

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

LATHALLAN SCHOOL

Updated September 2025

Adapted from National Guidance for Child
Protection in Scotland 2021 (updated 2023)

Introduction

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (updated 2023) outlines the collective responsibility of all services, professional bodies and agencies that provide child and or adult services to identify and actively consider potential risks to all children and young people. Every adult in Scotland has a role in ensuring all our children live safely and can reach their full potential.

2.47: All staff working in education establishments, including early learning and childcare (ELC) settings have a key role in the support and protection of children and young people. Day-to-day professional experience of, and relationship with children is a fundamental protective factor. All staff must be aware of, and must follow, child protection procedures.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a specific duty on services to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of children and young people. It builds upon the principles set out in the **Children (Scotland) Act 1995** which places a specific duty on Local Authorities to investigate if it believes that a child is or is likely to suffer significant harm.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a much wider concept than child protection and refers to promoting the welfare of children. It encompasses: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcome. (**HIGIOS 4 - 4th Edition**)

The Aims of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers within our school can:

- ❖ Carry out their responsibilities to protect our children and young from all forms of neglect, abuse and discrimination.
- ❖ Recognise a situation that presents a risk to children and young people and identify signs which may suggest a child or young person is:
 - being physically, sexually or emotionally harmed, or put at risk of harm, abuse or exploitation
 - having their basic needs neglected or being cared for in ways that are not

appropriate to their age and stage of development

- being denied that sustained support and care necessary for them to thrive and develop normally
- being denied access to appropriate medical care and treatment
- being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development

❖ Understand and implement procedures related to the reporting and recording of concerns as detailed in this Child Protection Policy.

❖ Ensure that all record keeping, including Child Protection Concern referrals and Chronologies are up-to-date with information that is proportionate and relevant.

Lathallan School strives to educate all its pupils within an environment where the school values of Confidence, Opportunity, Respect, Endeavour and Modesty are promoted. We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our care and improve outcomes for children and families by being proactive:

- Positive whole school ethos
- Anti-bullying policies and practices
- Health and well-being programmes increasing knowledge and developing skills
- Education for personal and social development
- Developing resilience
- Safe use of internet and other technologies
- Working positively with parents and carers

We recognise that every adult has a role in ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people and in educational establishments, staff are in a strong position to contribute to the safety and well-being of children and young people – acting to challenge, minimise or prevent harm, to provide on-going support, and to educate about risks and how these can be managed. All staff share the responsibility during both pupil hours and out of school activities.

“Child protection” means protecting a child from 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.

How do we recognise abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) or neglect?

Physical Abuse:

Definition: This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

Possible indicators may include: unexplained injuries or burns; improbable explanation for an injury; recurring 'accidents'; untreated injuries; reluctance to discuss injuries; fear of returning home or chronic running away

Emotional Abuse:

Definition: Persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Persistent means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused, or is likely to cause, significant harm. Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can occur independently. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve the imposition of age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations on a child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting children, being exposed to the abuse of others, or extreme overprotection.

Possible indicators may include: constantly being put down, ridiculed, scapegoated; being treated differently from other children in the family; extremes of passivity and aggression or outbursts; lack of concentration; low esteem; running away; self-harm

Sexual Abuse:

Definition: Child sexual abuse is an act that involves a child under the age of 16 of age in an activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. For those who may be victims of sexual offences aged 16-17, child protection procedures should be considered. Sexual abuse relates to **contact** (including penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and **non-contact** (including indecent images, exposure to sexual activities, sexual language towards a child, and encouraging inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour).

Possible indicators may include: behaviour changes eg withdrawn, anxiety, isolation, depression; developmental regression; anxiety associated with certain places or people; lack of trust or over familiarity and attention seeking; sexual knowledge and awareness beyond age; sexualised acting out with other children or toys; risk taking behaviours eg drugs or alcohol misuse; self-harm

Neglect:

Definition: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs in an age and stage appropriate manner and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve the failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care and treatment. In its extreme form, children can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation, leading to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children in particular, the consequences may be life-threatening within a relatively short period of time. Neglect may be a single instance but is more likely to present as cumulative neglectful behaviour over time.

Possible indicators may include: always hungry; inappropriate clothing; health needs not being met; appointments not kept; poor personal hygiene; poor self-esteem; social isolation; left unattended or with inappropriate adults; poorly supervised.

When should we worry?

Remember - your threshold for sharing a concern is any worry that you have about a child/young person's health and wellbeing or if there is a risk of harm. **If in doubt - check it out.**

What are our concerns?

