

Libberton Primary School



Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

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Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all pupils who are in contact with members of our school staff team. All staff are briefed on the content of this policy and their role in responding to concerns about young people annually. All staff are expected to comply with this policy, and to seek clarification if/as necessary.

In all aspects of our work, the needs, interests and wellbeing of our pupils will be prioritised. This policy and the guidance contained within it therefore has priority over other policies and advice.

The scope of this policy covers the roles, responsibilities and actions which are expected of all members of the staff team.

Context

Our work is shaped by a number of local and national drivers, all of which are underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The national approach to improving outcomes for young people in Scotland is Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC). This provides a framework for us when working with children and their families and should enable the right support to be provided at the right time. The practice of all professionals working with young people in Scotland is also underpinned by the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023 - gov.scot](#)

Equality and diversity matters were clarified and streamlined through the Equality Act (2010) and in accordance with this our Child Protection & Safeguarding processes are consistent, fair and centre on individual outcomes and enablement. We expect all staff to be mindful of equality and diversity issues, and all children can expect to have equal access to and delivery of Safeguarding and Child Protection processes, supports and services.

Each member of our staff team holds responsibility in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding according to the operational responsibility of their role.

Policy Statement

Every young person has the right to be safe and protected, and to feel safe and protected from any situation or act which might result in them:

- Being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed
- Being put at risk of physical, sexual or emotional harm, abuse or exploitation
- Having their basic needs neglected
- Having their needs met in ways that are not appropriate to their age and stage
- Being denied the sustained support and care necessary to thrive and develop
- Being denied access to appropriate medical treatment
- Being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development

... in accordance with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Our school is committed to ensuring that:

- Young people are heard, and their concerns are taken seriously
- The right of young people to care and protection from harm is firmly upheld regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity factors, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- We maintain an ethos which promotes and safeguards the welfare and wellbeing of all young people, and where people are comfortable about sharing any concerns which arise
- There is clarity for all members of the school community about how to appropriately share concerns when they arise
- We take account of the additional needs of young people from minority groups, who have disabilities, or who face other barriers to learning, in order to ensure that there is no discrimination preventing access to support
- The interests of all staff are safeguarded as they engage with all learners as part of school business
- All staff are suitably trained in safeguarding matters, and have clear guidance to follow where concerns about a young person are identified
- Clarity is available to all staff on roles and responsibilities involved in Child Protection
- We are an effective and reliable part of the multi-agency process with and for our young people as need dictates
- We fulfil our legislative duties relating to Safeguarding, including Child Protection

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

This policy provides the framework which defines the individual and collective responsibility of the staff team in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults. This is a priority for all members of staff.

What do we mean by Child Protection?

Child Protection means protecting a young person from the likelihood or risk of significant harm caused by abuse as defined in the National Guidance (below). There are four primary categories of child abuse – Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Neglect.

“Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, significant harm to the child.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.”

National Guidance for Child Protection 2014

What do we mean by Safeguarding?

Safeguarding extends beyond the area of Child Protection and includes all that we do to promote welfare and wellbeing of young people and vulnerable adults as we work to achieve positive outcomes. We use the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) practice model to ensure that our young people are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured active, respected, responsible and included. We work in partnership with young people, their families and relevant professionals to address concerns which impact on any of the eight areas of wellbeing as the need arises.

Our young people are all supported by universal provision through what is provided within classrooms and as part of our core provision. Those who need more individualised support will be able to access services within school and from our partner agencies based on who can provide a service which meets their need. We aim to ensure that our young people can develop the knowledge, skills and resilience to keep themselves safe now and as they move into adult life.

