

Child Protection & Safeguarding

Information for Parents/Carers



St Paul's RC Primary School

Child Protection Coordinator: Nadine MacPhee- Headteacher

Depute Child Protection Coordinator: Brianna O'Donnell- Principal Teacher

“Child Protection is everyone's job and everyone's responsibility”

Worried about a child?

If you see behaviour that is of concern, or if a child tells you something worrying, you need to do something about it and speak to someone.

You can speak to a teacher, health visitor, social worker or police officer.

However, if you think a child has been harmed, telephone the Social Work Contact Centre on 03451 55 15 03, from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Out-with these hours, please call them on 03451 55 00 99.

You can call the police on telephone number 101, 24/7.

If you consider a child(ren) to be in immediate danger, do not wait, call the Police on 999

What to say

Explain exactly what you have seen, heard or been told and what it was that concerned you.

If you can, keep a note of dates, injuries and the exact words used. These will help you give as much information as you can about the child and their family/carer.

Let the person know if there are other things they should be aware of, for example, immediate risks for the child or any other child.

Will you need to give your name?

You can ask to remain anonymous but any information about you will be treated with care. Any details, including your name, will not be revealed unless the child's safety requires it. Even if you do not give your name, enquiries can still be made into the child's care and welfare. Withholding your name may make it more difficult for those looking into these concerns.

What will happen to the child or young person and their family?

When you contact a professional about your concern, unless the child is in immediate danger, they will make some initial enquiries before taking action. They will check whether the child is known to them and what information is held. All information will be treated seriously and acted upon as appropriate. This may lead to immediate action or a more planned response.

Should you mind your own business?

Many people do not tell because they fear that:

- the child will be at further risk of harm
- that nothing will be done
- the child would be taken away
- the family may find out who reported them

- telling may ruin family relationships.

In reality, it is best for everyone that action is taken early to identify any abuse before it gets worse. Long-term abuse is much more likely to cause problems for a child as they get older. Even if you think an incident is just a one off, other professional agencies may already have concerns about the child.

In Scotland it is everyone's job to make sure children are OK.

At all times we keep the child's best interests at the centre of any required actions or planning, and in almost all cases liaise closely with family.

Staff know to alert the Child Protection Coordinator in the school immediately should they have a Child Protection Concern.

When the Child Protection Coordinators are made aware of a concern we do the following in most instances.

1. **Talk to the child.** This is usually our first step. The discussion is conducted sensitively to the child, making it clear that any information they share is confidential unless they or someone they know may be in danger.

We take the child's views into consideration in planning next steps and include them in any subsequent planning to keep them safe.

If we have to share information with other agencies we will discuss this with the young person wherever possible.

The child is offered a quiet, safe environment if they are upset for as long as needed.

2. **Contact the child's family.** In almost all situations we include the child's family early in order to support the child so long as they are not part of the concern. In most instances a family member comes to school to support the child if they are distressed.

3. **Consider action & update appropriate agencies** (Health Team etc). We look at appropriate supports for the young person and their family. This is done in conjunction with the young person and family.

Any safety planning will include the young person's opinions and is monitored closely.

4. **Record the concern.** We record the concern securely including the action we take and any monitoring required. The record is kept securely with access limited to the Child Protection Coordinator(s), Head Teacher and the young person's named person if different.

5. **Plan and monitor over time.** The Child Protection Coordinator will keep in close contact with the child and manage any supports they require over time.

The Child Protection Coordinator will in almost all instances stay in close contact with the child's family and plan jointly with them to identify supports.

6. In the event of a young person being in immediate danger, we contact the Public Protection Unit to liaise with Police and Social Work.

Parents/carers are always contacted unless doing so may put the young person at greater risk.

Extract from National Guidance for Child Protection 2021

