

SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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MELVILLE-KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ABERDEEN

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‘A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.’ (John 13 v 34)

‘Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.’ (Romans 13 v 10)

‘Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.’ (Galatians 6 v 2)

1. Definitions

‘**Safeguarding** ...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 outcomes. Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.’ (Education Scotland)

‘**Child protection** refers to the processes involved in consideration, assessment and planning of required action, together with the actions themselves, where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm.’ (National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2021)

The Child Protection Co-Ordinator (CPC) is responsible for the day to day management of Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures in the school.

- 1.1. At Melville Knox Christian School Aberdeen the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare of our pupils is of primary importance. For this reason, we regard Safeguarding as vitally important. The school recognises its legal and moral duty to promote the well-being of children, protect them from harm, and respond to child abuse, by following the **National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2021**.
- 1.2. We believe that every child, regardless of age, has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically, psychologically or spiritually impacted.
- 1.3. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action when there is a concern about a child.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. The Board of Directors

Melville Knox Christian School Aberdeen has a Board of Directors whose responsibility it is to ensure that the school has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare. It is the Board of Directors responsibility to ensure that an appropriately trained **CPC** is appointed.

2.2. The Board of Directors will:

- 2.2.1. Facilitate a whole-school approach to safeguarding, ensuring that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development
- 2.2.2. Evaluate and approve this policy at each review, ensuring it complies with the law, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation

- 2.2.3. Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- 2.2.4. Read any future updates to the **National Guidance on Child Protection Scotland 2021**
- 2.3. The **Chair of the Board of Directors** will act as the 'case manager' in the event that an allegation of abuse is made against the headteacher and take the appropriate course of action.
- 2.4. The **Board Secretary**, or an approved substitute, will review safeguarding practices in the school on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:
- 2.4.1. The school is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children at the school.
- 2.4.2. Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current safeguarding practices, and that staff receive training. This includes training for the **CPC at the appropriate level to reflect their role**. All members of staff will receive training annually.
- 2.4.3. Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers.
- 2.4.4. Only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the school, or work in a voluntary capacity. Safe and effective recruitment procedures are followed.
- 2.4.5. All teachers employed at the school are registered with the GTCS.
- 2.4.6. All volunteers working in the school will have completed satisfactory PVG checks.
- 2.4.7. Substantiated safeguarding concerns about a member of staff will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken.
- 2.4.8. There is an effective safeguarding and child protection policy that describes procedures which are in accordance with government guidance and that the policy is updated annually.
- 2.5. **The Headteacher**, (also currently the **CPC**) is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:
- 2.5.1. Ensuring that staff and volunteers:
- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy, as part of their induction
 - Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect
- 2.5.2. Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the school.
- 2.5.3. Facilitate all staff undertaking appropriate safeguarding and child protection training.
- 2.5.4. Acting as the 'case manager' in the event of an allegation of abuse made against another member of staff or volunteer.
- 2.6. Child Protection Co-Ordinator**
- 2.7. The **Child Protection Co-Ordinator (CPC)** in Melville Knox Christian School Aberdeen is: **Ms Ashleigh Moodley**
- 2.8. In the absence of the CPC, these matters will be dealt with by: **MS. Svea Noll, the Deputy CPC.**

2.9. The **CPC** is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to safeguarding issues.

2.9.1. All members of staff (including volunteers) will be made aware of who the **CPC** is and what their role is. The **CPC** will act as a source of advice and coordinate action within the school over child protection cases. He will liaise with other agencies and build good working relationships with colleagues from these agencies. The **CPC** is the first person to whom members of staff report concerns. The **CPC** is responsible for referring disclosures and incidents causing concern to the relevant investigating agencies.

2.10. To be effective the **CPC** will:

2.10.1. Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school

2.10.2. Be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Services and other relevant agencies over concerns that a child may be suffering harm.

