

Child Protection and Safeguarding Handbook for Education

September 2021 v7.1

Ullapool High School

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Introduction

School context, setting, roll, catchment, associated schools. Local context.

School ethos, mission statement and links to the health and wellbeing and safeguarding curriculum.

Designated Child Protection Coordinator

In the event of a Child Protection concern, our Designated Child Protection Coordinator is:

Andrew Inglis

Our Depute Child Protection Coordinator is:

Carline Boyd (Head teacher)

Our Principal Teacher of Guidance are: Andrew Inglis and Claire Cormack

Scope of Handbook

This handbook applies to all children, young people* and vulnerable adults** who are in contact with members of **Ullapool high School** staff*** team.

All staff are briefed on the content of this handbook and their role in responding to concerns about children and young people annually.

All staff are expected to comply with the information contained in this handbook, and to seek clarification if/as necessary.

In all aspects of our work, the needs, interests and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults will be prioritised. The approach our establishment takes is also a holistic approach which focuses on prevention and early intervention through our whole school ethos.

This policy and the guidance contained within it should also be read and implemented alongside the Highland Council's [Attendance Management and Children Missing in Education Policy](#).

The scope of this handbook covers the roles, responsibilities and actions which are expected of all members of the staff team. It does not extend to the responsibilities of multi-agency or partner organisation teams.

*'Children and young people' is the term used in this document which refers to a person up to the age of 18.

** 'Vulnerable adult' is the term used in this document to identify a young person or parent/carer over the age of 16 who is provided with a type of care, support or welfare service, or whose circumstance or context leads to a need for their protection. Highland Council guidance on adult protection can be found at:

<https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/services/asc/adultsupport/pages/welcome.aspx>

*** Throughout this document the term 'staff' is used to identify all teaching and non-teaching team members, promoted and unpromoted staff, permanent, temporary/visiting/occasional team members, student teachers, and volunteers – and is determined as someone whose role in school or other educational setting places them in a position of responsibility for providing a service or support to any of our children and young people.

Context of Handbook

The education handbook complements the multi-agency procedures and provides a framework for working with children, young people and their families. This should enable the right support to be provided at the right time, and also, offers a focus on whole school approaches to supporting prevention and early intervention. The practice of all professionals working with children and young people in Scotland is also underpinned by [The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#).

Child Protection and Safeguarding

The Scottish Government has expanded the definition of Child protection to make it clear that it is part of a continuum of services to safeguard, support and maintain the wellbeing of children. This includes services focused on prevention and early intervention. Child protection refers to the processes involved in consideration, assessment and planning of action, together with the actions themselves, where there are concerns that a child may be at risk. Education Scotland defines safeguarding as: *'A much wider concept than child protection and refers to promoting the welfare of children, young people and protected adults. It encompasses protecting from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their health or development, ensuring that they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children, young people and protected adults to have the best outcome. Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. We have a distinctive approach to safeguarding in Scotland linked to Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) which promotes action to improve the wellbeing of every child and young person.'*

Safeguarding is a golden thread that runs through the curriculum. The aim is to support the development of learner's knowledge, skills and resilience to keep themselves safe and protect themselves and to develop an understanding of the world so that they can respond to a range of issues and potential risky situations arising throughout their lives. As such, it permeates many features of the education experience including leadership, values, vision, the curriculum, learning and teaching, positive relationships, building learner resilience, etc.'

(Education Scotland, 2018)

The updated Child Protection guidance brings together the principles of Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes for young people: [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\)](#). The GIRFEC model in Highland is the [Highland Practice Model](#) (2017). The framework has a strengthened focus on children's rights, as Scotland incorporates the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into law. This also supports the ambitions of The Promise, which sets out changes needed to make sure all children in Scotland grow up feeling safe, loved and heard. This includes a greater emphasis on: incorporating children's views into all decision making which affects them, engaging and collaborating with families; and building on existing strengths as well as addressing risk.

The principles and standards of child protection are based on the following themes:

- **Safety and rights:** these are underpinned by the UNCRC, which protects rights to protection from abuse, alongside rights to participation, non-discrimination, survival, recovery, parental support, and support for healthy development. For educational settings this is also strongly interlinked with positive relationships and [Rights Respecting Schools](#).
- **Child's experience:** this involves not only listening to children's words but also their experience, needs, wishes and feelings. It involves listening to non-verbal communication and observation of physical and behavioural responses to their care and environment. Local services must also ensure sufficient continuity and co-ordination of planning and support for each vulnerable young person at risk of harm as they make their individual transitions to adult life and services. 'Transitions' could also be considered to be movement between services, and yet for a young person they are complex. Phases of enhanced risk may relate to emotional and relational transitions that occur some time after changes in service, worker or home base, and this should be kept in mind.
- **Workforce:** this sets out the principle that professionals should each play their part in ensuring child protection plans are clearly understood, co-ordinated and streamlined as appropriate. In the new Child Protection guidance, Education are now clearly included in all references to multi-agency arrangements, and on-going support and training will be regularly provided to each school's Designated Child Protection Coordinator through termly support meetings.

The revised guidance includes a focus on the importance of having a learning culture, and in particular the critical role of supervision in supporting practitioners.