Harm refers to the ill treatment or impairment of the health and development of the child.

Development can mean physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development;

Health can mean physical or mental health

Significant harm

*Protecting children involves preventing harm and/or **the risk of harm** from abuse or neglect. Child protection investigation is triggered when the impact of harm is deemed to be significant.*

- A single traumatic event
- An accumulation of significant events

Increasingly we are seeing newer forms of child abuse which staff in schools may be well placed to identify:

- Harmful traditional practices, such as honour-based violence, forced marriage and FGM (female genital mutilation)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Children/young people who are missing
- Child trafficking, criminal exploitation and radicalisation
- Online and mobile phone safety, including technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)

The School is committed to the continuing professional development of staff around child protection issues. We continue to develop awareness in all staff of the need for child protection and their responsibilities in identifying abuse through annual Child Protection training and regular PREVENT training updates, ensuring that all staff are aware of referral procedures within the school. With regards to concerns regarding radicalisation, such concerns are raised to the Child Protection Coordinator and, if considered appropriate, a referral is made using the Prevent National Referral form. This form is available from local police or the local authority. Further information regarding PREVENT is included below:

- We monitor children who have been identified as 'at risk'.
- We ensure that, where appropriate, outside agencies are involved.
- We ensure that key concepts of child protection are integrated within the curriculum, especially with Health & Wellbeing.
- We create an environment where children feel secure, have their viewpoints valued, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

What staff should do if they have concerns about a child's welfare or safety.

The designated person for child protection is

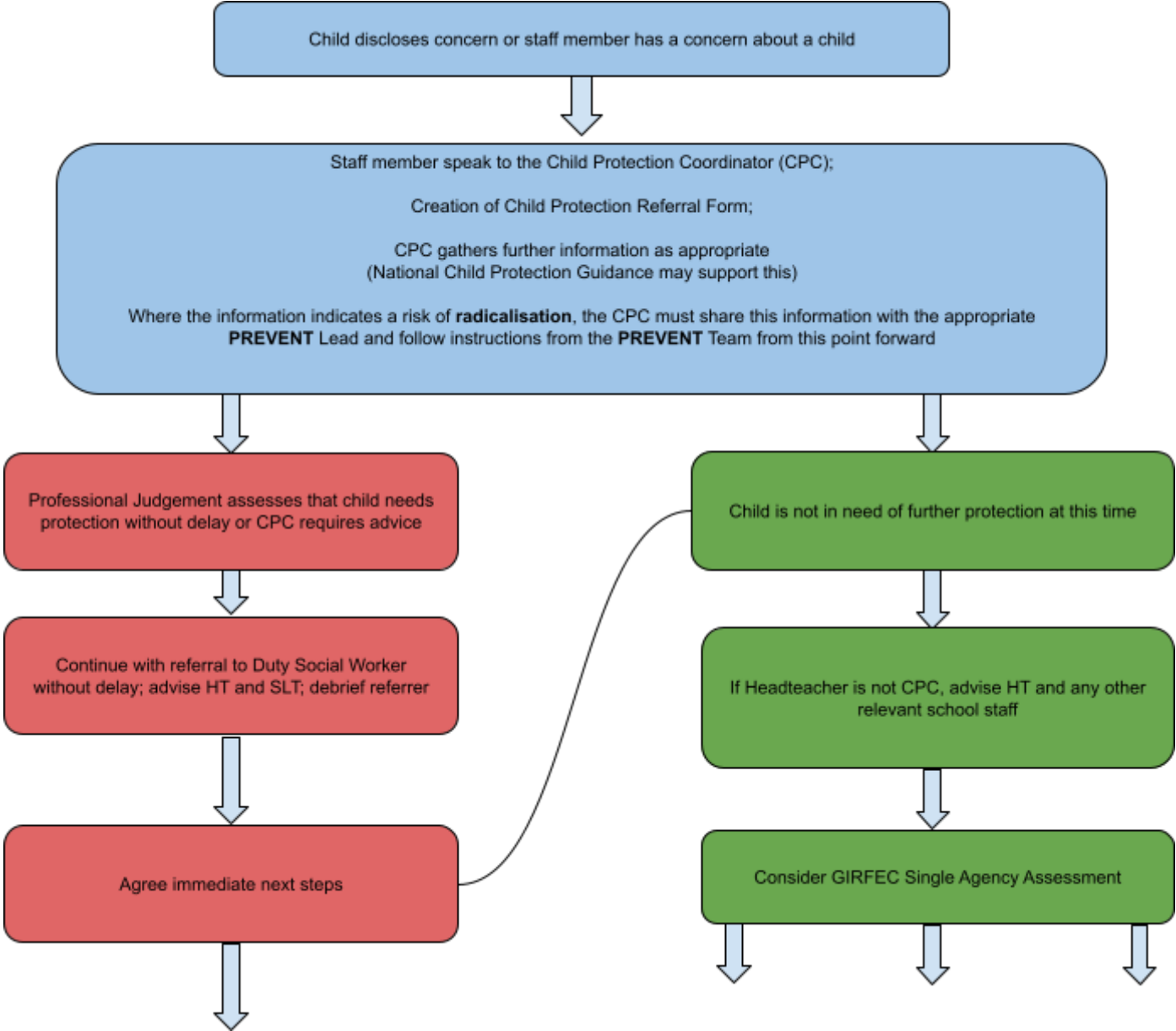
- the Child Protection Co-ordinator, Head of Pastoral Care, **Mr Len Wiltshire**.
- In his absence, the Depute Child Protection Co-ordinator is **Miss Zoe Jordan**.
- In their absence, staff should raise concerns with the senior leadership team:
Head of Junior School, **Mrs Pamela Hossick**;
Head of Senior School, **Mr Duncan Lyall**;
Headmaster, **Mr Richard Toley**.