2.10.3. Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by the Aberdeen City Council

2.10.4. Ensure each member of staff and all volunteers at the school are given a paper copy of this policy.

2.10.5. Ensure all staff are aware of the early signs of abuse and neglect (Appendix 3) and report any concerns to the **CPC**.

2.10.6. Work with the Board Secretary for safeguarding and child protection to ensure this policy is updated annually.

2.10.7. Where children leave the school roll, ensure any child protection information is transferred to the new school.

2.10.8. Provide advice and support to staff on child welfare/child protection matters, take part in strategic discussions and multi-agency meetings, and/or support other staff to do so.

2.10.9. Keep detailed, accurate, secure, written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place in the school office. These records will include **chronologies** with respect to each referral, detailing actions taken, documents received and when, where and to whom information was provided as part of the child protection procedure. (See Appendix 5 for the chronology template)

2.11. **Children Missing in Education** - Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Missing school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns around other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children. The school monitors attendance carefully and will address poor or irregular attendance without delay. We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we require at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Attendance rates are to be reported to the Board of Directors at Board meetings. This is actioned by the Headteacher, as are any follow up measures.

When a pupil leaves the school contact will be made with the receiving school and records promptly transferred.

3. Aims

- 3.1. At Melville Knox Christian School Aberdeen we aim to minimise risk to the safety and well-being of our pupils and positively promote their safety by:
 - 3.1.1. Protecting children from maltreatment
 - 3.1.2. Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - 3.1.3. Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances that enable them to thrive.
 - 3.1.4. Taking prompt action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

4. Recognising abuse and taking action

4.1. If a child makes a disclosure or presents an unexplained injury you should:

- 4.1.1. Listen to them carefully. Allow them time to talk freely and **do not ask leading questions**. For example **do not** ask questions like 'did he/she hit you?' If clarification is needed, rather ask questions such as: 'Can you tell me about it?' or 'Can you tell me what happened?' Or 'How did you get that bruise/cut?'
- 4.1.2. Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- 4.1.3. Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you.
- 4.1.4. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- 4.1.5. Write up your conversation (using the 'Logging a Concern Form' in Appendix 4) as soon as possible in the child's own words. Record the facts and refrain from giving opinions or making judgements.
- 4.1.6. Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the **CPC**.

4.2. If a child is suffering or likely to suffer serious harm, or in immediate danger

- 4.2.1. Report to the **CPC** as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

4.3. **Mental health problems** can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should be alert to behavioural signs that suggest a child may be experiencing mental health challenges or be at risk of developing one. If a member of staff has a concern about a child's mental health that is also a safeguarding concern they must take immediate action by informing the CPC and completing Appendix 4.

4.4. **Allegations of abuse made against other pupils**

Children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up", as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour and an unsafe environment for pupils. Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy, but the child protection and safeguarding policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- 4.4.1. Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- 4.4.2. Could put pupils in the school at risk
- 4.4.3. Is violent
- 4.4.4. Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol

4.4.5. Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos.

4.5. **Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher, volunteer or contractor**

If you have concerns about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor), or an allegation is made about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor) posing a risk of harm to children, speak to the headteacher as soon as possible. If the concerns/allegations are about the headteacher, speak to the **Chairman of the Board of Directors**.

4.6. **Inappropriate Use of Mobile Phones by Pupils**

Pupils are not normally permitted to bring mobile phones to school. In exceptional circumstances some pupils may need to bring them to communicate with parents/carers after the end of the school day. They will not be permitted to carry mobile phones on their persons or to have access to them unsupervised during school hours. All mobile phones brought into school will be locked away in the school office. Parents must obtain the permission of the headteacher if they wish their child to bring a mobile phone into school. Such phones will be returned to the pupil at the end of the school day on leaving the building. Any use of a mobile phone during school hours will be supervised by an adult.

