

Getting it Right for Every Child in Aberdeenshire



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Alehousewells Nursery

Child Protection Coordinator: Michelle Morrison - EYSP

Carol Hughes - Head Teacher

Policy Review:

Date of Issue 18th July 2023



Updates Available:

Nursery Office

Nursery

Noticeboard

Alehousewells School Website

Reference Guidance:

[Child Protection \(girfec-aberdeenshire.org\)](http://Child Protection (girfec-aberdeenshire.org))

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

Contacts at Alehousewells Nursery

Designation	Person Responsible	Role	Contact Number
Child Protection Coordinator (Dedicated Child Protection Officer – DCPO)	Michelle Morrison	Early Years Senior Practitioner, Alehousewells Nursery	01467 538746
Child Protection Coordinator	Carol Hughes	Head Teacher, Alehousewells School	01467 536910

Social Work Contacts

Kemnay Family Centre, Social Work dept.	01467 534555
Duty Social Worker	01467 532888
Out of hours social work dept	03456 08 12 06
Police Scotland	101

1. Aims.	Page 4
2. Child Protection Policy Statement.	Page 4 - 5
3. National and Local Guidance.	Page 6 - 7
4. What is Child Abuse.	Page 8
5. How do I respond to child protection concerns in nursery/ school?	Page 8
6. How do I respond to a disclosure?	Page 9
7. Guidance on Making Notes.	Page 9 - 10
8. What happens next?	Page 10 - 11
9. Advice for supporting the child.	Page 11
10. Teaching children to be safe.	Page 11
11. Case Conferences and child protection register.	Page 12 - 13
12. Some General points.	Page 13
13. Absence and child protection	Page 14 - 15
14. Outside supervision and child protection.	Page 15
15. Safe arrival/ embarkation and child protection.	Page 15
16. Training.	Page 16 - 17

Appendices

Appendix One	Request for Assistance Referral Child Protection https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/?s=request+for+assistance	Page 18 - 23
Appendix Two	Prompt Sheet for Child Protection Referrals	Page 24 - 25
Appendix Three	Dealing with Disclosures	Page 26
Appendix Four	The Scottish Government (2021) The Definition of Child Abuse	Page 27 - 30
Appendix Five	Missing Child Flow Chart	Page 31

ALEHOUSEWELLS NURSERY

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. AIMS

At Alehousewells Nursery, we aim to create a nursery environment in which children are safe from abuse and promptly and appropriately respond to any suspicion of abuse. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. No child should experience abuse or harm, this policy is intended to protect the children who attend our nursery and provide guidance to staff in our approach to child protection and safeguarding of children. Alehousewells Nursery is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation. We actively work with the children, parents, and other professionals to ensure this.

2. Child Protection Policy Statement

Alehousewells Nursery is committed to ensuring we protect children as we uphold the children's rights as stated in the UNCRC's articles. The overall aim is the prevention of harm to vulnerable groups and involves working with both victims and perpetrators. All agencies have the objective of improving outcomes for children by making sure children get the help they need, when they need it and have the right to be safe, and protected from abuse, neglect and harm.

At Alehousewells Nursery we adhere to all matters relating to Child Protection and protecting children. All establishments and services in Aberdeenshire have coordinators appointed to be responsible for Child Protection and have special training for the task. The Child Protection Coordinator for Alehousewells School is the Headteacher. The Early Years Senior Practitioner is the Designated Child Protection Officer for Nursery.

<https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/report-a-concern/aberdeenshire-child-protection-committee/>

Given ongoing public concern on the subject of child abuse and changes in the law, schools/ nurseries are now required to report if we think any child has come to harm as a consequence of possible abuse. Should you wish to talk further about child protection and the safety of children, please feel free to contact the Head Teacher or Early Years Senior Practitioner. Where there is the possibility that a child could be at risk of abuse or neglect, the nursery is required to refer the child to Social Work, Police Scotland or the Reporter and under these circumstances, the parent would not normally be consulted first.

Article 3 of the UNCRC states '*Adults must do what's best for me.*'

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.

3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

Article 19 of the UNCRC makes it clear that every child has the basic human right to dignity and protection from harm.

