



Child Protection Policy

Purpose of Policy

We aim to provide an environment in which children and young people will feel safe, secure, and cared for. The purpose of this policy is to provide the staff and parents of Little Dreams Nursery with guidelines and support about child abuse and how they can act to assist in the safeguarding of children and young people in the setting.

The Guidance in context

Little Dreams Nursery works following "The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003".

We also refer to the following legislation:

- **The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2023**
- **Health and Social Care Standards - My support, My life**
- **GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child)**
- **Early Years Framework**
- **The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- **The Children's Charter**
- **The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**
- **The Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019**

A copy of all documents above is available at the nursery for all staff and parents/carers to view, or it can be viewed online

The Scottish Government wants Scotland to be the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up so that they become: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens. All children and young people (including unborn babies) have the right to be cared for and protected from harm and abuse and grow up in a safe environment in which their rights are respected and their needs met. Children and young people should get the help they need when they need it, and their safety is always paramount.

Child protection must be seen in the context of the wider **Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)** approach, the **Early Years Framework**, and the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. GIRFEC promotes action to improve the well-being of all children and young people in eight areas. These well-being indicators state that children and young people must be healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included, **and, above all, in this context, safe. (SHANARRI)**

GIRFEC is the national approach to improving outcomes through public services that support the well-being of children and young people. The GIRFEC approach ensures that services are brought together more effectively to provide help and support for children, young people, and their parents when they need it.

Children have a right to protection from being hurt, and from violence, abuse, and neglect (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19)

Definitions

For child protection purposes, this policy refers to any child aged 0 - 16 years (18 years for Children with Additional Support Needs). The **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014** came into force, and a "child" is defined for all Parts of that Act as someone who has not attained the age of 18.

A parent is defined as any person who has parental responsibilities over a child. For example, a mother or father. We may also include in this foster and adoptive parents and carers, including those who may have substantial care of a child.

A child carer: These people may not have specific parental responsibilities, but have a duty of care for the child. This is **inclusive** of Little Dreams Nursery staff.

What is Child Abuse?

Child Abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are intentionally or inadvertently harmed or placed at risk of harm, usually by adults, and often by people whom they trust.

Categories of Abuse

- **Physical Injury:** This is defined as any injury inflicted or knowingly not prevented by any person having custody or care of a child. Physical abuse is often defined by injuries that cannot be explained by the normal play activities of a child and is defined as hitting or hurting a child on purpose.
- **Neglect:** This is defined as the wilful failure to meet the basic needs of a child, for example, not clothing, feeding, or caring for a child adequately, and leaving them without adequate supervision.
- **Emotional Abuse:** This is defined as any abuse or torment that would influence the mental health and well-being of a child. Most commonly, emotional abuse is categorised as shouting at a child, making a child feel worthless, exposing a child to inappropriate and never punishment, and inconsistency of behaviour towards a child.
- **Sexual Abuse:** This is defined as the exploitation of children to meet the demands of adults or other children. Sexual abuse may include involvement of children in masturbation, involvement of children in pornographic activity, including taking pornographic photographs and involving children in watching or viewing pornographic materials, involvement of children in sexual activity, including rape, sodomy, oral sex and sexual intercourse with a child, even with their consent.
- **Bullying:** Bullying is defined as any form of abuse of a child that is inflicted upon them by their peers. This abuse can be subtle, including teasing, being ignored, or left out, being pushed or pulled about, or having money or possessions taken.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** This is the practice of cutting or removing the external female genitalia without medical justification or consent. The practice is found in some countries of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, and within communities abroad from countries in which FGM is common. It is illegal in many countries.
- **Grooming:** Child grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions with the objective of sexual abuse. Child grooming is also regularly used to lure minors into various illicit businesses such as child trafficking, child prostitution, cybersex trafficking, or the production of child pornography.
- **Child Sex Tourism (Trafficking):** This is defined as the purpose of engaging in child sex tourism, which is the commercial facilitation of child sexual abuse.

Within the wider issue of [commercial sexual exploitation of children](#). The children who perform as prostitutes in the child sex tourism trade often have been lured or abducted into [sexual slavery](#).

Recognition of Child Abuse

It is not in the remit of members of staff at Little Dreams Nursery to identify the specific category of abuse that a child may be experiencing, but rather to highlight any causes for concern to the appropriate person and organisations.

The following list, although not exhaustive, may be indicative of some of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. It should be noted that some children may display some of these signs in times of stress; it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused.

Indicators of Abuse

- Injuries to the child that are not consistent with the normal play activities of a child, either in position or type.
- Inconsistent or unreasonable explanation of an injury by a child, parent, or carer
- Inconsistent or inappropriate behaviour such as sexually explicit remarks or actions, mood swings, uncharacteristically quiet/aggressive, or severe tantrums.
- Becoming isolated socially
- Overeating, loss of appetite, weight loss, and weight gain.
- Inappropriately dressed or ill-kept and/or dirty
- Self-inflicting injury
- Open distrust of, or discomfort with, parent or carer
- Delayed social development, poor language, and speech
- Excessively nervous behaviour, such as rocking or hair twisting
- Low self-esteem

General indicators of abuse, though often typical of sexual abuse/grooming/child sex tourism

- Recurring Abdominal Pain
- Reluctance to go home
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Recurring headaches
- A child having a mobile phone
- Infections - UTIs or STIs
- Scaring / bleeding/bruising
- Attending nursery with more luxurious items
- Different carers collecting

Recording and Reporting of an Incident - Suspicions of Abuse

All staff should be aware that any incidents must be recorded. It is also very important for staff to communicate about matters of this kind.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is under threat, there are several steps that must be taken.

