



Kinder Croft CIC

Child Protection Policy

Contact details for Child Protection Concerns:

Social Work - Skye and Lochalsh (Includes Ullapool area) - 01478 613825

Emergency Social Work contact: 0808 1753646

Highland Council ELC commissioner, Tracy McIlver - 07585984072

Child Protection Office (Education) - Yvonne Ross - 07917596598

Yvonne.Ross@highland.gov.uk

Contact telephone numbers

- CARE INSPECTORATE 01382 207 100
- SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL 0345 60 30 891

Related policies and Guidance:

Safer Recruitment Policy
Staff induction, training and development Policy
Health and Social Care Standards 3.14 / 3.17 / 3.20 / 3.21 / 3.22
National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
Children (Scotland) Act 1995
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach
The Children's Charter
The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2007
Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020
Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005
Highland Child Protection Committee

Introduction:

Kinder Croft is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment when working with children. In our work with this group we recognise that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, however, we also recognise that every person is potentially at risk from abuse and exploitation, particularly those who are young and/or vulnerable.

Policy Statement:

The aim of this policy is to provide children, adults and staff members with appropriate safety and protection whilst participating in educational activities with Kinder Croft. The scope of this policy includes those working for Kinder Croft, children directly involved in Kinder Croft activities and indirectly in the local communities where Kinder Croft works.

In Scotland, when a child reaches the age of sixteen years, they are considered by law to be an adult, but there are however, certain instances where the law will extend to the age of 18 years, so 'child' in this policy will hold for all under 18s, consistent with the National Guidance.



Kinder Croft supports the Scottish Government approach to child protection, which is based upon the protection of children's rights as outlined in the UNCRC.

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.

In all work with children, Kinder Croft will ensure that the welfare and safety of the child is paramount and that we constantly strive to provide an environment free from abuse through implementation of appropriate policies and guidelines and having a competent, skilled and confident workforce.

All of the staff working at Kinder Croft will complete Child Protection Training. An online refresher course will be completed annually and in person 'Recognition and Response' training will be completed every 3 years.

We value and will respond promptly and constructively to all information presented by children, participating adults or third parties regarding the safety and welfare of our participants.

To promote children's welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self image
- Provide positive role models
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Always listen to children

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. Child Protection is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the other policies and procedures. The nursery is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns.

Our practitioners have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there is a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse. Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. All staff will work with other agencies, including as part of a multi-agency team where needed, in the best interests of the child.

Kinder Croft aims to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of staff
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to share information and seek the help that the child may need.
- Ensure staff are trained to understand the child protection policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of

the different ways in which children are harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour.

- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures including the local child protection committee's guidelines.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur.
- Make referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the local child protection committee's guidelines.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Child Protection Board. We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We will offer diverse activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group.

Raising and Reporting Child Protection Issues

The named person regarding child protection at the nursery is: *Joni Mackay* - Kinder Croft Nursery Manager

If the named person is not available please contact: *Yvonne Ross* - Child Protection Officer (Education).

Whilst everyone working with Kinder Croft has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children to have challenging experiences, it is not the responsibility of anyone working with Kinder Croft to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. It is therefore vital that staff raise all cases of suspected or alleged child abuse in line with the procedures identified below.

It is the Kinder Croft policy therefore, that suspicions and allegations of abuse will be reported to the appropriate Social Work Departments and or the Police, whose duty it will be to take further steps to protect the child and investigate the allegations or suspicions.

Steps to take if you see or hear something that is concerning:

- As a member of staff, your responsibility is to speak to the named person - *Joni Mackay*, Kinder Croft Nursery Manager
- Record your concerns - write down the facts that have been shared, by whom. Date and sign this document.
- The named person will contact Child Protection Officer for further advice if required.
- The named person will contact Social Work Duty Officer to raise a child concern.
- If a crime has been committed the police will be called.
- The named person will notify Care Inspectorate if a child concern is raised or police are contacted.

The overriding priority in any situation is the immediate safety of the child. Consideration must be given to removing the child from any potential harm to a place where any physical/emotional needs can be cared for. As well as establishing initial facts, there will be a need to ensure that both the child and alleged abuser are kept apart.

Kinder Croft CIC staff

In the situation that an allegation has been made against a member of Kinder Croft staff the nursery Manager will contact the local social services team. In the case that the Manager is accused then the nursery Chair of the Board of Directors will contact the social services team. Any staff member accused will be suspended on full pay pending investigation. Kinder Croft disciplinary procedures will be followed.

The Highland Council ELC commissioner should also be informed. Scottish Social Services Council will be notified that a registered worker has been removed from contact with children due to a child protection concern.

Types of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution, or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children.

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, describes the four main categories — physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Specific attention should also be given to these types of abuse - child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, honour-based abuse, and online abuse.

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Child Protection Procedure checklist for Kinder Croft staff.

- a child/young person has been injured, eg. bruising;
- a child/young person is seen in the company of people, either adults or children, who may be putting the child at risk;
- a specific allegation of child maltreatment has been made
- there are anxieties that a child may be experiencing continuing maltreatment or neglect; or a child/young person is behaving in a way that is dangerous to him or herself or others.
- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

All records should be made on an incident reporting form and filed securely in the relevant incident folder in the office. This is separate to the child's general file and is kept locked, with restricted access at all times. Scottish Government records management guidance states that Child Concern Forms that pertain to a child's safety and which originated from KC will be retained permanently.

