

Corporate Child Protection Policy

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Document Control

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Changes	This policy replaces the previous policy and procedure. The policy and procedure have been separated compliant with corporate template. The risks have been updated to reflect changes in guidance and standards.

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1 Purpose Statement

- 1.1. Every child and young person in Aberdeen has the right to be kept safe and protected from harm.
- 1.2. Children need to be kept safe from harm in order to thrive and reach important developmental milestones, and to ultimately become responsible and contributing citizens. Keeping children safe means more than ensuring their physical safety; looking after their emotional and mental well-being is equally important.
- 1.3. Aberdeen City Council is responsible for ensuring that its services, individually and collectively, work to protect children and young people as effectively as possible and this requires them to:

“disseminate a clear vision, shared values and aims that promote the protection of all children and young people.”

(National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, p37, 2014).

- 1.4. This policy aims to mitigate the risk of harm to children and young people in Aberdeen City by ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities and what to do if they have concerns for a child or young person's safety.

2 Application and Scope Statement

- 2.1 This policy sets out the child protection responsibilities of **all** Aberdeen City Council staff and elected members, regardless of their role or level of responsibility.
- 2.2 Aberdeen City Council has responsibility to ensure that all its services, **“recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child, irrespective of whether the child is the main focus of their involvement. They are expected to identify and consider the child’s needs, share information and concerns with other agencies.”** (National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, p36, 2014).

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1 Child protection is everyone’s responsibility; an approach endorsed by Aberdeen City Council. This policy requires that **All** staff and elected members must complete mandatory child protection training and must read the Corporate Child Protection Procedure. All staff and Elected Members must follow the Corporate Child Protection Procedure, and;
 - Be able to recognise the signs a child may be at risk;
 - Record any concerns they have that a child may be at risk in accordance with the Child Protection Procedure;
 - Report any concerns that a child may be at risk in accordance with the Child Protection Procedure.

- 3.2 Aberdeen City Council works with Community Planning Partners to develop and maintain effective inter-agency child protection procedures and working arrangements. The Child Protection Committee for Aberdeen City has strategic and operational oversight of multi-agency child protection practices across the city.
- 3.3 Overall responsibility for managing this policy is held by the Chief Social Work Officer.
- 3.4 Any instances of non-compliance with the policy should be reported to the Chief Social Work Officer.
- 3.5 Feedback on the policy should be reported to the Chief Social Work Officer.

4 Supporting Procedures & Documentation

- 4.1 This policy adheres to the current National Guidance for Child Protection. The following lists of associated policies and procedures, legislation, and guidance is not exhaustive.
- 4.2 Associated Policies and Procedures
 - Corporate Child Protection Procedure
 - Child Protection Procedures in Aberdeen City
 - [Managing Discipline Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [Employee Code of Conduct](#)
 - [ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#)
 - [Council's Corporate Information Policy](#)
 - Customer Service Standards and Charter
 - Sector specific policy and procedures
- 4.3 Relevant Legislation
 - [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)
 - [Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
 - [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
 - [Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)
 - [Adoption and Children \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- 4.4 National Guidance
 - [Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter](#)
 - [Early Years Framework](#)
 - [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014](#)
 - [Getting It Right For Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
- 4.5 Local Guidance
 - [Aberdeen City Child Protection information](#)
 - [Aberdeen Getting It Right website](#)
 - [Child Protection Partnership website](#)
 - [Aberdeen City Council, Data Protection](#)
 - [Child Protection, mandatory online training module – ACC Learn](#)

- [Aberdeen City Children's Services Plan](#)
- [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#)

5 Policy Statements

- 5.1 All staff/elected members have a responsibility to be able to recognise a situation that presents a risk to children and young people and to feel confident to respond in a way that will help protect the child.
- 5.2 All staff/elected members are required to be aware of the Corporate Child Protection Procedure and undertake the online learning module that highlights signs that may identify a child or young person at risk, how to record and report a concern; and what happens next.

6 Definitions

- 6.1 For the purposes of this policy a child or young person is defined as a person up to the age of 18 years.

7 Risk

- 7.1 This policy and supporting procedures specified in Section 4 are designed to set out the child protection responsibilities for Aberdeen City Council staff/elected members.
- 7.2 This policy is designed to mitigate strategic, compliance, operational, and reputational risks. Its principal purpose is to mitigate the risk of harm to children and young people by ensuring that staff/elected members report concerns as detailed in Section 5.
- 7.3 Child protection is a complex and emotive area of work and Aberdeen City Council recognise that staff may at times need additional support when they identify circumstances which indicate a child may have been abused. This support will be offered in a sensitive and impartial manner, by colleagues, line management supervision and through the Council's counselling service 'Time for Talking'.
- 7.4 The risks identified will be managed and mitigated through application of the policy across the Council. This policy will be readily available and accessible to all staff and elected members.
- 7.5 The child protection policy and supporting documentation will support the Council's "PREVENT" obligations as all staff and elected members will be able to act in an appropriate and effective way to safeguard children and young people who may be at risk of harm. This could include a variety of circumstances, for example grooming for terrorism or exertion of undue influence, that constitute a child protection matter; this policy aims to provide support and protection to the child in these circumstances.

8 Policy Performance

- 8.1 The main factors that will determine whether this policy is effective and adds the value intended will be usage of the policy by Aberdeen City Council staff/elected members in demonstrating behaviours, skills and knowledge that contribute to Guiding Principles contained within the Capability Framework with the aim of safeguarding children and young people.
- 8.2 We will know this policy contributes to Aberdeen City Council's effective response to child protection concerns through our ongoing Quality Assurance Framework, routine data analysis, and case reviewing processes. Where appropriate, relevant areas of learning may be incorporated into this policy.
- 8.3 Staff/elected members' awareness of this policy will be measured through the uptake of the online Child Protection training, through ACC Learn – (<https://learn.aberdeencity.gov.uk/>), that is mandatory for all. This training is part of induction for all new staff/elected members, irrespective of their role. It is the responsibility of the management structure within Aberdeen City Council to ensure that their staff have undertaken this mandatory training. The uptake numbers are reported to the Chief Social Work Officer annually.

9 Design and Delivery

- 9.1 This policy aligns to supporting delivery of the Target Operating Model (TOM) and to the strategic objectives contained within the LOIP that promote the safeguarding of children and young people so that they may thrive and reach their full potential.

10 Housekeeping and Maintenance

- 10.1 This policy should be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect any changes to practice, guidance, legislation, and processes, including relevance of links and associated documents.

11 Communication and Distribution

- 11.1 All staff/elected members are required to be aware of and compliant with this policy. Staff/elected members will undertake the child protection mandatory training that is included in the induction and refreshed every three years.
- 11.2 Communication and distribution of this policy will be done through Microsoft Teams, where possible, both directly and through signposting to webpages.
- 11.3 All Managers must, as a minimum, ensure that they:
 - Raise awareness amongst staff of this policy and associated procedure.
 - Ensure staff are aware of how they are expected to safeguard and promote the protection of children during the course of their work.

- Provide access to training, professional development and support for staff to promote the protection of children. This requires to be appropriate for the roles and responsibilities of individual posts.
- Ensure staff are aware that failure to comply with this policy and procedure is a breach of their employment responsibilities and may result in the instigation of disciplinary or performance processes.
- Have policies and procedures that are compliant with the corporate responsibility to safeguard and promote the protection of children in Aberdeen City.

12 Information Management

12.1 Any information generated in relation to this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Corporate Information Policy and supporting Procedures.