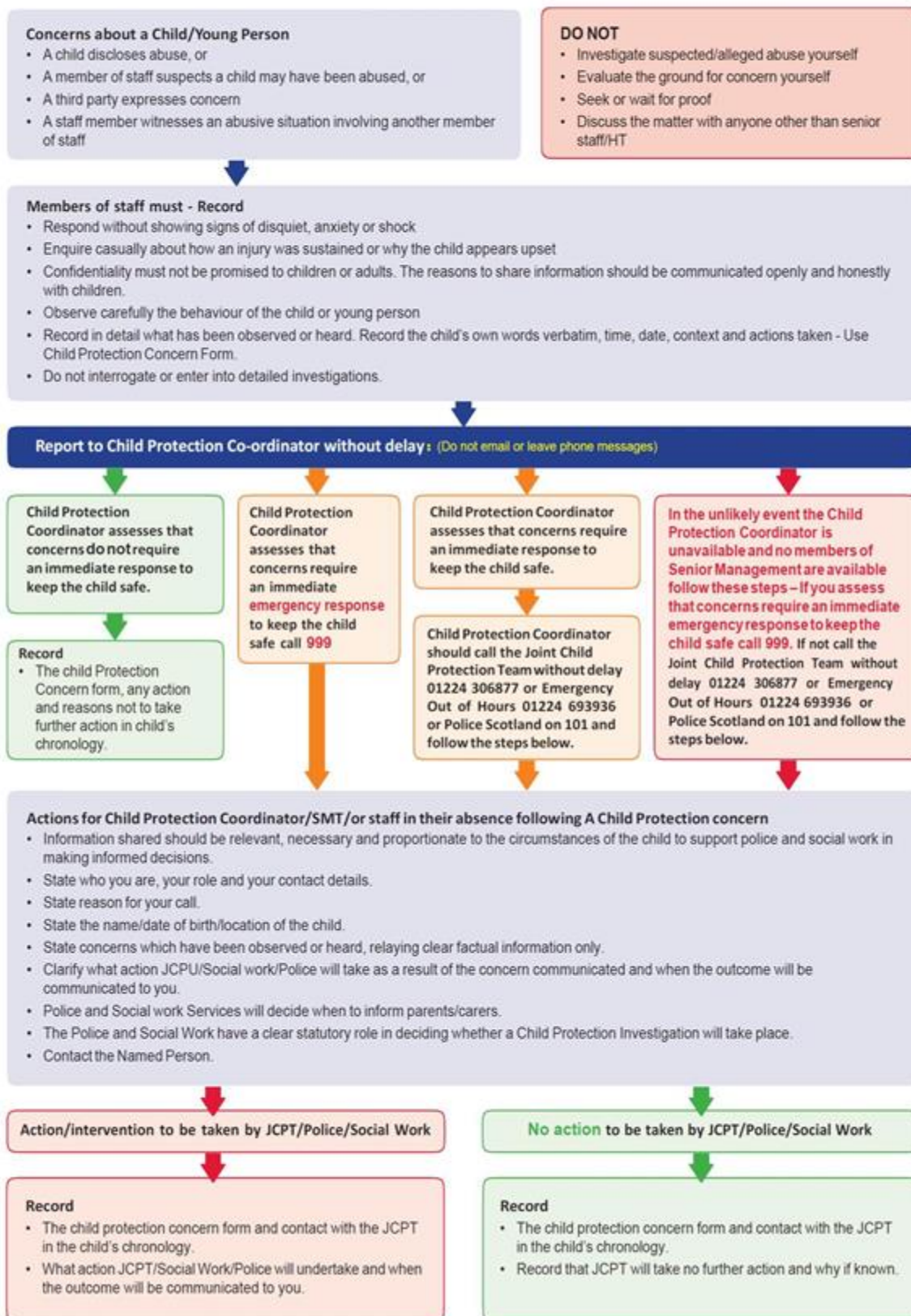
All school staff and volunteers are well placed through pupil contact to observe physical and psychological changes in a child which might indicate abuse or need. Whilst the statutory responsibility for investigating cases of child abuse rests with social work and the police, teachers and other school staff have a real responsibility in identifying, monitoring and reporting possible cases of emotional, physical and sexual abuse as well as other support needs of a child. Definitions of the categories of abuse can be found in Appendix A.