5. **Working with other agencies and seeking professional advice**

- 5.1. The **CPC** may need to contact Social Services to find out if a child is known to them, to seek advice about necessary action, to contact the child's assigned social work team or to make a referral to that team. Where the wellbeing and safety of a child is considered to be at risk, action must be taken.
- 5.2. **Schools are not investigating agencies** and it is essential that child protection issues are addressed through proper procedures. However, schools continue to play a role after referral and need to develop strong links with partner agencies. Melville Knox Christian School Aberdeen recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure staff are able to attend all relevant meetings including case conferences, core groups and strategy meetings.

6. **Listening to Pupils**

- 6.1. We recognise the importance of listening to our pupils, particularly when they are distressed, worried or concerned. The school will identify quiet areas and provide the opportunity for them to take respite from the normal day when necessary.
- 6.2. We will encourage children to feel safe and to talk about their feelings. It can:
 - 6.2.1. reduce isolation
 - 6.2.2. relieve tension by enabling children to talk and be listened to
 - 6.2.3. provide an opportunity to develop an appropriate vocabulary
 - 6.2.4. enable planning for an action or change
 - 6.2.5. make children feel protected by a culture which actively promotes a 'listening environment'
- 6.3. All staff shall be made aware that children who are not known to be the subjects of concern may, however, be experiencing ill treatment, neglect or abuse. This means that staff should be aware of the need for sensitivity and vigilance when dealing with all students at all times.

- 6.4. We will ensure pupils know how to complain and understand the process for doing so they can identify a trusted adult with whom they can talk about any concerns.
- 6.5. All children need to know what to do in case someone tries to harm them. Knowing that the vast majority of children are abused or harmed by someone they know, teaching children to avoid dangerous situations, to recognise inappropriate touching and comments, can encourage them to trust their own judgement and to feel safer, more aware and confident.
- 6.6. We recognise that students who are distressed through experiences outside the classroom may be less able to achieve their potential. While it is clear that such students need firm boundaries, staff will take into account the student's distress when managing behaviour.
- 6.7. The school will seek to support the child's development in ways which will foster security, confidence and independence. This is such an important factor to really embed this understanding. The most appropriate approach is skills-based, set alongside a knowledge component, with an emphasis on helping children to develop the personal and social skills they need to keep themselves safe and to become responsible and independent adults. The school will seek to impart skills of conflict de-escalation, negotiation and resolution to all children.

7. Talking to parents/carers

- 7.1. The school's relationship with families is very important and every effort must be made to retain a working relationship with them. Wherever possible, the school will seek to work with parents and carers and inform them of action taken. If it is deemed that by informing them of a referral this may put a child in danger, then the referral will go ahead without parental permission. In such cases it is important that National Guidance is followed to ensure the processes keep children safe from risk and harm.

8. Handling information and confidentiality

- 8.1. The school, and all members of staff at the school, will ensure that all data about pupils is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.
- 8.2. If a child discloses information relating to abuse or neglect this will be handled sensitively. It is important that staff do not promise confidentiality in relation to serious allegations or concerns as staff have a duty of care to inform the CPC. A disclosure from a child may be sudden and unexpected or it may arise from a normal enquiry into a particular incident. On other occasions, disclosure may be through stories or comments, possibly sparked by a particular lesson. It is important that all staff are prepared to receive disclosures from children, to listen to and support them and to report the incident to the CPC. (See Appendix 2 – Child Protection: Everyone's Responsibility and Appendix 3 – Recognising Signs of Abuse)
- 8.3. Staff who have suspicions but no evidence of abuse or neglect should discuss their concerns with the CPC as they may already be aware of that concern or hold other relevant knowledge. The CPC may need to talk to other staff involved with the child in school or with an independent assessor, or with professionals working with the child to gain further information or to clarify the concern, e.g. School Nurse. Information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis; in other words, where background knowledge of a child's difficulties aids staff to better support them. Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is only disclosed to those people who need to know.
- 8.4. Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may be suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the CPC. Where any member of staff fails to report concerns about a child, this will be considered as misconduct and dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