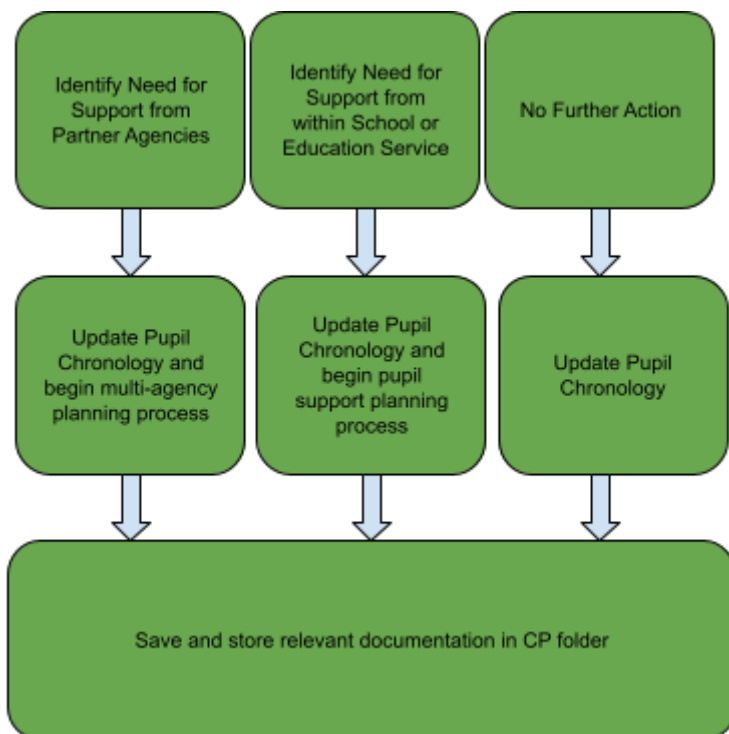
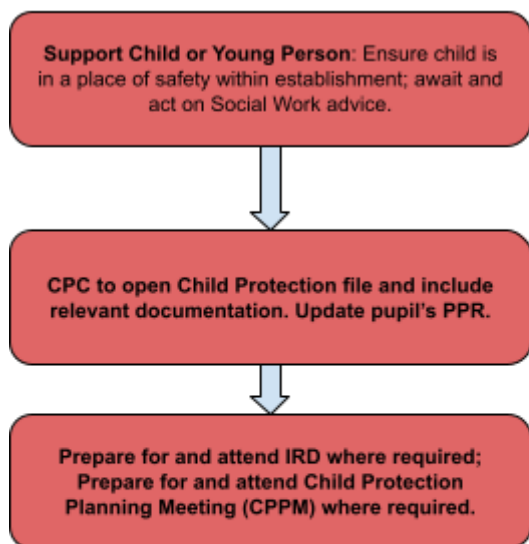
Nursery staff should raise relevant concerns with either Manager **Ms Ruth Christie** or Nursery Admin Manager, **Mr Colin Christie**, who will contact the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Welfare concerns

Any member of staff with an issue or concern relating to child's welfare should immediately discuss it with the Child Protection Co-ordinator. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will then decide on an appropriate course of action. **Allegations of child abuse must always be given the highest priority and referred immediately to Mr Wiltshire or in his absence, one of the individuals identified above.**

Child Protection Procedure - recognising actual or potential harm to a child or young person





Dealing with Disclosures

NB The pupil must be advised, at the earliest opportunity, that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed but support will be available.

