

St Mary's Primary School
Child Protection
and
Safeguarding
Guidance and Procedure



It is everyone's responsibility
to protect children.

Welcome to St Mary's Primary School.

All children have a right to grow up in a caring and safe environment. All adults have a responsibility to protect children, including:

Parents Family Members Friends

Neighbours Community Groups

Professionals Members of the Public

Children cannot always get help for themselves, they may need you to get help for them.

St Mary's Primary School

Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedure

The Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (Designated Person) for our school is:

Mr Mark Deegan, Head Teacher

In the event that the Head Teacher is not available the Depute Head Teacher will assume the role:

Mrs Jacqueline Blincow

Or the Acting Depute Head Teacher:

Mrs Nicole Macdonald

Our Child Protection Policy is that we follow Inverclyde Council's "Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing" policy which is located on Staff Shared, within the Policies folder and also within the Child Protection Policy folders in the staffroom, main office and HT office. All staff must read and follow this policy and in engage in the annual Child Protection training during the August In Service Day.

What do we mean by Child Protection and Safeguarding?

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 outcomes.

Child protection is part of safeguarding.

St Mary's Primary School recognises that it has an explicit duty to safeguard and protect children from abuse and neglect as defined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023/documents/>

Copies of this are available in the Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher offices.

What is Child Abuse and Neglect?

The Scottish Government's National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (refreshed in 2023) states that "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; and in the online and digital environment. 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."

There are different types of abuse which can be described within four main categories:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

(Further details and definitions can be found in Inverclyde Council's "Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing" policy and also within the annual presentations shared with staff at the beginning of each new school session.)

Indicators of Risk

The following circumstances are considered to be indicators that a child may be at increased risk of harm within their families:

- Domestic abuse
- Parental problematic alcohol and drug misuse
- Non-engaging families
- Children and young people experiencing or affected by mental health problems
- Children and young people who display harmful or problematic sexual behaviour
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Honour based violence and forced marriage
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Sudden unexpected death in infants and children

Further detailed information on all of the above circumstances can be found within the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021- updated 2023 (page 12). This can be accessed online at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023/documents/>

The above guidance also provides information about ways in which children and young people can come to harm outside of the home and in specific circumstances, for example:

- Child trafficking
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Online and mobile phone safety
- Radicalisation

Further detailed information on these and other specific circumstances can also be found within the National Guidance (Page 13) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023/documents/>

Any member of staff who would like further training around Child Protection and Safeguarding should discuss their training needs with the CLPL Co-ordinator and reflect this in their Professional Learning plan.

Everyone in our school shares an objective to safeguard and protect children by:

- Providing a safe environment for children to learn in
- Supporting children's development in ways that will foster a sense of self-esteem and independence
- Identifying and responding to children in need of support and/or protection
- Working in a manner that places the safety and wellbeing of pupils at the forefront

School Commitment to Safeguarding

At St Mary's Primary School, we will

- establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- ensure all children have effective means of communication with more than one adult in the school

- give opportunities for class or group discussions of thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance
- include in the curriculum activities and opportunities for PSHE/Citizenship which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from abuse
- ensure all aspects of school life including Risk Assessment, Curriculum Design, Information Sharing etc. take account of the best interests of pupils at all times.

Action Guidance for all staff

What to do if you have general concerns about a child

All staff must follow the process outlined in Inverclyde Council's "Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing" policy.

What if a child makes a concerning disclosure?

All staff must follow the process outlined in Inverclyde Council's "Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing" policy. Information must be recorded on the form available in the staffroom and given immediately to the Child Protection co-ordinator.

Additional Safeguarding Procedures

- All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Education staff have a responsibility to report suspicions of child abuse and have a professional and contractual obligation to report such suspicions. All staff are required to follow with guidelines and procedures contained within Inverclyde Council's "Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing" policy.
- All staff will be informed of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and the procedures for referring concerns to the Designated Person - Head Teacher. This will take the form of annual Child Protection Training in August or during staff induction meetings at other times of the year. The designated person for child protection will receive regular training.
- Staff will be supported through opportunities to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person if required and directed to the employee counselling service if required.
- Ensure that a named person (Head Teacher) is designated for Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) and that an up to date list of children is regularly reviewed and updated.

Staff and Volunteer Recruitment

Staff working in St Mary's Primary have been part of Inverclyde Council's Recruitment and Selection Procedures. They have been checked by the PVG system in place at the point of employment. All volunteers coming in to school regularly to help with activities, after school clubs or outings should have current PVG certificates.

Attendance and absence procedures.

Each child's attendance is recorded on the SEEMIS system for registration. Attendance is monitored very closely by our admin staff. The Head Teacher discusses attendance and timekeeping regularly with the office staff. Concerns are managed in line with Inverclyde Council's "Attending School Matters" policy. Where a concern is highlighted, in the first instance, parents are notified by letter accompanied by their child's attendance summary and asked to support the school in ensuring regular attendance at school. Should the situation continue to be a concern the parents will be invited to a meeting with the Head teacher. If this does not improve a further meeting will be scheduled with the request for Social Work and Educational Psychology to be present. If there is no sustained improvement, the family will be referred to the Attendance Review Committee.

The school has clear procedures for the notification of absence and parents are reminded of this on a regular basis. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school by telephone on the first morning and to keep the school office updated. Teachers and SMT are notified on a daily basis of the reasons given for absence. When a parent does not make contact with the school, the school will contact the parent directly to ensure the child is safe. If contact cannot be made with the parents, emergency contact details will be used. The school will continue to try to make contact and if necessary may do visits to houses.

Responsible User Agreement

Annually the school sends out information to parents regarding the use of the internet. Parents are asked to sign the accompanying forms to give permission for their children to use the internet safely within school. Consent is sought at point of registration for permission to use photographs of children for educational purposes. Children are given guidance on the safe use of the internet and are directed to the potential dangers of putting

personal details onto the web as part of the Personal Safety element within our Health and Wellbeing Programme.

Mobile Phones

Children are asked not to use their mobile phones during school time and must keep them switched off and in school bags or handed to their teacher for safe keeping at the beginning of the school day. They are not allowed to bring phones into the playground. The expectation is that phones are switched off and put into school bags before entering the school gate. Where a mobile phone is seen within the school, it will be handed in to the school office for collection at the end of the day by a parent. Children should not take photographs or video footage of any school activities on personal mobiles without permission from staff. The school follows Inverclyde Council's policy statement on the use of mobile phones and this should be referred to for further guidance.

Date of Review: August 2024

Date of next review: August 2025