1. Inform the **Manager (Nicola Park) or Director (Michelle Hardcastle)**, as the named persons responsible for Child Protection in the setting (Child Protection Officer - CPO), if they are not available, staff should refer to the local authority child protection guidelines for details of their local joint child protection team.

1. Report the specific concerns that you have to the **Manager**, as the person responsible for child protection for the setting
2. Record your suspicions and give them to the **Manager (Nicola Park) or Director (Michelle Hardcastle)**
3. Records of suspicions must include the following information:
 - The nature of the suspicion
 - Details of any injury
 - Times, dates, and any other relevant information
 - Dates, times, and names of other adults involved with the child who may substantiate the suspicion
 - The Manager / Director will contact the Joint Child Protection Team or the Police

Disclosure of Abuse

If a child discloses to you that they have been abused, the member of staff should:

Inform the child that to help them, you must tell your **Manager / Director**; the member of staff should tell the child who this person is and reassure the child that they can trust them and that they have done the right thing in telling you what has been going on.

Listen to the child and note down what they say to you **in their own words**. It is important at this stage that you do not interrupt the child, and you do not ask questions.

Report the disclosure to the **Manager (Nicola Park) / Director (Michelle Hardcastle)** as persons responsible for child protection in the setting. Management will then contact the relevant agency or the police, who will investigate the disclosure. The Manager / Director, or a member of staff dealing with the situation, must contact the joint child protection team immediately. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger, then the manager/director or member of staff should contact the police.

It should be noted that if a member of staff is named in the disclosure, the member of staff should be as discreet as possible and inform the Manager / Director as soon as possible. In addition to this, if a member of staff observes another member of staff harming a child, they should report this to the Manager / Director, who will act according to the **Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003**.

In addition to this, if the Manager / Director is named in the disclosure, the member of staff should be discreet and contact one of the other persons responsible for child protection in the setting. The Nursery Manager / Director or any authorities detailed below:

- **0800 731 5520 (Joint Child Protection Team)**
- **101 (Police Scotland)**

Little Dreams Nursery recognises that it can be a traumatic experience for a member of staff to witness a child's disclosure of abuse; therefore, all staff will be offered information on counselling services to help them through this time.

General Information on Child Protection

Child Protection involves several agencies working together, known as the joint child protection team.

To maintain the levels of protection, all persons working with children must have an Enhanced Disclosure / PVG through Disclosure Scotland and have completed an application process, interview, and have 2 references.

Responding to a Child who confides in you

- Stay Calm
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Offer reassurance and support
- Immediately tell your line manager
- Record the facts and discussion in the child's own words and give a copy to your Manager / Director
- Do not take control of the situation yourself
- Maintain confidentiality
- Keep records
- Talk to the right people