Child Protection processes are a significant part of our approach to Safeguarding, but we also consider that our work in the following areas as important contributors to our Safeguarding arrangements:

- Administration of medicines
- Adult Protection
- Adverse weather arrangements
- Attendance processes
- Additional Support for Learning
- Bullying
- Children Missing from Education procedures
- Complaints/compliments
- Corporate parenting

- Enrolment & Induction processes
- Equalities
- Exclusions
- First Aid provision
- Free school meals & clothing grants (& emergency foodbank referrals)
- GDPR/Data Protection
- Health & Safety (including emergency procedures, accident reporting etc)
- Multi-Agency working
- Prevent (Section 26 of the Counter-terrorism and Security Act, 2015)
- Prevention of/Recovery from Offending
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Pupil Voice
- Records Retention/storage
- Restorative Practice
- Risk Assessment
- Sharing of student information (eg medical needs)
- Substance Misuse (response to)
- Support at transition points
- Young Carer Support

What do we mean by Risk?

In the context of Child Protection and Safeguarding, risk is considered as the likelihood or probability of a particular outcome given the presence of factors in a young person's life.

Risk is part of everyday life – a toddler learning to walk will face the probability of stumbles and the risk of scrapes, but this does not mean they should be discouraged from walking.

Risks identified may be deemed acceptable, and/or they may be able to be reduced by parents/carers or through early intervention.

Where risks cause (or are likely to cause) significant harm to a young person, a Child Protection response is required. Where a young person has already been harmed, assessment involves considering the risk of repeated harm, and at the potential effects of continued exposure over time.

Roles and Responsibilities - Overview

Child Protection is a core responsibility of all staff regardless of whether there is direct contact with young people through their core duties. All staff must be fully aware of their responsibilities in respect of keeping young people safe and seek advice from the Child Protection Coordinator regarding any uncertainty.

Our staff team plays a crucial role in the support and protection of young people. We are well placed to observe physical and psychological indicators which may suggest exposure to abuse or risk of harm, and we are able to meaningfully contribute to assessing and supporting vulnerable young people.

Specific roles and responsibilities relating to Child Protection vary according to each professional role within our school. We strive to have a staff team who are individually and collectively trusted and considered to be a source of effective support and advice to our young people.

Concerns must be shared within school at an early stage by the person who identifies them. Intervention will range from school level to multi agency and statutory according to the circumstances and context of the child. Specific school staff (CP Co-ordinators) may be asked to support investigation into reported or suspected abuse or neglect.

All relevant documents can be found in the Staff Information Folder and/or in the Shared Google Drive.

Roles and Responsibilities – Individual Members of Staff

Every member of staff working with young people has a responsibility to:

- Help keep young people safe and well
- Be aware of signs that young people may need support, be at risk, and/or be suffering from harm and/or neglect – and be vigilant to these
- Contact the Child Protection Co-ordinator immediately when they have concerns, hear an allegation, or receive a disclosure. Staff must not investigate the concern.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Facilitate quick access to support through own action or appropriate onward referral
- Ensure that their work is carried out in ways that prevent harm to young people whilst promoting the safety and wellbeing of all involved
- Attend school Child Protection briefings and further relevant training (will vary depending on role)
- Ensure that actions and conduct are always professional in order to mitigate against concern arising from interaction with young people
- Be proactive in learning more about current risks that affect young people within our local community and school
- Request clarification promptly should any part of the Child Protection policy or process be unclear

Roles and Responsibilities – Visiting staff (including Educational Psychologists, specialist teachers, supply staff, music instructors, volunteers and active school co-ordinators)

The roles and responsibilities already outlined for individual members of staff apply equally to staff visiting the school for whatever reason. In addition to this:

- Visiting staff should familiarise themselves with the Child Protection arrangements in each setting they visit in order to be able to respond to concerns about a young person as they arise
- Visiting staff must ensure they know who the Child Protection Co-ordinator is in each setting they work in, and must ensure they share any concerns (however minor) with that member of staff as soon as they arise
- Visiting staff must check regularly that they are aware of any changes in arrangements for Child Protection

Roles and Responsibilities – Child Protection Co-ordinator

The key role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator is to ensure the effective operation of Child Protection procedures within our school. Our Child Protection Co-ordinator is Laura Forde (Head Teacher) with Adrienne Sheridan (Principal Teacher) as backup.

Should a member of staff believe they have identified a Child Protection concern and be unable to contact a member of the SLT or PTs Guidance, the member of staff should pass information directly to Social Work (0303 123 1008 ask for Child and Family duty worker) or Police Scotland (101).

