



Lochgoilhead Primary School and ELC

Child Protection Policy

This policy was adopted at a meeting of:

Lochgoilhead Primary and ELC

On Wednesday 13th March 2024

Signed: Louise Blair Designation Head Teacher

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

– Martin Luther King Jr



Article 2- Non-discrimination

Article 3 -Best interests of the child

Article 12 Respect for the children’s views

Article 13 Freedom of expression of the child’s views

Article 16 Protection of privacy

Article 19 The right to protection from violence, abuse or neglect

Article 34 Protection from Sexual Abuse

Article 35 Prevention of sale and trafficking

Article 36 Protection from exploitation.



1. Statement of Purpose

At Lochgoilhead primary School and ELC we put children's needs first and ensure that children are listened to and understand decisions that affect them. We work with all relevant agencies to ensure that they get the appropriate co-ordinated support needed to promote, support and safeguard their wellbeing, health and development.

Lochgoilhead Primary School has a policy of partnership between home and school, but with child abuse, suspicion of child abuse, or safeguarding, our first and only responsibility is to the child. This means that parents are not informed or consulted in instances where information is lawfully shared. This is clearly laid out in Argyll and Bute Council's Management Circular on Child Protection and Safeguarding, and staff are required to follow these procedures.

Throughout this guidance the term 'parents' is used to include all main caregivers.

2. Rationale

This policy is underpinned by UNCRC principles, Argyll and Bute's 'Our Children, Their Future' Council strategy, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), the Early Year's Framework and the Framework for Standards.

Every child has a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which may result in harm. The welfare of children is paramount consideration, and we must work together to ensure they are protected.

All forms of child abuse can have damaging and long-lasting consequences. All children have the right to be protected from abuse, and it can be prevented.

Our curriculum is designed to enable children to develop skills and understanding of what being safe means, to recognise when they may not be safe and way of keeping themselves safe.

3. Responsibility

Staff play an important part in the prevention of abuse and neglect through creating and maintaining a safe environment for children and young people. Every member of staff at Lochgoilhead Primary School has a professional and contractual duty to protect children, young people and protected adults from abuse and exploitation, respond appropriately if abuse is suspected, and enable our children to exercise their right to be raised in a warm, stimulating and safe environment with the support of staff, their families and carers.

This policy is rooted in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Argyll and Bute's Our Children, Their Future, the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, the Early Years Framework, the Children's Charter and the Framework for

Standards.

Everyone in school and ELC have the responsibility to protect young people and protected adults. Staff play a key role in promoting the wellbeing of children and protected adults. Children, young people, protected adults and staff have the right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which might result in harm. The welfare for all children and protected adults are paramount. All adults must work together to ensure they are protected.

4. Definition of terms

Child Abuse- 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. 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.

Child Protection - Protecting a child from child 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.

Safeguarding – This is a much wider concept than child protection and refers to promoting the welfare of children, young people and protected adults. It encompasses protecting from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their health or development, ensuring that they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children, young people and protected adults to have the best outcome. Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities to prevent children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

5. Types of 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.

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 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 (Scotland) Act 2018)

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. '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.

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), or to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect may include unresponsiveness to a child's essential emotional needs. 'Non-organic failure to thrive' 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 may be associated with chronic neglect.

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.

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.

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.

Female genital mutilation is an 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.

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.

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'.

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 trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

We recognise the problems associated with bullying and harassment of both children and adults and are committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently, and competently. Harassment and/or bullying of

children or adults, including members of staff, is not acceptable under any circumstances. The focus of this policy is to promote good relationships and positive behaviours that engender mutual respect and esteem among staff, children, and parents.

Potential signs of child abuse can include:

- Mood swings - angry, emotional, withdrawn, suicide attempts, depression
- Bruising, scarring on body
- Receiving gifts
- Staying out late or not returning home
- Secretive and distant towards family and friends
- Skipping education
- Involved in criminal activity
- Education grades dropping
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy or miscarriage
- Using alcohol or drugs
- Eating disorders
- Not sleeping, nightmares, anxiety, panic attacks
- Violence or aggression towards parents, siblings or animals

Child protection involves:

- immediate action, if necessary, to prevent significant harm to a child
- inter-agency investigation about the occurrence or probability of abuse or neglect, or of a criminal offence against a child. Investigation extends to other children affected by the same apparent risks as the child who is the subject of a referral
- assessment and action to address the interaction of behaviour, relationships and conditions that may, in combination, cause or accelerate risks
- focus within assessment, planning and action upon each child's experience, needs and feelings
- collaboration between agencies and persistent efforts to work in partnership with parents in planning and action to prevent harm or reduce risk of harm
- recognition and support for the strengths, relationships and skills within the child and their world in order to form a plan that reduces risk and builds resilience

The Continuum

Child Protection is part of a continuum of collaborative duties upon agencies working with children. The Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach promotes and supports planning for such services to be provided in the way which best safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing of children, and ensures that any action to meet needs is taken at the earliest appropriate time to prevent acute needs arising. The planning of systems should ensure that action is integrated from the point of view of recipients.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, along with the staff, to monitor, evaluate and review the above arrangements and adjust them according to need/ national guidelines. It is the responsibility of staff to share their concerns with the Head Teacher, following Child Protection protocol and procedures.