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Article 34 (Sexual Exploitation) *Children have the right to be free from sexual abuse.*

Further information and guidance can be found on the links below:

[UNCRC: the foundation of Getting it right for every child - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/uncrc-foundation/Getting-it-right-for-every-child-2019/pages/1-Introduction.aspx)

[Children's rights legislation in Scotland: quick reference guide 2019 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-rights-legislation-in-scotland-quick-reference-guide-2019/pages/1-Introduction.aspx)

https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/home/children-and-young-people/childrens_rights/

<https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UNCRC-Summary.pdf>

3. National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021)

“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.” Available: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021>

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021): Supporting Narrative

‘The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 describes the responsibilities and expectations of everyone who works with, or comes into contact with children and young people, families and carers in Scotland. It sets out how agencies should work together with children and young people, families, carers and communities to protect children and young people from abuse, neglect and exploitation and replaces the 2014 National’. Available:

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2021/09/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021/documents/narrative/narrative/govscot%3Adocument/narrative.pdf>

National Guidance Documentation Followed Includes:

Scottish Government, 2012, “National Risk Framework to Support the Assessment of Children and Young People”: [National Risk Framework to Support the Assessment of Children and Young People - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-risk-framework-to-support-the-assessment-of-children-and-young-people/documents/national-risk-framework-to-support-the-assessment-of-children-and-young-people.pdf)

Getting it right for every child (2022):

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2022/09/getting-right-child-girfec-policy-statement/documents/getting-right-child-policy-statement-2022/getting-right-child-policy-statement-2022/govscot%3Adocument/getting-right-child-policy-statement-2022.pdf>

Equality Protection from Assault (Scotland) (2020):
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/children-equal-protection-from-assault-scotland-bill-framework-for-statutory-bodies/#:~:text=It%20removes%20a%20defence%20being,the%20removal%20of%20the%20defence>

Scottish Government, 2013, “Getting Our Priorities Right” (Alcohol & Drug Abuse):

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2013/04/getting-priorities-right/documents/00420685-pdf/00420685-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00420685.pdf>

Local Authority Guidance:

Practice and procedures at Alehousewells Nursery are from ‘Aberdeenshire Council (2021) “Getting It right for Every Child – Aberdeenshire”.

<https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/GIRFEC-Guidance-V2-15-Feb-2021.pdf>

Aberdeenshire Council, 2023, “Child Protection in Education Guidance”

[Additional Support Needs \(ASN\) Aberdeenshire, Inclusion, Equity and Wellbeing \(asn-aberdeenshire.org\)](#)

[Child-Protection-in-Education-Guidance-1.docx \(live.com\)](#)

[Child Protection \(girfec-aberdeenshire.org\)](#)

National Care Standards (2021):

Through the use of the National Health and Social Care Standards children will *‘feel safe and I am protected from neglect, abuse or avoidable harm.’*

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.

3.15 My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well.

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.

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/2544/sg-health-and-social-care-standards.pdf>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-social-care-standards-support-life/>

Care Inspectorate: A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school aged childcare, published: 21 March 2022:

Quality indicator 1.2: Children are safe and protected.

https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/QF_ELC_13092022.pdf

How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare.

Quality Indicator 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection

[How good is our early learning and childcare? | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

4. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Appendix Four shares the definition of the following headings noted below:

5.

Four Main Abuse Headings:

- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Abuse

Other Abuse Headings:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Trafficking
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage

HOW DO I RESPOND TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS IN SCHOOL?

If a member of staff has any concerns relating to a child at risk from any form of abuse, the following procedure must be followed:

- ◆ Discuss your concerns immediately with the Designated Child Protection Officers (DCPO) of the setting (Head Teacher or Early Years Senior Practitioner).
- ◆ The DCPO will consider together with the member of staff whether this information needs to be shared and if so, with whom. The DCPO will consider whether an informal discussion with Duty Social Work about the circumstances of the child causing concern is required.
- ◆ The DCPO will ensure that the information is accurately recorded electronically within Pastoral Notes noting the reasons for the decision reached.
- ◆ Remember that the role of the educational establishment or other services is to observe, record and report. An investigation is not the responsibility of the Education and Children's services.
- ◆ Remember that Social Work has a responsibility to provide feedback to the referrer. If this does not happen it is the referring agency's responsibility to seek a response and record it.
- ◆ Ensure that if you cannot contact the appropriate person, and there are immediate concerns for the child's safety, contact your line manager, Social Work or the Police directly. The phone number for the Duty Social Worker is: **01467 532888**.
- ◆ Ensure that if this occurs after-hours or at the weekend, contact should be made with the Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service: **03456081206**

If after discussion with the Child Protection Coordinator, the decision is to take this forward as a Child Protection concern:

- ◆ The DCPO will make contact with the Social Work Service to discuss the situation.
- ◆ If the decision is to proceed, the referral form should be submitted within 7 days.

