



## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that George Watson's College ("the School") exists to provide the highest possible quality of education and care for pupils from Preschool to the Senior 6 year. It is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its pupils, to providing them with an exceptional range of curricular and extracurricular opportunities and to preparing them to take their own unique place in the world. In doing so, the School works in partnership with parents and others who have responsibility for the care of pupils. It does so in line with the Scottish Government's approach to safeguarding, namely:

*"Child protection refers to the processes involved in consideration, assessment and planning of required action, together with the actions themselves, where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm. Child protection guidance provides overall direction for agencies and professional disciplines where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm. Child protection procedures (as described in Part 3) are initiated when police, social work or health professionals determine that a child may have been abused or may be at risk of significant harm.*

*Child protection involves:*

- *immediate action, if necessary, to prevent significant harm to a child*
- *inter-agency investigation about the occurrence or probability of abuse or neglect, or of a criminal offence against a child. Investigation extends to other children affected by the same apparent risks as the child who is the subject of a referral*
- *assessment and action to address the interaction of behaviour, relationships and conditions that may, in combination, cause or accelerate risks*
- *focus within assessment, planning and action upon listening to each child's voice and recognising their experience, needs and feelings*
- *collaboration between agencies and persistent efforts to work in partnership with parents in planning and action to prevent harm or reduce risk of harm*
- *recognition and support for the strengths, relationships and skills within the child and their world in order to form a plan that reduces risk and builds resilience"*

*National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021*

The School recognises that the safety, welfare and needs of the child/young person are paramount and that all children, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, have a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

## Aim of Policy

This policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the School and refers to children and young people who are 18 and under.

- a) To recognise George Watson's College statutory, regulatory contractual and professional responsibilities to safeguard and promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children.
- b) To embed the New National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and Guidance (2020) into the practice of the School
- c) The Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach underpins both preventative and child protection processes. This includes an identified point of contact to provide early support, advice and access to services, a shared approach to assessment and consideration of wellbeing, and a shared response to identified needs, including planning for children across services where needed. Refreshed guidance describing GIRFEC policy was published in 2021.

- d) The wellbeing indicators provide a holistic representation of children’s wellbeing needs and outcomes. Safety is paramount. The eight indicators are inter-connected. They encapsulate children’s rights to be: safe, healthy; achieving, nurtured; active, respected, responsible and included, as set out in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- e) To demonstrate our commitment to the 4 principles and articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
  - Non-discrimination
  - Best interest of the child
  - Right for life, survival and development
  - Respect for the views of the child
- f) To ensure the School practises safer recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers (including Governors) to work with children, ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers and dealing appropriately with allegations against staff, volunteers and other adults.
- g) To raise awareness of safeguarding issues and providing effective training for staff, governors, volunteers and senior pupils where appropriate and working with parents to reduce the likelihood of abuse occurring.
- h) To implement our procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse / significant harm and reviewing the effectiveness of those procedures.
- i) To support pupils who have suffered abuse / significant harm and others who may have been and others who may have been affected by
- j) To establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop and empower them by equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to keep them safe.

## **The Overall Context and Scope**

Section 96(2) of the Act defines child wellbeing in terms of eight key indicators that enable children to flourish. These are whether the child is safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. It is intended that these terms provide a common language for staff to identify wellbeing concerns, including those that may require a targeted intervention. Inevitably the circumstances of any individual child can be complicated and it is not possible to provide universal and authoritative definitions of the wellbeing indicators. They should, however, guide staff in considering whether any individual child or group of children in the School requires support or intervention. It may be helpful to consider the hierarchy of concerns in relation to children.

