



**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL



**PROTECTING CHILDREN  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE IN EDUCATION  
Book 2 Roles and Responsibilities**

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## 1 Background

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) is our way of working with all children and young people. It is the foundation for all children's services. The approach focuses on what makes a positive difference for children and young people and how practitioners can act to deliver the best outcomes for them.

In Education and Children's Services our vision is that we will:

- Put the child and their family at the centre of everything we do.
- Provide intervention early in order to ensure that all children achieve their potential.
- Achieve the highest standards of joint working and collaboration to improve outcomes for children.
- Take personal responsibility for ensuring that all children achieve.
- Focus on improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Ensure a single planning process for children and young people.

## 2 Child Protection

Child protection is part of our approach to Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Curriculum for Excellence. Every child or young person has the right to be safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. They have the right to be protected and be safe from harm. They have the right to be listened to and to have their views taken into account. They should expect to get the help they need, when they need it and be able to access help close to where they live.

## 3 Responsibility of All

Child protection is the responsibility of all who work with children and young people and families regardless of whether or not they come into direct contact with children. All workers must be fully informed of their responsibilities in respect of keeping children safe.

All services working with children, young people and families are expected to identify and consider the wellbeing of children and to share concerns appropriately.

All agencies, professional and public bodies and services that deliver services and work with children and their families have a responsibility to consider potential risks to a child, irrespective of whether the child is the main focus of their involvement.

These risks could present as one of the four primary categories of child abuse i.e. Physical abuse, Emotional abuse, Sexual abuse and Neglect but could also present as Child Sexual Exploitation, or a child at risk of Female Genital Mutilation or as a child at risk of radicalization.

Staff need to be mindful of the complexity of the risks facing some young people and look beyond the obvious.

Education practitioners, school staff and staff in other learning settings play a crucial role in the support and protection of children as well as the development of their wellbeing.

Teachers and practitioners are likely to have the greatest level of day-to-day contact with children and so are well placed to observe physical and psychological changes in a child that could indicate abuse, exploitation or radicalization and to contribute to the assessment of vulnerable children. Other staff are also likely to be well placed to observe changes.

Education staff may be the first to be aware that families are experiencing difficulties in looking after their children. Children and young people often see teachers as a trusted source of help and support. They should share information about any concerns with the social work service or the police at an early stage via their established reporting mechanisms and refer to the Children's Reporter if there might be a need for Compulsory Measures of Supervision. They may be asked to help with investigations into reported or suspected abuse or neglect.

The role of the Head Teacher and senior staff in education services is key to the identification of wellbeing concerns and participation in the assessment and planning for individuals to improve outcomes.

Where a child goes missing from education, education services within the local authority will conduct investigations in line with the Children Missing from Education procedures. This will involve a collaborative approach, sharing information across services and agencies to re-establish contact with the missing child.

## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

### **Director of Education and Children's Services**

The Director of Education and Children's Services has the role of ensuring that education services fulfil the requirements of the National Guidelines 2014.

### **Head of Education**

As senior manager responsible for child protection, the role of the Head of Education is to provide leadership and strategic direction for the management of child protection within education services.

### **Principal Educational Psychologist**

The Principal Educational Psychologist is the key member of staff with responsibility for Inclusion, Equity and Wellbeing within education services.

### **Development Officer (Child Protection)**

The Development Officer for Child Protection will support training development in relation to child protection. Any Child Protection Co-ordinator who requires advice on a child protection matter should contact their local Social Work Office or Policy Scotland. The Development Officer should not be the first point of contact for child protection concerns.

### **Head Teachers and Service Managers**

The Head Teacher or Service Manager is ultimately accountable for the establishment's or service's actions in response to child protection concerns and its activities to keep children safe and well.

The Head Teacher or Service Manager has the following responsibilities in respect to child protection:

- (a) Ensure all staff fully understand their responsibilities for child protection.
- (b) Ensure establishment practice complies with local authority guidelines.
- (c) Ensure the curriculum equips children and young people with the knowledge, skills and attributes to protect themselves.
- (d) Appoint a suitably experienced and trained Child Protection Co-ordinator. In primary schools this will be the Head Teacher. In secondary schools this will be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. In nursery settings that are open during holiday periods this should be the Early Years Senior Practitioner. Other services must follow guidance provided by Service Managers.
- (e) Appoint a Depute Child Protection Co-ordinator. In small settings, arrangements can be agreed for a Child Protection Co-ordinator from within the local area to be nominated as Depute.
- (f) Ensure that all employees know who the named Child Protection Co-ordinator is.
- (g) Ensure arrangements are clearly communicated to all staff and contact details are displayed in every classroom, activity space and main office.
- (h) Ensure that all visiting staff, students, volunteers, temporary, newly appointed and permanent employees know who the Child Protection Co-ordinator is.
- (i) Ensure children, young people and parents have information and understand procedures on child protection and that senior staff can be approached at any time.
- (j) Ensure recruitment and induction procedures give due regard to child protection.

