

Child Protection Policy

Every child or young person has the “right to be protected from all forms of harm and abuse”. National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. In the context of these guidelines, the term “Child Abuse” incorporates suspected as well as actual abuse of children. Provided there are reasonable grounds for suspicion each instance of actual or suspected Child Abuse must be reacted to and followed up as indicated in these guidelines.

These guidelines take into consideration the articles in the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child that state that protection is a right:

Article 3: (Best interests of the child) Adults must do what’s best for me.

Article 19: (Protection from violence, abuse and neglect) Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

Article 34: (Sexual exploitation) Children have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare Quality Indicators state:

2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection - Arrangements for safeguarding , including child Protection. Arrangements to ensure wellbeing. National guidance and legislation.

Care Inspectorate: A Quality Framework for Daycare of Children, Childminding and School aged Childcare Quality Indicators state:

1.2 Children are Safe and Protected - Children are supported to feel safe, secure and are protected from harm. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and are supported by comprehensive child protection procedures to inform their practice.

Health and Social Care Standards state:

3.14 I have the confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

3.15 My Care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well.

3.22 I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made.

‘Child protection is the responsibility of all who work with children and families regardless of whether they come into direct contact with children or not. Education practitioners and all schools and Early Learning and Childcare setting staff, play a crucial role in the support and protection of children as well as the development of their wellbeing. The role of the Named Person in education services is key to the identification of wellbeing concerns and the assessment and planning to improve outcomes. Education staff are likely to have the greatest level of day-to-day contact with children and are well placed to observe physical and psychological changes in a child that could indicate abuse.’ – Aberdeenshire Council Child protection in Education Guidelines

Where the Head Teacher or in the Head Teacher's absence other designated Child Protection Officers members of staff judge that there is evidence of abuse or potential danger to a child then contact will be made with the Divisional Social Work Department in accordance with the NESPC Child Protection Guidelines.

Full copies of these guidelines are in the flowchart within this policy.

This policy can be found:

- **School Website**
- **Policy located in the SLT office within the school and the Nursery Office**

Annual Actions

Each year New Machar School will publish information through the parent handbook making parents aware of the school's Child Protection Guidelines. This will make parents aware that in situations where there is a possibility that a child could be at risk of abuse or neglect, the school is required to refer the child to Social Work, the Police or the Reporter and that under these circumstances, the parents would not normally be consulted first.

Child Protection Statement

Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

"It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright." Scottish Executive 2002 highlights the importance of protecting all children and young people, therefore we are required to report if we think any young child/ young person has come to harm or is at risk of harm as a consequence of possible abuse."

Education and Children's Services have Designated Child Protection Officer's appointed to be responsible for Child Protection matters and specially trained for the task.

Should you wish to talk further about Child Protection and the safety of children please feel free to contact the Head Teacher.

When there is the possibility that a child/young person could be at risk of abuse or neglect then a referral will be made to Social Work, the Police or the Reporter.

NEW MACHAR SCHOOL & NURSERY CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

All children have a right not to be abused and 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' (Scottish Executive, Nov 2002) underlines the need for us all to take responsibility in order to protect children.

At New Machar School and Nursery, we are committed to creating an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately. The wellbeing 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.

In order to achieve this, we will:

- Seek to work in partnership with parents, carers, other agencies and Aberdeenshire Council to promote good practice in the area of child protection.
- Update any changes in Child Protection Policy and Practice under the guidance from the designated person in the school.

- Endeavour to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate child protection training, supervision and support in order to implement this policy effectively and with the minimum of stress.

The detailed arrangements, systems and procedures for ensuring that the above policy statements are fully implemented are contained in the "National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland". It was agreed at Aberdeenshire Child and Family Protection Committee on 27 November 2014 that –

In Aberdeenshire, from 1 December 2014 – all Child Protection reference will be to The 'National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland; 2014'

[National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

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.

When a child tells an adult about possible abuse, his or her statements should not be dismissed or ignored. The adult should attend carefully to what the child wants to communicate, taking account of the child's age and stage of development, and allow the child to say what he or she wants to say without being drawn into detailed questioning.

Our school will always seek to work with families in a clear, positive and open way, bearing in mind always that the welfare of the children is paramount.

COPIES OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY GUIDELINES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE DESIGNATED PERSON.

**In our school the designated person is Mr Brian Carle.
In their absence the Depute is Mrs Kathryn Duncan / Miss Laura MacFadyen / Mrs Laura Ramage. In Nursery it is EYSP Mrs Lesley Daniel**

REMEMBER:

Any concerns about the well-being of a child need to be shared.

