



From mountain to sea

# Barthol Chapel School

## Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy



## The Context

Every child or young person has the right to be safe and protected from any avoidable situation or acts which might result in that child:

- Being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed in any way.
- Put at risk of physical, sexual or emotional harm, abuse or exploitation.
- Having their basic needs neglected or experiencing that their needs are met in ways that are not appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Being denied the sustained support and care necessary for them to thrive and develop normally.
- Being denied access to appropriate medical treatment.
- Being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development. Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

Child protection is the responsibility of all who work with children and families regardless of whether or not they come into direct contact with children. All workers must be fully informed of their responsibilities in respect of keeping children safe. All services working with children, young people and families are expected to identify and consider the wellbeing of children and to share concerns appropriately.

These guidelines are based on National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. The National Guidance provides a framework within which agencies and practitioners can understand and agree processes for working together to support, promote and safeguard the wellbeing of all children.

Child Protection is part of our approach to Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Curriculum for Excellence. Every child and young person has the right to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. They have the right to be listened to and to have their views taken into account. They should expect to get the help they need, when they need it and be able to access help close to where they live.

### **Article 3**

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

### **Article 12**

Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

### **Article 13**

Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

### **Article 19**

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.

### **Article 36**

Governments must protect children from all other forms of bad treatment.



These guidelines will assist all who work with children, young people and families by: Developing an ethos which safeguards and promotes the welfare and wellbeing of all children.

- Providing clear guidance for all staff on the roles and responsibilities involved in child protection.
- Ensuring that staff respond appropriately when abuse is identified.
- Describing the processes and procedures that all staff must follow in response to disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse.
- Ensuring effective multi-agency communication, collaborative working and providing a consistent framework for practice.

## What is Child Protection?

Child protection means protecting a child or young person from abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a likelihood or risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect. Where a child requires protection, a Child Protection Plan is used to detail how a child will be kept safe. Everyone is responsible for Child Protection.

There are circumstances where, although abuse has taken place, formal child protection procedures are not required. For example, the child's family may take protective action by removing the child from the source of risk. Children who are abused by strangers would not necessarily require a Child Protection Plan unless abuse occurred in circumstances resulting from a failure in familial responsibility

## What is Child Abuse and Child Neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, a significant harm to a child. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Assessments will need to consider whether abuse has occurred or is likely to occur. There are four primary categories of child abuse: Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Neglect.

### Physical abuse

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.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve the imposition of inappropriate expectations on a child. It may involve causing a child to feel frightened or in danger; or exploiting or corrupting a child. Some level of emotional abuse is



present in all types of ill treatment of a child; it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is any act that involves the child or young person 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. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving a child in looking at or in the production of indecent images or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child or encouraging a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child 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 child's basic emotional needs. Neglect may also result in the child 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 a child can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation. This can lead to damaging long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children in particular, the consequences may be life-threatening within a relatively short period of time.

### **Other Sources of Harm and Threat for Children and Young People**

The four primary categories of child abuse listed above can be present for children and young people from a number of sources and they may not be easy to identify. Staff need to be alert to what is happening in a child's life to help them identify behaviour, actions or changes in patterns which might signal that a child is at risk.

All staff should familiarise themselves with the Aberdeenshire Council Child Protection Folder - "**Protecting Children and Young People in Aberdeenshire**". This is located in the Staffroom.

Where there is a possibility that a child could be at risk, the school is required to follow strict procedures which are outlined in this policy. Any intervention by a public authority in the life of a child must be properly justified and should be supported by services from all relevant agencies working in collaboration.



# Procedures at Barthol Chapel School

All educational establishments should designate a senior member of staff as responsible for co-ordinating action on child abuse within the establishment. At Barthol Chapel School this is the **Head Teacher, Mr Adrian Anderson**. Referrals should normally be through this designated person but every employee has the responsibility to make a direct referral if this is necessary.

If any member of staff has any concerns relating to a child at risk from any form of harm, action must be taken immediately. In all cases, incidents should be logged, and recorded in line with Child Protection Flow Chart. (See Appendix 1).

## The 3 key questions

When considering the immediate needs of a child or young person once a concern about their possible safety is raised, it is essential that practitioners consider the following questions:

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

It is essential to maintain strict confidentiality in all child protection matters. Breach of confidentiality is a serious disciplinary matter and must be reported immediately to the line manager.