Further Information can be Found in: Appendix Two - Prompt Sheet for Child Protection Referrals

6. HOW DO I RESPOND TO A DISCLOSURE?

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 distasteful the information.
- Do not ask any leading questions or suggest who might be responsible.
- **Staff can ask who, where, what, when and how when speaking to the child.** This will allow for a clearer picture of the event if it requires further investigation by social work.
- 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 can be upsetting.
- **For further information refer to Appendix 3.**

Next Steps

As soon as practicable, the reporting member of staff will inform the DCPO and record an accurate account of their concerns/ observation/ conversation within the child's individual Pastoral Notes using the language used by the child or young person, linking the event with the relevant siblings who are within the school.

Professionals should be aware, however, that behaviours which might appear to indicate abuse, may be the result of other factors in a child's life, and that signs can be inconclusive or ambiguous. If there is not sufficient information to be sure that the child has NOT been abused, it is everyone's duty to report their suspicions to the Child Protection coordinator.

7. GUIDANCE ON MAKING NOTES

- ◆ Notes should be made carefully, accurately, and factually.
- ◆ Signs of physical injury should be described in detail and/or sketch. At no time take photographic records of any sign. However, you may be asked to take photographic evidence by the police or social work, particularly if a child is non-verbal.
- ◆ Any relevant comment by the child or by an adult who might be the abuser, should be recorded, preferably quoting the words used accurately, as soon as possible after the comment has been made.
- ◆ Opinion should be restricted to the demeanour of the child.
- ◆ The personal opinions of members of staff must not be included.

Guidance on Report Writing and Record-Keeping

- ◆ It is vital that procedures are followed precisely, and information and events are recorded accurately, factually and in detail. Information gathered may be required for a Child Protection case conference or, less frequently, for court action.
- ◆ It should be noted that the content of reports may be required to be made known to the families concerned and therefore reports must be factual.
- ◆ Paper Records and reports should be kept in a sealed envelope and filed appropriately.
- ◆ Paper Records must be marked and maintained as confidential.
- ◆ A record should be kept of when records are consulted and by whom.
- ◆ It is helpful to keep a chronology of events relevant to Child Protection.
- ◆ When a child's file contains Child Protection information it should be identified on the outside with a round blue sticker.
- ◆ All Child Protection information must be retained in the file whether or not the child's name is currently entered in the child protection register. Current or previous Child Protection concerns must be highlighted to the receiving nursery at the point of transfer. Never remove material relating to Child Protection from a file.

The following support is available for all staff involved in child protection issues.

Staff may be called upon to attend Child Protection Case Conferences. Guidance will be provided by the Headteacher/ Early Years Senior Practitioner to support staff attending such meetings.

Protecting Children and Young People in Aberdeenshire – Education & Children's Services Guidelines can be accessed through:

8. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Getting it Right for Children, Young People & Families in **Aberdeenshire Multi-Agency Operational Guidance** is used to ensure all involved in protecting children understand their roles and responsibilities within the multi-agency approach.

Aberdeenshire Council, 2023, "Multi-Agency Child Protection Guidance"

When a Child Protection referral is made to Social Work or the Police, they will check to determine whether they already know the child/family. Initial enquiries with relevant other agencies will be made to help inform an initial assessment of risk. In most cases, the child, parent, or any other person will not be contacted at this stage by them.

In Aberdeenshire, allegations of child abuse are investigated by specially trained Social Work and Police officers who will also liaise with their Education and Learning colleagues where appropriate. The information gathered from the initial enquiries will be used to review the initial assessment of risk and to determine what further action, if any should be taken.

9. ADVICE FOR SUPPORTING THE CHILD

The following points should be discussed with Police and Social Work if a child or young person is to be interviewed within Education & Children's services premises:

- Whether the Child Protection co-ordinator has a role in the interview.
- How the child or young person should be informed by the Police/Social Work about what may be done to keep them safe.
- The team/establishment will provide a supportive role before and after the process.