- 8.5. Social workers occasionally need to seek information from school when allegations or concerns have been highlighted by other sources. Information about attendance, care and appearance, or changes in behaviour may be sought. It is important to work with children's social care in the best interests of the child. All such requests should be recorded on a child's chronology.
- 8.6. Normally, personal information should only be disclosed to the third parties (including other agencies) with the consent of the subject of that information (UK General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR) However, the welfare of the child is paramount and there may be reasons for not sharing the concerns with the child, their parents or carers prior to making a referral to children's social care. Information should only be shared without consent where there is justification for doing so, e.g to prevent a crime being committed, or to prevent serious harm to a child or adult, or where there is a risk to public safety.
- 8.7. The law also requires the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard children. Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, statutory agencies have a duty to co-operate with the Aberdeen City Council if a child may be at risk of significant harm. Therefore, if the Police or children's social care are conducting a Section 47 investigation under the 1989 Children Act, staff must share requested information relevant to the investigation.
- 8.8. When a child or children transfer to a new school, child protection information will be transferred with them.

9. Online safety

- 9.1. We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. To address this, our school aims to:
 - 9.1.1. Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils.
 - 9.1.2. Protect and educate children in the safe and responsible use of technology, including mobile phones.
- 9.2. To meet our aims and address the risks we educate pupils about online safety as part of our curriculum. For example:
 - 9.2.1. The safe use of social media, the internet and technology
 - 9.2.2. Keeping personal information private
 - 9.2.3. How to recognise unacceptable behaviour online
 - 9.2.4. How to report any incidents of cyber-bullying, ensuring pupils are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than a victim.
- 9.3. Filtering and monitoring systems are put in place to limit children's exposure to the risks from the school's IT systems

10. Photographing Children

- 10.1. We understand that parents like to take photos or video of their children at school events. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes. We will not allow others to photograph or film pupils during a school activity without their parents' permission.
- 10.2. We will not allow images of pupils to be used on the school website, or in publicity material without express permission from the parent. Children will not be identified by name.

- 10.3. Members of staff may take photographs of children whilst engaged in school activities for teaching and learning purposes; for assessment purposes or as means of celebrating successes in school.

11. Whistleblowing

- 11.1. We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If it becomes necessary to raise concerns about the management of Child Protection/Safeguarding within the school, the Chair of the Board of Directors should be contacted.
- 11.2. Whistleblowing regarding the Head teacher should be directed to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

12. Record Keeping

- 12.1. We will hold records in line with GDPR requirements.
- 12.2. All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing and in a chronology. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to record something they must discuss it with the CPC.
- 12.3. Records will include:
- 12.3.1. A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
 - 12.3.2. Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
 - 12.3.3. A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- 12.4. Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file organised by the **CPC**. This information is confidential and will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.
- 12.5. Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the school and if they have not moved to another educational establishment.
- 12.6. Our records are paper based and are held in a secure locked cupboard accessible only by the **CPC** and Deputy **CPC**.

13. Staff – providing a safe working culture

- 13.1. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- 13.2. Staff and volunteers are in a position of trust. All staff and volunteers must seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which children are put at risk, or misunderstandings about their behaviours towards children. Staff and volunteers must adhere to this guidance and policies.
- 13.3. The school has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries. At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff will be aware of the dangers inherent in:
- 13.3.1. working alone with a child
 - 13.3.2. physical interventions