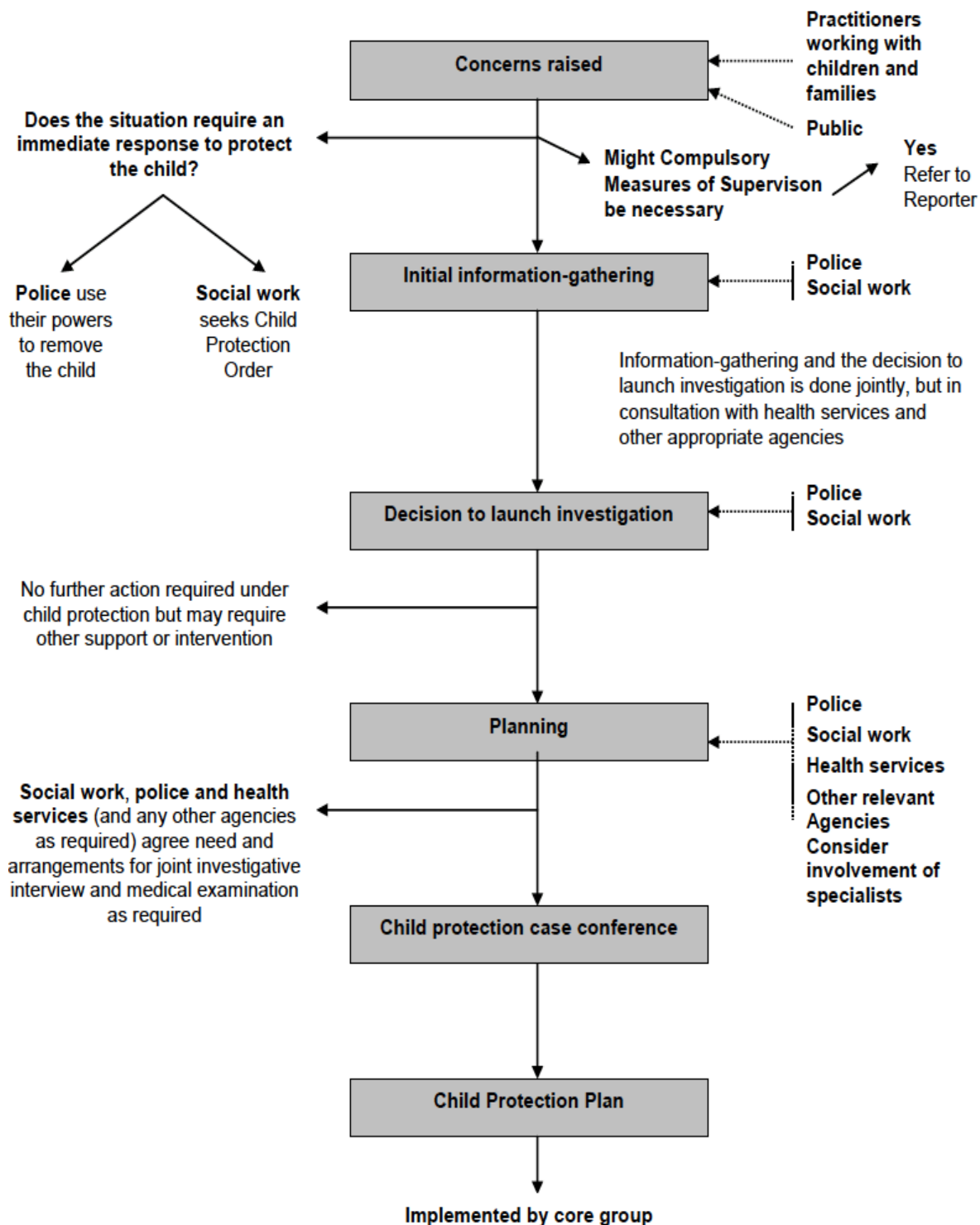
End Note

All families should be aware that members of staff attend regular child protection training so that we keep your children safe from harm.

The Nursery must report any suspicions of abuse and neglect to any of the contacts below, who must investigate such matters:

Child Protection Flowchart

This chart is to be used as a guide to the organisational procedures for the Protection of Children. For further information, please refer to the internal policy for Child Protection and the local authority's Child Protection Guidelines.



Child Protection Code of Conduct

Little Dreams Nursery supports the **Protection of Children Scotland Act 2003**, and as such, all members of staff are required to abide by the code of conduct as detailed below.

All Members of Staff Should:

- Play your part in helping to develop an ethos where all people matter and are treated with equality, respect, and dignity.
- Always put the care, welfare, and safety needs of a child first.
- Respect a child's right to be involved in making choices and decisions that directly affect them.
- Listen attentively to any ideas and views a child wants to share with you.
- Respect a child's culture (for example, their faith and beliefs)
- Respect a child's right to privacy and personal space.
- Respond sensitively to children who seem anxious about participating in certain activities
- Speak to a member of staff immediately if you suspect that a child is experiencing bullying or harassment.
- Be aware of the vulnerability of some groups of children to being isolated and hurt.
- Ensure that when you are working with children, you are at least within sight or hearing of other adults.
- Listen carefully when a child tells you (sometimes through drawings and behaviour as well as words) that they are being harmed and report what you have discovered immediately to the **Manager / Director**.
- Report immediately any suspicion that a child may be at risk of harm or abuse.
- Never dismiss what a child tells you as lies or exaggeration
- Only restrain a child who is in imminent danger of inflicting harm to themselves or others.
- Never underestimate the contribution that you can make to the development of safe communities for children.

Members of Staff Should Not:

- Exaggerate or trivialise another worker's concerns about a child or ignore an allegation or suspicion of abuse in the hope that it will either go away or that someone else will deal with it.
- Discuss personal issues about a child or their family with other people, except where it concerns the well-being of the child.
- Be drawn into derogatory remarks or gestures in front of the children or young people.
- Allow a child or young person to be bullied or harmed by anyone else in the organisation
- Allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.

Members of Staff Should Never:

- Engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Never allow others to or yourself to engage in touching a child in a sexually provocative manner
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Engage in rough or physical contact unless it is permitted within the rules of a game or sports activity or conforms to the guidance on appropriate physical restraint
- Never form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children

Members of Staff Should Never: (continued)

- Harass or intimidate a child or worker because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic status, or disability
- Unnecessarily invite or allow children to stay with you at your home. *
- Where members of staff invite or allow children to enter their own homes (for example, when playing with the staff member's own children or upon request of the child's parent or carer), this must be done with the express permission of the child's parent or carer.
- In addition, the member of staff should inform the Manager of the setting of the arrangement and follow the child protection policy and the code of conduct, as always expressed above. Little Dreams Nursery accepts no responsibility for the actions of its employees when they are not within their working hours. Parents and carers should be aware that when they request a member of staff to look after their children outside of setting hours, this is done by personal arrangement and has no bearing on Little Dreams Nursery.