

MONKTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

&

EARLY YEARS CENTRE



**CHILD PROTECTION
GUIDELINES**

2023-24

To be reviewed annually



RATIONALE

These guidelines have been produced to ensure the continued safety and wellbeing of children at Monkton Primary School and Early Years Centre. These guidelines are in line with [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#) and [SAC Educational Services Management Guidelines on Child Protection, Safeguarding and Wellbeing](#). As a Gold Rights Respecting School, [rights](#) are embedded in our everyday work and as such, detailed within these guidelines.

THE ROLE OF STAFF IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS (UNCRC Article 3)

All staff in educational establishments are well placed to observe physical and psychological changes in a child which might indicate abuse (**UNCRC Articles 19, 34, 36 and 37**). School staff are likely to have the greatest level of day-to-day contact with children and they are able to contribute a great deal to the assessment of vulnerable children. Staff should always share information regarding any concerns about a child with social work, health, police or the Children's Reporter (**UNCRC Article 4**). Teachers also have an important role in delivering personal safety programmes in educational establishments and nurseries. These should equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep themselves safe (**UNCRC Articles 17 and 29**).

HEAD TEACHER (UNCRC Articles 3, 12 and 39)

The Head Teacher will ensure that child protection procedures are followed and that records are kept in a confidential file and on SEEMIS Pastoral Notes. Procedures should be made known to all new and visiting staff. A South Ayrshire Council PowerPoint presentation is sent out annually to be used at the beginning of a new session with all staff. Positive working relationships with social work, health, police and other agencies involved in child protection should be established. Child protection and child safety should be promoted within the curriculum, both formal and informal. Staff training should reflect this.

An ethos of protection and care should be fostered within the school and nursery. Parents should be aware of the child protection procedures and the general content of child safety and child protection within the curriculum (**UNCRC Article 42**).

TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF (UNCRC Articles 3, 12 and 39)

- Staff will undertake an annual update and relevant online modules as part of their PRD / PDR and CLPL.

- All staff in educational establishments must follow child protection procedures.
- All staff should know how to respond to a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
- Staff should be clear that a guarantee of absolute confidentiality cannot be given to a child or young person.
- Staff should be confident in delivering child safety and child protection as part of the curriculum.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (UNCRC Articles 12, 19, 32, 33, 34, 36 and 37)

Children and young people should be encouraged to seek help from an adult they trust if they think that they may be in an abusive situation. They have the right to expect their teachers and other adults will take any disclosure seriously and will work together to protect them from neglect, exploitation and all forms of abuse.

ROLE OF CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR (CPC) (UNCRC Articles 3, 12 and 39)

Whilst all staff in educational establishments have responsibilities towards children and young people, the protection of children and the efficient operation of the school's child protection procedures can be facilitated by the designation of a senior member of staff with a special responsibility for co-ordinating child protection within the school. At Monkton, this is the Head Teacher (The Depute Head Teacher will deputise for the Head Teacher in Child Protection issues where the Head Teacher is unavailable). The CPC would have both general and particular responsibilities with regard to child protection.

General Responsibilities (UNCRC Articles 3, 12 and 39)

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the child protection procedures and amendments to them.
- Supplying new and visiting members of staff with a written copy of procedures and emphasising their importance.
- Co-ordinating staff training on child protection, including an annual reminder of the procedures to all staff and encourage staff to undertake online modules.
- Overseeing the planning of the curricular provision for child safety and child protection.
- Liaising with other agencies, e.g. police, social work, health, the children's reporter and other government and local authority departments, on general issues relating to child protection.

- Listening and responding to general concerns raised by staff, children, young people and parents/carers in relation to child protection, for instance, by informing parents/carers of the school's policy.

Particular Responsibilities (UNCRC Articles 3, 12 and 39)

- Co-ordinating action within the school in relation to specific children about whom concerns have been raised.
- Ensuring appropriate measures for the recording and secure storage of child protection information and files.
- Review and update child protection files and chronologies.
- Liaising with staff to ensure appropriate information is shared and support given to children.
- Delegating responsibilities to the most appropriate person, e.g. in situations where the CPC may not be the most appropriate person to support a particular child when an allegation has been made.

PARENTS/CARERS AND VOLUNTEERS IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Who Would Be Checked?