- a) Concerns about Safety: Is the child at immediate or imminent risk of significant harm? A member of staff must act to intervene to prevent harm to a child where it is possible to do so, either by taking appropriate action themselves and reporting the matter to the appropriate person or by making the appropriate referral.
- b) Concerns about Welfare: Is there substantive ongoing concern that the child is being harmed or is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect? A member of staff must make an appropriate referral as a matter of urgency.
- c) Concerns about Wellbeing: Is there a concern about the child that is either less substantive or less serious, considering the wellbeing indicators? A member of staff should discuss the matter with appropriate staff and if necessary with the Child Protection Co-ordinators to ensure that appropriate intervention takes place. The GIRFEC tools such as those outlined in the National Practice Model can be useful in identifying Wellbeing concerns about a pupil.

Concerns about Safety and Welfare are generally considered under the Child Protection Policy whilst concerns about Wellbeing are generally first considered under the Schools’ Guidance, Anti-Bullying and [Inclusion and Additional Support Needs Policies](#). However, this is guidance only and the circumstances of an individual pupil may require an alternative approach.

All child protection concerns should be made directly and using the appropriate Child Protection Concern Form or Wellbeing Concern Form.

By law, any person with concerns about a child has a right to make a report directly to the Children's Reporter. In exceptional cases, where a member of staff feels that concerns about a child are not being taken seriously, or followed through appropriately or with sufficient speed, it is perfectly legitimate for that member of staff to refer the matter directly to the Chair of Governing Council or the Reporter.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**Child.** Child protection processes within this Guidance relate to children and young people who are 18 and under.

**Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC), or Deputy CPC,** coordinates the processes involved in consideration, assessment and planning of required action, together with the actions themselves, where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

**The Team Around the Child** consists of those practitioners who support the child and family, and are likely to be participants at a Child's Plan Meeting.

**The Named Person,** or equivalent function, will be the professional point of contact within the School if a child, young person or their parents need information, advice or help. In the Junior School the Named Person is George Salmond and in the Senior School it is Gordon Boyd.

**The Lead Professional,** where applicable, will be responsible for ensuring the production and review of an agreed multi-agency child's plan. This should integrate information from previous plans by individual agencies as appropriate. Reports for a child's planning meeting or for a CPPM should be circulated to everyone involved, especially the child and family. Reports should be available and presented so that they are accessible to all. This includes, for example, children or parents or carers with learning disabilities.

In child protection cases, the role of a lead professional will typically be taken by the CPC or Deputy CPC. Where a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, a Child Protection Plan should be incorporated into the child's plan for as long as the risk of significant harm is deemed to last. The multi-agency group working with the child and their family will be known as the Core Group.

The Lead Professional will make sure the child is supported through significant points of transition. They will ensure a planned transfer of responsibility when another practitioner becomes the lead professional, for example if the child's needs change or the family moves away.

## **Responsibility for Implementation, Operation and Monitoring of the Policy**

The Governing Council has delegated responsibility for the adoption and monitoring of this policy to the Education Committee.

The Principal, Melvyn Roffe, is responsible to the Governing Council for the effective implementation of the policy.

The Principal has delegated routine operation of the policy to the Heads of Senior School and Junior School who are Named Persons under the Act and are the Child Protection Co-ordinators who work with their teams of designated staff to provide support to pupils. The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the implementation of the [Recruitment Policy](#), the [Visitor Management Procedure](#) and [Code of Safe Practice for Contractors](#).

## **Raising Awareness and Staff Training**

The School is committed to a Child Protection Training Programme for all staff. There will be regular safeguarding updates for staff and annual formal training for every member of staff. All staff are expected to use their best endeavours to implement this policy effectively. The School will provide training upon appointment and comprehensive child protection training as part of the induction programme for all new members of staff.

Volunteers and others working in the School, such as Governors, trainee teachers or gap assistants will receive child protection training as soon as possible.

The Policy is operated under the doctrine of action at the 'Lowest Effective Level'. That means that all staff have autonomy to act in the interests of pupils in accordance with this policy subject to the oversight of senior staff as required.