The Child Protection Co-ordinator has the following strategic responsibilities in respect of Child Protection processes within our school:

- To be a single point of contact for staff and other agencies for all matters relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding
- To implement the South Lanarkshire Council Child Protection policy and procedures
- To ensure that young people and parents/carers have information, understand procedures for Child Protection, and are aware that senior staff can be approached at any time
- To comply with SLC guidelines on appropriate and secure record retention and recording systems for Child Protection information
- To liaise with other agencies to support investigations, court proceedings, Children's Hearings and case reviews
- To have a strategic oversight of concerns for individual young people and monitor to identify patterns or accumulating concerns
- To attend Child Protection training and/or strategy update sessions
- To ensure that all staff have access to Child Protection guidance and appropriate professional learning materials
- To develop staff understanding of Child Protection training during induction
- To ensure that all staff in the establishment are trained annually in accordance with South Lanarkshire Council's guidance
- To ensure that a Child Protection training record is maintained
- To lead in the development of policy and practice, ensuring compliance with national and local guidance
- To promote and support curricular input in relation to personal safety/Child Protection
- To monitor and evaluate practice regularly
- To lead on the evaluation of Child Protection arrangements and practice on an annual basis
- To ensure that the school team contributes effectively and appropriately to multi-agency Child Protection procedures including:
 - Reports being submitted timeously for Child Protection Case Conferences, Looked after Child Reviews, IRD's, Core Group meetings or Children's Hearings
 - Contributing to the development of Child Protection Plans

The Child Protection Co-ordinator has the following operational responsibilities in relation to Child Protection processes within our school:

- The responsibility to ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to concerns being reported as outlined in CP Co-ordinator's guidance pack
- To listen to and record the concerns of young people, staff or third parties in relation to Child Protection
- To compare new or updated/changing information relating to young people's circumstances in order to ascertain whether there is a risk of harm to the young person or their wellbeing

- To gather further relevant information from appropriate sources as a matter of urgency after a concern has been raised
- To make an assessment and determine whether the young person is in need of protection without delay
- To contact social work in order to share concerns if an immediate risk exists
- To record concerns and reasons for decisions reached accurately and to share this with relevant multi agency partners
- To liaise and co-operate with other establishments and agencies in relation to Child Protection processes where appropriate
- To co-operate where additional information or clarification is needed by Social Work team members or Police Scotland Officers
- To communicate sensitively with parents/carers as per agreement reached with partner agencies
- To ensure appropriate support is provided to staff affected by their role in supporting Child Protection processes
- To share information that is relevant, necessary, legitimate, appropriate and proportionate with others including the HT and QLO
- To ensure that appropriate records are maintained within school, including adding and recording feedback received
- To implement multi-agency Child Protection plans
- To work within the Multi-Agency Guidance as per Appendix 2
- To be aware of which young people are on (or have previously been on) the Child Protection register, and to allocate appropriate additional support to them as needs dictate

Roles and Responsibilities – Head Teacher

Our Head Teacher is ultimately accountable for our actions in response to Child Protection concerns, and our activities which promote and protect wellbeing. The Head Teacher has the following responsibilities within our Child Protection procedures:

- To ensure that arrangements exist which clarify individual and collective responsibility for Child Protection for all staff
- To ensure establishment practice complies with local authority guidelines
- To ensure arrangements for curriculum development which equips young people with the knowledge, skills and attributes to protect themselves
- To ensure that all staff who the named Child Protection Co-ordinator is
- To ensure recruitment and induction procedures give due regard to Child Protection and Safeguarding requirements
- To support the monitoring and evaluation of Child Protection policy and procedures, and the planning of appropriate improvement
- Supporting appropriate action in conjunction with senior officers and ER when there are concerns or allegations about a member of school staff

Child Protection training

SLC requires that all staff working with young people receive adequate training to ensure that they are confident, well informed, and supported to promote the protection of young people. Advice on appropriate training is published annually and includes LOL.

