

Maidenhill Primary School & Nursery Class

Child Protection Policy August 2020

The Child Protection Coordinator for Maidenhill Primary School & Nursery Class is Mr Alasdair McDonald (HT). The Depute Child Protection Coordinator is Miss Alison Shaw (DHT).

Rationale

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.
(Article 3 UNCRC)

Our young people have the right to be protected by the adults with responsibility for their wellbeing. All staff at Maidenhill Primary & Nursery Class and all adults within our wider community carry that responsibility and have a duty of care to protect our young people.

Aims

We aim to:

- Value the right of all children to be safe and protected
- Create an ethos where children are listened to and their concerns are taken seriously
- Develop confident individuals who can express their thoughts and feelings
- Increase staff knowledge and confidence and ensure they are trained in Child Protection
- Develop nurturing approaches, skills and expertise to address specific Child Protection and welfare issues
- Provide Health and Wellbeing programmes which develop children's skills and help to keep them safe
- Share information with other agencies and other schools at transition to protect our children
- Ensure information is managed effectively, sensitively and in line with our General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) responsibilities
- 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 all our children

Introduction

The importance of rigorous Child Protection policies and procedures is identified within legislation and guidance at all levels:

- Child abuse is a criminal offence which can involve prosecution in the Criminal Courts
- Child abuse is the concern of the Child Protection system
- In the absence of criminal prosecution or conviction, the Children's Hearing system can act to protect a child

At Maidenhill Primary School & Nursery Class, we will follow East Renfrewshire Council's guidelines and procedures on child protection as outlined in **Standard Circular 57**.

Standard Circular 57 details types and indicators of risk, including:

- Physical injury
- Physical neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Non organic failure to thrive

If a member of staff has a concern or a child discloses information (related to Child Protection), the member of staff has an obligation to report this to Child Protection Coordinator (or his Depute) immediately.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff will 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. ongoing support

All members of staff are expected to:

- Attend Child Protection training and implement guidelines as directed
- Complete training log
- Report any concerns to the Child Protection Coordinator immediately
- Design the curriculum (where appropriate) to develop children's knowledge and skills

- Complete any required reports, attend relevant meetings or discuss any child with appropriate agencies
- Record wellbeing concerns in line with school procedures
- Support children for whom concerns have been raised

The Child Protection Coordinator will have overall responsibility for all Child Protection issues and should be the first person staff or parents/ carers inform in the event of any concerns.

The Child Protection Coordinator will be responsible for:

- Annual Child Protection training of all staff in August (as per ERC policy, using *CP training resources / Safe and Well* and Standard Circular 57)
- Ensuring training of new staff who join Maidenhill 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 concerns
- Informing and cooperating with other agencies by attending meetings and providing reports
- Supporting children, parents and staff who are involved in the Child Protection process

Parents/ Carers are asked to:

- Familiarise themselves with both ERC and school Child Protection policies
- Inform the school of any incidents or concerns
- Cooperate with the school and with appropriate agencies (as required)

Responding to a Disclosure

Adults may raise a concern based on the way a child presents, behaves or interacts. Concerns may also arise from information disclosed by a child. The following is useful guidance when responding to a disclosure:

What should you do?

- Listen – make time
- Stay calm
- Keep questions to a minimum
- Use only what? where? who? when? questions

- Avoid why and how questions
- Reassure child– let them know they were right to speak to you
- Tell the child what you are going to do next
- Act promptly and refer to HT
- Record what child said **in their own words**

What should you avoid?

- Asking too many questions
- Making false promises (such as confidentiality)
- Express shock or anger
- Make interpretations – report only what is **actually** said by the child
- Delay listening or passing on concerns
- Carry out your own investigation

Recording and Reporting

All staff will have access to Care and Welfare Concern sheets. Any concerns should be noted on these and passed to the Child Protection Coordinator or his Depute. Potential Child Protection concerns should be reported immediately. Parents/ carers with concerns should immediately contact the Child Protection Coordinator or his Depute via the school office, clearly stating that they have a potential Child Protection concern. The Child Protection Coordinator will work with the parent/ carer to record this concern.

Next Steps

Following the reporting of a concern, the **Child Protection Coordinator** will:

- Consult with the appropriate Head of Education Services, the Request for Assistance Team at Social Services, the police or any other appropriate agency
- Make the relevant referrals to partner agencies (as appropriate) following the guidance as set out in East Renfrewshire Council's Standard Circular 57

- Ensure written records of concerns and referrals are in line with East Renfrewshire Council's Standard Circular 57 and GDPR requirements
- Cooperate fully with all investigations, meetings, case conferences and provision of reports required by partner agencies
- Undertake any relevant actions resulting from a case conference
- Ensure appropriate support for any pupil involved and for any staff member or parent/ carer who has reported concerns

COVID-19 and the School/ Nursery Class Lockdown form March 2020

We are all aware of the strain the current COVID pandemic and subsequent school & nursery class lockdown may have placed on domestic relationships. Unfortunately this has resulted in a widely-reported increase nationally in reports of abuse towards children. Basic staff training for August 2020 has been updated in light of the current context and all of our community stakeholders have been asked to be especially vigilant at this time.

Monitoring and Review

The Child Protection Coordinator, using the aims as stated in page 1, will monitor the policy in liaison with all staff and the Parent Council. The policy will be reviewed annually in August and updated as required.

Next review: August 2021

Policy author: A McDonald, August 2020