The Learning & Development Manager (HR) is responsible to the Head of Senior School and Head of Junior School and the Principal for the frequency and suitability of training given. To date all Child Protection training is recorded. Governors are also trained and updated.

For sessions 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25, the School will ensure that all staff are updated annually via the SCIS Child Protection training programme. New staff are made aware of the Child Protection policies and arrangements at our school, at induction.

## **Safer Recruitment and Employment Practices**

The School will follow approved procedures set out in its [Recruitment Policy](#) to ensure as far as is possible that persons who are unsuitable to work with children are not employed by the School or allowed access to children as volunteers.

The [Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers](#) and the conditions of occupancy of staff residential premises will make clear responsibilities in respect of other adults living in school accommodation as members of their households or as visitors.

The school routinely will ask a child protection question at all interviews at all levels.

The School will follow the statutory procedure for dealing with allegations against staff or volunteers, including the referral of all credible allegations to Police.

The [Management of Visitors Procedures](#) and [Contractors Code of Safe Working Practices](#) controls the presence of visitors and contractors on the School site.

## **Identification and Reporting**

It is recognised that the extent of the contact that School staff have with pupils means they are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The School will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) Ensure pupils know that there are adults in the School and outside agencies they can approach if they are worried, providing access to child protection information in appropriate and accessible forms
- c) Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and members of the Governing Council know the name of the designated Child Protection Co-ordinators and their role
- d) Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse or harm and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Child Protection Coordinators
- e) Ensure that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the School and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in admissions information sent to parents
- f) Notify the Local Authority if there is an unexplained absence of more than one day of a pupil for whom there is a child protection concern
- g) Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences as specified under the Act, any relevant regulations and the School's policies
- h) Ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations
- i) Follow approved procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff, a volunteer or other adult with the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

## **Support for Children at Risk of Harm or Abuse**

The School recognises that children who are abused or witness violence or other abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at the School their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The School will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- a) The content of the curriculum
- b) Access to specialist guidance staff, and where appropriate independent counsellors
- c) The School ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued, included and respected
- d) The Pupil Behaviour Chart which is aimed at supporting pupils in the School. The School will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, as outlined in the Pupil Code of Conduct, but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred
- e) Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Children's Social Services and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- f) Ensuring that, when a pupil about whom there is a child protection concern on the child protection register leaves the school, the appropriate information is transferred securely to the new school immediately and that any other agencies are informed.

## **Education and Empowerment**

The School acknowledges that pupils themselves can be empowered to help protect themselves and each other from abuse. The School will therefore:

- a) Include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse both online and offline
- b) Develop the capacity of children to support each other and to prevent abuse occurring
- c) Encourage an attitude of intolerance to bullying in all forms amongst pupils and alert them to ways in which they may inadvertently expose themselves and each other to harm on the internet and by the use of other electronic media
- d) Make clear to pupils the ways in which they can report abuse and the supportive attitude of the School to those who may have suffered abuse.

## **Prevent Duty**

The School has a duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

In discharging that duty the School will:

- a) Provide 'Prevent Awareness' training to appropriate staff
- b) Incorporate Prevent strategies into learning and teaching
- c) Implement robust procedures in place for sharing information about vulnerable individuals in line with existing safeguarding procedures.

## **Information Sharing**

The Data Protection Act (Scotland) 2018 provides exemptions which permit the sharing of data with other agencies out with the School without the permission of the data subject (usually the pupil or his/her parents) in certain circumstances. In general, where data sharing is required in the interests of a pupil's safety or welfare, this will be lawful but it may not be lawful to share data in other circumstances. In all cases, the advice of the Head of Junior School, the Head of Senior School or the Principal should be taken before data is shared outside the School.

## **Supervision**

Support and supervision for practitioners involved in child protection work, regardless of professional role, is critical to ensure:

- support for those who are directly involved in child protection work, which may be distressing
- critical reflection and two-way accountability, which enables a focus on outcomes

- the development of good practice for individual practitioners, and improvement in the quality of the service provided by the agency.

