



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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

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

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

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

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

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

This policy endorses and takes account of the National Guidance on Child Protection and the N.E.S.C.P.C. guidelines. It was prepared on the 4 March 2014. It is displayed at the front of school and in the nursery cloakroom and individual copies may be obtained from the school office.

We aim to:

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

We will achieve these aims by:

- reviewing our policy annually to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and any new legislation. All staff will be updated and knowledge will be refreshed at the beginning of the school session in August. All new staff will receive child protection training within 2 weeks of their appointment.
- ensuring that all members of staff and volunteers have a copy of Hazlehead Child Protection Policy and know where to access the N.E.S.C.P. child protection guidelines and the Protecting Children and Young People Framework for Standards.
- issuing all members of staff and volunteers with the school child protection policy which outlines the categories of abuse and details the steps which a member of staff must take if child abuse is suspected or disclosed.

- monitoring our Health and Wellbeing programme to ensure appropriate life and social skills are being taught and that pupils are aware of how to resist or avoid abuse and how to approach the known adults in school.
- ensuring standard records are kept in a consistent manner and stored securely within school in line with the advice from Aberdeen City Council..

Roles and Responsibilities

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

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

Definitions of the categories of abuse can be found in Appendix 1.

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

See Appendix 2

Named Person's Role

- Within Hazlehead the named person or deputised person will listen carefully to the staff member's concerns.
- If the named person judges that further investigation is required she can contact any agency who may have information about the child or family and discuss concerns and relevant information about the child and their circumstances in the child's best interests. They should also check the child protection register and will most likely also speak with the child.
- If the named person judges there is evidence of neglect or abuse then she will contact the social work service and discuss the case including discussion as to how parents are to be engaged.
- In all cases incidents should be logged and action taken recorded.

Role of all staff and volunteer workers

- Everyone within the school has a responsibility to identify and pass on concerns re a child to the named person for child protection. The named persons within Hazlehead School are **Barbara Jones Head Teacher/Helen Bruce Depute Head Teacher**
- If the named person is not available then concerns should be passed to the **Depute Head Christine Beard**
- If no-one in the management team is available then **the Joint Police and Social Work Child Protection Unit at Bucksburn 01224 306879** for advice and guidance.

DO NOT DELAY IN CONTACTING SOCIAL WORK BECAUSE YOU CANNOT CONTACT A MEMBER OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM – a child's well being and safety may be at risk.

- When passing your concerns to the named person you should keep a written log of incidents / events. It is important that this log is completed with times and dates noted. The report must be passed to the named person who in turn will ensure a copy is passed to the school's Quality Improvement Officer if appropriate.
- A full inquiry by a single member of staff or volunteer worker must be avoided because collection of evidence is a **specialist police / social work role**. Inappropriate inquiries may prevent successful prosecution.
Do not ask leading questions – report it to the named person or depute.
- As the reporting worker you should ensure that the information you have passed on has been followed up by the relevant agency, if you have not been notified of the outcome of an inquiry then ask what has happened.

The Child Protection Register

- Registration is an administrative system for alerting workers to the fact that there is sufficient professional concern about a child to warrant a multi- agency child protection plan.
- Aberdeen City Social Work Service maintains the central register for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray.
- The register is located at NESCP Offices at Balgownie One, AECC.
- The keeper of the register is, Carol Calderwood for Aberdeen City Council and within the Education, and Children Services Eleanor Shepherd is the lead officer.

- The register has information regarding the referral, whether the abuse was substantiated, nature of injury and by whom inflicted

Monitoring

Regular review of the policy will be undertaken by the Head Teacher in line with new legislation. Care Inspectorate Inspections which occur in the nursery also ensure the policy meets with current legislation, as do HMIE inspections

Appendix 1

What Is Child Abuse?

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

Categories of Child Abuse

- Physical Injury – actual or attempted physical injury including the administration of toxic substances.
- Physical Neglect – child denied food, sleep, clothing, cleanliness, shelter, warmth. Left unattended or inadequately supervised.
- Emotional Abuse / Emotional Neglect – coldness, hostility, criticism inappropriate punishments, isolation, scapegoating. Wilful destruction of a child's confidence.
- Sexual Abuse – when any person by design or by neglect causes the child to be involved in any activity that might lead to sexual arousal or gratification including organised networks. This includes rape, intercourse, lewd and libidinous practices.
- Non-Organic Failure to Thrive/ Neglect – failure to meet expected weight and growth norms or developmental milestones. Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation.

This occurs when a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. A lack of appropriate care results in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child. Physical neglect may also include a failure to secure appropriate medical treatment for the child, or when an adult carer persistently pursues, or allows the child to follow, a lifestyle inappropriate to the child's developmental needs or which jeopardises the child's health.

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

Severe neglect of young children is associated with major detrimental effects on growth and intellectual development. Constant neglect can lead to health and long-term developmental problems socially, emotionally and educationally. Neglect in some cases can result in physical disability and deformity and even death.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix 2

Listening to the Child

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

- Be receptive.
- Take it seriously – there is a reason for the child imparting such information.
- Reassure the child they are right to tell, listen carefully, avoid showing any kind of shock reaction.
- Tell the child you need to seek help do not promise not to tell.
- Make a careful record of what was said – use the child's words not your own.
- Don't jump to conclusions, speculate or accuse anyone.
- Don't use leading questions this is not your role.
- Inform the Head Teacher or PT in charge of child protection i.e. the named person, immediately

Complaints Procedure

In line with Aberdeen City Council's Complaints Procedure if you have a concern or complaint you should follow the stages listed below:

Stage 1 Contact Mrs Jones, the Head Teacher, as soon as possible to inform her of your complaint.

Stage 2 Write a letter, telephone or email

Charlie Love
Quality Improvement Officer
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1BY
Tel: 01224 522775
Email: ChaLove@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Or contact

Care Inspectorate
Johnston House
Rose Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1 UD

Stage 3 Write to

Angela Scott
Chief Executive
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1BY

Stage 4 Contact:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
0131 0115378

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Under the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 members of the public have the right to complain to the public Services Ombudsman about services that they receive from public bodies, including local authorities.

The Ombudsman has the power to investigate complaints against Aberdeen City Council in relation to maladministration and service failure. This includes the power to investigate maladministration in the internal organisation and management of school.

The Ombudsman does not have the power to investigate professional education matters i.e. the giving of instruction, conduct, curriculum or discipline in any educational establishment under the management of Aberdeen City Council.

The Ombudsman may investigate matters only where there is a claim that a member of the public has sustained injustice of hardship in consequence of maladministration, service failure or other action as appropriate.

Contacting the Ombudsman

Members of the public may contact the Ombudsman direct. Individuals may also give written authorisation to a representative to act on their behalf eg MSP or local councillor.

Complaints should normally be made in writing to:

Public Services Ombudsman
23 Walker Street
EDINBURGH
EH3 7XX
Tel: 0870 011 5378
Fax:0870 011 5379
Email:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk

Time Limit

A complaint must be submitted within 12 months after the day in which the person aggrieved first had notice of the matter complained of, unless the Ombudsman is satisfied that there are special circumstances which make it appropriate to consider a complaint outwith that period.

Child Protection Concern Form

Appendix 1

Hazlehead School

Member of Staff Reporting: _____

Social Work Involvement: Yes/No

Name if known: _____

Name of Child _____ Gender _____ D.O.B. _____

Address _____

Parent/Guardian/ _____ Carer _____

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

Legislative Framework

Appendix 2

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

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

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

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