- 13.3.3. dealing with sensitive information
 - 13.3.4. giving gifts to children
 - 13.3.5. contacting children through private telephones (including texting), e-mail, MSN, or social networking websites.
 - 13.3.6. disclosing personal details inappropriately
 - 13.3.7. meeting pupils outside school hours or school duties.
- 13.4. Staff are advised to use the following sensible precautions when working alone with children:
- 13.4.1. Avoid working in isolation with children unless thought has been given to safeguards including appropriate risk assessments being completed
 - 13.4.2. Work in a room where there is a glass panel in the door or leave the door open
 - 13.4.3. Make sure that other adults visit the room regularly
- 13.5. All staff must have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put a child at risk of harm (Appendix 3). Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse and deliberately missing education put children in danger.
- 13.6. All staff are responsible for safeguarding the welfare of children whilst in the school, through positive measures to address bullying. The school uses a positive behaviour management system and has a Christian ethos, designed to encourage achievement and to prevent bullying incidents from taking place. Bullying in any form is totally unacceptable and any that occurs will be addressed through the school Behaviour Policy.
- 13.7. We recognise that staff who become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the **CPC** and to seek further support as appropriate. Also to provide supports for the CPC who are also often impacted by their role and responsibilities.

14. Physical Interventions

- 14.1. Melville Knox Christian School Aberdeen acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a **last resort**, when a child is endangering themselves or others, may damage property/buildings or compromise the orderly operation of the school.
- 14.2. Staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention will be appropriately trained.
- 14.3. We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

15. Safer Recruitment Procedures

- 15.1. In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this school, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected.
 - 15.1.1. Before appointing someone, 2 references are obtained, one being from the current/most recent employer.
 - 15.1.2. All staff and volunteers have a PVG check before starting work. Where a conviction is identified a risk assessment will be completed to ascertain the appropriateness of employing the individual and withdrawing the employment offer if there is a safeguarding conflict.
 - 15.1.3. New teaching staff will be required to be registered with the GTCS
- 15.2. In addition, we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the school:
 - 15.2.1. Identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be through birth certificate, passport, new style driving licence etc.
 - 15.2.2. Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
 - 15.2.3. Professional and character references prior to offering employment
 - 15.2.4. Satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
 - 15.2.5. Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.
- 15.3. Occasional visitors do not need to be PVG checked when visiting, provided they are permanently in the presence of a member of school staff. All visitors must sign in at reception and receive a visitor badge which must be worn at all times whilst on the premises. This should include a summary of what the visitor should do if a CP/SG disclosure is made during their visit.

16. Volunteers

- 16.1. We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the school, in whatever capacity, will undergo the same checking and security vetting as paid staff.
- 16.2. Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with any child. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in school regularly or over a longer period then they will undergo the same checking and security vetting as paid staff.
- 16.3. The outcomes of the checks carried out on all adults working in school (staff and volunteers) are held by in accordance with the requirements of the Disclosure Handling Policy.

17. Induction & Training

- 17.1. All new staff and volunteers will complete a formal induction process that includes safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They will be given an overview of the school and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.
- 17.2. All new staff at the school (including volunteers) will receive basic safeguarding and child protection information and a copy of this policy.
- 17.3. All staff will attend training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively.
- 17.4. Staff will attend refresher safeguarding and child protection training every year, either provided by the Local Authority or 'in house'.
- 17.5. Records will be kept of all staff training completed and the date it was undertaken.

18. Review

- 18.1. This policy was first written in October 2022 and is reviewed on an annual basis.

This policy was approved by the Board of Directors on.....

Review date: Oct 2023

SignedChair of the Board of Directors

Signed.....Headteacher

Appendix 1 - Safeguarding/Child Protection Procedure Flowchart

A child protection concern is raised by a member of the school community or a pupil makes a disclosure to a member of staff or a volunteer. The person raising the concern **should not attempt to investigate it.**

The person receiving the disclosure or raising the concern **must** complete a '**Logging a Concern Form**' (Appendix 4) and pass to the **CPC** or in his absence the **Deputy CPC**.



The CPC will consider the evidence presented in the 'Logging a Concern' form and seek clarification if required from the author. **NO ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO INVESTIGATE THE CONCERN.**

The **CPC** will decide if the information presented demonstrates that a child is at risk of significant harm. If this is not the case, the CPC will address the matter with the parents/carers, keeping a written record of the meeting and keeping it on file.