The list of persons to be checked through the PVG scheme would include any adult who has substantial and unsupervised access to children. If a parent/carer or volunteer does not have a South Ayrshire Council PVG certificate then there should be no unsupervised access.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

This section details the procedures that should be followed in responding to concerns about a child or young person where there is a concern or suspicion of abuse. In general, it should be remembered that collaboration with other agencies is the key to responding appropriately when concerns arise. In a situation where there is uncertainty as to how to proceed, an informal conversation with a Social Work duty team leader should clarify the most appropriate course of action.

HOW CONCERNS MAY ARISE (UNCRC Articles 12 and 37)

Concerns about child abuse usually arise in educational establishments in the following ways:

- A teacher or other member of staff has concerns arising from knowledge of the child and observing changes in the child's behaviour or appearance, or from things the child has said.
- A child discloses to a teacher or member of staff that abuse has taken place or that the child feels unsafe
- A third party expresses concerns to a member of staff; this could be a parent/carer or another child or young person.
- An anonymous allegation is received.

IF A MEMBER OF STAFF SUSPECTS ABUSE OR A CHILD TELLS OF ABUSE

Staff may suspect abuse by the presence of physical signs or from a feeling that all is not well with the child. Indicators of abuse may include:

- Changes in behaviour
- Constantly attention seeking
- Poor attendance and timekeeping
- Parental drug or alcohol misuse
- Repeated or unusual injuries
- Persistently hungry, unkempt and tired
- Poor concentration
- Age inappropriate behaviour and/or language
- Takes time to settle in morning
- Withdrawn/social isolation/ aggression
- History of domestic abuse
- Anxiety at home time

It is appropriate for a member of staff to make casual enquiries of a child about how an obvious injury was sustained, or why the child appears upset.

Where there is any suspicion of abuse, staff should not enter into detailed investigation of the symptoms or causes of the child's distress or injury as such an approach could prejudice later formal investigations.

The role of school staff is to observe, record and report. Staff should:

- **Observe** carefully the child's behaviour and demeanour.
- **Record** in detail what they have seen and heard and when. (Any signs of physical injury should be described in detail or sketched. When recording, words actually used by the child or young person should be quoted.)
- **Report** their suspicions or disclosure as quickly as possible to the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

The following points should also be kept in mind:

- A guarantee of secrecy or confidentiality must not be given to the child.
- Any initial questioning or discussion must be limited to establishing if there is reasonable cause to believe the child is being abused or is at risk of abuse. Once the possibility of abuse has been established discussion should cease.
- Open-ended questions must be used.
- The member of staff conducting the interview should not introduce any personal experiences of abuse or those of other children into the interview.
- The child must be told that the CPC will have to be informed.
- The matter must be referred to the Head Teacher or CPC immediately (this must always be done without delay).
- Notes must be taken, dated and signed as soon as possible and recording should not delay reporting.
- Even when there has been no formal referral to the Social Work service, notes should be kept in a confidential record and on SEEMIS Pastoral Notes.

A THIRD PARTY EXPRESSES CONCERN

A member of staff to whom a third party expresses concern should:

- **Observe** the behaviour or demeanour of the person expressing the concerns, where this is done in person.
- **Record** in detail what they have seen and heard and when they did so, with the actual words used being quoted where possible.
- **Report** the matter to the CPC.

Those expressing concerns may seek a guarantee of confidentiality. No guarantee of confidentiality can be given. The protection of the child involved is the main priority and it will be easier to take action to protect the child if the person making the disclosure is willing to be identified. If legal proceedings follow, it may be necessary to disclose the identity of that person. Where the concerns are expressed by another child or young person for whom the school has responsibility, it should be remembered that reporting situations of abuse may be traumatic for a child and some support may be advisable.

AN ANONYMOUS ALLEGATION IS RECEIVED

Staff in receipt of anonymous allegations about child abuse should:

- **Record** in writing the words used, so far as possible, where the allegation is by telephone, or retain the paper, where it is in writing.

- **Report** the matter to the *CPC*.

Action by staff in all cases

- Action must be taken once a disclosure has been made, whatever the source of the disclosure.
- The person to whom the disclosure was made must inform the Head Teacher or *CPC* immediately, on the same day as an allegation is made.
- The member of staff must also record, date and sign the information given.
- The information must not be shared with any person other than the *CPC*.