Colleagues will be trained in Trauma Informed Approaches and will be trauma-focused in their work. Our overarching vision is to develop a trauma informed and responsive workforce, that:

- is informed by people with lived experience
- recognises the importance of wellbeing in the workforce
- recognises where people are affected by trauma and adversity
- responds in ways that prevent further harm
- supports recovery
- and can address inequalities and improve life chances

Resources

The Highland Council has prepared and provided a number of useful sources of information relating to Child Protection, which can be found on the website www.hcpc.scot. Under the heading "Highland Policy Documents and Operating Procedures" you will see a list of available documents.

All staff are expected to be mindful of equality and diversity issues, and all children and young people can expect to have equal access to and delivery of Safeguarding and Child Protection processes, supports and services. Equality and diversity matters were clarified and streamlined through the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) and in accordance with this our Child Protection & Safeguarding processes are consistent, fair, and centre on individual outcomes and enablement. Further learning and resources can be found via the [Inclusion](#) links.

Safeguarding is a multi-faceted concept, and further resources and materials for learning, teaching and the curriculum can be located in the [Schools' Hub](#) on the [Safeguarding tile](#), which is a dedicated space for materials.

Each member of the staff team holds responsibility in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding according to the operational responsibility of their role. Training in core competencies, knowledge and skills are provided according to the level of need required for the role. Every year all staff will receive a Child Protection refresher course during the August In-Service day, and every third year it is mandatory for teaching, EYP and PSA staff to attend a more in-depth Child Protection course delivered by the Child Protection Advisor. Every member of staff should also annually complete their on-line PREVENT training.

Designated Child Protection Coordinators, Guidance Teachers and Health and Wellbeing links will also have a termly support, development and update meeting to enable peer supervision, a learning culture and collective development activities.

Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers will also receive annual Children Missing in Education training.

Further training is made available when required in response to the changing needs of our school communities, working in close partnerships with the Police, Social Work, Third Sector Partners etc.

Handbook Policy Statement

Every young person has the right to be safe and protected, and to feel safe and protected from any situation or act which might result in them:

- Being physically, sexually, or emotionally harmed.
- Being put at risk of physical, sexual, or emotional harm, abuse, or exploitation.
- Having their basic needs neglected.
- Having their needs met in ways that are not appropriate to their age and stage.
- Being denied the sustained support and care necessary to thrive and develop.
- Being denied access to appropriate medical treatment.

- Being exposed to demands and expectations which are inappropriate to their age and stage of development.

In accordance with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, our educational settings are committed to ensuring that:

- Children and young people are heard, and their concerns are taken seriously.
- The right of children and young people to care and protection from harm is firmly upheld regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity factors, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- We maintain an ethos which promotes and safeguards the welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people, and where people are comfortable about sharing any concerns which arise.
- There is clarity for all members of the learning community about how to share concerns appropriately when they arise.
- We take full account of the additional needs of children and young people from minority groups, who have disabilities, or who face other barriers to learning, to ensure that they receive the support they require and are entitled to.
- We safeguard the interests of the staff as they engage with all learners as part of school business.
- All staff are suitably trained in Safeguarding matters and have clear guidance to follow when concerns about a child or young person are identified.
- All staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities involved in Child Protection.
- We are an effective and reliable part of the multi-agency process with and for our children and young people as need dictates.
- We fulfil our legislative duties relating to Safeguarding, including Child Protection.

Child Protection & Safeguarding Handbook

This handbook provides the framework which defines the individual and collective responsibility of the establishment's staff team in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is a priority for all members of staff.

Safeguarding extends beyond the area of Child Protection and includes all that we do to promote welfare and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults as we work to achieve positive outcomes. We use the [Highland Practice Model](#) to ensure that our children and young people are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured active, respected, responsible, and included. We work in partnership with young people, their families and relevant professionals to address concerns which impact on any of the eight wellbeing indicators as the need arises.

Our children and young people are all supported through universal provision provided within classrooms and as part of our core provision. Those who need more individualised supports will be able to access services within school and from our partner agencies based on who can provide a service which meets their need. We aim to ensure that our children and young people can develop the knowledge, skills, and resilience to keep themselves safe now and as they move into adult life.

Child Protection processes are a significant part of our approach to Safeguarding, but we also consider that our work in the following areas are important contributors to our Safeguarding arrangements:

- Administration of medicines
- Adult Protection
- Adverse weather arrangements
- Attendance processes
- Additional Support for Learning
- Bullying
- Children Missing from Education procedures
- Complaints/Compliments
- Corporate parenting
- Enrolment & Induction processes
- Equalities
- Exclusions
- First Aid provision
- Free school meals & clothing grants (& emergency foodbank referrals)
- GDPR/Data Protection
- Health & Safety (including emergency procedures, accident reporting etc.)
- Multi Agency Working
- Prevent (Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act, 2015)

- Prevention of/Recovery from Offending
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- Pupil Voice
- Records Retention/storage
- Recruitment/Selection (PVG process)
- Restorative Practice
- Risk Assessment
- Sharing of student information (e.g. medical needs)
- Substance Use (response to)
- Support at transition points
- Young Carer Support

What do we mean by Risk?