- (k) Ensure staff contribute effectively to multi-agency child protection procedures including:
- Reports being submitted timeously for Child Protection Case Conferences or for Children's Hearings.
  - The most appropriate member of staff attending Case Conferences, Core Group meetings or Children's Hearings.
  - Contributing to and implementing Child Protection Plans.
  - Take appropriate action in conjunction with the school's Quality Improvement Officer or Service Manager when there are concerns or allegations about a member of school staff.
- (l) Monitor and evaluate child protection policy and procedures and, where necessary, plan for improvement.

If the Head Teacher or Service Manager is not the Child Protection Co-ordinator they must maintain an overview of any information received by the Child Protection Co-ordinator, decisions on recording and referral, subsequent liaison with other agencies during investigations, proceedings and action planning to support children and young people.

### **Child Protection Co-ordinator**

The role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator is critical to the effective operation of child protection procedures within the school or child-care setting. The Child Protection Co-ordinator has a legal duty to share concerns appropriately.

All establishments must have an assigned Child Protection Co-ordinator and Depute. All nurseries operating outwith normal school hours must also have a designated Child Protection Co-ordinator and Depute. The duties associated with role will be undertaken or delegated by the Head Teacher or Service Manager, taking account of the circumstances relating to each establishment or service.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator has the following responsibilities in respect to child protection:

- (a) Be the point of contact for employees and other agencies on child protection.
- (b) Implement the service's child protection policy and procedures.
- (c) Comply with authority guidelines on appropriate and secure records systems for child protection information.
- (d) Listen to and record the concerns of children and young people, staff or third parties in relation to child protection.
- (e) Make child protection notifications of concern in line with authority procedures and guidelines.
- (f) Liaise with other agencies to support investigations, court proceedings, Children's Hearings and case reviews.
- (g) Implement multi-agency child protection plans.

- (h) Communicate sensitively with parents in agreement with partner agencies.
- (i) Have a strategic oversight of all concerns for individual children and monitor to identify patterns or accumulating concerns.
- (j) Attend child protection training and Co-ordinators' meetings.
- (k) Ensure that all employees have access to child protection guidelines and appropriate materials.
- (l) Develop staff understanding of child protection, their roles in relation to child protection and the procedures.
- (m) Ensure that all new staff receive child protection training during induction.
- (n) Ensure that all staff in the establishment are trained annually in accordance with Aberdeenshire's child protection training calendar.
- (o) Ensure that a child protection training record is maintained.  
Lead in the development of policy and practice to meet national and local guidance.
- (p) Ensure appropriate support to staff affected by child protection issues.  
Promote and support curriculum input in relation to personal safety/child protection.
- (q) Liaise and co-operate with other establishments and agencies where appropriate.
- (r) Monitor and evaluate practice regularly.
- (s) Use the Child Protection Policy on an annual basis to evaluate child protection arrangements and practice.

## **5 Role of Individual Staff Members**

Every member of staff working with children has a responsibility to:

- (a) Help keep children and young people safe and well.
- (b) Be vigilant for signs that children and young people may need support, are at risk, or are suffering from harm and/or neglect.
- (c) Immediately contact the Child Protection Co-ordinator when they have concerns or hear allegations.
- (d) Contribute to taking action or supporting children and young people following identifications of concerns.
- (e) Ensure their work is carried out in ways that prevent harm to children and young people and maintain safety and wellbeing of all involved.
- (f) Attend establishment based child protection briefings and training and record this on a suitable Professional Learning Record e.g. MyGTCS.

All members of staff should discuss any concerns they have about a child or young person with the Child Protection Co-ordinator however minor these worries may seem. The Child Protection Co-ordinator may have additional knowledge or information which, when added to, clearly indicates that the child may be at risk.

All members of staff have the same power as any other individual to pass information directly to Social Work or Police Scotland, if they feel that a crime has been committed.

## **6 Role of Visiting Staff (Including Educational Psychologists, Specialist Teachers, Supply Staff, Music Instructors and Active School Co-ordinators)**

The roles and responsibilities outlined above apply equally to staff visiting the school for whatever reason, and:

- (a) Visiting staff should familiarize themselves with the child protection arrangements in each setting they visit to ensure they are prepared in advance to appropriately respond to any concerns about a child or young person as they arise,
- (b) Visiting staff must ensure they know who the Child Protection Co-ordinator or Designated Officer is in each setting they work in and ensure they share any concerns, however minor, with that member of staff as soon as they arise.
- (c) Visiting staff must check regularly that they are aware of any changes in arrangements for child protection.

## **7 Child Protection Training**

Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Services requires that all adults working with children and young people will receive adequate training to ensure that they are confident, well informed, and supported to promote the protection of children. Training must be provided for all employees and will depend on the post held. Advice on appropriate training is published annually. The Child Protection Co-ordinator should also ensure volunteers are suitably trained.

## **8 Induction**

As part of school-based induction procedures all employees must receive an overview of child protection procedures within one week of taking up post. Staff must complete role related training as appropriate within twelve weeks of taking up appointment.