

9. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES

Reviewed: March 2021

Due for Review: February 2022

Policy Statement for Safe Strong and Free

We will:

- Treat everyone with respect;
- Remember that some issues are confidential;
- Provide an example we would wish others to follow;
- Where possible consider activities, which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others;
- Be aware that someone else might misinterpret our actions even if they are well-intentioned;
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy;
- Provide time for children to talk to us;
- Encourage children and adults to respect and care for others;
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- Remember to REFER not INVESTIGATE any suspicions or allegations about abuse;
- Only share concerns and seek support from those identified in the organisation's child/adult protection policy;

Contact numbers for Local Family Teams and the Police are available at www.hcpc.scot

Child Protection Policy

Child Protection Policy for Safe Strong and Free

We believe that every child regardless of age has, at all times and in all situations, a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged. In our organisation, if we have suspicions about a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being, we will take action.

We recognise that child protection should not be treated in isolation - we will take on board guidance given by Highland Child Protection Committee and will address recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees by doing the following:

1. We accept that it is our responsibility as an organisation to check that all adults in positions requiring disclosure checks are members of the appropriate Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and have been appropriately vetted
2. We will ensure we have a record of personal details for each member of staff/volunteer
3. We will ensure we have carried out necessary checks in relation to anyone working with children and young people, including requesting references where appropriate
4. We will interview prospective volunteers and staff
5. We will notify Disclosure Scotland if anyone on the Disqualified from Working with Children List applies to work for or volunteer with our organisation
6. We will ensure that all staff are given Codes of Practice to work to
7. We will remove any member of staff or volunteer whom we know or suspect to have caused harm to a child or to have placed a child at risk of harm and we will notify Disclosure Scotland of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our organisation

All volunteers or staff are encouraged to share concerns with the Project Manager, or in her absence the deputy for child protection. If the situation is urgent, the child is frightened to go home, or we have serious doubts about the child's safety, we will contact the Police or Social Work immediately.

Child Protection Is Everyone's Responsibility

Dealing with a Child Protection Situation

People who abuse others often do so in a manner that makes it difficult for children or young people to tell someone else if they are being abused.

However, there may be signs which make you concerned and may be an indication of abuse or neglect.

The Child/Young person may:

- Have unexplained bruising or bruising in unusual place
- Appear afraid, quiet or withdrawn
- Appear afraid to go home
- Be left unsupervised/unattended
- Have inappropriate levels of responsibility for their age
- Be acting out in a sexually inappropriate way
- Be misusing drugs or alcohol
- Be being bullied

Remember it is not our job to decide if abuse has taken place – it is your responsibility to report concerns.

Responding to children who disclose abuse

It is important to know that if you suspect a child is being abused or they disclose abuse or neglect to you, you have a responsibility to respond appropriately.

Whether you are staff or volunteer you must, at all times:

- Allow the child to speak without interruptions.
- Reassure them that they are right to tell but don't make suggestions to them.
- Do not investigate or question other than to clarify your understanding
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it is to hear what the child is telling you
- As soon as practical, write down everything the child/young person told you but remember that this is confidential

To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the SSF procedures when responding to a concern of abuse or assault.

If we have concerns, we must act – it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child – or we may prevent further children from being hurt.

Responding to Child Protection Concerns

LISTEN/OBSERVE/ACKNOWLEDGE

Child Discloses Abuse or Neglect/
Abuse or Neglect Suspected/
Allegation Made

RESPOND

Acknowledge the Information received and
take it seriously
Establish **BASIC** Facts - don't investigate
Make sure Child/Young Person is SAFE

REPORT

Report to designated person for child
protection (usually Head Teacher or
Nursery Manager).
Contact Project Manager on the day of
concern to give a verbal report.
If designated or secondary person for child
protection is **UNAVAILABLE** report as
below

REPORT

Contact your local Family Team
If there are immediate concerns about a
child's safety contact the Police on 999

RECORD

Record your concerns on a Safe Strong & Free
Concern Form.
Provide a copy to Designated person for Child
Protection (in person or recorded delivery on
the day of concern).
Retain a copy and send by recorded delivery to
Project Manager on the day of concern.

Rooms 11&12
Highland Rail House
Station Square
Inverness
IV1 1LE

Tel: 01463 712669
E-mail: kerry@safestrongandfree.org.uk



SAFE STRONG & FREE CONCERN FORM

This information should be used to complete section 2.2 of the Standard Child Concern Form, where there is a child protection concern.

1. Child's Name..... DOB
2. Date and time of incident/concern.
3. Name of Nursery/ Playgroup/ Day Care.....
4. Which workshop were you leading at the time.....
5. Name/s of nursery/playgroup/day care staff present at the time
.....
6. Name/s of other observer/s present
.....
7. Give details of the concern / incident. *(Use a continuation sheet if necessary)*

8. What action did the Designated Person say they would take?

Name of person who completed this form:.....

Signature

Date.....

Responding to Child Protection Concerns

What happens next....

- The Project Manager will inform the Board at monthly Board Meetings of the number of concerns recorded but will not give any details.
- The Project Manager will contact the designated Person for Child Protection in the nursery within 7 days to ascertain what action was taken.
- In the event that the Project Manager is not satisfied with the action undertaken by the Designated Person in the nursery/school, the concern will be passed to the relevant Practice Lead or Duty Social Worker.

Contact numbers for Local Family Teams and the Police are available at www.hcpc.scot

Local Family Team (Care and Protection)

Police

101 (non-urgent)
999 (urgent)

Out of hours Social Work Emergency Service:

08457 697284