NB: It is the role of the Police/ Social Work to decide whether or not to involve the parent/carers at this stage.

10. TEACHING CHILDREN TO BE SAFE

At Alehousewells Nursery we take positive steps to help the children protect themselves from abuse through programmes mainly within health education and personal and social development. This is achieved through the use of Alehousewells School and Nurseries Sexual Health and Parental Education Policy *'rationale states that throughout all areas of the curriculum, we aim for children to expand their awareness, recognition and realisation of their rights (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)), and to encourage respectful behaviours towards the rights*

of both themselves and others. Above all, as a school, we have a responsibility to keep children safe from harm.'

Working with other agencies is key to Getting it Right for every Child. It may be necessary to work alongside another agency to support a child in being safe.

11. CASE CONFERENCES & THE CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

Child Protection Register

The Child Protection Register is a confidential database of children deemed to be at risk of child abuse. There are four categories under which abuse can be registered:

- Physical abuse
- Physical neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse

The Child Protection Partnership office maintains the Child Protection Register for Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray areas and can be accessed by Police and Social Work. It provides a safety net of information when vulnerable families move from one authority to another. Every Education & Children's service establishment should know which children are on the Child Protection register and have measures in place to provide additional support if required. Placing a name on the Register does not itself protect the child. Protection comes from the multi-agency Child Protection plan.

Business Hub 2,
Lower Ground North,
Marischal College,
Broad St,
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Phone: [01224 523232](tel:01224523232)

Case Conferences

If a child is believed to have been abused, or to be at risk of abuse, a meeting of professionals may take place to decide whether or not the child's name should be placed on the Child Protection Register. The 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 assess the extent to which the child is at risk of abuse.
- Agree what measures need to be taken by various agencies to protect the child or promote their welfare.
- Place the child on the Child Protection register and if it is considered necessary to put a Child Protection Plan in place.
- Appoint a Keyworker and identify a Core Group to implement the plan.

Participants, who are asked to provide a written report at least seven days ahead of the conference, are required to speak about their report. Those who attend the Case Conference will be asked for their professional opinion as to whether the child's name should be entered in the Child Protection Register. If the child is placed on the Child Protection Register, a review meeting will be arranged for a later date; the Core Group will be expected to meet prior to the review to ensure the progress of the plan.

12. SOME GENERAL POINTS

- ◆ What if I am wrong? You can only know what you know – there may be information held by others which substantiates your concerns or otherwise.
- ◆ Remember that contacting Social Work or Police informally to discuss concerns is always encouraged and may not always lead to an investigation.
- ◆ Everyone has a responsibility to keep children safe – you need to know your own agency's policy and protocol.
- ◆ Treat all children and young people with respect.
- ◆ Ensure your own conduct is a good example to children.

- ◆ Whenever possible make sure you are not alone with a child/young person – stay in sight or hearing of others.
- ◆ Ensure your actions cannot be misinterpreted.
- ◆ Be aware of the GIRFEC guidelines and refer to them for help when required.
<https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/home/child-protection/>
- ◆ Protecting your relationship with a family or individual is never an option when there are child protection concerns – the welfare of the child is always paramount.

13. ABSENCE & CHILD PROTECTION

It is Aberdeenshire Council policy that parents/ carers contact nursery before 9.30am on the first day of an absence. Nursery staff should send their register to the school office immediately after morning and afternoon registration.

The office staff will attempt to contact all parents/carers of pupils who are recorded as absent with no prior notification as soon as practicable and in any case, by 9.45am on the first morning of the absence. This is to avoid parents assuming that a child has arrived safely in nursery (when they have not) and nursery assuming that a child is absent with the parent's permission (when they are not). From 8.30 am onwards the school office is manned. Where a parent/carer is informed of the unexplained absence of a child from nursery, the parent/carer will be responsible for taking appropriate action. Parents/carers will be responsible for providing and updating emergency contact information, all emergency contact information is reviewed by the parent/ carer every three months. Parents/carers will be responsible for responding promptly to contacts from the nursery. Where contact is achieved by telephone with the parent/carer, the reason for absence will be established and recorded by the nursery.

In cases where no explanation of an unexplained absence has been received by the school by 10.00 am on the first morning of absence, the Early Years Senior Practitioner will conduct a risk assessment. Effective

risk assessment may require high risk/protection factors to be identified through multi-agency contact and collaboration. These will include likely harm to the child and ways to protect the child from that harm.