Action by the *CPC*

- All reports of alleged or suspected abuse must be treated seriously and as a matter of extreme urgency.
- The school should collate all the information that is known about the child at that time. It should be remembered that it is not the school's role to investigate the allegation or suspicion, but to gather together what information it has about the child and to pass it to the social work service if this is the course of action decided upon.
- If the *CPC* is certain, or has a very good reason to suspect that a child has been abused or requires protection, he or she should phone the social work service immediately, ask to speak to the duty social worker, state the concerns and the basis for them. The information should be followed up in writing to the social work service within 24 hours using the Notification of Concern form (enclosed in this booklet). A copy should also be sent to the Social Work manager and the officer with the responsibility for Child Protection in Education. A copy should be placed in the Child Protection file.

HOW MUCH CAN PARENTS/CARERS BE TOLD WITHOUT BREACHING CONFIDENTIALITY?

In circumstances where a parent/carer is suspected of possible abuse, advice should be sought from the investigating social workers or police officers. If the child has been detained beyond the end of the school day, consideration must be given as to how the child will get home. At the end of the meeting, a decision should be made about whether there are concerns which require a referral to the social work service. Referrals should be made where there is any substantial suspicion. Proof is not required at this stage. If there is any doubt about whether to refer, the social work office should be advised in any case of the circumstances of the allegations and the school's doubts about it. Minutes should be kept of the meeting, together with a record of the reasons for the decision to refer or not to refer. These should be kept in a confidential file within the school and

on SEEMIS Pastoral Notes. All those at the meeting should be reminded that all matters must be treated confidentially

Where the conclusion is that there may be grounds for suspicion that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, the CPC should immediately inform the school's the Social Work Initial Response Team (**UNCRC Article 9**).

CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

There has been a growing awareness that the abuse of children can take many forms. Part of this awareness has been the recognition that, although occurring rarely, the abuse of children can also be carried out by those who are trusted on society's behalf with their care and protection. This fact has been particularly highlighted by the media. Recognising the sensitivity of this, where an allegation is made against a member of staff, it must be taken seriously, and the principles and procedures outlined in these guidelines must always be followed. In these circumstances particular attention must be given by those receiving or investigating information to ensure that different standards are not applied. Any allegation against a member of staff must be taken seriously, and there must be at least a preliminary consideration of it by the Head Teacher of the school. If the conclusion after such consideration is that the allegation is completely unfounded, the decision to take the matter no further should be recorded, together with the reasons for the decision, and the information placed in a confidential file and on SEEMIS Pastoral Notes.

When an allegation is made or suspected against a member of staff:

- The person receiving the allegation must inform the CPC or Head Teacher immediately. Where the allegation is being made against the Head Teacher or CPC, the member of staff receiving the allegation must inform the Director of Educational Services.
- On receiving the information, the CPC or Head teacher must then immediately notify the Director of Educational Services who would take any necessary action regarding informing the police.

The CPC or Head Teacher must take advice from the Director of Educational Services about the need to:

- Remove the member of staff from access to children.
- Suspend the member of staff.
- Inform the parents/carers of the child concerned.
- Inform the parents/carers of all children and young people with whom the member of staff has come into contact.

- Inform the reporter where it is known that a child who is on supervision and/or in care is alleged to have been abused.

ABUSE BY OTHER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (UNCRC Articles 13 and 15)

This may involve:

- Physical harm
- Emotional harm e.g. bullying, racial harassment
- Sexual abuse

In the case of minor incidents of physical and emotional harm, the school's normal disciplinary procedures should apply. In more serious cases, the Head Teacher will have to decide whether to involve the parent/carers of the victim and the alleged perpetrator. The Head Teacher may wish to discuss with the victim and his or her parents whether there should be police involvement. The same procedures should be followed as for other allegations of abuse.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE ON AN EDUCATIONAL OFF-SITE VISIT

Any member of staff operating within a school's jurisdiction with responsibility for children on a school trip must be aware that, while on the trip, the children are the responsibility of the Visit Leader. Staff in these circumstances must follow the required procedures and must be able to contact the CPC or Head Teacher at all times. Specific Management Guidelines should be consulted when arranging Educational Off-Site Visits.

CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS (UNCRC Article 23)

There are several additional factors to bear in mind when the possibility of abuse of a child with additional support needs is being considered:

- Children with additional support needs can be particularly vulnerable to anyone who seeks to abuse children as it may be more difficult for them to communicate.
- Failure to recognise signs and symptoms and confuse the abuse with the child's impairment.
- The child may be isolated and vulnerable to bullying from peers.
- Impaired capacity to avoid or resist abuse.

ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE CHILDREN (UNCRC Article 1, 10, 14 and 22)

Children and young people who are seeking asylum or are refugees may be particularly vulnerable for a variety of reasons:

- Language barriers
- Past trauma and experiences
- Racism and discrimination
- Lack of resource
- Isolation

POLICE AND SOCIAL WORK INTERVIEWS IN SCHOOL

Under normal circumstances, any interview with a child at school should take place with the consent of, or in the presence of, their parent/carer. The exceptional circumstances in which interviews may be permitted without parental consent are:

- The child seeks the interview.
- A child mature enough to understand the situation voluntarily agrees to speak to a social worker, or to the police, so long as the child is not a suspect.
- A parent/carer is alleged to have abused the child.
- An immediate interview is essential to allow a criminal investigation to proceed.
- The child is a suspect and the police have been unable to contact the parents, or the parents are suspected of involvement in the offence, and it is necessary in the interests of justice, to interview the child immediately. In this situation, the Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher should be present.

GUIDANCE ON STAFF INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When providing support for any child or young person, in particular for a child where abuse or risk of abuse is an issue, staff should take account of the need to protect themselves from allegations of impropriety. They may also need to set limits to contact in order that children do not develop a dependence of trust in adults which could render them vulnerable to exploitation by others. The following list gives guidance on staff interaction with children and young people:

- Demeaning or suggestive remarks should never be made to or in the presence of children or young people.
- Staff should always consider the appropriateness of being with a child or young person on their own, especially if this involves being out of earshot or vision of a colleague.
- Sufficient adults should be available to provide proper supervision on trips, especially residential excursions.

- Staff should always be able to justify physical contact with a child in any situation.
- Physical contact in order to provide care for a child should only involve a level of contact necessary to provide such care.
- Some children with additional support needs will require a higher level of physical care than other children of their age but the physical contact involved should be limited to that necessary to provide such care.
- Physical contact involving restraint should involve the minimum of force necessary to protect a child or young person who is at imminent risk of inflicting harm to self or others.
- If one member of staff has to use physical restraint, another member of staff, where possible, should be summoned to witness and assist.
- If a member of staff has concerns about a relationship that is developing with a child or young person on the side of either party, then these concerns should be shared with the CPC. There is a clear requirement that staff will not engage in a sexual relationship with children and young people of any age and it is an offence to do so.

PROTOCOL FOR HOLIDAY COVER

During school holiday period, the central authority team have protocols in place to ensure that appropriate information is available and shared at case conference meetings.

POLICE ALERTS - CHILD WELLBEING CONCERN / TRAUMA INFORMED CONTACT and CARE REPORTS

Police may share information about certain incidents via a Child Wellbeing Concern or Trauma Informed Contact and Care Report. These are sent from central admin to the school CPCs to enable them to monitor individual children. Details should be added to SEEMIS Pastoral Notes and any action taken if required. The Child Wellbeing Concern Report is not printed or stored by the school. If the child is under five years of age, Health will inform the EYC.

CHILD PROTECTION ALERTS AND DE-ALERTS

When a child protection investigation is underway, a Child Protection Alert is sent to the educational establishment. A copy of the alert should be placed in the child's Child Protection file and SEEMIS Pastoral Notes. Similarly, de-alerts should be added to the file and SEEMIS Pastoral Notes updated.

NON-DISCLOSURE OF PLACE OF RESIDENCE OR WHEREABOUTS

A children's hearing or sheriff can impose a condition that any place where a child is to reside must not be disclosed. When notification of a non-disclosure of a child's address is received, information will be sent from central admin to educational establishments. Please remove the child's home address from SEEMIS/Click & Go and replace with the school address. A record of the non-disclosure and the child's home address should be placed in the child's PPR and in the notes area of the pupil's record in Click & Go (clearly marked Non-Disclosure).

CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN (UNCRC Article 9)

Some children are 'looked after' because they have experienced neglect or abuse. The safety, wellbeing and achievements of these children are vital to minimise the risks of future harm. Looked after children should have a 'Care Plan' in place. Staff in school should contact the child's lead professional.

CAMERAS, FILMING & IMAGE MESSAGING

Educational establishments should make it clear in their handbook the policy for the use of cameras during events, shows and other activities. Parents/carers should provide explicit consent to their child being photographed or filmed.