As part of the induction to working in our school, new staff will receive an initial overview of Child Protection procedures within one week of taking up post. Staff must complete role related training within twelve weeks of taking up appointment.

Information Sharing and Child Protection

Sharing relevant information is an essential part of protecting young people.

At times school staff may be concerned or conflicted about the balance of their duty to protect young people from harm and their personal relationships. Concerns about a young person's safety must always take precedence.

It should be borne in mind that a fairly minor wellbeing concern when combined with information from other sources may point to much more serious concerns.

Under current information sharing legislation it is lawful for services to share information where there is an indication that a young person's wellbeing is at risk. Under such circumstances consent is not required and need not be sought.

In relation to Child Protection procedures and confidentiality, the main points to remember are:

- In the interests of protecting young people, staff have a professional obligation to pass on information to relevant agencies
- Staff must not promise to keep secret any allegation or concern even if a young person or third party person requests this
- There is no guarantee that the source of a concern can be kept confidential

Child Protection Measures

Formal Child Protection measures can be broadly divided into a number of different stages. Members of our staff team often contribute to the first three and the last two of the stages listed below:

- Recognising actual or potential harm to a child
- Sharing concerns
- Initial information gathering
- Joint investigation/assessment
- Medical examination and assessment
- Child Protection Case Conferences
- Developing a Child Protection Plan

Key Questions when a Child Protection concern is raised

When considering the immediate needs of a young person once a concern about their safety is raised, it is essential that staff consider the following questions as part of their assessment:

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

Recording Decisions and Actions

Should our Child Protection Co-ordinator decide that it is necessary to contact Social Work and/or the Police because of a Child Protection concern, this will be progressed without delay. Contact may be made by phone or in person. Social Work staff and/or the Police will determine whether:

- The child is considered to be at risk of immediate or significant harm
- The child is considered to be a “child in need”
- That no further action is identified as being required

Regardless of the outcome, a note of the discussion will be recorded in the young person’s file or chronology by the Child Protection Co-ordinator. Staff should be aware that all contact with social work team members will be recorded.

When a child is considered to be at risk of imminent or significant harm:

- If the child is or may be at risk of significant harm the Social Work service or Police will advise the Child Protection Co-ordinator of next steps
- Under these circumstances it is probable that a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment (called an Initial Referral Discussion or IRD) will take place, a record of which will be created by either Social Work or the Police. This will be added to the young person’s Child Protection file by the Child Protection Co-ordinator
- When the outcome from the concern being raised is fed back to the establishment, the Child Protection Co-ordinator should record this in the young person’s Child Protection file

Where the child is considered to be a “child in need”:

- If the outcome of the discussion with Social Work or the Police is that the child should be considered to be “in need”, this and next steps suggested should be recorded by the Child Protection Co-ordinator in the young person’s chronology

When it is considered that no further action is required:

- If the outcome of the initial consultation with Social Work or the Police is that no further action is required, this should be recorded in the young person’s chronology by the Child Protection Co-ordinator
- The five key GIRFEC questions (Appendix 3) should be used to agree actions in response to need of the young person
- The Child Protection Co-ordinator will ensure that appropriate wellbeing forms are complete, and a brief note to signpost to this is recorded within Pastoral Notes

Informing Parents and Carers

The most important aspect of our Child Protection procedures are actions which keep young people safe from harm. When a concern has been raised, when, how and by whom parents/carers are informed should always be discussed with Social Work and/or Police Scotland colleagues as part of the referral process. The Child Protection Co-ordinator should not inform parents or carers prior to this discussion.

Child Protection Register

The Child Protection Register is a confidential database of the names of any young people deemed to be at risk of serious harm or death. The Register can be accessed by Police and Social Work.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator must always be made aware of any decision to place a young person's name on the Child Protection register, and will prioritise them for additional support if required. Placing a name on the Register does not itself protect the young person. Protection comes from the multi-agency Child Protection Plan.

Case Conferences

If a child is believed to have been exposed to significant harm or felt to be at risk of significant harm, a meeting of multi-agency professionals may take place to decide whether their name should be placed on the Child Protection Register.