In the context of Child Protection and Safeguarding, risk is considered as the likelihood or probability of an outcome given the presence of factors in a child or young person's life. Further information can be accessed via the [National Risk Framework to Support the Assessment of Children and Young People](#)

There should be consideration of the impact of poverty on children as part of the assessment and family support. Poverty is interlinked with other stressors upon families, and can impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing and limit access to support. Multi-agency planning to protect children should seek to maximise income and access to appropriate resources for families.

Children and young people are also exposed to online risk, and the importance of education for children, and training for professionals, to help them identify online sexual harm and understand what to do if it happens; and provide more detailed information on how staff should respond to youth-produced sexual imagery is a stronger focus. Further training and materials are provided through the safeguarding in education team and learning and teaching resources can be accessed via the [Schools' Hub](#) and [Safeguarding tile](#).

Roles and Responsibilities – Overview

Child Protection and Safeguarding are a core responsibility of all staff regardless of whether there is direct contact with children and young people through their core duties.

All staff must be fully aware of their responsibilities to keep young people safe and seek advice from the Designated Child Protection Coordinator in Education settings regarding any uncertainty or concerns.

Our staff team plays a crucial role in the support and protection of children and young people. We are well placed to observe physical and psychological indicators which may suggest exposure to abuse or risk of harm, and we are able to contribute meaningfully to assessing and supporting vulnerable children and young people.

Specific roles and responsibilities relating to Child Protection vary according to each professional role within our setting. We strive to have a staff team who are individually and collectively trusted and considered to be a source of effective support and advice to our learners.

Concerns must be shared within the school or setting at an early stage by the person who identifies them.

Intervention will range from education staff level to multi agency and statutory according to the circumstances and context of the child or young person. Specific staff (usually the Designated Child Protection Coordinator in the education setting) may be asked by Social Work Services or Police Scotland to support an assessment into reported or suspected abuse or neglect.

Roles and Responsibilities – Individual Members of Staff

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

- Help keep children and young people safe and well.
- Always maintain confidentiality and share relevant information with the Designated Child Protection Coordinator.
- Any information shared should be proportionate, relevant and appropriate for the wellbeing of the child or young person.
- Be aware of signs that children and young people may need support, be at risk, and/or be suffering from harm and/or neglect – and be vigilant to this.
- Contact the Designated Child Protection Coordinator immediately when they have concerns, hear an allegation, or receive a disclosure. Staff must not investigate the concern or promise to keep secrets that the child or young person has disclosed that are pertinent to the concern.
- Facilitate quick access to support through own action or appropriate onward referral.
- Ensure that their work is carried out in ways that prevent harm to young people whilst promoting the safety and wellbeing of all involved.

- Attend school Child Protection briefings and further relevant training (will vary depending on role).
- Ensure that actions and conduct are always professional to mitigate against concern arising from interaction with children and young people.
- Be proactive in learning more about current risks that affect children and young people within our local community and school or setting.
- Request clarification promptly should any part of the Child Protection policy or process be unclear

Please see your specific sector's professional standards*.

<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/Standards-2021.aspx>

<https://www.sssc.uk.com/the-scottish-social-services-council/sssc-codes-of-practice/>

Roles and Responsibilities – Visiting Organisations, Visiting Staff and Volunteers

(including Educational Psychologists, specialist teachers, supply staff, music instructors, volunteers, external instructors, active school coordinators, Youth Workers, Social Workers, Children's Services Workers, Primary Mental Health Workers, Allied Health Professionals and third sector organisations)

The roles and responsibilities already outlined for individual members of staff apply equally to staff visiting the school or setting for whatever reason. In addition to this:

- Visiting staff should familiarise themselves with the Child Protection arrangements in each setting they visit to be able to respond to concerns about a child or young person as they arise.
- Upon registering at the school office, visiting staff will be provided with a 'visitor' lanyard and the Designated Child Protection Coordinator's details will be recorded on the back of the badge.

Roles and Responsibilities – Designated Child Protection Coordinator

The key role of the Designated Child Protection Coordinator in education settings is to ensure the effective operation of Child Protection procedures within the establishment. All Head Teachers,

Depute Head Teachers, PT Guidance and Support, and Primary PT are also familiar with what is required of this role should the designated key contacts be unavailable.

Should a member of staff believe they have identified a Child Protection concern and be unable to contact a member of the SMT or PT Guidance, the member of staff should pass information directly to Social Work or Police Scotland (101).

The Designated Child Protection Coordinator has the following **strategic responsibilities** for Child Protection processes:

- To be a single point of contact for staff and other agencies for all matters relating to Child Protection and Safeguarding
- To implement the Highland Council multi-agency Child Protection policy and procedures
- To ensure that arrangements are clearly communicated to all staff and are displayed in every classroom, activity space and main office via the [Highland Child Protection poster](#)
- To ensure that children, young people and parents/carers have information, understand procedures for Child Protection, and are aware that senior staff can be approached at any time
- To comply with Highland Council guidelines on appropriate and secure record retention and recording systems for Child Protection information
- To liaise with other agencies to support interagency referral discussions, investigations, court proceedings, Children's Hearings, and case reviews
- To have a strategic oversight of concerns for individual children and young people and monitor to identify patterns or accumulating concerns, liaising with appropriate services as per the Highland Practice Model
- To attend Child Protection training and/or strategy update sessions
- To ensure that all staff have access to Child Protection guidance and appropriate professional learning and support through liaison with the Highland Council's Child Protection Officer
- To develop staff understanding of Child Protection and their role in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding
- To ensure that all new staff receive Child Protection training during induction
- To ensure that a Child Protection training record is maintained
- To monitor and evaluate child protection and safeguarding procedures and practices regularly.