Where it is clear that a Child Protection Referral is needed the **CPC** will contact Aberdeen City Joint Child Protection Team: 01224 306877 / (0800 731 5520 Emergency Out of Hours)

Alternatively, they should contact the Police Child Protection Team via 101
(<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/social-care-and-health/child-protection>)

Parents/Carers will **not** be informed.

However, if there is reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm the **CPC** will contact the Police on 999.



The **CPC** will follow any instructions given by either the Police or Children's Services.

The **CPC** will keep a written chronology of all events and action taken. Records are stored securely and confidentially.

Appendix 2 - Child Protection – Everyone’s Responsibility

Child Protection relates to children who are in need or at risk of abuse. Abuse relates to physical injury, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect or witnessing domestic violence.

What do I do if I suspect that a child is being abused because of:

- Marks/bruising
- Behaviour
- Comments a child has written or said
- Hearsay from others.

Then it is my responsibility to pass on my concerns:

- Tell the **CPC** by completing the ‘logging a concern about a child’ form on the same day a disclosure is made.
- You do not need to question the child yourself but may make an enquiry if they are clearly upset or their behaviour is of concern.
- Maintain confidentiality – don’t tell others who do not need to know.

If a child tells you he/she has been subject to physical or sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect or has witnessed domestic violence.

- Never agree to keep ‘secrets’/maintain confidentiality
- Listen carefully to the child and allow them to say what they need to
- **Use questions for clarification;** avoid leading questions
- Reassure the child that they have done the correct thing by telling someone
- When the child has finished speaking, write down what has happened using the ‘logging a concern’ form, including where possible, the exact words or phrases they used and hand immediately to the **CPC**.

If I suspect or receive information about any adult who may be abusing a child or children

- Write down what you know and pass it to the **CPC**.

Child Protection Co-Ordinator: Ms. Ashleigh Moodley

Deputy CPC: Ms Svea Noll

Appendix 3 - Recognising Signs of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

The signs of child abuse aren't always obvious, and a child might not tell anyone what's happening to them. Children might be scared that the abuser will find out, and worried that the abuse will get worse. Or they might think that there's no-one they can tell or that they won't be believed. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening is abuse. The effects of abuse may be short term or may last a long time - sometimes into adulthood.

Children develop and mature at different rates. So, what's worrying for a younger child, might be normal behaviour for an older child. If a child looks or acts a lot older or younger than their age, this could be a cause for concern. However, if a child develops more slowly than others of a similar age and there's not a cause such as physical or learning needs, it could be a sign they're being abused. Long term effects of abuse and neglect include:

- emotional difficulties such as anger, anxiety, sadness or low self-esteem
- mental health problems such as depression, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), self-harm, suicidal thoughts
- problems with drugs or alcohol
- disturbing thoughts, emotions and memories that cause distress or confusion
- poor physical health such as obesity, aches and pains
- struggling with relationships
- worrying that their abuser is still a threat to themselves or others
- learning difficulties, lower educational attainment, difficulties in communicating
- behavioural problems including anti-social behaviour, criminal behaviour.

Definitions and Examples of Abuse

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person and may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. There may be some variation in family, community or cultural attitudes to parenting, for example in relation to discipline. Cultural sensitivity must not deter 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.

Children suffering physical abuse may exhibit unexplained injuries such as bruising and burns/scalds. An explanation for injuries should always be sought by the school. A fairly non-intrusive enquiry such as 'how did that happen?' by a member of staff may be enough to arouse or allay concerns. Where a child exhibits unexplained injuries and is incapable or unwilling to respond to open ended questions about the injury, they must be referred immediately to the CPC. If a member of staff believes that a child may be at risk of significant harm, a 'Logging Concern' form must be completed. Again, at no point should staff attempt to investigate any possible incident of child abuse.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused or is likely to cause significant harm. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

Emotional abuse 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
- Exploitation or corruption of a child or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age.

- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (Domestic Abuse Act Scotland 2018)
- Serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger

Sexual abuse 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. These activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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.

