



Ayr Academy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

June 2022

AMBITION RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY COMPASSION COMMUNITY

Ayr Academy actively promotes the welfare and wellbeing of its employees and pupils.

We are committed to ensuring:

- Children's and young people's rights to care and protection from harm in any form are firmly upheld;
- We fulfil our legislative duties related to safeguarding, including child protection;
- All staff within Ayr Academy are suitably trained in safeguarding matters and are aware of Child Protection Procedures.

This policy provides the framework within which all staff, individually and collectively, can understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding/child protection and promoting the welfare of children.

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. 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 to have the best outcome. Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. We have a distinctive approach to safeguarding in Scotland linked to Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) which promotes action to improve the wellbeing of every child and young person. Safeguarding is a golden thread that runs through the curriculum. The aim is to support the development of learner's knowledge, skills and resilience to keep themselves safe and protect themselves and to develop an understanding of the world so that they can respond to a range of issues and potential risky situations arising throughout their lives. As such, it permeates many features of the education experience including leadership, values, vision, the curriculum, learning and teaching, positive relationships, building learner resilience, etc. The needs, interests and wellbeing of children must be put above the needs and interests of all others.

Working in partnership with stakeholders, Ayr Academy seeks to ensure that:

- Children are enabled to be safe, nurtured, achieving, healthy, active, included, respected and responsible; and
- Children become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors in centres of learning, the workplace and community.

We do this by:

- Always putting the needs of and desired outcomes for, children in centres of learning, the workplace and the community at the forefront;
- **Accounting rigorously and clearly to children and their families.**
- Promoting high quality equitable outcomes for all learners by eliminating inequity that exists amongst learners from different backgrounds and particular vulnerable groups.

In carrying this out, Ayr Academy staff recognise their professional and legal obligations to protect children, particularly those at risk. Education Scotland will promote safe practice to protect children, young people and adults from harm, abuse and exploitation.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Ayr Academy operates a robust and safe selection and appointment process which requires all employees who have opportunities to engage regularly with children in the course of their normal duties and be members of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme and to participate in relevant professional learning;
- Creation of a safe environment for children,
- Staff are equipped with the information, knowledge, support and guidance to keep children, young people and adults at risk, safe and protected; and
- We take account of local inter-agency child protection guidelines and each local authority's legal obligation to safeguard and protect any group at risk.

Principles of this Policy

- The welfare of all children is always the primary concern.
- Protecting children is everyone's responsibility.
- Every child should be treated as an individual and has a right to a positive sense of identity.
- All children have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- All children have the right to express their views on matters affecting them.

To promote these principles we will:

- Treat everyone with respect and encourage children to respect others;
- Promote the rights, including privacy and dignity, of children, young people and protected adults as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC);
- Respect confidentiality and only share information and concerns about children, young people and protected adults with those who need to know;
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour and emotional abuse, including bullying;
- Treat all concerns and allegations seriously and respond appropriately, operating within our agreed policy, procedures and guidance; and
- Refer, not investigate.

Policy and legislative context

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 places a duty on schools and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2005/08/0191408/14360>

Safeguarding sits within the context of the wider Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/YoungPeople/gettingitright>, the Early

Years Framework, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/01/13095148/0> and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publicationpdfs/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf.

The Scottish Government wants Scotland to be the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up so that they become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. All children and young people have the right to be cared for and protected from harm and abuse and to grow up in a safe environment in which their rights are respected and their needs met. Children and young people should get the help they need, when they need it and their safety is always paramount.

GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people in eight areas. These wellbeing indicators state that children and young people must be: healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included and, above all in this context, safe. The primary indicator for child protection is to keep a child safe and, in so doing, attention is given to other areas of wellbeing as appropriate.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 sets out duties on a range of public bodies to report on how they are taking forward children's rights as set out in the UNCRC. Moreover, ratified by the UK Government in 2009, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulates that in order for disabled children to be able to realise the rights mentioned above, they need to be provided with disability and age appropriate assistance. In addition to the Convention, the Children's Charter was drawn up following consultation with children and young people as part of the Scottish Government's child protection reform programme. The Charter sets out a list of demands children should feel entitled to make including the need to be safe.