It is essential to maintain strict confidentiality in all child protection matters. You have a duty to pass on your concerns but should not discuss the concerns with anyone who is not relevant to the enquiry. Breach of confidentiality is a serious disciplinary matter and will be reported to the Quality Improvement Officer for the school. All staff and volunteers should be aware of their role in any child protection matter. Every child's opinion should be listened to and valued. Advice on listening to the child can be found in Appendix B.

4. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN, SUSPICION OR RECEIVE A DISCLOSURE ABOUT A CHILD:

Everyone within the school has a responsibility to identify and pass on concerns, suspicions or disclosures they receive about a child to the school's Lead Child Protection Officer who will listen carefully to your concern. Guidance for dealing with any concerns, suspicions or disclosures are summarised in the flow chart below and explained further thereafter:

Child Protection Procedural Flowchart for School and Nursery staff in Aberdeen City



- If a member of staff has a concern, suspicion or received a disclosure about a child, it is **crucial that the above summary is followed** in conjunction with the advice given below;
- In all cases, the facts as known should be **recorded on the Child Protection Concern Form (Appendix C)** of this policy and **forwarded, in person, to the Lead Child Protection Officer**;
- Members of staff **must not ask leading questions** when dealing with concerns, suspicions or disclosures (see Appendix B);
- A full inquiry or **investigation by a single member of staff or volunteer worker must be avoided** because collection of evidence is a specialist police / social work role. Inappropriate inquiries may prevent successful prosecution.
- In all cases when passing your concerns to the Lead Child Protection Officer, you should **keep a written log of all incidents/events on the Child Protection Concern Form, Appendix C, for recording in the child's chronology**. It is important that this log is completed with times and dates noted. The report must be forwarded to the Lead Child Protection Officer who in turn will ensure a copy is passed to the school's Quality Improvement Officer if appropriate. **Any action, or decision not to take further action and the reasons why, should also be recorded on school log, and kept in the child's confidential file.**
- **If the Lead Child Protection Officer is not available then concerns should be passed to any member of the Senior Management Team who will fulfil the function of the Lead Child Protection Officer in his/her absence.**
- In the unlikely event that no member of the Senior Management Team are available, then concerns should be shared with the named person for the child. In Northfield Academy the named person is the Principal Teacher of Guidance for the child's House group.
- The Lead Child Protection Officer may contact any agency who may have information about the child or family and discuss concerns and relevant information about the child and their circumstances in the child's best interests. They will also check the Child Protection Register.
- **If the Lead Child Protection Officer believes that there is sufficient concern of neglect or abuse, they will contact the Joint Police and Social Work Child Protection Unit at Bucksburn on 01224 306877** and discuss the case; this will include a discussion as to how parents are to be engaged if appropriate.
- If you have significant concerns that a child is in immediate danger and neither the Lead Child Protection Officer, a member of the Senior Management Team or the named person is available, please contact the Joint Police and Social Work Child Protection Unit at Bucksburn 01224 306879 for advice and guidance. **Do not delay in contacting the JCPU because you cannot contact the Lead Child Protection Officer, senior management team or named person - a child's safety may be at risk.**

5. THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER AND KEY CONTACTS

- Registration is an administrative system for alerting workers to the fact that there is sufficient professional concern about a child to warrant a multi- agency child protection plan.
- The Lead Child Protection Officer lead can phone to check if a child's name has been recorded on the child protection register.
- The North East of Scotland Child Protection Team maintains the central register for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray.
- The register has information regarding the referral, whether the abuse was substantiated, nature of injury and by whom inflicted

6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually. This will be undertaken by the Head Teacher and Lead Child Protection Officer in line with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland will check that these policies are up to date and that all staff and volunteers understand what they have to do if they have a concern about a child.