A Case Conference is a non-statutory multi-agency meeting organised by the social work service. It is central to Child Protection procedures. Its function is to:

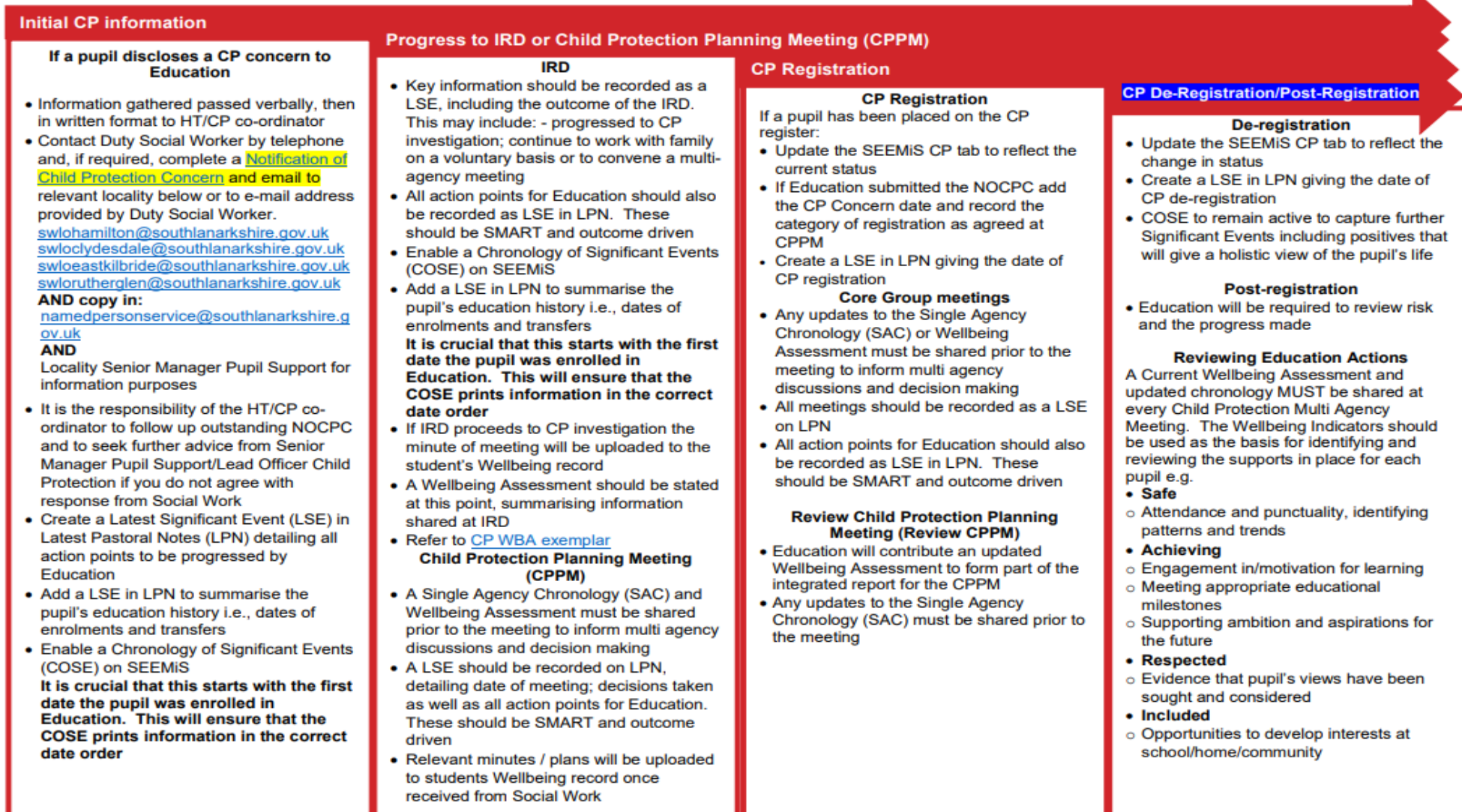
- Bring together all the information from people who work with the child
- Use this information to analyse and to assess the extent of risk that the child is or may be exposed to
- Agree what measures need to be taken by various agencies to protect the child and/or promote their welfare
- Decide whether to place/keep the child's name on the Child Protection register, and whether to create a Child Protection Plan
- If a Child Protection plan is created, the Child Protection Case Conference will appoint a Lead Professional and identify the plan. Regular review meetings will take place until the risks reduce or no longer apply