The Framework for Standards 2004

(<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2004/03/19102/34603>) is the detailed means for translating the commitments made in the Children's Charter into practice. In working with children and their families, all practitioners should strive to adhere to the following best practice standards.

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00450733.pdf> provides a national framework within which agencies and practitioners at local level – individually and jointly – can understand and agree processes for working together to support, promote and safeguard and the wellbeing of all children. It sets out expectations for strategic planning of services to protect children and young people and highlights key responsibilities for services and organisations, both individual and shared. All agencies, professional and public bodies and services that deliver adult and/or child services and work with children and their families have a responsibility to recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child, irrespective of whether the child is the main focus of their involvement. They are expected to identify and consider the child's needs, share information and concerns with other agencies and work collaboratively with other services (as well as the child and their family) to improve outcomes for the child. Across Scotland, local arrangements are now well established to meet local geographic and demographic demands and service user needs. Chief Officers are responsible for determining the most appropriate child protection arrangements for their

respective area(s). Chief Officers' Groups have strategic responsibility for their Child Protection Committees (CPCs). Further information on the role and functions of CPCs can be found in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. Child protection policy must pay due attention to equality and diversity issues. Access to, and delivery of, child protection services should be fair, consistent, reliable and focused on individual outcomes and enablement. Service users should be listened to, respected and responded to. There should be no discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment or on the basis of pregnancy and maternity.

The Equality Act 2010 <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality> restates, streamlines and harmonises equality legislation. The 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" In Scotland' (2012) - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00395179.pdf>) describes the essential characteristics that everyone should have if they work with children, young people and their families.

These essential characteristics embody the values of the GIRFEC approach are cross-referenced to the guiding principles of the UNCRC:

- Non-discrimination
- Best interests of the child
- The child's right to life, survival and development
- Respecting the views of the child

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 puts Corporate Parenting on a statutory footing and introduces a new framework of duties and responsibilities for the 24 public bodies listed in Schedule as corporate parents. These duties were commenced on 1 April 2015 and require all corporate parents to collaborate with each other to promote the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers in their care and enable them to achieve the best outcomes. The statutory guidance for Corporate Parenting provides corporate parents with information and advice about how they should fulfil the duties set out in Part 9 (Corporate Parenting) of the 2014 Act. Corporate parents compliance with the legislation will be monitored through the review of corporate parenting reports (by Scottish Ministers), independent inspection mechanisms (such as those provided by the Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland) and corporate parents' existing governance arrangements (such as councillors, parliamentarians and non-executive board members).

Summary of responsibilities

Ayr Academy is committed to promoting the welfare and wellbeing of all children who staff are in contact with during all our work.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone regardless of their individual role. This policy will support our staff in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities and duties.

We have identified safeguarding roles to support staff in dealing with safeguarding responsibilities and duties as well as an outward facing role though capacity building, review and providing professional learning opportunities.

We will support all our staff and ensure they;

- Are appointed following appropriate and stringent safe recruitment procedures;
- Are supported through appropriate professional learning to raise their awareness of the need for safeguarding children, know their responsibilities and are familiar with the procedures to follow when they have concerns; and
- Take actions to respond to allegations, suspicions or incidents of abuse and ensure all safeguarding concerns are shared with the relevant head of establishment in order that they can take appropriate action.

Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the setting agrees to the following standards of good practice:

- to treat all children with respect
- to set a good example of conducting ourselves appropriately
- to ensure we are positive role models to children
- to involve children in decision-making which affects them (taking age and development of children into account)
- to encourage positive and safe behavior among children
- to be a good listener
- to be alert to changes in a child's behaviour
- to recognize that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- to read and understand the setting's guidance on child protection and information-sharing
- to ask the child's permission before doing anything for him/her which is of a physical nature, such as administering first aid
- to maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoid the use of derogatory language
- to be aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyle of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse
- to raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills to keep themselves safe
- to establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop, particularly in their confidence and self-esteem and to provide opportunities for achievement.