No matter how good we are at evaluating and assessing matters to do with children in our classes, when it comes to the child's welfare we cannot evaluate and assess potential danger, risk, damage, as we only know a tiny part of the whole picture. We must share our concerns with the designated person.

Staff should use the attached flow-chart if:

- A child discloses abuse, or
- A member of staff suspects a child may have been abused, or
- A third party expresses concern
- A staff member witnesses an abusive situation involving another staff member

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The member of staff must: **RECORD** and **REPORT**

R Respond without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock

E Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset

C Confidentiality must not be promised to children or adults in this situation

O Observe carefully the demeanour or behaviour of the child

R Record in detail what has been seen and heard (GC1 form in school office)

D Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations: rather encourage the child to say what he/she wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate

Then **REPORT** to the designated person without delay.

Members of staff must not

- Investigate suspected/alleged abuse themselves
- Evaluate the grounds for concern
- Seek or wait for proof
- Discuss the matter with anyone other than head teacher/senior staff. Further information can be found in the

Further information can be found in the 'National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland; 2014'.

Whilst it is understood that some parents do often have queries regarding the steps, we have a duty of care to every child in our care, and it is essential that we follow procedure in order to ensure the safety of our young people.

I am very happy to discuss this matter with any members of the wider school community – feel free to contact me at the school.

EDUCATION PROCEDURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CASES OF CHILD ABUSE OR CHILD PROTECTION COMING TO THE NOTICE OF EDUCATION STAFF

1. A designated member of staff is responsible for co-ordinating action on child abuse within the establishment. Referrals should normally be through this designated person, but every employee has the responsibility to make a direct referral if this is necessary.
2. Any member of staff suspecting or identifying child abuse, should, without delay, contact the designated member of staff. If contacting the designated person implies delay beyond the end of the school day or community education session, an assessment should be made of the child's safety and, if necessary, a direct referral should be made.
3. Where the designated member of staff judges that there is evidence of abuse or potential danger to a child then he/she must ensure that Social Work is contacted (this to include discussion as to how parents are engaged). It is important that all staff understand that investigation only needs to establish evidence of the need to investigate abuse. A full inquiry by Education staff must be avoided because collection of evidence is a specialist Police/Social Work role. Inappropriate inquiries may prevent successful prosecution.
4. If it is considered that the child required immediate medical attention, contact Health Visitor, School Doctor or Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital as appropriate. If there is a view that the child may risk further abuse if returned home, the Police and Social Work must be informed as soon as possible and preferably well before the end of the day.

5. When the designated member of staff considers that further investigation is required before suspicions can be confirmed or rejected, he/she can contact social work and any other agency who may be able to assist in any such inquiries or who may have information about the child or family. In particular, the Health Visitor and in Aberdeen, the Home – School Liaison Officer, but also including the child’s General Practitioner and, if actively involved in the case, Educational Psychologist. The designated officer may also check the Child Protection Register.

6. A Head of Establishment may, of course, at any time draw to the attention of the Reporter (Authority Reporter – Aberdeenshire – 01224-565179) to the Children’s Panel the circumstances of a child who is believed to be in need of compulsory measures of care. Out of hours emergency number 0845 840 0070.

7. In all cases, incidents should be logged, action taken and recorded in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Concern Sheet appended.

8. The Educational Psychologist Service has designated responsibility for this area and can be contacted at Craigearn Business Park, Morrison Way, Kintore, Inverurie. Tel: (01467-634759).

9. It is essential to maintain strict confidentiality in all child protection matters. Breach of confidentiality is a serious disciplinary matter and must be reported immediately to the line manager.

10. The Head of Establishment will ensure that all appropriate staff, including new staff, on an ongoing basis, are made familiar with the contents of this booklet and ensure there is a quality PSE programme.

11. It is possible that employees are implicated in abuse. Indeed, any adult or child may be an abuser and research show that some abuse may be perpetrated by women or men, or women and men acting in partnership. Disclosure should not be discounted because of the status or role of the alleged abuser.

The value, benefits, and overall approach from the implementation of this policy and procedures will be reviewed annually.

Any changes will be discussed and communicated to all staff immediately.

The Head Teacher at New Machar School welcomes feedback on this document.

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This document has been written in reference to the following:

<https://asn-aberdeenshire.org/child-protection-in-education/>

<https://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org/>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

<https://education.gov.scot/media/gryie4yx/hgioelc020316revised.pdf>

<https://hub.careinspectorate.com/media/2544/sg-health-and-social-care-standards.pdf>

https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/6585/Quality%20framework%20for%20early%20learning%20and%20childcare%202022_PRINT%20FRIENDLY.pdf

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