In cases where a child is known to have a Social Worker or is known or suspected to be at risk, the Social Work Service will be informed of the absence and asked to contact the family. The past attendance record and history of parental contact will also be considered. In this case, responsibility for contacting the parent/carer or taking other action, for example contacting the Police, will pass to the Social Work Service to allow them to proceed with their statutory duties.

In cases where there is no reason to suspect that the pupil is at risk, the school will continue to attempt to contact the parent/carer or emergency contact. If no contact with the parent/carer can be achieved by 14.00 at the latest, the Social Work Service may be informed of the absence and asked to contact the parent/carer. At this time responsibility for contacting the parent/carer or taking other action, for example contacting the police, will pass to the Social Work Service. The school will continue to monitor the pupil's attendance/absence.

Where no contact can be achieved by telephone on the first day of absence, a letter notifying the parent/carer of the absence and requesting an explanation of the reason shall be sent by first class post on the second day of absence. In case of any doubt, early discussion between the Early Years Senior Practitioner and the Social Work Service shall take place. In all cases the Early Years Senior Practitioner shall have regard to Aberdeenshire Council's Child Protection Guidelines.

If the parents/carers are still non-contactable a local Aberdeenshire Child Missing from Education (CME) search should be initiated by contacting: cme@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

The missing child flow chart is available in Appendix Five.

14. OUTSIDE SUPERVISION & CHILD PROTECTION

Children are signed in and signed out by a member of staff when they enter the nursery building. Staff note who has dropped the child off and who will be collecting the child. Children are not permitted to go home with another person unless the parent has called to say there is a change of plan and stating the name of the person who will now collect their child.

Nursery staff will adhere to the child/ adult ratios as set by the Care Inspectorate, currently 1 – 5 for children under two years old and 1 – 8 for children aged 3 to school age. The nursery garden gates are closed at all times and visitors must not walk through the nursery garden to get to the school reception. Any visitors are to be challenged and redirected to follow the pavement outside the garden to gain access to the school reception. All visitors must sign in at the school reception prior to entering the nursery.

15. SAFE ARRIVAL/ EMBARKATION & CHILD PROTECTION

Aberdeenshire Council shall take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of pupils whilst they are within its care.

Home to School Travel

Parents/carers are responsible for making arrangements for their child to travel to and from nursery. Parents/carers are responsible for the health, safety and well-being of, and of the actions of, their children when travelling to and from nursery.

Children, parents and carers arriving at nursery should observe the following points relating to child protection:

(a) Arrival by parent/carer vehicle

The school car parks are not for parent use. They are reserved for disabled access, staff parking, school buses and taxis, deliveries and emergency vehicles. Parent drop-off / parking areas are Bremner Way and Craigearn Park/Waterside Court. All of these areas are connected to school by safe pedestrian routes. Children should walk into the school grounds via the pathways. Children should not walk through car park areas.

(b) Arrival by Bicycle or Scooter

Children can come to nursery on their bike or scooter. All children must come off their bike or scooter as soon as they reach the school pathway and walk to the racks. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their bike or scooter is locked securely for the day. Children and parents using a bike should be wearing a helmet.

(c) Time of Arrival

Children should not arrive at nursery more than a few minutes before the start of their nursery session.

16. Training

All staff will attend update training on Basic Child Protection on the first in-service day of each school year. All new staff will receive a copy of the guidelines and be given Child Protection Training as part of their induction. The DCPO will renew their training every three years. All staff will be supported by the Early Years Senior Practitioner or Headteacher whenever they are involved in child protection issues. Training will be accessed at the appropriate level e.g. training for Managers; Training for Designated Child Protection Officers; Training for Practitioners. The managers will ensure that staff have regular opportunities for professional learning and that regular reviews of procedure take place. The recording of training attended is all staff's responsibility with the Senior Practitioner having an overall responsibility to ensure staff record training they have attended. All staff have responsibility for their own professional

learning. Discussion of Child Protection scenarios are regularly included in staff meetings to ensure training is continually being refreshed.