School Buildings Security

Restricting access to the school building is an important step in keeping children/young people safe whilst in school. This is achieved through a policy on access for visitors, parents, carers, work persons etc.

- Our school has secure entry; visitors are required to sign in and out and wear visitor badges.
- We have CCTV that monitors and records entry/exit points to the school building.
- The School Janitors have responsibility for ensuring that the building and astro turf pitch are kept secure.
- The canteen area is monitored by staff at break time and lunch times to keep children safe.

Intimate/Personal Care

Where a child/young person requires support with intimate/personal care they will receive this support from a limited number of staff to preserve dignity and ensure a level of privacy.

Keeping everyone safe

Children/young people are taught through PSE, HWB, assemblies, input from Campus Officers etc that they can talk to adults in the school.

- Staff should not deal with Child Protection issues by themselves. If procedures are followed, then support is available to manage these difficult and potentially upsetting situations.
- Only staff who have received MAPA training should attempt to restrain a child, both for their own and the child's safety. Children should always be warned that they are likely to be restrained and the restraint should be witnessed by another adult.
- As a school we recognise that there is sometimes the need to work in a one-to-one situation with a child. Staff should leave the door open and make sure another adult knows where they are and what they are doing.
- Children cannot be left unsupervised at any time.

Use of mobile devices: personal phones and handheld devices:

- Children/young people are not allowed to use electronic devices during class time unless as part of a directed learning activity. Please see mobile device policy.

Cameras, photography and images

- Written consent must be given by a parent/carer to use images for newspapers, twitter and other agreed media.

School Trips

- Risk Assessment paperwork should be completed for all trips out with the school agreed areas.
- Consideration must be given to those children with additional support needs and additional risk assessments should be completed that are bespoke if required to consider the additional needs.
- Staffing ratio must take into consideration those who are vulnerable.
- When a trip involves other agencies such as tour guides, rangers etc. they should be informed of the additional needs.

Procedure and Responsibilities – Any Staff member

The procedural route will depend upon the urgency of the situation and whether it is merely a suspicion of abuse or an actual disclosure.

Suspicion of neglect/abuse:

If through conversation or other contact with a child/young person, a staff member has reason to suspect physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect, they should do the following:

- Listen to what the child says.
- It is particularly important not to make any suggestions to the child regarding how the incident may have happened, therefore do not question the child, except to clarify what he/she is saying.
- You can record the facts of the conversation using the exact words spoken not implied. Sign and date as it may be required as evidence.
- Do not make assumptions about what the allegations might concern. If a member of staff is involved, appropriate steps must be taken to ensure the safety of the child and other children.
- Report the suspicion to the Child Protection Coordinator immediately. If the coordinator is unavailable report immediately to the Head Teacher. Whoever the suspicion has been reported to will take the appropriate action.

Disclosure

If a child/young person makes a disclosure the member of staff should:

- Listen to what is being said without shock or disbelief
- Listen to what is being said but do not apportion blame
- Allow the child to talk freely-ask only open questions e.g. "Tell me more about....." Do not press for detail, put forward your own ideas or use words that the child has not used themselves.
- Stay calm and reassuring
- Do not make promises that might be impossible to keep. Tell the child that you will have to tell someone else who will be able to help.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Pass the information to the Child Protection Coordinator without delay.

Guidelines for the Child Protection Coordinator

- If an incident is reported they should be confident in their roles and decisive in how to proceed.
- Wherever possible talk to parents, unless to do so may place a child at risk of significant harm, impede any potential police investigation and/or place a member of staff or others at risk.
- Whether to make a child protection referral to social work because a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm
- Not to make a referral at this stage but to continue to monitor and log the situation.
- If it would be appropriate to undertake a Team Around the Child meeting
- Meet with the parents to discuss the situation.