### **Duty of Candour**

All professionals working with children and young people share a duty to protect them and to report matters of concern using this policy and the appropriate National Guidance. This includes senior staff, including the Principal, who is responsible for reporting to the Governing Council.

### **Publication and Review**

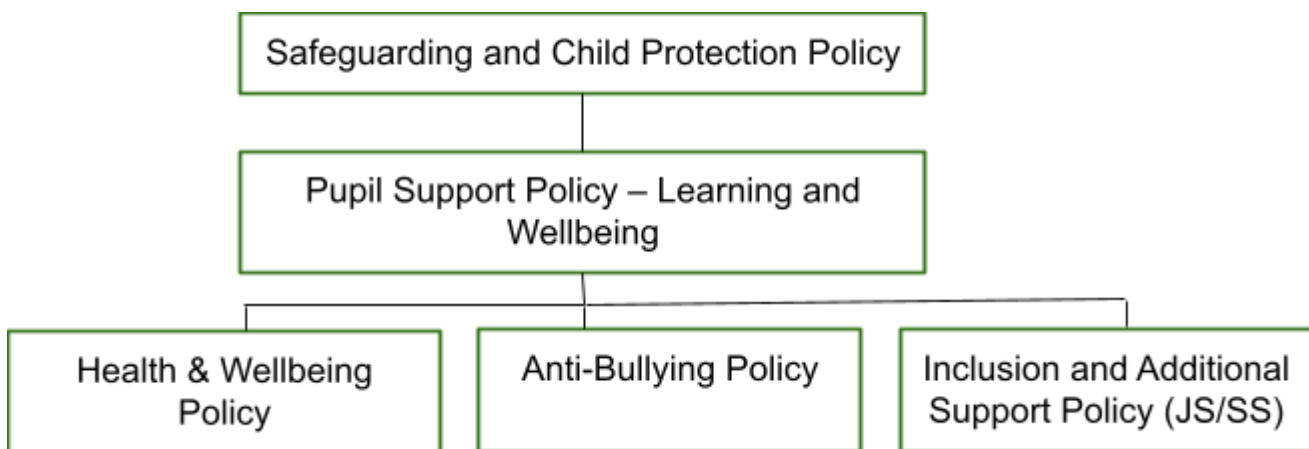
Once approved by the Governing Council, this policy (and its annexes and appendices) will be available on the public area of the School’s website. A link will be published by email to all parents. It will be available to all staff via the portal.

The Policy will be subject to annual review by the Education and Pupil Wellbeing Committee of the Governing Council.

### **Related Policies and Other Documents**

- [Pupil Support Policy](#) (Learning & Wellbeing)
- [Health & Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy – Including Advice to Pupils](#)
- [Inclusion and Additional Support Policy](#)
- [Adults Other than Staff in School Residential Accommodation Policy](#)
- [Recruitment Policy and Procedure for Recruitment of Staff](#)
- Information Security - Acceptable Use Policies ([P1-P4](#)), ([P5-S6](#))
- [Pupil Attendance, Uniform and Discipline Policy](#)
- [Pupil Code of Conduct \(Junior School\)](#)
- [Pupil Code of Conduct \(Senior School\)](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers](#)
- [Management of Visitors Procedure](#)
- [Policy on Education about Transgender Issues and on Supporting Transgender Children and Young People](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)
- [Contractors Code of Safe Working Practice](#)
- [Prevent Policy](#)
- Child Protection Concern/Wellbeing Concern Form

### **Links Between Pupil Wellbeing Policies**



## Annex 1

# Child Protection – Response Flow Chart

This response flow chart provides a general guide for those responding to a child protection concern.

Child protection refers to the action taken in response to concerns that a child may be at risk of harm. The test is 'significant harm' or risk of significant harm. There is no legal definition of significant harm or the distinction between harm and significant harm. The extent to which harm is significant will relate to the severity or anticipated severity of impact upon a child's health and development. All staff have a responsibility to recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child (Scottish Government, 2021b).