Child Protection training in line with the [Aberdeenshire Child Protection in Education Professional Learning Framework](#)

- Aberdeenshire Council UNCRC Day 1 Presentation (Annually)
- Aberdeenshire Council Child Protection and Safeguarding Day 1 Presentation (Annually)
- Introduction to Child Protection
- Child Protection Basic Awareness Training [ALDO](#)
- Child Protection Refresher Training [ALDO](#)
- Designated Child Protection Officer Training [ALDO](#)
- Neglect Training [ALDO](#)
- GIRFEC Portal Training [ALDO](#)
- Multi-Agency Meetings and the Child's Plan [ALDO](#)
- Neglect [ALDO](#)
- [Trauma Informed Training](#) [ALDO](#)
- [GIRFEC Learning and Development Strategy 2021-2023](#) [ALDO](#)

Appendix One Request for Assistance Referral Child Protection



[How to use GIRFEC Proformas guide](#)

This form is not for Child Protection referrals. Follow Aberdeenshire Child Protection Procedures without delay if you believe a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm.

All Requests for Assistance must:

- Have been fully discussed in advance with the relevant child/young person and/or parent/carer
- Follow an initial conversation with the receiving Agency/Service
- Be completed in line with [Information-Sharing](#) legislation and [Aberdeenshire GIRFEC Guidance](#)

[Request for Assistance:](#)

The outcome of any prior discussion to make sense of a wellbeing need should be recorded in the Named Person/other professional's agency records.

Request for information to be shared (<i>where receiving Agency/Service ask for this in writing</i>)	
Advice to make sense of a wellbeing need/concern (<i>where receiving Agency/Service ask for request in writing</i>)	
Request for assessment	
Direct request for a service/targeted support	

[Details of Requesting Service](#)

Requesting Agency/Service	Named Person		
	Lead Professional		
	Other Professional		
Name	Role/Organisation/Location	Email	Telephone

[Details of Receiving Service](#)

Receiving	Named Person	
------------------	---------------------	--

Agency/Service	Lead Professional		
	Other Professional		
Name	Role/Organisation/Location	Email	Telephone

Child/Young Person’s Details

Name		Date of Birth	
		Gender	
CHI			
SQA			
CareFirst			

Main Address			
Current Address (if different)			
Ethnic Origin		Religion	
Additional Support Need/Disability			
School/Nursery		GP Practice	
Legal Status			
Child Protection Status			

Team Around the Child/Young Person/Family
 (Parent/Carer/Sibling/Involved Professional/Other)

Name	Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Relationship/ Role	Address & telephone no (if different to child/young person)

			

Named Person Service Provider	NHSG		
	Aberdeenshire Council Education Service		
	Other (please state)		
Name/Role (if known)	Email	Telephone	

Lead Professional Service/Agency (If applicable)		Lead Professional (Name/Role/ Base/Email/Tel)	
--	--	--	--

Brief Summary of the Child/Young Person's Wellbeing Needs

	Also identify all affected Wellbeing Indicators	
	Safe	
	Healthy	
	Achieving	
	Nurtured	
	Active	
	Respected	
	Responsible	
	Included	

Desired Outcomes from the Request

--

Child/Young Person's Views

I confirm I have discussed with the child/young person: • <i>The identified Wellbeing Needs</i> • <i>This Request for Assistance</i> • <i>Information-sharing</i>	Yes No	If no - explanation must be provided	
Child/Young Person's Views			

Parent/Carer's Views

I confirm I have discussed with the parent/carers: • <i>The identified Wellbeing Needs</i> • <i>This Request for Assistance</i> • <i>Information-sharing</i>	Yes No	If no - explanation must be provided	
Parent/Carer's Views			

Supporting Information (Additional info may be requested to inform appropriate Agency/Service response)

Information Type	Child/Young Person in agreement to share?	Parent/Carer in agreement to share?
Chronology *Mandatory*		
Single Agency Assessment *Mandatory*		
Child's Plan		

Receiving Agency/Service to Complete Response Section

All Requests for Assistance must be responded to within a maximum of 10 working days from date of receipt with an explanation for the decision reached. The outcome is recorded in Requesting and Receiving Agency/Service records.