**ACCEPTED AS NORTHFIELD ACADEMY'S POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION
BY THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM ON 27 February 2020.**

SIGNED

Head Teacher

END

Appendix A

Definitions of the categories of Child Abuse

Child abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It knows no geographical or social boundaries. All forms of child abuse involve the elements of a power imbalance, exploitation and the absence of true consent. (see p 21 - 23 of NESCP)

Categories of Child Abuse:

- **Physical Injury** – actual or attempted physical injury including the administration of toxic substances.
- **Physical Neglect** – child denied food, sleep, clothing, cleanliness, shelter, warmth. Left unattended or inadequately supervised.
- **Emotional Abuse / Emotional Neglect** – coldness, hostility, criticism inappropriate punishments, isolation, scapegoating. Wilful destruction of a child's confidence.
- **Sexual Abuse** – when any person by design or by neglect causes the child to be involved in any activity that might lead to sexual arousal or gratification including organised networks. This includes rape, intercourse, lewd and libidinous practices.
- **Non-Organic Failure to Thrive/ Neglect** – failure to meet expected weight and growth norms or developmental milestones, malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation. This occurs when a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. A lack of appropriate care results in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child. Physical neglect may also include a failure to secure appropriate medical treatment for the child, or when an adult carer persistently pursues, or allows the child to follow, a lifestyle inappropriate to the child's developmental needs or which jeopardises the child's health.

This category also covers children who are left on their own for long periods and do not receive enough stimulation or suffer sensory deprivation, especially in infancy. They may also not experience enough nurturing, nor have many caregivers.

Severe neglect of young children is associated with major detrimental effects on growth and intellectual development. Constant neglect can lead to health and long-term developmental problems socially, emotionally and educationally.

Neglect in some cases can result in physical disability and deformity and even death.

In its chronic form, non-organic failure to thrive can result in the child suffering more serious illnesses, a reduced potential height and, with young children particularly, the results may be life-threatening over a relatively short period.

Vulnerability Factors – issues which can affect the wellbeing and safety of children:

Children may need our support or help but not be victims of child abuse. Children may need our support through difficulties at certain times in their lives e.g. divorce, new partners in the home, new families, bereavement suicide, moving home, moving school, adoption, fostering etc

The Childrens Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011 introduced new grounds for referral and these should also be considered when thinking about children who may be in need of support, these grounds include

- The child has, or is likely to have, a close connection with a person who has carried out domestic abuse.

- The child has, or is likely to have, a close connection with a person who has committed a schedule 1 offence.
- The child has misused alcohol.
- The child has misused a drug (whether or not a controlled drug).
- The child is being, or is likely to be, subjected to physical, emotional or other pressure to enter into a marriage or civil partnership, or is likely to become a member of the same household as such a child.

For the purpose of this report “a close connection”, would mean that the child is a member of the same household as the person or the person is not living in the same household but the child has significant contact with them.

Difficulties such as these should be reported in the same way as you would report concerns re child abuse as they are still child protection issues and may require adjustments to the curriculum or input from other agencies

Additional Factors / Risk Indicators

The following factors should act as a prompt for all staff working in an adult or child care setting, to consider how they may impact on a child. Where these co-exist, risk may be increased:

- Domestic Abuse
- Parental alcohol misuse
- Parental drug misuse
- Children or Young People experiencing or affected by disability
- Children and young people experiencing or affected by mental health problems
- Children and young people who display harmful or problematic sexual behaviour
- Non engaging families
- Sudden unexpected death in infants and children

Harm outside the home

- Child Exploitation
- Child Trafficking
- Online and Mobile phone child safety
- Children and young people who place themselves at risk
- Underage sexual activity
- Forced Marriage
- Concealed pregnancy
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation

Difficulties such as these should be reported in the same way as you would report concerns re child abuse as they are still child protection issues and may require adjustments to the curriculum or input from other agencies

Appendix B

Listening to the Child

The first steps when listening to a child are crucial. They often feel frightened, confused and vulnerable.