- All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, should be fully documented All referrals should be accompanied by a referral form.
- Social work and the Authority Child Protection Manager are always available to offer advice to designated safeguarding staff if action needed is unclear.
- If at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made immediately.

Volunteers

- Any parent or other person/organisation engaged by the school to work in a voluntary capacity with pupils will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures and a disclosure undertaken.
- Volunteers supporting on school trips need not be disclosed. However, they should not be left unsupervised with children at any time.
- Volunteers will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of the school.

Allegations against a member of staff

- Should there be an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head Teacher.
- Should the allegation be made against the Head Teacher, the matter should be reported immediately to another member of the Senior Management Team.
- Where an allegation is made the Head Teacher should obtain necessary further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. Consideration should be made as to whether the evidence/information establishes that the allegation is unfounded.
- Whenever an allegation is made against a member of staff the head teacher will follow South Ayrshire procedures.
- If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, suspension, without prejudice, will be undertaken to protect all involved persons and safeguard the enquiry.
- Should a formal referral not be appropriate, the Head Teacher will make a full investigation as to the member of staff's conduct. Should the allegation not require formal disciplinary action the Head Teacher should institute appropriate action within 3 working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.
- Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action the Head Teacher will discuss the allegation with the QIO / personnel who will make a report.
- On receipt of the report the Head Teacher should consult with SAC and decide whether a disciplinary hearing is necessary.

Confidentiality

All staff understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Staff should only discuss concerns with the designated persons or Head Teacher. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a “need-to-know” basis.

Staff Training

- Whole-school in-service training on Child Protection is organised in August. All staff should sign to indicate they have been to the training and also read these guidelines. These guidelines will also be issued to all supply teachers who will be asked to sign to say they have read them. The Child Protection Procedures will be refreshed at collegiate/in-service day.
- Staff awareness of medical and learning conditions relating to specific pupils are shared at whole-school in-service in August. Further support for staff working with individual pupils is available in Staged Intervention and from Pupil Support.
- The Child Protection Coordinator will attend regular meetings run by the authority and disseminate information accordingly.
- Staff must alert the Head Teacher if they feel their training / awareness needs are not being met.

Record keeping

- Well-kept records are essential to good Safeguarding Practice. Our setting is clear about the need to record any concerns held about a child or children within our setting, the status of such records and when those records should be passed over to other agencies.
- Any records regarding safeguarding and child protection are kept securely in a locked cabinet in a locked room. Pastoral notes are also recorded via click and go.
- When a child has additional support needs through medical or diagnosis it is essential that all relevant staff read and are aware of the child’s staged intervention file. It is the member of staff’s responsibility to do this.
- Information on children’s medical needs is recorded on Seemis, a tab next to a pupil name on the register alerts staff to medical conditions of learners in their class.
- Supply staff have relevant information for additional support needs via Seemis, a tab next to a pupil name on the register alerts staff to additional support needs of learners in their class.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences and ongoing abuse significantly impact on children/young people throughout their lives.

To recognise that our children/young people are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. We will ensure all staff understands their responsibilities in being alert to indicators of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated professionals for safeguarding and child protection.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. These categories overlap and an abused child does frequently suffer more than one type of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may also involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally – inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some levels of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.

Neglect

Neglect is the **persistent** failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failing to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-

medical reasons. It has no health benefits and harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue and hence interferes with the natural function of girls' and women's bodies. FGM causes severe pain and has several immediate and long-term health consequences, including difficulty in childbirth also causing dangers to the child.

Preventing Radicalisation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views, in particular those via the internet and other social media. Schools can help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that they help to safeguard children from drugs, gang violence or alcohol. At Ayr Academy we encourage children and young people to use the internet safely, we participate in Internet Safety Week and cover online safety in PSE and curricular areas.

Bullying

Ayr Academy has clear guidelines on bullying and the anti-bullying guidelines should be adhered to. All incidents of alleged bullying should be recorded via pastoral notes, the Seemis bullying tab and a member of management informed immediately. All incidents of bullying will also be recorded in accordance with South – Ayrshire anti bullying policy.