**1. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk of harm or has been exposed to abuse, recognise this as a Safeguarding and Child Protection concern and act immediately.**



**2. If you suspect a child may be at risk and/or if a child discloses information suggesting they have been at risk: DO**

- Collect information, using open ended questions
- Take the child to a private and safe place (keeping the door open)
- Stay calm
- Reassure the child and stress that they are not to blame and they were right to tell you
- Listen to the child and tell them that you believe them
- Tell the child that you have to speak to someone who can help to keep them safe
- Do not interview the child, keep questions to a minimum and encourage the child to use their own words:  
*Tell me...what happened/when it happened/where did it happen?*  
*Explain*  
*Describe*  
*Use the mirroring technique: i.e. "My dad hit me last night"; respond by "Your dad hit you last night?"*

**DO NOT**

- Investigate the issue yourself
- Ask the child to write down what they said or repeat it to another adult
- Record the conversation on any device
- Ask another adult to witness their disclosure –the child has chosen to tell you



**3. For some children it may be better for them to return to class but for others they may need time out or to receive immediate support from an adult. Seek advice as required.**



**4. Record as soon as possible exactly what the child has said to you / what you have heard or what you saw, and any other relevant information in the School's data management system**

- Record in detail what you have seen and heard in the 'Child Protection Concern Form Part 1' located on 3Sys. Make sure that in 3Sys you share the record with the CPC and Deputy CPC. This should be done as soon as possible on the same day.
- Any notes made during an initial disclosure by a child must be given to the Child Protection Coordinator and any copies deleted or destroyed. For any colleague without access to 3sys they should record the concern on paper and pass directly to the CPC/Deputy CPC.



**5. Follow up with the CPC or Deputy CPC to gain feedback, as appropriate.**

## Annex 2

# Expectations with Children and Families in Child Protection





## Annex 3

# Definitions of Abuse / Significant Harm

### Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and Neglect are forms of maltreatment. Abuse or neglect may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be maltreated at home; within a family or peer network; in care placements; institutions or community settings; and in the online and digital environment. Those responsible may be previously unknown or familiar, or in positions of trust. They may be family members. Children may be harmed pre-birth, for instance by domestic abuse of a mother or through parental alcohol and drug use.

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm 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.

There may be some variation in family, community or cultural attitudes to parenting, for example, in relation to reasonable discipline. Cultural sensitivity must not deflect practitioners from a focus on a child's essential needs for care and protection from harm, or a focus on the need of a family for support to reduce stress and associated risk.

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 also occur independently of other forms of abuse. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- exploitation or corruption of a child, or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age or stage of development
- repeated silencing, ridiculing or intimidation
- demands that so exceed a child's capability that they may be harmful
- extreme overprotection, such that a child is harmed by prevention of learning, exploration and social development
- seeing or hearing the abuse of another (in accordance with the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018)

### Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child under 16 years of age in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

For those who may be victims of sexual offences aged 16-17, child protection procedures should be considered. These procedures must be applied when there is concern about the sexual exploitation or trafficking of a child. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of indecent images, in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 into sexual activity in

exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact. It can also occur through the use of technology. Children who are trafficked across borders or within the UK may be at particular risk of sexual abuse.

### **Sexual Abuse Between Siblings**

Sexual abuse between siblings form when they are children, may be the most common of intra-familial child sexual abuse, although data on prevalence is scant. Professionals need to be precise about the language they use to label sexual behaviours of siblings which can include developmentally normal sexual interactions between young sibling children; problematic sexual behaviour between siblings which may be harmful to each child involved; and sibling sexual abuse which could include a range of persistent and exploitative behaviours which can be significantly harmful immediately and over the lifespan. Case records should include detailed descriptions of the behaviours in addition to the labels for the avoidance of any future doubt.