Where possible, our school will provide a report to summarise the views and observations of the staff team to the chair of the Case Conference in advance. The school representative at the Case Conference will usually be the Child Protection Co-ordinator, who will elaborate on the contents of the report, and provide any clarification that is necessary.

Each professional in attendance at a Child Protection Case Conference will be asked for their professional opinion as to whether the young person's name should be entered or maintained on the Child Protection Register.

Appendix 1 – Child Protection Flow Chart

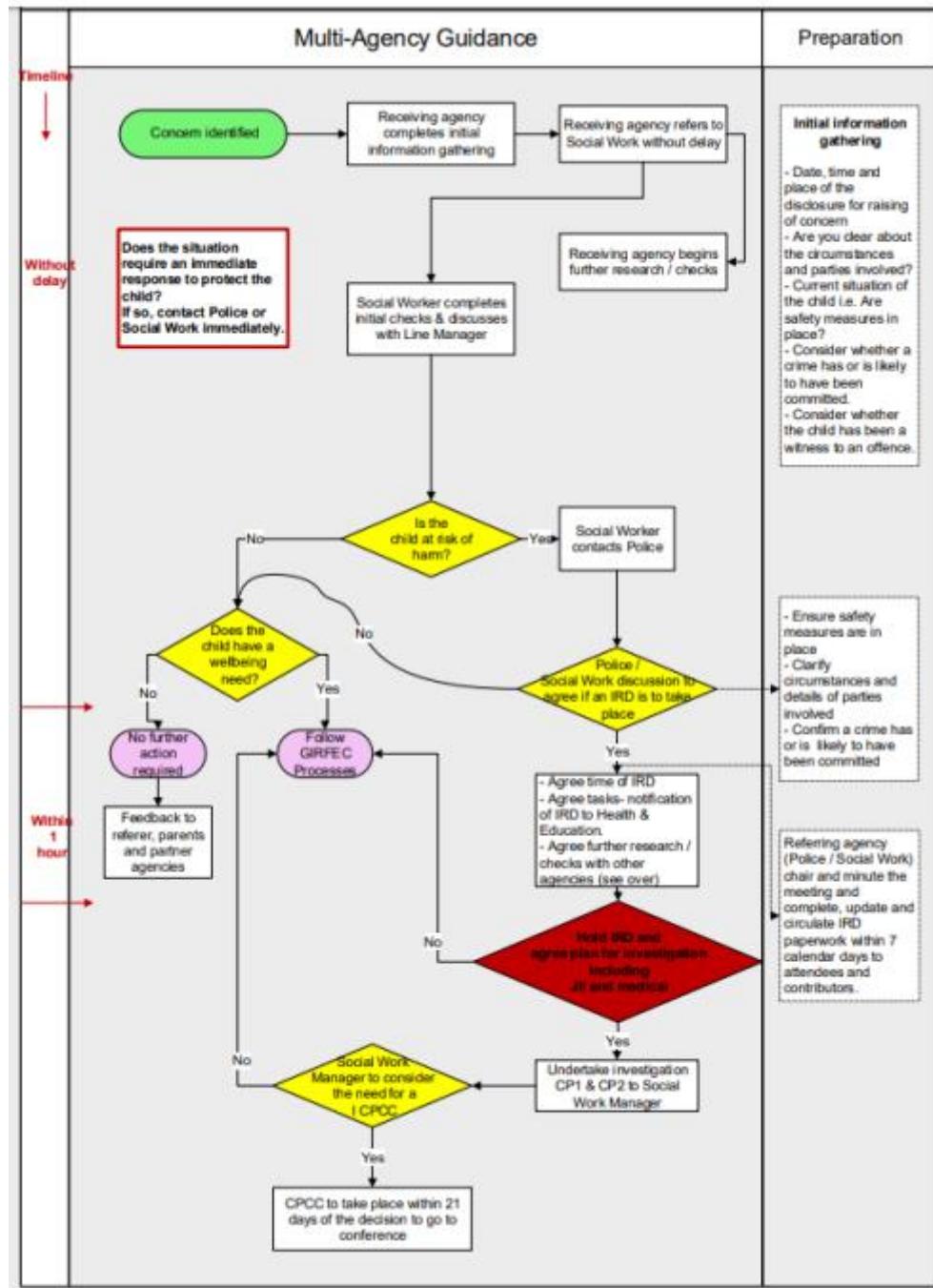
Education – Child Protection Process



Appendix 2 – Multi-Agency Child Protection Process

Procedure & Guidance

Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedure 2023 FINAL



Appendix 3 – 5 Key GIRFEC Questions



The 5 GIRFEC questions every professional should ask.

1. What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
2. Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
3. What can I do now to help this child or young person?
4. What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
5. What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

Appendix 4 – Categories of Abuse

Definitions of the four categories of child abuse (referenced on page 4) are below, as described in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014.

Physical Abuse is the causing of physical harm to a young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a young person they are looking after. For further information, see the section on Fabricated or induced illness.

Emotional Abuse is persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a young person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a young person that they are worthless, 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 young person. It may involve causing young people to feel frightened or in danger or include exploiting or corrupting young people. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill treatment, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

Sexual Abuse is any act that involves the young person in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that there was consent or assent. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as young people looking at, or being in the production of indecent images or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a young person or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways (refer to section – within national guidance – on child sexual exploitation).

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, their failure to protect from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, a young person's basic emotional needs. Neglect may also result in the young person being diagnosed as suffering from "non-organic failure to thrive", where they have significantly failed to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones and where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated. In its extreme form young people can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurture and stimulation. This can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children, the consequences of neglect may be life-threatening within a relatively short period of time.