- Be receptive.
- Take it seriously – there is a reason for the child imparting such information.
- Reassure the child they are right to tell, listen carefully, avoid showing any kind of shock reaction.
- Make no promises about keeping it confidential or not telling anybody.
- Tell the child you need to seek help.
- Make a careful record of what was said – use the child's words not your own. In all cases, record the facts as known on the Child Protection Concern Form (Appendix C) of this policy for forwarding, in person, to the Lead Child Protection Officer.
- Don't jump to conclusions, speculate or accuse anyone.
- Don't use or ask leading questions: this is not your role.
 - A full inquiry or investigation by a single member of staff or volunteer worker must be avoided because collection of evidence is a specialist police / social work role. Inappropriate inquiries may prevent successful prosecution.
- Inform the Lead Child Protection Officer, failing that, another member of the SMT, failing that, the named person for the child and, failing that contact the JCPU yourself - a child's safety may be at risk.

Appendix C**Child Protection Concern Form**

Member of Staff Reporting: _____

Social Work Involvement (if known): Yes / No

Social Worker name if known: _____

Name of Child _____

Gender _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Parent/Guardian/Carer _____

Date Time	Incident / Concern	Action – please initial or name each action

Appendix D

Legislative Framework

The legislative framework for intervention in Child Protection matters in Scotland is found mainly in the following:

- **The Children (Scotland) Act 1995** which requires Local Authorities to promote the welfare of children in need, and to make enquiries when they receive information that a child may be in need of compulsory measures of supervision. It also requires the Children's Reporter and the Children's Hearing to consider who are deemed to be in need of compulsory measures of supervision.
- **The Police (Scotland) Act 1997**, which requires the police to guard, watch and patrol in order to prevent crime, preserve order and protect life and property and to pass information to the Procurator Fiscal when an offence may have been committed.
- **The Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 - Schedule 1** which lists offences against children.
- **Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003**. As of 10 January 2005 this act comes into force. An individual who is disqualified from working in a child care position will commit an offence if they apply for, offer to do, or accept such work. An organisation will have a duty to refer individuals working in a child care position to the DWCL (Disqualified from Working with Children List) if the individual has harmed a child or placed a child at risk and has been dismissed or moved away from access to children as a consequence. Similarly the organisation will have a duty to refer an individual who would have been dismissed but resigned, retired or was made redundant before the dismissal process was completed.
- **Protection of Children Act (2003)** – Implications for Disclosure Scotland applications.
- **Additional Support for Learning Act (2005 and 2009)**.
- **Data Protection Act (1998)** – data should be gathered and processed fairly and held securely and only used for the purpose for which it was collated.
- **Children and young Peoples (Scotland) Act 2014**
- **Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland July 2015**

Legislation and practice are underpinned by the principles from the articles of **the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)**.

Further detailed information regarding child protection can be obtained within the N.E.S.C.P.C. guidelines (online version and Framework for Standards – Protecting Children and Young People).

Appendix E

Child Protection in the Education Service Folder Contents

1. Introduction

2. Protecting Children and Young People

- The Charter
- Framework for Standards

3. Child Protection Partnership

- National Guidelines for Child Protection in Scotland 2014

4. Corporate Protecting Children Guidance

- Corporate Protecting Children Policy and Guidance
- Policy on behaviour of staff in schools towards children and young people

5. Children Missing from Education

- Children Missing from Education Leaflet
- ACC Guidance on Children Missing from Education

6. Happy Safe and Achieving their Potential

7. Tools for Assessment

8. Child Sexual Exploitation

- Forced Marriage
- Safeguarding Children in Scotland who may have been trafficked
- Sexting
- FGM

9. Consent and Confidentiality when Sharing Information

10. Guidance for Preparing a Child Protection Policy for an Educational Establishment

11. Establishment Child Protection Policy

12. Guidance on Record Keeping in Educational Establishments / Transfer of Records

13. Local Information & Procedures

- ACC Policy on Behaviour of Staff towards Children and Young People

14. Getting it Right for Every Child

- Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011

15. Private Fostering

16. Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland 2015

17. Useful Links

18. Self Evaluation Process

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Advice
- Audit against Q.I. 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection

19. Annual Update

- Aberdeen City Council Powerpoint Presentation
- Register of staff attending annual update and follow up training sessions