- To ensure that all staff in the establishment are trained annually in accordance with Highland Council's guidance.
- To lead in the development of policy and practice, ensuring compliance with national and local guidance.
- To promote and support curricular input in relation to personal safety/Child Protection.
- To lead on the evaluation of Child Protection arrangements and practice on an annual basis.
- To ensure that the staff team contributes effectively and appropriately to multiagency Child Protection procedures including:
 - Reports being submitted timeously for initial Child Protection Planning Meetings / Interagency Referral Discussion, Child Protection Planning Meetings, Looked After Child Reviews, Children's Hearings etc.
 - Ensuring appropriate staff representation at initial Child Protection Planning Meetings, Child Protection Planning Meetings, Core Group meetings or Children's Hearings.
 - Contributing to the development of Child Protection Plans.

The Designated Child Protection Coordinator has the following **operational responsibilities** in relation to Child Protection processes:

- To ensure school visitors and school staff have signed the [Highland Child Protection Information for Supply Staff and Visitors](#)
- To ensure school visitors wear the appropriate identification badge with the Child Protection procedures in the back of the badge
- The responsibility to ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to concerns being reported as outlined in Appendix 1.
- To make an assessment and determine whether the young person needs protection without delay.
- To listen to and record the concerns of children, young people, staff or third parties in relation to Child Protection, ensuring the appropriate agencies receive the relevant information.
- To work within the Multi Agency Guidance as per [Appendix 2](#)

- To compare new or updated/changing information relating to children and young people's circumstances to ascertain whether there is a risk of harm to the child or young person or their wellbeing.
- To contact Practice Lead Care & Protection / Duty Officer Social Work to share concerns if an immediate risk exists.
- In consultation with the Practice Lead / Duty Officer Social work, gather further relevant information from appropriate sources as a matter of urgency after a concern has been raised.
- To record concerns and reasons for decisions reached accurately on a [Child Concern Form](#) (CCF), and to share this with relevant multi-agency partners.
- To liaise and co-operate with other establishments and agencies in relation to Child Protection processes where appropriate.
- To co-operate where additional information or clarification is needed by Social Work team members or Police Scotland Officers.
- To communicate sensitively with parents/carers as per agreement reached with partner agencies, i.e. Social Work and/or Police Scotland
- To ensure appropriate support is provided to staff affected by their role in supporting Child Protection processes.
- To share information that is relevant, necessary, legitimate, appropriate, and proportionate with others including the HT and/or the Area Education and Learning Manager.
- Robust records and chronologies are maintained. These records will include all actions taken and outcomes secured. Details documented include adding and recording feedback received. The following course may be helpful for supporting greater understanding of robust chronologies: <https://calaelearning.co.uk/product/what-makes-a-good-chronology/>
- To implement multi-agency Child Protection plans
- To be aware of which children and young people are on (or have previously been on) the Child Protection register, and to allocate appropriate additional support to them as needs dictate

Roles and Responsibilities – Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is ultimately accountable for actions in response to child concerns, and the activities which promote and protect wellbeing.

The Head Teacher has the following responsibilities within our Child Protection procedures:

- To ensure establishment practice complies with local authority guidelines.
- To ensure that arrangements exist which clarify individual and collective responsibility for Child Protection for all staff.
- To ensure arrangements for curriculum development which equips children and young people with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to protect themselves.
- To appoint a suitably experienced and trained Designated Child Protection Coordinator, a Depute Designated Child Protection Coordinator and to create a contingency plan should both be unavailable.
- To provide time and space for staff involved in child protection to engage with peer support and supervision activities
- To ensure that all staff know who the named Designated Child Protection Coordinator is.
- To ensure recruitment and induction procedures give due regard to Child Protection and Safeguarding requirements.
- To support the monitoring and evaluation of Child Protection policy and procedures, and the planning of appropriate improvement.
- Supporting appropriate action in conjunction with senior officers and HR when there are concerns or allegations about a member of school staff.

Child Protection Training

The Highland Council Education and Learning Service requires that all staff working with children and young people receive adequate training to ensure that they are confident, well informed, and supported to promote the protection of children and young people.

Each year, all schools will deliver mandatory Child Protection training on the August in-service day. The general programme includes Child Protection processes and Childhood Trauma, Online Safety, Prevent (online) and Run, Hide & Tell (online). There will be termly area meetings with the Highland Council's Child Protection Officer for Education and Learning, the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding in Education, and each school's Designated Child Protection Coordinator.

Advice on the calendar of appropriate training is published annually.

As part of staff induction procedures, new staff will receive an initial overview of Child Protection procedures on the day of taking up post.

Staff must complete role related training within twelve weeks of taking up appointment.

Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers should annually attend Attendance Management and Children Missing in Education training.

Information Sharing and Child Protection

Sharing relevant information is an essential part of protecting children and young people.

At times, staff may be concerned or conflicted about the balance of their duty to protect children and young people from harm and their personal relationships with others in a variety of contexts. Concerns about a child or young person's safety must always take precedence.

It should be borne in mind that what may seem to a member of staff a minor wellbeing concern, when combined with information from other sources may point to much more serious concerns. It is therefore imperative that staff pass on all concerns to the Designated Child Protection Coordinator. The Designated Child Protection Coordinator may wish to seek advice from the Child Protection Advisor (Education and Learning Service).

Under current information sharing legislation it is lawful for services to share information where there is an indication that a child or young person's wellbeing is at risk. Under such circumstances consent is not required and need not be sought.

In relation to Child Protection procedures and confidentiality, the main points to remember are:

- In the interests of protecting children and young people, staff have a professional obligation to pass on information to relevant agencies.
- Staff must not promise to keep secret any allegation or concern even if a child, young person or third-party person requests this.
- There is no guarantee that the source of a concern can be kept confidential.

Child Protection Measures

Formal Child Protection measures can be broadly divided into several different stages.

Members of our staff team often contribute to the first three and the last two of the stages listed below:

- Recognising actual or potential harm to a child or young person.
- Sharing concerns.
- Initial information-gathering.
- Joint investigation/assessment.
- Medical examination and assessment.
- Child Protection Planning Meetings.
- Developing a Child Protection Plan.

Key Questions when a Child Protection concern is raised

When considering the immediate needs of a child or young person once a concern about their safety is raised, it is essential that Designated Child Protection Coordinators consider the following questions as part of their assessment:

- Is this child at immediate risk?
- What is placing this child at immediate risk?
- What needs to happen to remove this risk now?

Concern may be raised within the school or following the receipt of a Child Concern Form from another agency.

Recording Decisions and Actions

Should the Designated Child Protection Coordinator decide that it is necessary to contact Social Work and/or the Police because of a child concern, this will be progressed without delay. Contact may also be made by phone or in person and this should also be recorded. A [Child Concern Form](#) will be completed and submitted to Social Work.

Whilst it is important to make a written record, for evidential, chronological, and audit purposes, the completion of a Child Concern Form should not be seen as a substitute for the sharing of

information through direct contact with Care and Protection services within Highland Council or Police Scotland.

Direct contact with Family Team Practice Lead or Duty Social Worker / Police Scotland initially and the agreement of the submission of a Child Concern Form is the most effective means of sharing concern and acquiring advice from Social Work / Police Scotland timeously.

Social Work staff and/or the Police will then determine whether:

- The child or young person is at risk of immediate or significant harm.
- The child or young person is a “child in need.”
- That no further action is identified as being required.

Regardless of the outcome, a note of the discussion and any arising actions, including no action, will be recorded in the child’s or young person’s file or chronology by the Designated Child Protection Coordinator. Staff should be aware that all contact with social work team members will be recorded.

When a child or young person is at risk of imminent or significant harm:

- If the child or young person is or may be at risk of significant harm the Social Work service or Police will advise the Designated Child Protection Coordinator of next steps.
- Under these circumstances it is probable that a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment will take place, a record of which will be initiated by either Social Work or the Police. This will be added to the child’s or young person’s file by the Designated Child Protection Coordinator.
- When the outcome from the concern being raised is fed back to the establishment, the Designated Child Protection Coordinator should record this in the child’s or young person’s file and chronology.

Where the child or young person is a “child in need”:

- If the outcome of the discussion with Social Work or the Police is that the child or young person should be “in need,” this and next steps suggested should be recorded by the Designated Child Protection Coordinator in the child’s or young person’s chronology.

When it is considered that no further action is required:

- If the outcome of the initial consultation with Social Work or the Police is that no further action is required, this should be recorded in the child's or young person's chronology by the Designated Child Protection Coordinator.
- The five key GIRFEC questions should be used to agree actions in response to need of the child or young person. These are:
 - What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
 - Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
 - What can I do now to help this child or young person?
 - What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
 - What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?
- The Designated Child Protection Coordinator will ensure that this is recorded in the chronology and a brief note to signpost to this is recorded within Pastoral Notes.
- If a [Child Concern Form](#) has been completed, and no further action is required, it is imperative that discussions and decisions are recorded under actions.

Informing Parents and Carers

The most important aspect of our Child Protection procedures are actions which keep children and young people safe from harm. When a concern has been raised, when parents/carers are informed, how and by whom, should always be discussed with Social Work and/or Police Scotland colleagues as part of the referral process.

The Designated Child Protection Coordinator should not inform parents or carers prior to this discussion.

Protecting children involves preventing harm and/or the risk of harm from abuse or neglect

All staff within the school community are asked to discuss with the Head teacher or Designated Child Protection Coordinator any concerns they may have around a child/young person. This may be something that a staff member has briefly seen, over-heard or what the child/young person has said or disclosed. It may be that another pupil has raised a concern because of what they know or have observed. These short incidents should be highlighted if they arouse concern. Or, it could be

a concern that has built up over a period of time and now is causing harm or distress to the child/young person.