### **Peer-on-Peer Abuse**

Peer-on-Peer abuse may be used to refer to any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between children and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate). The term 'peer-on-peer' can obscure significant age and power differences and is sometimes referred to as "child-on-child abuse".

### **Technology Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour (TA-HSB)**

TA-HSB is when one or more children engage in sexual discussions or acts, using the internet and/or any image-creating/sharing or communication device, which is considered inappropriate and/or harmful given their age or stage of development. This behaviour falls on a continuum of severity from the use of pornography to online child sexual abuse.

### **Criminal Exploitation**

Criminal exploitation refers to the action of an individual or group using an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Violence or the threat of violence may feature. The victim may have been criminally exploited, even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation may involve physical contact and may also occur through the use of technology. It may involve gangs and organised criminal networks. Sale of illegal drugs may be a feature. Children and vulnerable adults may be exploited to move and store drugs and money. Coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons may be involved.

### **Child Trafficking**

Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt, exchange or transfer of control of a child under the age of 18 years for the purposes of exploitation. Transfer or movement can be within an area and does not have to be across borders. Examples of and reasons for trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

### **Neglect**

Neglect consists in persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty, and is an indicator of both support and protection needs.

Persistent' means there is a pattern which may be continuous or intermittent which has caused, or is likely to cause significant harm. However, single instances of neglectful behaviour by a person in a position of responsibility can be significantly harmful. Early signs of neglect indicate the need for support to prevent harm.

The GIRFEC SHANARRI indicators set out the essential wellbeing needs. Neglect of any or all of these can impact on healthy development. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment; to ensure the child receives education; or to respond to a child's essential emotional needs.

Faltering growth refers to an inability to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones in the absence of medically discernible physical and genetic reasons. This condition requires further assessment and may be associated with chronic neglect. Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and lack of stimulation can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. For very young children the impact could quickly become life-threatening. Chronic physical and emotional neglect may also have a significant impact on teenagers.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

This extreme form of physical, sexual and emotional assault upon girls and women involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Such procedures are usually conducted on children and are a criminal offence in Scotland. FGM can be fatal and is associated with long-term physical and emotional harm.

### **Fabricated or Induced Illness**

Fabricated or induced illness refers to a process in which a parent or caregiver induces illness or a sick role in a child by exaggeration, deliberate non-treatment, fabrication or falsification of signs of illness. The process can include maladministration of medication or other substances causing symptoms of illness, and interference with equipment, observation charts or other documents relevant to the child's health. The caregiver may or may not genuinely believe the child to be ill.

### **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional abuse. Forced marriage is both a child protection and adult protection matter. Child protection processes will be considered up to the age of 18. Forced marriage may be a risk alongside other forms of so-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA). HBA includes practices used to control behaviour within families, communities, or other social groups, to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or 'honour'.

### **Vulnerability to being drawn into Terrorism**

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (section 26) places a duty on specified authorities in Scotland such as local authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. It also places an obligation on local authorities to ensure that a panel of persons is in place for its area to assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and, where appropriate, arrange for support to be provided.

Further definitions of abuse and significant harm can be found in the New National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2021.

**Disclosures** See Response and Information Flow Charts at Annex 1.

## Annex 4

# eSafety/Online Safety Concern:Response Flow Chart

This response flow chart provides a general guide for those responding to an online safety concern related to devices such as computers, tablets, mobile phones, gaming devices and other online-enabled devices. If abusive content is recorded, uploaded or shared by others online, there is a risk of the on-going experience of abuse. Online communications and social media include software, applications (including those running on mobile devices), email and websites which enable users to interact, create and exchange information online. Examples include, but are not limited to, sites such as TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Wikipedia and MySpace. Also included is the use of SMS and instant messaging systems, such as MSN Messenger and BBM.