Other Plan		
Record of Meeting		
Other (Please specify)		
Where any information is provided without explicit agreement please explain why		

CONFIRMATION OF RESPONSE

Date Request for Assistance Form Received	
Date Response made to Requesting Service	
Reason for delay in response (specify below where applicable)	

OUTCOME

Request for Assistance/Information Sharing Agreed	
Request for Assistance/Information Sharing Refused	

DETAILS OF RESPONSE		
Agreed Action	Named Person follow-up to be provided to address wellbeing need/concern	
	Provision of Information to Requesting Agency/Service	
	Assessment to be undertaken with child/young person and/or parent/carer	
	Provision of specific Targeted Support to child/young person agreed	
	Other (Please specify below)	
Refusal Reason	Request not appropriate to service/agency role/remit	
	Assessment/Information provided does not indicate level of need	
	Reason for information request/type of information requested deemed unjustifiable	
	Other (please specify below)	

Requests for Assistance MUST be sent via secure means using contact details provided by the Receiving Agency/Service. A copy should be retained in electronic/paper files as per agency protocol, with a GDPR Privacy Notice provided where required.

Appendix Two - Prompt Sheet for Child Protection Referrals



Child's details

Name (including any middle names and if the child is known by more than one name, list all names known)

Date of birth.

Address and phone number.

Health issues that may be relevant.

Any known disabilities that may affect communication.

Family Details

Names of parents and or carers.

Names and ages of siblings.

Ethnicity and cultural background and where appropriate information about the need for interpreters.

Name of the family's GP.

School History

How long has the child attended your school?

Attendance record: check if there has been a problem with attendance, look out for any patterns that emerge from attendance records; i.e. some children have been reported to miss every Monday because of problems at the weekend.

Behaviour: how does the child present in School? Check for any repeated patterns of behaviour, or sudden changes of behaviour. Are you aware if these relate to change in circumstances at home?

Relationship with school: supportive, non-existent, volatile?

Child Protection History

Have you had previous concerns and have you made previous referrals? It is important to revisit previous concerns to get a wider picture. Child protection services are reliant on other agencies to help them build up a clearer picture of what has been happening. The relationship between each event may be more significant than each individual event. If you have referred in the past, what was the outcome? Never let the fact that no action was taken last time affect your way of managing new concerns. If you have a concern always pass it on.

This Referral

It is useful to write down your reason for a referral before making your call. Include as much detail as you can. It may be useful to complete the referral form to use as a prompt when phoning.

Physical Injury

When your concern is about physical injury make sure you note where on the body the injury is and describe it, including its shape, colour and size.

Sexual abuse

Are your concerns about the child's behaviour? If so give as much detail as possible. State exactly what the child has been doing. Don't just report, "sexualised behaviour". Give details. Consider whether or not the behaviour/language is appropriate given the age/stage of the child.

Has the child disclosed? If the child discloses to you or to a member of your staff, record in as much detail as possible what was said, who was there and the child's emotional state throughout the disclosure. Make sure any hastily written notes are signed and dated and kept securely. Handwritten notes are useful evidence should the case go to court at a later date.

Emotional abuse

Referrals concerning emotional abuse usually involve a number of concerns arising from both contact with the child and contact with the parents. Emotional abuse can cause an impairment in the child's development, and such children may have very low self-esteem and self-image. Detail the way the child functions at school, with peers and with parents. Emotional abuse is hard to evidence so detail a number of events that have led to your concerns.

Neglect

If you are to refer a child because of possible neglect always check back to see if there have been previous concerns. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 talks about how the persistent neglect of very basic needs is likely to cause an impairment in the child's development.

Always think through whether the case in question fits more appropriately within a "a child in need" framework. (e.g. children with poor personal hygiene may simply come from families with poor personal hygiene: clearly the family need to do something about the child's cleanliness and appearance, and may need some support in this, but it might not be the case that the child is being abused and in need of protection).

Making the referral

Once you have all the details in front of you and you have thought through the issues you will be able to make a child protection referral with confidence. Record all your actions and responses from other agencies. Note whom you spoke to, the time and the date.

Professional judgement

Value your professional judgement. Nursery may be the only agency involved with the family at the time of referral. Do not come off the phone before you have shared your concerns and ensured that the person you spoke to understands exactly what your concerns are – they may not be quite as worried as you but it is important that they understand what it is you are worried about.

Appendix Three - Dealing with Disclosures

This Appendix provides additional advice regarding dealing with disclosures.

Receive

Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.

Accept what is said.

Take notes.

Reassure

Reassure the child/young person but only so far as is honest and reliable. e.g. don't make any promises you may not be able to keep, like "I'll stay with you" or "Everything will be alright".

Don't promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer, but you must ensure confidentiality with the child's peers and community.

Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it e.g., you could say "You're not to blame".