Often these concerns can be addressed by working with the parent/carer, and together with school staff they would identify any support required.

If it is thought to be a possible child protection issue it may be deemed necessary after an Interagency discussion (IRD) held between Police, Social Work and Health, to hold a Joint Investigation Interview (JII). Whilst a JII may be held during school time on the school premises, Police/Social Work Services hold responsibility throughout. Sometimes other pupils may also be required to be interviewed to help clarify details.

Police/Social Work will make the decision as to when Parents/Carers are informed of the JII and depending on the circumstances it may be before, during or after the interview. Parental consent is not required for JII to be conducted.

School staff are not able to share details of the JII and any communication should be through, or via guidance from, Police/Social Work.

Parents/carers should be assured that Police officers and Social workers who conduct JII are specifically trained using trauma-informed practice and child-centred approach. The child/young person's well-being is at the absolute centre of any action taken.

Child Protection Register

The Child Protection Register is a confidential database which records the details of all children and young people who have been identified through a Child Protection Planning Meeting as at risk of significant harm and who require a multi-agency Child Protection Plan to address risk.

'Significant harm' is a complex matter and subject to professional judgement based on a multiagency assessment of the circumstances of the child or young person and their family.

The Designated Child Protection Coordinator will be made aware of any decision to place a child's or young person's name on the Child Protection register and will prioritise them for additional support as required.

Placing a name on the Register does not itself protect the child or young person.

Protection comes from the actions in the multi-agency Child Protection Plan, which each service has agreed to implement for the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person.

Child Protection Planning Meetings

If a child or young person is believed to have been exposed to significant harm, or assessed as being at risk of significant harm, a meeting of multi-agency professionals, main carer(s), child if appropriate, will take place to decide whether their name should be placed on the Child Protection Register as children who require a multi-agency plan to protect them and address risk.

A Child Protection Planning Meeting is a non-statutory multi-agency meeting convened by the Lead Professional in Children and Families Social work. It is central to Child Protection procedures.

Its function is to:

- Bring together all the information from people who work with the child or young person, and incorporate the main carer, key family members to contribute their views as to how risks can be addressed.
- Use this information to analyse and to assess the extent of risk that the child or young person is or may be exposed to.
- Agree what measures need to be taken by various agencies and main carer to protect the child or young person and/or promote their welfare.
- Make a decision based on the evidence provided as to whether to place/keep the child's or young person's name on the Child Protection register, and if so to contribute to a Child Protection Plan.
- Where registration is agreed, the Lead Professional will be the Social Worker and they will agree Core Groups to implement and review the plan. Regular core meetings will take place until the risks reduce or no longer apply.
- Discussion will take place as to whether a referral to the Children's Reporter is required, and this will be agreed at the Child Protection Planning meeting.

Where possible, our establishment will provide a report (usually written by a DHT or PT of Guidance or ASN) to summarise the views and observations of the staff team to the chair of the Child Protection Planning Meeting in advance.

The representative of the establishment at the Child Protection Planning Meeting will usually be the Designated Child Protection Coordinator and/or the PT of Guidance, PT ASN or the Lead Practitioner in ELC settings, who will elaborate on the contents of the report, and provide any clarification that is necessary.

At the Child Protection Planning Meeting, which is chaired by a Quality Assurance and Reviewing Officer, each service in attendance will have a representative who will be asked for their professional views as to whether the child's or young person's name should be placed or maintained on the Child Protection Register and will be asked for their reasons for their decision.

Child Protection Learning Review

Education staff may be asked to participate in a multiagency Learning Review either as part of a case group, or the wider review team.

Highland Child Protection Committee uses the [National Learning Review Guidance \(2021\)](#) to establish whether or not a review should take place, and conduct the review process. This is based on criteria laid out nationally.

Criteria for undertaking a Learning Review

A Child Protection Committee will undertake a Learning Review in the following circumstances:

When a child has died or has sustained significant harm or risk of significant harm as defined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and there is additional learning to be gained from a Review being held that may inform improvements in the protection of children and young people and one or more of the following apply:

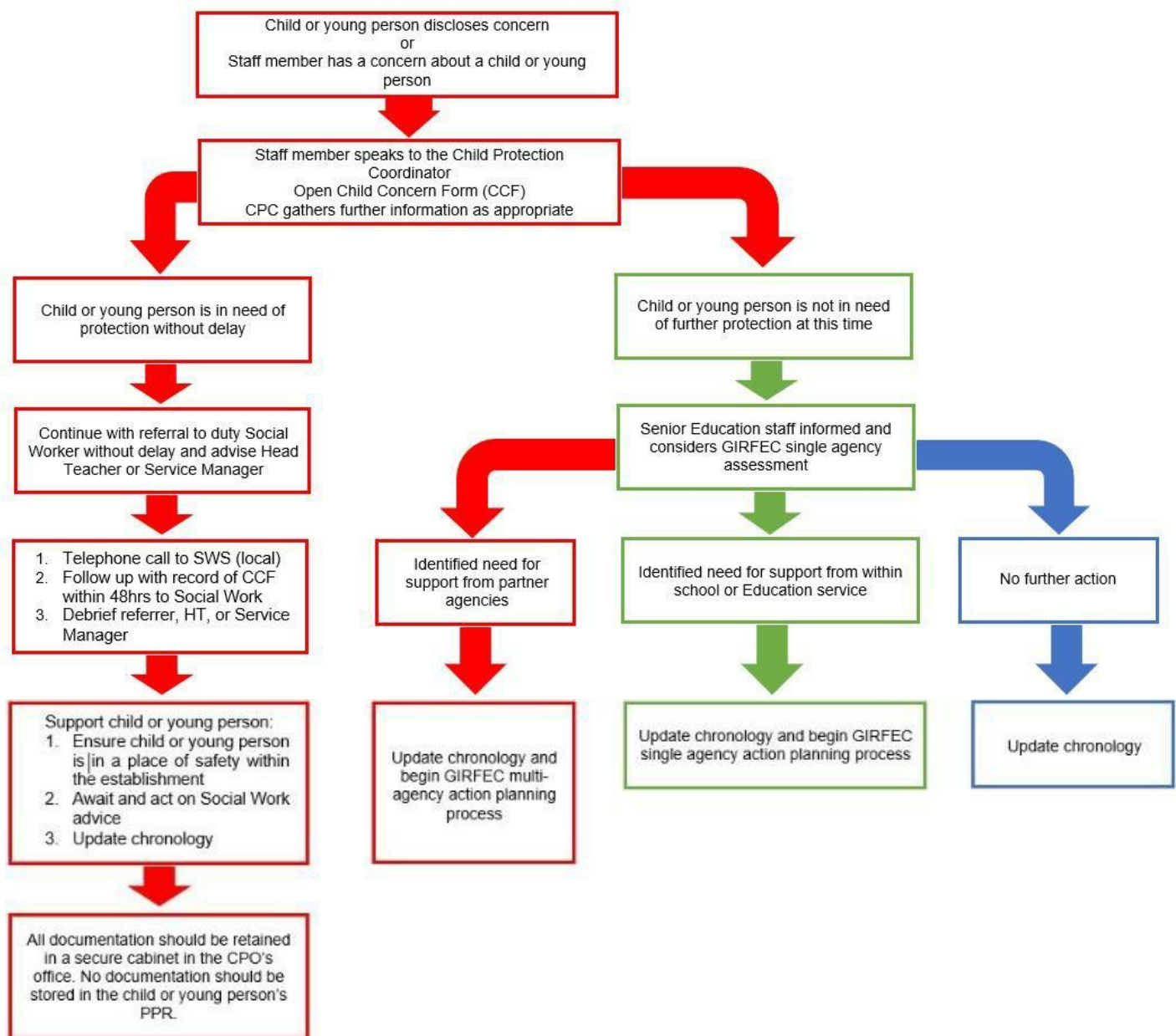
- abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death or the sustaining of or risk of significant harm
- the child is on, or has been on, the Child Protection Register (CPR) or a sibling is or was on the CPR or was a care experienced child (i.e. looked after, or receiving aftercare or continuing care from the local authority). This is regardless of whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death or sustaining of significant harm, unless it is absolutely clear to the Child Protection Committee that the child having been on the CPR or being care experienced has no bearing on the case
- the child's death is by suicide, alleged murder, culpable homicide, reckless conduct, or act of violence

Learning Reviews may also be undertaken where effective working has taken place and outstanding positive learning can be gained to improve practice in promoting the protection of children and young people.

Learning Reviews are not investigations. They are an opportunity for in-depth analysis and critical reflection in order to gain greater understanding of inevitably complex situations and to develop strategies to support practice and improve systems across agencies.

Throughout the review, support for staff is critical and will be integral to the review process in order that they can participate fully in the process, reflect on practice, share knowledge and contribute to the emerging learning.

Appendix 1: Child Protection Flowchart



Appendix 2: 5 Key GIRFEC Questions

The 5 GIRFEC questions every professional should ask.

1. What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
2. Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
3. What can I do now to help this child or young person?
4. What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
5. What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

Appendix 3: Child Concern Form

STANDARD CHILD CONCERN FORM
(all agencies except Police Scotland)

Available to download from the Schools' Hub [here](#)

Appendix 4: Forms of Abuse

Definitions of the **forms of child abuse** (referenced in the updated 2021 Child Protection framework) are below.

What is child abuse and child 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.

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 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.

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 trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. '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.

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), or to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect may include unresponsiveness to a child's essential emotional needs. 'Non-organic failure to thrive' 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 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

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.

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'.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Online Safety

Online child abuse is any type of abuse that occurs in the digital environment and the internet, facilitated through technology and 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 abuse can include online bullying; emotional abuse and blackmail; sharing of intimate images; grooming behaviour; coercion and preparatory behaviour for abuse including radicalisation; child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation as described above.

Spyware which enables monitoring and tracking of activity on devices and offline locations may be used abusively. Perpetrators may be strangers, family members, friends or professionals.

What is child protection?

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 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 each child's 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

Child protection is part of a continuum of collaborative duties upon agencies working with children. The Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach promotes and supports planning for such services to be provided in the way which best safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing of children, and ensures that any action to meet needs is taken at the earliest appropriate time to prevent acute needs arising.

