

# Our Lady & St. Francis Primary School & Nursery Classes



## Safeguarding, Child and Adult Protection Policy

March 2021  
Review March 2023

# **Safeguarding, Child and Adult Protection Policy**

*"It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright"*

*Report of the Child Protection Audit and Review*

## **Rationale**

All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect, therefore child protection is the responsibility of everyone. 'It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright' underlines the need for us all to take responsibility in order to protect children. At Our Lady & St. Francis Primary School and Nursery Classes we are committed to creating an environment where children are safe from abuse and any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately. The well-being of children in our care takes precedence over any other consideration. It is the clear responsibility of all those involved in our school to adopt good practice throughout their work.

The overarching principles of the UNCRC and GIRFEC inform our practice.

### **UN Convention: Rights of the Child - The Welfare Principle**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Every child has to be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Children should be listened to (according to their age, maturity and understanding).
- Every effort should be made to preserve the child's family home and contacts.
- Any intervention services should be based on collaboration between relevant agencies.

The procedures outlined in this policy are implemented in conjunction with NLC's Child Protection Policy 2013 and The national Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014.

## **Aims**

The aim of this policy is to provide advice and guidelines for all staff in relation to issues of child protection and the health and wellbeing of the children in our school. The main purposes are to:-

- Raise staff awareness of the categories of abuse and the indicators which could indicate that abuse is taking place.
- To identify the roles and responsibilities in relation to the care, welfare and protection of our pupils.
- To provide guidance and support to staff in carrying out their role and responsibilities in the protection and safeguarding of our pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

All staff at Our Lady & St. Francis Primary School and Nursery Classes have a significant role in the protection and safeguarding of children. The role extends beyond reacting to abuse to include safeguarding. We aim to do this by:

- Promoting and developing a positive and caring ethos based on children's rights

- Health and Wellbeing curriculum development
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals
- Ensuring safe internet access and practices

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, significant harm to the child.

*National Guidance for Child Protection, 2014*

There are different types of abuse:

- Physical abuse – causing physical harm e.g. hitting, throwing, shaking, burning, drowning...
- Emotional abuse – persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has had severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.
- Neglect – failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. Includes 'failure to thrive' or 'growth altering'. – Child fails to reach normal development milestones.
- Sexual abuse – is an act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person whether or not it is claimed that the child consented or assented.

### **Indicators of Risk**

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

- 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) – this comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- Honour based violence and forced marriage
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Sudden unexpected death in infants and children
- Harm outside the home including (but not exclusively) ritual abuse, child trafficking, internet abuse.

### **UK Government Counter Terrorism Awareness**

Contest is the overarching UK Government Counter Terrorism Strategy. It contains four work streams known as the 4 P's i.e. Pursue Prevent Protect Prepare. The Prevent strategy, published by the UK Government in 2011, is part of our overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as "prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Key risk factors to be taken into account are ideologies. Is the child using language/engaged in activities to suggest they are at risk from being involved or drawn in to any type of radicalisation?

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Abusers come from all walks of life and are not restricted to any social class, religion or culture. Abusers are more commonly known to children but there are occasions when a child may be abused by someone unknown to them. It is paramount that all staff follow the guidelines set out NLC Child and Adult Protection Procedures and Guidelines. The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for all child and adult protection issues, including:-

- Ensuring all staff receive updated training each year and a copy of the guidelines are distributed to all staff and is displayed in the main entrance.
- Ensuring that staff know that a full copy of the guidelines is located in the Head Teacher's office and that a self-learning pack is also available to staff.
- All staff members have a duty to report child and adult concerns to the Head Teacher.
- Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- Ensure that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

All staff have an active role in terms of safeguarding, as outlined earlier and in following grounds for concerns:-

- Disclosure of information
- Notice of bruising/marks which are a concern
- Concerns about behaviour or neglect
- Witness an incident
- Suspect a child/young person has been abused or harmed

Any Child Protection Concerns must be reported immediately to the Head Teacher.

During any disclosure of abuse by a child the member of staff should respond in a sensitive and supportive manner by following strategies:

- Listen and observe with care;
- Treat the allegation in a serious manner;
- Reassure the child that he/she is right to tell;
- Affirm the child's feelings as expressed by the child;
- Do not give a guarantee of confidentiality or secrecy;
- Do not ask leading questions;
- Seek clarification using open ended questions only;
- Do not interrogate the child;
- Do not show disbelief;
- Do not be judgmental;
- Do not introduce personal or third party experiences of abuse;
- Do not display strong emotions.

### **What happens next?**

The process takes place very quickly and is generally treated as high priority by all agencies involved. A Notification of Concern is completed and sent to Social Work and NLC.

Once the investigation has been completed all relevant information is recorded by the agencies involved in the investigation. It will also include a recommendation of action required to protect the child.

Child abuse is a criminal offence. All staff working in our school have an ethical duty to report any reasonable concern that a child may be being abused.

The role of members of staff is to inform the designated person of any instance, which suggests that abuse is taking place. It is not the role of the member of staff to wait for proof, investigate or gather evidence of abuse.

The next course of action can take 2 paths:

1. No Child Protection Concerns – One or more of the following may happen:
  - No further action
  - Social work offer help to support the child and their family
  - A case discussion is held to identify support needs of the child and family
  - A referral to other agencies for help or support.
2. Ongoing Child Protection Concerns – One or more of the following may happen:
  - A Child Protection Case Conference will be convened.
  - A Child Protection Order, Exclusion Order, Emergency Police Powers are placed
  - Criminal Enquiries - report to Procurator Fiscal
  - Referral to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
  - White/Blue Care and Welfare Files

All information reported must be recorded and kept confidential. The recording must be relevant, accurate, signed and dated as it may become a legal document. The information should include a clear, succinct chronology of events, all relevant factual information and a summary of the employee response and any agreements reached.

It is important to note that we do not investigate or gather evidence and proof is not required. All information must be confidential and staff should not discuss concerns with others, but report to the Head Teacher.

### **Adult Protection**

It is our duty to protect vulnerable adults as well as children. This could be children aged between 16 & 18, or vulnerable parents, carers or family members.

An adult is at risk of harm if they:

- are unable to safeguard their wellbeing, rights, interests or their property;
- are being harmed by other people;
- have a disability, illness or mental disorder, as they are more at risk of being harmed than others who are not so affected.

All three elements above must be met for an adult to be considered at risk. All concerns should be reported immediately to the Head Teacher and an AP1 Form is completed.