

Child Protection and Safeguarding at St Thomas' Primary School

We Value Love, Faith and Understanding



Reviewed August 2024

Defining Child Protection and Safeguarding

At St Thomas', we take the care, welfare and protection of our children very seriously. We use the definitions below to ensure everyone has a clear understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Child Protection:

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.

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 outcomes.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

[Education Scotland – Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy June 2023](#)

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We follow East Renfrewshire Council's Guidelines on Child Protection as outlined in their Standard Circular 57. A copy of this can be found on our staff intranet. Standard Circular 57 details types of abuse.

Physical injury

Physical neglect

Sexual abuse

Emotional abuse

Failure to thrive

UNCRC (United National Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Article 19: Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and are protected from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 28: Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of.

We are a recognised Silver Rights Respecting School. We have a duty of care to protect all pupils attending our school, to ensure all pupils are being treated with respect and that their needs are being met. We ensure all children know their rights through the use of charters, regular classroom activities, assemblies and discussions.

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Child Protection Procedures

If a member of staff has a concern or a child discloses information related to Child Protection, this information must be reported to the school Child Protection Officer immediately.

In St Thomas', the Head Teacher, [Marie Kane](#) is the Child Protection Officer.

In her absence, staff reports should be made to [Claudia Kearney](#), Principal Teacher.

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Vision and Aims

We aim to:

- Create an ethos where children are listened to and their concerns are heard
- Develop confident individuals who can express their thoughts and feelings
- Increase staff knowledge and confidence and ensure they are trained in Child Protection
- Develop an Extended Care Team with skills and expertise to address specific Child Protection and welfare issues
- Share information with other agencies and other schools at transition and through the Joint Support Team, to protect our children
- Ensure information is managed confidentially and effectively
- Include information about Child Protection procedures in our school handbook and on our website
- Monitor our practice and review regularly to ensure it meets the needs of, and protects, our children

We promote a safe, positive environment in St Thomas' through providing:

- Opportunities for children to express their thoughts and feelings and for their complaints to be taken seriously;
- Health and Wellbeing programmes which develop children's skills and help to keep them safe
 - Training for all staff in Child Protection
- Opportunities to ensure we best meet the needs of our children through discussion with other agencies at meetings such as Joint Support Team, transition and review meetings
- Information to parents about Child Protection procedures (school handbook and website)
- Systems which allow information to be recorded, monitored and held securely

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Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff have a role and responsibility in ensuring that children are safe, well and protected. The five main responsibilities are:

1. Training
2. Prevention
3. Reporting
4. Cooperative working with other agencies
5. Support

Head Teacher/Child Protection Coordinator

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for Child Protection issues and should be the first person staff or parent/carer informs in the event of any concerns. The Head Teacher is also responsible for:

- Annual Child Protection training for all staff in August
- Ensuring training of new staff who join St Thomas' after the annual training has been delivered
- Maintaining a log of Child Protection training
- Ensuring the school is a safe environment for children
- Reporting, and responding appropriately to, any Child Protection incidents
- Informing, and cooperating with, other agencies by attending meetings and providing reports and information
- Supporting children, parents and staff who are involved in the Child Protection process

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Principal Teacher (Depute Child Protection Coordinator)

The Principal Teacher, Claudia Kearney, will take on all responsibilities and duties in the absence of the Head Teacher.

Teaching Staff

Children spend most of the school day with their teacher.

Teachers are often the first person to observe a change in behaviour or the first person in whom a child confides.

Teachers must:

Attend annual Child Protection training and implement guidelines as directed

Complete the training log

Use the curriculum to develop children's knowledge and skills

Report any Child Protection incident immediately to the Head Teacher or Principal Teacher

Complete any required reports, attend relevant meetings or discuss a child with appropriate agencies

Inform the Leadership Team of any wellbeing concerns as soon as possible

All Staff

Attend Child Protection training and implement guidelines as directed

Complete training log

Report any incidents or concerns to the Head Teacher or Principal Teacher immediately

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Roles and Responsibilities

Following reporting of incident /issues, the Child Protection Coordinator will:

Consult with Head of Service, Social Services or other appropriate agency

Complete relevant referral paperwork and send copies as instructed in Standard Circular 57

Record all referrals on pastoral notes

Support the pupil involved and the staff member(s) who reported the concern or is supporting the child

Parents / Carers are asked to:

Familiarise themselves with both the East Renfrewshire Council and school Child Protection policies

Inform the school of any incidents or concerns

Co-operate with the school and with appropriate agencies as required

Things to Do

Stay Calm

Listen

Minimise Questions

Reassure the Child

Tell the child what you will do next

Record what the child said in his/her own words

Report to the Head Teacher immediately

Things to Avoid

Panic or express shock or anger

Ignoring Concerns

Asking too many or leading questions

Telling the child you can keep it a secret as they may ask you to

Carrying out your own investigation

Add interpretation or change wording of what the child has said

Delay reporting concerns to the Head Teacher

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Recording and Reporting

All Staff

All staff have access to a *Raising a Wellbeing Concern* form, located alongside Child's Wellbeing Plans on the staff shared drive.

Any concerns should be noted on these and passed to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Concerns of a serious nature should be reported immediately.

Support Staff

Support Staff should inform Class Teachers and the Senior Leadership Team of any incidents they feel are significant.

They should complete a Wellbeing Concern form and return to a member of the Senior Leadership Team as outlined above.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will record all significant events on pastoral notes. The Head Teacher will also report to all involved agencies as required and follow-up any identified action points

Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher will monitor the policy in liaison with the Principal Teacher and the policy will be reviewed annually in August.

If you are worried or know of a child who could be at risk of abuse or neglect, please speak to the Child Protection Coordinator or the following contacts:

Barrhead Police Station: 0141 532 2000

East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership: 0141 577 8300