React

React to the child only as far as it is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but don't "interrogate" for full details.

Do not ask leading questions, for example: "What did he do next?". This assumes he did.

Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's or young person's) in any later prosecution.

Do ask open questions like: Anything else to tell me?

Do not criticise the perpetrator. The child/young person may love him/her, and reconciliation may be possible.

Don't ask the child/young person to repeat it all for another member of staff.

Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.

Record

Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand, record in Pastoral Notes as soon as possible

Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.

Record date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child. If the child uses sexual "pet" words, record the actual words used rather than translating them.

Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.

Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Remember

To follow the guidelines.

Relax

Get some support for yourself.

Appendix Four

The Scottish Government (2021) The Definition of Child Abuse

Further Information Can be Found: [national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021.pdf](https://www.scotland.nhs.uk/our-work/child-protection/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021.pdf)

1.33 Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Abuse or neglect may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be maltreated at home; within a family or peer network; in care placements; institutions or community settings; and in the online and digital environment. Those responsible may be previously unknown or familiar, or in positions of trust. They may be family members. Children may be harmed pre-birth, for instance by domestic abuse of a mother or through parental alcohol and drug use.

Physical Abuse

1.34 Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or 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 child they are looking after.

1.35 There may be some variation in family, community or cultural attitudes to parenting, for example, in relation to reasonable discipline. Cultural sensitivity must not deflect practitioners from a focus on a child's essential needs for care and protection from harm, or a focus on the need of a family for support to reduce stress and associated risk.

Emotional abuse

1.36 Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused, or is likely to cause, significant harm. Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- exploitation or corruption of a child, or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age or stage of development
- repeated silencing, ridiculing or intimidation
- demands that so exceed a child's capability that they may be harmful

- extreme overprotection, such that a child is harmed by prevention of learning, exploration and social development
- seeing or hearing the abuse of another (in accordance with the Domestic Abuse <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2018/5/contents>)

Sexual abuse

1.37 Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child under 16 years of age in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

1.38 For those who may be victims of sexual offences aged 16-17, child protection procedures should be considered. These procedures must be applied when there is concern about the sexual exploitation or trafficking of a child.

1.39 The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of indecent images, in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

1.40 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact. It can also occur through the use of technology. Children who are trafficked across borders or within the UK may be at particular risk of sexual abuse.

Criminal exploitation

1.41 Criminal exploitation refers to the action of an individual or group using an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Violence or the threat of violence may feature. The victim may have been criminally exploited, even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation may involve physical contact and may also occur through the use of technology. It may involve gangs and organised criminal networks. Sale of illegal drugs may be a feature. Children and vulnerable adults may be exploited to move and store drugs and money. Coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons may be involved.

Child Trafficking

1.42 Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt, exchange or transfer of control of a child under the age of 18 years for the purposes of exploitation. Transfer or movement can be within an area and does not have to be across borders. Examples of and reasons for trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

Neglect

1.43 Neglect consists in persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty, and is an indicator of both support and protection needs

1.44 'Persistent' means there is a pattern which may be continuous or intermittent which has caused, or is likely to cause significant harm. However, single instances of neglectful behaviour by a person in a position of responsibility can be significantly harmful. Early signs of neglect indicate the need for support to prevent harm.

1.45 The GIRFEC SHANARRI indicators set out the essential wellbeing needs. Neglect of any or all of these can impact on healthy development. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment; to ensure the child receives education; or to respond to a child's essential emotional needs.

1.46 Faltering growth refers to an inability to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones in the absence of medically discernible physical and genetic reasons. This condition requires further assessment and may be associated with chronic neglect.

1.47 Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and lack of stimulation can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. For very young children the impact could quickly become life-threatening. Chronic physical and emotional neglect may also have a significant impact on teenagers.

Female genital mutilation

1.48 This extreme form of physical, sexual and emotional assault upon girls and women involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Such procedures are usually conducted on children and are a criminal offence in Scotland. FGM can be fatal and is associated with long-term physical and emotional harm.

Forced marriage

1.49 A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional abuse. Forced marriage is both a child protection and adult protection matter. Child protection processes will be considered up to the age of 18. Forced marriage may be a risk alongside other forms of so called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA). HBA includes practices used to control behaviour within families, communities, or other social groups, to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or 'honour'.

Appendix Five

Missing Child Flow Chart