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. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stress such as poverty and is an indicator of both support and protection needs. Neglect may be a failure to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

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.

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.

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.

Criminal exploitation

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 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

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.

Female Genital Mutilation

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 the UK. FGM can be fatal and is associated with long-term physical and emotional harm. **If you discover that FGM has taken place or a pupil is at risk of FGM you must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary action for failing to do so.**

Forced marriage

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 4 - Logging a concern about a child's safety and welfare

Part 1 (for use by all staff and volunteers)

Pupil's Name:	Date of Birth:	Year:
Date/Time of Incident:	Date/Time (of writing):	
Name: Print	Signature	
Job Title:		
Why are you concerned about this child? Please provide a description of any observations/incidents/conversations and the dates they occurred. You must make clear what is fact and what is hearsay or opinion. You must not ask the pupil leading questions or try to investigate the concern yourself.		
What have you observed and when? This relates to anything that you have personally witnessed.		
What have you been told and when? Write here anything that you have been told by the pupil or any other person. Be clear about who has said what.		

What have you heard and when?

This may be third party information that is relevant but as yet unsubstantiated. If an allegation has been made, give any details you have about the alleged abuser.

Does the pupil have any visible injury, or have they told you that they have been injured?
Yes / No

If yes, record visible signs of harm and physical injuries or marks seen on child using the body maps at Annex A to record injuries (Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment.) **At no time, should an individual teacher/member of staff take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person. The body map at Annex A should be used. Any concerns should be reported without delay to the appropriate safeguarding services.**

Injuries or marks recorded on Annex A Yes / No

If there are injuries has medical advice been sought?
Write here what medical advice has been sought and from whom

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern?
Write here what action has been taken e.g. pupil removed from class, first aid administered.

Name and position of the person that this record was handed to:

Date and time the above person received this record.

If this record has been handed to someone other than the CPC or Deputy CPC, please explain why:

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.
Please pass this form to the Child Protection Co-Ordinator. If unavailable it should be passed to the Deputy CPC. If you have used additional sheets to complete this record of concern, please staple them to this form and write the number of additional sheets here:

Appendix 5 - Child Protection Chronology of Events

Name of Child.....DOB.....

Sheet Number.....

Date of Event	Significant Event	Source	Impact (Positive or Negative)	Action Taken to Mitigate	Entered by	Date of Entry

Annex A

Name of Child.....

Date injuries or marks recorded.....

Injuries or marks recorded by.....

Time injuries or marks recorded.....

Name of any others present when recording marks or injuries on child:

.....

Use these body maps to document and illustrate visible signs of harm and physical injuries.

- Always use a black pen (never a pencil) do not use correction fluid or any other form of eraser.
- Do not remove clothing for the purpose of the examination unless the injury site is freely available because of treatment. At no time, should an individual teacher/member of staff take photographic evidence of any injuries or marks to a child's person
- Ensure that if used this form is securely attached to the logging concern form

When you notice an injury to a child, try to record the following information in respect of each mark identified e.g. red areas, swelling, bruising, cuts, lacerations, wounds, scalds and burns:

- Exact site of the injury on the body e.g. upper outer arm, left cheek
.....
- Size of the injury – in centimetres or inches
.....
- Approximate shape of the injury e.g. round, square or a straight line
.....
- Colour of injury – if more than one colour, say so
.....
- Is the skin broken?
- Is there any swelling at the site of the injury or elsewhere?
- Is there a scab, any blistering, any bleeding
.....
- Is the injury clean or is there grit, fluff etc?

- Is mobility restricted as a result of the injury?
- Does the site of the injury feel hot?
- Does the child feel hot?.....
- Does the child feel pain?.....
- Has the child's body shape changed, are they holding themselves differently?.....

Ensure first aid is provided where required and record:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Name of Child.....

Date of birth.....

Name of member of staff.....

Position.....

Signature of staff member

Date and time of observation