**1.If you are concerned that a child may be at risk of harm or has been exposed to unsuitable online material or illegal content or activity, recognise this as a Child Protection concern and act immediately and follow the School's Child Protection Guidance.**



**2.If you are concerned about cyberbullying, please refer to our Anti-bullying Policy.**

**Cyberbullying can include:**

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.



**3.Reporting online sexual abuse**

If your concern is about online sexual abuse, make the Child Protection Coordinator aware. This will be reported to the **Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)** and to **Police Scotland**. The police will assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate. This may include making a **referral to the local authority**. Services will risk assess the situation and take action to protect the child as appropriate either through statutory involvement or other support. This may include making a referral to the local authority.



**4. Reporting online child abuse images**

It's against the law to produce or share images of child abuse, even if the image was self-created. This includes sharing images and videos over social media. If you see a video or image that shows a child being abused:

- Don't comment, like or share the video or image, as this will distribute it further.
- Report it to the website you've seen it on.
- Report it to the police.
- Contact the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 and we'll report it to the police for you.
- If the image or video involves the sexual abuse of a child, report it to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) who will take steps to get it removed from the internet.



**5.Sexual images or videos**

- Young people under 18 who are worried that a sexual image or video of them may have been shared online can use Childline and IWF's Report Remove tool to see if it can be taken down. The tool can be used with the support from a trusted adult, and support is available from Childline.
- Some images and videos may appear old but it's still important to report them.
- Help prevent the video being shared further by alerting the person sharing the video that it's been reported to the authorities.



### **6. Responding to cases of online abuse**

When responding to cases of online abuse:

- listen calmly to what the child has to say
- remember that the young person may be embarrassed and/or ashamed
- be non-judgmental and make sure the child knows that abuse is never their fault.
- parents should be informed about cases of online abuse unless to do so would put a child at further risk of harm. They may need additional support to understand what has happened and how best to help their child.

## Annex 5

# Escalating a concern: Response Flow Chart

This response flow chart provides a general guide for responding when you are concerned that an agency such as Children and Families are not handling your concern about a child appropriately.

**1. If you are concerned about how a child protection issue is being handled, express your concern directly to the relevant Social Worker or individual, articulating why you are unhappy with the current response. Express your concern in a phone call and/or email. Discuss your concern with the CPC or Deputy CPC.**

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**2. If you think that something has gone wrong with the social work service provided to you, you might:**

- ask them to look at their decisions again
- ask them to change their decisions
- recommend that they improve their services in a particular way
- recommend that they apologise to you

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**3. If you remain concerned you can make a complaint. Before making a complaint, make sure that you have discussed your concern with the CPC or Deputy CPC and that you have tried speaking to the person working with you, or their manager. If this does not resolve the issue, you can contact the relevant complaints services, such as:**

- Edinburgh City Children's social work complaints
- Call - 0131 529 2572 (voicemail)
- Email - [ChildrensServices.SocialWorkComplaints@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensServices.SocialWorkComplaints@edinburgh.gov.uk)
- By post - Children's Services Social Work Complaints, 1.2 Waverley Court 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG

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**4. Record your concern and associated communication in the child's 3Sys record**

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**5. If you remain concerned, discuss your concern with the CPC or Deputy CPC who can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).** The SPSO looks at complaints about most public services including social work. Before the SPSO can look at your complaint, you need to have complained about the social work issues you are unhappy with to the social work service. Once they have received your complaint, they will look into it, tell you their decision and signpost to us. If you then want the SPSO to look at the complaint, contact the SPSO (0800 377 7330 Online [www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us))

## Annex 6

# Information Sharing: Response Flow Chart

This response flow chart provides a general guide for those judging when and how to share information about a child or young person. Sharing relevant information is an essential part of protecting children from harm and we should understand when and how we may share information. (Scottish Government, 2021b).