Receive

- Reassure the child or young person, but only so far as is honest and reliable for example, don't make any promises you may not be able to keep, like "I'll stay with you"
- **Don't promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer.**
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it. For example, you could say: "You're not to blame"

- React**
- React to the child or young person only as far as it is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but don't 'interrogate' for full details.
 - Do not ask leading questions, for example: "What did they do next?", etc. Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court.
 - Ask open questions like: "Anything else to tell me?", "And?", "Yes?".
 - Do not criticise the perpetrator, the pupils may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
 - Do not ask the child or young person to repeat it all for another member of staff.
 - Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.

Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a Court.
- Record date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the words used by the child or young person. Record the conversation accurately, using the child's/young person's own language. Do not add comments or opinions.
- Record statements and observable things(for example, bruising), rather than your interpretations or assumptions.
- Child protection concerns need to be passed on immediately. Do not leave until a free period. Seek class cover from SLT if required.
- Try to get some support for yourself if you need it. Children and young people may make a disclosure to a member of staff with whom they have a good relationship. If this happens staff must follow the procedures below

What next? You must not attempt in any circumstances to deal with this yourself but you must report it immediately.

What should you do if there are indications of abuse? You must not enter into any discussion with the child or young person but you must report it immediately.

Recording concerns

- Referral forms available in Junior and Senior School Google Classrooms and in the Lathallan School Handbook;
- Concerns should be recorded on the same day/as soon as possible;
- Factual and in the child's/young person's own words;
- With reference to Wellbeing Indicators - SHANARRI;
- With as much context as possible, outlining what the potential abusive behaviour is and impact/potential impact on the child/young person involved;
- Alterations and amendments should be signed and dated in case required as evidence.

As of June 2025, the Prevent duty remains a statutory requirement in Scotland under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. It mandates that specified authorities, including schools, have due regard to the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is an integral part of Scotland's broader child protection and safeguarding framework.

What Is the Prevent Duty?

The Prevent duty is one of the four pillars of the UK Government's CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy. It focuses on safeguarding individuals from the threat of terrorism by:

- **Identifying individuals at risk:** Recognising those who may be susceptible to radicalisation
- **Providing support:** Offering appropriate interventions to divert individuals from radicalisation pathways
- **Collaborative working:** Engaging with multiple agencies to ensure a coordinated approach.

In Scotland, the Prevent duty guidance was updated and came into force on 19 August 2024. Key changes include:

- **Revised objectives:** Emphasising the need to tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
- **Updated terminology:** Reflecting current best practices and official language.
- **Introduction of the Security Threat Check (STC):** A tool to ensure high-level decision-making within Prevent is informed by the current terrorism threat landscape
- **Enhanced focus on ideology:** Ensuring that ideological factors are a critical consideration in referrals.
- **Clearer risk management advice:** Providing guidance on understanding and managing risks, including training and risk assessments. **Emphasis on reducing permissive environments:** Addressing broader radicalising influences beyond immediate threats.

For more details, refer to the [Scottish Prevent Duty Guidance Factsheet](#).

Prevent and Child Protection in Scotland

In Scotland, safeguarding children and young people is a shared responsibility. The Prevent duty aligns with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (updated 2023), which outlines procedures for identifying and responding to concerns about children at risk of significant harm.

Radicalisation is recognised as a form of exploitation and abuse. Therefore, concerns about a young person being drawn into terrorism should be treated as child protection concerns. This necessitates a multi-agency approach, involving education, social work, health services, and the police.

Recognising Signs of Radicalisation

School staff should be vigilant for indicators that a young person may be vulnerable to radicalisation. These signs can include:

- **Expressing extremist views:** Articulating support for extremist ideologies or groups.
- **Isolation:** Withdrawing from family and friends.
- **Changes in behaviour:** Displaying sudden changes in mood, behaviour, or appearance.
- **Online activity:** Accessing or sharing extremist content online.
- **Association with concerning individuals or groups:** Spending time with people who have known extremist views.

It's important to note that these signs do not necessarily mean a young person is being radicalised, but they should prompt further investigation.

The Referral Process: Notice, Check, Share

The Prevent referral process follows the "Notice, Check, Share" model:

1. **Notice:** Be alert to any signs that a young person may be vulnerable to radicalisation
2. **Check:** Consult with your school's designated safeguarding lead or Prevent lead to discuss the concerns and gather more information.
3. **Share:** If concerns persist, share the information with appropriate authorities.