The planning of systems should ensure that action is integrated from the point of view of recipients.

Child protection processes fall at the urgent end of a continuum of services which include prevention and early intervention. The GIRFEC principles and approach are consistently applicable. Children who are subject to child protection processes may already be known to services. They may already have a child's plan in place.

Child protection processes should build on existing knowledge, strengths in planning and partnerships to reduce the risk of harm, and to meet the child's needs.

Preventative and protective work may be needed at the same time. Preventative, restorative, supportive, collaborative and therapeutic approaches do not stop because compulsory measures or urgent protective legal steps are taken. A tailored blend of care and professional authority may be needed whether a child at risk is at home with family or accommodated, or when the child is to transition between placements or to be reunified with birth family after a placement away from home.

The level of risk a child is exposed to can shift, often rapidly, as circumstances change or information emerges. Services may be organised in response to 'thresholds' of risk. However, the way children and families act and think is not bound within such categories. Safe systems allow for a degree of flexibility as professional understanding of need and risk evolves. Safe systems ensure sufficient continuity of support when the immediate urgency to protect is alleviated.

Safety may depend upon accessible support when need arises over the longer term.

Appendix 5: Indicators of Risk

When making judgements about the risks and needs of a young person, there are a range of indicators that should trigger assessment and, where appropriate, action.

For further information, see Part 4 (specific concerns) in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#)

Not all are common, nor should their presence lead to any immediate assumptions about the levels of risk for an individual. Where identified, they should act as a prompt for all staff to consider their impact. Indicators of potential risk often arise alongside others. Indicators of risk should therefore be considered alongside all information relating to the relevant aspects of a young person's life (e.g., a young person involved in offending behaviour is often a young person in need of care and protection).

Where there are several risk factors in a young person's life, the cumulative impact of these should be identified.

Indicators of Risk as identified and fully described in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#)

- Poverty
- When services find it hard to engage
- Protection of Disabled children
- Parents with learning disabilities
- Impact of mental health or health problems on children
- Children and young people experiencing mental health problems
- Suicide and self-harm affecting children
- Responding to neglect and emotional abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Children and families affected by alcohol and drug use
- Physical abuse, Equal Protection, and restraint
- When obesity is a cause for escalating concerns about risk of harm
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Indecent images and internet-enabled sexual offending by adults
- Children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviour
- Child protection in the digital environment / online safety
- Under-age sexual activity
- Pre-birth assessment and support
- Children who are looked after away from home
- Re-unification or 'return home'

- Preventing repeat removal of children
- Children and young people who are missing
- Protecting unaccompanied asylum-seeking and trafficked children
- Child trafficking and criminal exploitation
- Protection in transitional phases
- Bullying
- Hate crime
- Serious harmful behaviour shown by children above and below age 12
- Vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism
- Complex investigations
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour-based Abuse and Forced Marriage
- Fabricated or Induced Illness

Appendix 6: Counter Terrorism Approaches

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-scotland>

Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland is the Scottish Government's strategy for countering terrorism. It was formally updated in 2019. It is part of the UK wide strategy called CONTEST 2018.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2018>

Contest has four areas of focused work which are known as the 4 P's. These are:

Prevent | Pursue | Protect | Prepare

The Prevent strategy has 3 specific strategic objectives;

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support
- work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address

Our establishment strives to provide a safe space for children and young people to explore, discuss and debate the range of social and political issues which impact on our world.

The Prevent agenda is about safeguarding individuals from being drawn into terrorism. Our establishment has an important role to play in this which starts with being aware of those children and young people who may be vulnerable to extremist and terrorist narratives, and to intervening with appropriate advice and support at an early stage.

Our staff are aware of the Prevent strategy and know that they must flag concerns about young people holding views which endorse extremism as they would any other Child Protection concern.

Further advice on approaches to Prevent can be found within the [National Improvement Hub](#). Staff may also find the published [guidance on right-wing terrorism](#) is useful in understanding the context and risks.

Appendix 7: Further Sources of Advice

Members of staff should seek support with any difficult emotions following concerns arising for a young person via the Designated Child Protection Coordinator or our Employee Assistance Programme in the first instance.

Sources of further information and support include:

- Schools' Hub [Safeguarding and Child Protection](#) tile
- Guidance on protecting Children in Highland: <https://hcpc.scot/> and <https://hcpc.scot/policies-guidance/>
- The [NSPCC](#) Website
- CHIP Highland: <https://www.chipplus.org.uk/>
- Childline Scotland: <https://cool2talk.org/health-info-zone/service/childline-scotland/>
- Rape Crisis Helpline (can also be used by Professionals supporting young people): <https://www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk/help-helpline/> Call: 08088 010302 / Text: 07537 410 027
- Highland Council Employee Assistance Programme: https://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/info/8/health_and_safety/330/employee_assistance_programme
- Rape and Sexual Abuse Service (Highland): <https://www.rasash.org.uk/>
- National Trauma Training Programme: <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/trauma-national-trauma-training-programme/>

Appendix 8: Inter-agency Guidelines to Protect Children and Young People in Highland

<https://hcpc.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Final-Highland-CP-Guidance-2020-COVID19-VERSION.pdf>