**1. Where there is a child protection concern, share relevant information with police or social work without delay, provided it is necessary, proportionate and relevant.**

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**2. Use your professional judgement to judge what is relevant, proportionate, and necessary to share.** Place the concern in the context of available observed and recorded information about the particular child, their needs and circumstances.

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**3. You can share relevant information where there is a child protection concern in order to:**

- clarify if there is a risk of harm to a child
- clarify the level of risk of harm to a child
- safeguard a child at risk of harm
- clarify if a child is being harmed
- clarify the level of harm a child is experiencing
- safeguard a child who is being harmed

**Do not share information if it is not in the best interests of a child at risk of significant harm or if it is not to fulfil a public function.**

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**4. Seek consent to share information and, where appropriate, try to build an understanding about and agreement about the sharing of information.**

- Try to let the child understand what is happening and why.
- Do not put a child under pressure to consent to the sharing of their information.
- Consider whether the child has the capacity to make their own decisions. Under the Data Protection Act 2018, a child under the age of 16 must be treated as though they have capacity to exercise their rights under that Act, if there is reason to believe that the child has a general understanding of what it means to exercise those rights.
- In general, it should be assumed that a child who is over the age of 12 years has reached the age where they have the necessary level of maturity to have this understanding, unless there is evidence to the contrary.

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**5. Decide what information to share, identify how much information to share, distinguish fact from fiction and make sure you are giving the right information to the right individual. Ensure, where possible, you are sharing the information securely.**

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**6. Record in 3Sys the reasons and considerations that informed the decision to share the information or the reasons for not sharing.**

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**7. If in doubt about the boundaries of information sharing, practitioners should seek advice from their line managers.**

# Annex 7

## Allegations Against Staff

There are occasions when pupils accuse teachers or other members of staff of physical or sexual abuse. Any such allegations must be treated seriously and investigated fully by the appropriate agency. In these cases, a pupil must not be left alone or allowed to mix with other pupils until consultations have taken place and a course of action agreed. This may include the need for the pupil to return home in which case arrangements will be made to supply the child with appropriate working materials so that they do not fall behind with the curriculum.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or Child Protection Coordinator if he is not available) must be informed immediately. If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Chairman of the Governing Council must be informed directly by the member of staff. The contact information for the Chairman of Governing Council (Don Young from 1/7/22) can be obtained from the Bursar and Clerk to the Governors (James Mills).

The police and statutory agencies will be involved in any case in which there is an allegation against a member of staff (including the Principal). A discussion will take place as to who will inform parents, the member of staff against whom the allegation has been made and Children's Social Services if they are not already aware of the situation.

In cases where the pupil may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, the School and Children's Social Services will consider what support the student might need.

The School will also keep the person who is the subject of the allegations informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual, for example employee welfare arrangements. If the person is a member of a union or professional association, they will be advised to contact that body at the outset. Every effort will be made to resolve cases as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated/considered.

A record of the allegation and how it was followed up and resolved will be kept on the individual's confidential personnel file and a copy will be provided to the individual concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference if the individual has moved on. It will provide clarification in cases where a future PVG Disclosure reveals information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction. The record will be retained in accordance with Disclosure Scotland guidelines.

Suspension of a member of staff will be considered in a case where there is cause to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm, or the allegations warrant an investigation by the police, or it is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. The decision to suspend a member of staff will be taken by the Principal after discussion with the police and Chairman of the Governing Council. A decision to suspend the Principal can only be taken by the Chairman of the Governing Council in consultation with the Chairman of the Merchant Company Education Board.

When an allegation has become the subject of a full criminal investigation, the School will receive information from the police as to the outcomes of the investigation. In cases which are dismissed or where the accused is found to be not guilty of an offence (or the case is not proven), the School will work with the individual to support them as they re-integrate to school life. However, the School may still need to complete its own internal disciplinary procedures as the member of staff may nevertheless have committed a disciplinary offence under the School's [Disciplinary Policy and Procedures](#). Further advice can be found in the [Staff Code of Conduct](#).