Appendix 6 – Indicators of Risk

When making judgements about the risks and needs of a young person, there are a range of indicators that should trigger assessment and, where appropriate, action. Not all are common, nor should their presence lead to any immediate assumptions about the levels of risk for an individual. Where identified they should act as a prompt for all staff to consider their impact. Indicators of potential risk often arise alongside others. Indicators of risk should therefore be considered alongside all information relating to the relevant aspects of a young person's life. (For example, a young person involved in offending behaviour is often a young person in need of care and protection). Where there are a number of risk factors in a young person's life, the cumulative impact of these should be identified.

Indicators of Risk as identified and fully described in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014 as:

- Domestic abuse
- Parental problematic alcohol and drug misuse
- Disability
- Non-engaging families
- Children and young people experiencing or affected by mental health problems
- Children and young people who display harmful or problematic sexual behaviour
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Honour based violence and forced marriage
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Sudden unexpected death in infants and children

Further guidance related to harm outside of the home and/or in specific circumstances is given from page 139 onwards of the National Guidance and should be referred to as needed.

Appendix 7 – Counter Terrorism Approaches

Contest is the UK Government's strategy for countering Terrorism. It was formally updated in 2018.

Contest has four areas of focussed work which are known as the 4 P's. These are:

- Prevent
- Pursue
- Protect
- Prepare

Our school strives to provide a safe space for young people to explore, discuss and debate the range of social and political issues which impact on our world.

The Prevent agenda is about safeguarding individuals from being drawn into terrorism. Our school has an important role to play in this which starts with being aware of those young people who may be vulnerable to extremist and terrorist narratives, and to intervening with appropriate advice and support at an early stage.

Our staff are aware of the Prevent strategy, and know that they must flag concerns about young people holding views which endorse extremism as they would any other Child Protection concern.

Further advice on approaches to Prevent can be found within the National Improvement Hub. Staff may also find the published guidance on right-wing terrorism is useful in understanding the context and risks.