USE OF INTERNET (UNCRC Articles 13 and 17)

The internet has brought many opportunities and benefits for learning. However, on occasions, it can be used inappropriately and unlawfully. The best protection of children lies in the safe use of the internet wherever they are. All children must sign the consent form for the safe use of the internet as part of their education of safe practice.

MOBILE PHONES

Educational establishments should consider the use of mobile phones by children and staff across their school. They may wish to consider areas of the school in which mobiles cannot be used, such as changing rooms, toilets, classrooms. At Monkton children are required to leave mobile phones in the main office.

INFORMATION SHARING (UNCRC Article 16)

Any information shared must comply with GDPR. Clear and accurate sharing of information is vital in the protection of children. Children, young people and their families have a right to respect, privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, information shared should only be with professionals who need to know for the benefit of the child and family. All professionals have an obligation to safeguard the confidentiality of personal information. Where there are child protection concerns, agencies have a duty to share information.

RECORDING AND FILING CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION (UNCRC Article 16)

The procedures for recording, filing, storage and retention of child protection information is set out in the file guidance for educational establishments. All establishments should adhere to this to ensure that there is consistency in the recording and storing of information and that key information is readily accessible when required. The CP file should be kept separate from the PPR. A file will be opened for a child once a referral is made or an alert is received. SEEMIS Pastoral Notes will also be updated.

ANNUAL CHILD PROTECTION UPDATE

The authority annual child protection update will contain information on the following: -

- Mental Health
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Anti-bullying
- Child sexual exploitation and abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour based marriage / forced marriage
- Child trafficking
- Online safety
- Sexting
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Designated Manager information

CHILD PROTECTION - CONCERN FORM

Please use this form to formalise any child protection referral. A copy should be placed in the child's file, if relevant, sent to the person to whom the referral was made, usually the named Social worker, and to InitialResponseTeam@south-ayrshire.gov.uk and to EducationSecure@secure.south-ayrshire.gov.uk

1	Establishment:			
	Name of Referrer:		Designation:	
	Named Person (if known)			
	Lead Professional: (if relevant)			

2	CHILD'S DETAILS			
	Surname:		Date of Birth:	
	Forename(s)			
	Address:			
	Post Code:			
	Parent/Carer details:			

3	LINE MANAGER / SOCIAL WORKER INFORMED			
	Time / Date of Incident / Concern		Name of Social Worker Contacted:	
			Time / Date Contacted	
	Name of Supervisor informed		Designation of Supervisor Informed of Concern	
			Time / Date informed	

4	Suspicion/Risk of:	Suspicion/Risk of: (factors relating to child)	Suspicion/Risk of: (factors relating to parents/guardians)
	Please delete as appropriate	Please delete as appropriate	Please delete as appropriate
	Physical Abuse NO/YES	Absconding NO/YES	Alcohol Abuse NO/YES
	Emotional Abuse NO/YES	Child Safety NO/YES	Asylum Seeking/Refugees NO/YES
	Neglect NO/YES	Education NO/YES	Domestic Abuse NO/YES
	Sexual Abuse NO/YES	Emotional Care/Development NO/YES	Drug Abuse NO/YES
		Health/Illness/Disability NO/YES	Housing/Accommodation NO/YES

Suspicion/Risk of:	Suspicion/Risk of: (factors relating to child)	Suspicion/Risk of: (factors relating to parents/guardians)
	Physical Care/ Neglect NO/YES	Mental Illness NO/YES
	Self-Harm NO/YES	Parenting NO/YES
	Sexual Exploitation NO/YES	Physical Illness NO/YES
	Offending Behaviour NO/YES	Poverty/ Financial NO/YES
	Substance Misuse NO/YES	Other (please specify below) NO/YES

DETAILS OF CONCERNS	
Please summarise the reasons for the referral	

5

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Please provide a summary of relevant child information, additional risk factors - ASN/ Wellbeing Assessment/ significant chronology details/family circumstances etc.	

IF CHILD IS AT **IMMEDIATE RISK** TELEPHONE THE **POLICE DIAL 999**

IS CHILD AT RISK OF ABUSE OR SIGNIFICANT HARM?

TELEPHONE SOCIAL WORKER OR

INITIAL RESPONSE TEAM ON:

01292 267675 OR CALL 0800 328 7758 IF OUT OF HOURS.

COMPLETE THIS CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN FORM

Initial Response Team

InitialResponseTeam@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

Education Concern Mailbox

Education.Concerns@south-ayrshire.gov.uk