The role of members of staff is to inform the Kinder Croft manager of any instance, which suggests that abuse is taking place. It is not the role of the member of staff to wait for proof, investigate or gather evidence of abuse. When a child/young person tells an adult about possible abuse, his or her statements should not be dismissed or ignored. The adult should attend carefully to what the child wants to communicate, taking account of the child's/young person's age and stage of development, and allow the child/young person to say what he or she wants to say without being drawn into detailed questioning.

REMEMBER:

Any concerns about the well-being of a child/young person need to be shared. No matter how good we are at evaluating and assessing matters to do with children, when it comes to the child's/young person's welfare we cannot evaluate and assess potential danger, risk, damage, as we only know a tiny part of the whole picture. We must share our concerns with the Manager of Kinder Croft CIC. Who will then advise on next steps to take.

See; Information Sharing Between Services in Respect of Children and Young People
[national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023.pdf](#)

If a child chooses you to talk to and disclose an incident of potential abuse, it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. It is important to remember this because any subsequent investigation by the relevant authorities must not be compromised by staff putting words in the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure, details must be logged accurately

R.E.C.O.R.D.

Respond without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock. Take what the child/young person says seriously.

Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why the child/young person appears upset.

Confidentiality must not be promised to children or adults in this situation.

Observe carefully the demeanour or behaviour of the child/young person.

Record in written detail, as soon as possible, what has been seen and heard.

Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations: rather encourage the child/young person to say what he/she wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.

Members of staff must not:

- Investigate suspected/alleged abuse themselves
- Evaluate the grounds for concern
- Seek or wait for proof
- Discuss the matter with the child's parents or carers if this would put the child at more risk of harm or compromise an investigation.

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure (supported by the manager).

This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any other witnesses
- Name of the person to whom any concern was reported, with date and time and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with parent

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the manager or supervisor, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

It may be thought necessary that after discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the Child Protection Team and the Care Inspectorate. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information they have concerns about with regards to a child. The nursery expects all members of staff to co-operate with the child protection team and care inspectorate in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the child. Staff must not comment either publicly or in private about parents or staff's alleged or actual behaviour.

Staffing

Under the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 all staff (including freelancers) who come into contact with children through work with Kinder Croft will be registered with Disclosure Scotland and a current member of the PVG scheme.

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- Applicants for posts within the nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of the information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by the Care Inspectorate requirements regarding references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children
- We ensure we receive at least two written and verified references before a new member of staff commences employment with us. One of these references is from the most recent employer.
- Volunteers and students do not work unsupervised and do not take responsibility for personal care.
- We abide by the protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2007 requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concerns.
- We have procedures for recording details of visitors to the project and have control over who comes into the site so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- All staff have access to and will comply with the whistle blowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner
- All staff will attend regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be available to discuss child protection training and any need for further support
- The deployment of staff within the site allows for constant supervision and support.

Photography

Staff, visitors and visiting adults can use photographic and or video equipment as a legitimate educational aid – to record learning, progress, to show our work to others and to promote Kinder Croft. However, all involved with Kinder Croft will be given the option, during registration with the nursery, to opt out of these media. Any prior consent can be withdrawn at any time. There is a strict policy in place for the use of mobile phones and cameras to protect the welfare of the children while in our care. Staff are not permitted the use of mobile phones at any time within the children's play area and are restricted to the use of these for break time only away from the group. Under no circumstances are staff allowed to take images of the children on their personal mobile phones. Any images taken must be using the nursery camera or tablets and there is maximum control over how long these images are stored for.

The use of mobile phones is also prohibited by the parents within the nursery when dropping off and picking up their child.
See media policy.

Practice to be encouraged

- Always put the welfare of each person first before achieving goals.
- Treat all people with respect and dignity.
- Seek opportunity for conversations with children and adults about keeping safe at Kinder Croft and at home.
- Sometimes it may be necessary to do things of a personal nature for participants e.g. in an emergency or when changing. If you must use physical contact, clearly tell the person what you are doing and why, seek their permission and give choices where possible.
- Report all concerns, suspicions or allegations.
- Involve people in the decisions that affect them.
- Make Kinder Croft activities fun and enjoyable and promote fair play.

Contact with Local Agencies and Authorities

Each Local Authority Area in Scotland will have a Child Protection Committee (CPC). The lead agency with the statutory responsibility for Child Protection is Social Work Services who will usually chair this committee. Other agencies that will assist in investigating child protection cases include Health, Education, Probation/Criminal Justice, Police, NSPCC/SSPCC and other locally based and identified agencies as necessary.

Verified: Joni Mackay

On: 15/07/2026

Date of review: 15/07/2027

Health and social care standards

3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

3.17 I am confident that people respond promptly, including when I ask for help.

3.20 I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

3.21 I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm.

3.22 I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made.



Kinder Croft CIC

Verified: Joni Mackay (Manager)

Date of review: 17/01/2024

Date of next review: 17/01/2025