In Scotland, referrals should be made using the [Prevent National Referral Form](#). Completed forms should be emailed to the Prevent Delivery Unit at the address specified on the form.

If there are concurrent child protection concerns, these should be reported to the local social work department or police without delay, following your school's child protection procedures.

Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP)

When a referral is made, and the police assess a risk of radicalisation, a Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) may be convened. PMAPs bring together professionals from various agencies to assess the risk and develop a support plan for the individual. Participation in PMAP is voluntary, and consent must be obtained from the individual (or their parent/carer if under 18).

Training and Resources

The UK Government offers free online courses, including: [education.gov.scot](https://www.education.gov.scot)

- **Prevent Awareness:** An overview of the Prevent programme and identifying concerning behaviours. [education.gov.scot](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- **Prevent Referrals:** Guidance on articulating concerns and making robust referrals. [education.gov.scot](https://www.education.gov.scot)
- **Channel or Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP):** Training for those contributing to or running PMAPs. [education.gov.scot+1gov.uk+1](https://www.education.gov.scot+1gov.uk+1)
- **Refresher Awareness:** A condensed version for those who have previously completed the awareness course. [education.gov.scot](https://www.education.gov.scot)

Access these courses through the [Education Scotland Prevent Resources](https://www.education.gov.scot). The Prevent duty is a critical component of safeguarding in Scottish schools. By understanding the duty, recognising signs of radicalisation, and following appropriate referral procedures, school staff can play a vital role in protecting young people from the threat of terrorism.

There are also child protection resources available via the [Care Inspectorate Hub](https://www.careinspectorate.gov.uk) which includes useful links to relevant information and advice sources, such as Barnardo's Scotland and NSPCC, as well as further reading relating to safeguarding and child protection.

The Role of the Designated Person (Child Protection Co-ordinator)

- To raise awareness and confidence on child protection procedures and to ensure new staff are aware of these procedures.
- To ensure that all staff know about and have access to guidelines.
- To refer promptly all cases of suspected child abuse to the local Social Services Department or the Police Family Protection Unit. If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived then it must be remembered that we have no right to prevent the removal of the child. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the police should be called.
- To co-ordinate action where child abuse is suspected.
- To attend case conferences or nominate an appropriate member of staff to attend on his/her behalf.
- Maintain records of case conferences and other sensitive information in a secure confidential file and to disseminate information about the child/young person only on a 'need to know basis'.
- To maintain and update as necessary records relating to Child Protection concerns.
- To keep up-to-date with current practice by participating in training opportunities wherever possible.
- To organise regular training on child protection within the school.
- To facilitate and support the development of a whole-school policy on child protection.
- To pass on records and inform the key worker when a child is on the Child Protection Register leaves the school. The custodian of the register must also be informed.

Professional Integrity

All staff should be aware of professional boundaries and consider their conduct around children and young people at all times. The following advice is offered:

- Maintain appropriate professional relationships with children and young people.
- As much as practicable, arrange 1-to-1 meetings with children with another member of staff present and/or aware of the meeting taking place.
- Do not touch children except for care and safety;
- Be considerate of your language and actions around children and young people. Do not use suggestive or sexual language or gestures;
- Be mindful of other relevant policies and guidance, such as Intimate Care Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, etc.
- If you feel that a young person is becoming attracted to you, or that you are attracted to them, share this with your line manager or the Child Protection Co-ordinator;
- Similarly, if you are uncomfortable with what you are seeing or hearing in relation to a colleague, share this with your line manager or the school Child Protection Co-ordinator.

Scotland's Children and Young People

"A Scotland in which every child matters, where every child, regardless of his or her family background, has the best possible start in life"

"Providing and ensuring a safe and secure environment for all learners within a caring and compassionate ethos and with an understanding of wellbeing (GTCS - Standard for Registration)"

Key sources consulted:

[National Guidance for Child Protection \(2021, updated 2023\);](#)

[Scottish Government \(2019\), “Children’s Rights Legislation in Scotland - A Quick Reference Guide”](#)

[Scottish Government \(2017\), “Protecting Scotland’s Children and Young People: It is still everyone’s job](#)

[Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\), Using the National Practice Model](#)

[The Promise Scotland \(2020\), ‘Transforming how Scotland cares for children families and care-experienced adults’](#)

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\) \(1989\)](#)

[StopItNow](#) - child sexual abuse prevention resources

[Education Scotland](#): Safeguarding - Prevent radicalisation and extremism.

[Scottish Prevent Duty factsheet](#)

Policy last updated: September 2025

Staff responsible for update: Len Wiltshire (Head of Pastoral Care; Child Protection Coordinator)