Investigation by school staff only needs to establish evidence of the need to investigate abuse. Collection of evidence is a specialist Police/Social Work role – inappropriate inquiries may prevent successful prosecution.

## Dealing with Disclosures

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

Don't "interrogate" for full details. Do not ask leading questions, for example: *"What did he do next?"* (This assumes he did). Do ask open questions like: *"Anything else to tell me?"* *"And?"* *"Yes?"* Do not ask the pupil to repeat it all for another member of staff.

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

Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible on the GIRFEC Concern Sheet **GC1 Form**.

Do not destroy your original notes, attach them to the **GC1 Form**.

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



# Police Concern Reports

When the Police attend an incident where children are directly or indirectly involved, the attending officer will normally complete a Police Concern Report, where there is concern for or there is a risk to a child's wellbeing. This will be submitted to the Police Concern Hub, who will review and assess the Concern Report. The Police Concern Report will normally be shared with the Named Person for the children concerned.

When a Police Concern Report is to be sent to a Named Person in Education, the following process will be followed by the Referral Unit.

## Actions on Receipt of a Police Concern Report

On receipt of the Concern Report, the Head Teacher should first check that the child is known to them and the Report has come to the correct school.

If the Concern Report has been received in error, forward the Concern Report to: [ellchildprotection@aberdeenshire.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:ellchildprotection@aberdeenshire.gsx.gov.uk) and advise that the child does not attend this school. If you have information on the school now attended, please provide that information when you return the Police Concern Report. Please return the Police Concern Report without delay.

The Headteacher will forward the Concern Report to the Named Person for the school. The Named Person will consider what the information means for the child in question and decide what to do next. This may mean sharing information with colleagues, in line with GDPR guidance, and putting this information into the broader context of what has been happening to that child. It may mean further actions via the GIRFEC

Where the Named Person believes that the circumstances or the pattern emerging, when considered with other information held, raises child protection concerns, Child Protection Procedure must be followed.

## Storage and Confidentiality

The Police Concern Report should be treated as child protection information and be retained in full. An electronic copy and/or a paper copy can be kept and must be securely stored in the Pupil's PPR. Where an electronic copy is retained, the secure electronic folder which this is stored in becomes part of the PPR. The PPR will consist of the paper PPR, any papers kept in the Child Protection Envelope associated with the PPR and the electronic file containing items such as the electronic copy of the Police Concern Report and any other electronic child protection material received.

Where the pupil moves to a different school, the current school should ensure that all relevant information is included with the PPR and that Aberdeenshire Council guidance, in place at the time, on action to be taken with PPRs when a child moves school, is followed.



**The child's chronology should record of child protection electronic material received, the date received, the location of the storage file and who accesses it should be recorded and kept with the child's PPR.**

**The child's Chronology should be annotated to show receipt of a Police Concern Report with the date and VPD ID number being recorded but without detailed information.**

**Electronic and hard copies should be securely stored. Hard copies should be filed in the envelope used to store child protection information, within the child's PPR. The PPR should display a blue dot to indicate that the file contains child protection information. Electronic material should be stored in line with Aberdeenshire Council practice.**



# Appendix 1

Child discloses concern or staff member has a concern



Staff member speaks to Child Protection Co-ordinator or Depute Co-ordinator or designated person for Child Protection. Open **GC1** Form.  
CPC gathers further information as appropriate.



Child(ren) is in need of protection without delay

Child is not in need of further protection at this time



Continue with referral to Duty Social Worker.  
01467 537111 (Ellon) 01467 537555 (Inverurie)  
(Out of hours – 03456 08 12 06)

Child will require GIRFEC Single Agency Assessment



1. Telephone call using the referral checklist (**RC1**)
2. Follow up with electronic record of child protection referral form (**RR1**) (within 48 hours)
3. Debrief referrer and inform Named Person

Identify need for support from partner agencies

Identify need for support from within school or service



Support Child:

- Reassure child
- Ensure child is in a place of safety within the school
- Await and act on Social Work advice

Named Person to update chronology and begin GIRFEC Multi Agency Action Planning Process

Named Person to update chronology and begin GIRFEC Single-Agency Planning process



Open Child Protection Education Case File and include paper copy of referral form. Blue dot placed on child's PPR.



Copy of referral record sent to Head Teacher, Named Person, Social Worker and QIO within 48 hours.

