



Child Safeguarding Policy

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Revision Number	2
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Responsibility for Review	Senior Management team (SMT)

This policy is adapted from the Highland Schools Child Safeguarding Policy, in partnership with Secondary Schools. Please also refer to our separate Growing2gether Online Safety Policy Statement.

1. Introduction : What is the intention of this policy?

The overall purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to protect the welfare of children and young people who receive our support or engage in our activities. This includes responding to direct safeguarding concerns raised by children and young people, staff and carers and members of the public.

This policy aims to:

- guide our staff and volunteers to understand and respond to child protection concerns ● promote a culture where children and young people are valued and their right to safety and respect is upheld.
- support the pro-active management of risk to minimise circumstances where children and young people involved in our activities may suffer harm.
- ensure we work collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that children and young people are safeguarded and protected.

The content applies to all children regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race,

religion, socio-economic status or family circumstance.

For the purposes of this policy, the term staff and volunteers refers to all workers, Board members and volunteers.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Growing2gether employees, contracted or self-employed and volunteers.

3. Responsibilities

Line Managers and Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring the fair and consistent day to day application of this policy and briefing all employees within their area of responsibility. All employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and complying with the policy.

We acknowledge the provision we provide within different local authorities and so our policy also relates and works in line with

- Highland Councils Child Protection Committee ([click here](#))
- Dundee City Council Child Protection Committee ([click here](#))
- Aberdeen City Council Child Protection Committee ([click here](#))
- Aberdeenshire Child Protection Committee ([click here](#))
- Moray Child Protection Committee ([click here](#))

4. The purpose and background of this policy

'Safer Highland' believes that every child/young person, regardless of age, has at all times, in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which results in the child/young person being physically or emotionally damaged.

Every employee of Growing2gether is PVG-checked before joining the staff and all adults entering the nursery are also PVG-checked. Additionally, a trustee of the Growing2gether Board, Gail Shaw, is entrusted with child safeguarding and it is a standing item on the Agenda for all Board meetings (eight per year). The policy will be formally reviewed by the Board on an annual basis, but it will be updated, if needed, in line with best practice (see below).

In school we are committed to creating an environment in which children/young people are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately. The well-being of children/young person in our care takes precedence over any other consideration. It is the clear responsibility of all staff involved in school to adopt good practice throughout their work.

In order to achieve this, we will:

- Follow the principles of Scotland’s national approach to improving outcomes for young people: [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\)](#) to work in partnership with parents, carers, Highland Council colleagues and other agencies to promote good practice in the area of child protection.
- Update any changes in child protection policy and practice under the guidance from the designated person in the school
- Endeavour to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate child protection training every three years (two years for the designated CP lead), supervision and support in order to implement this policy effectively and with the minimum of stress.

*‘Children and young people’ is used interchangeably throughout this Policy. The term ‘child’ in Scotland often means those below the age of 16, although the general definition in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Children and Young People (Scotland Act) 2014 is those below the age of 18.

These child protection guidelines apply to:

- all children below the age of 16
- those who are ‘looked after children’ (subject to a Children’s Hearing Supervision Requirement, or Compulsory Supervision Order etc.) below the age of 18
- other young people aged 16 or 17 who are particularly vulnerable, for example as a result of disability.
- Young people, aged 16, 17 or 18 years, still enrolled in school.

5. Context of Policy

This Policy 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](#).

6. 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. All staff are also 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.

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. Child abuse is a criminal offence. All staff working in schools have an ethical duty to report any reasonable concern that a child may be being abused.

The role of members of staff is to inform the designated person and/or Named Person of any instance, which suggests that abuse is taking place. It is not the role of the member of staff to wait for proof, investigate or gather evidence of abuse.

When a child/young person tells an adult about possible abuse, his or her statements should not be dismissed or ignored. The adult should attend carefully to what the child wants to communicate, taking account of the child's/young person's age and stage of development, and allow the child/young person to say what he or she wants to say without being drawn into detailed questioning.

REMEMBER: Any concerns about the well-being of a child/young person need to be shared.

No matter how good we are at evaluating and assessing matters to do with children, when it comes to the child's/young person's welfare we cannot evaluate and assess potential danger, risk, damage, as we only know a tiny part of the whole picture. We must share our concerns with the designated/ Named Person.

7. Child Protection Procedure checklist for Growing2gether staff. If: •

a child/young person has been injured, e.g. bruising;

- a child/young person is seen in the company of people, either adults or children, who may be putting the child at risk;
- a specific allegation of child maltreatment has been made;
- there are anxieties that a child may be experiencing continuing maltreatment or neglect;
- or • a child/young person is behaving in a way that is dangerous to him or herself or others.

To the above list, Growing2gether would add:

- being under stress or having mental health problems
- self-harming
- having learning difficulties or disabilities

- dependence on alcohol or other substances
- offending behaviour
- homelessness (sofa-surfing or rough sleeping)
- sexual exploitation, grooming or pornography
- living with or witnessing violence
- neglect
- bullying or victimisation on any grounds
- at risk of or fearing forced marriage
- on-line abuse.

The member of staff must RECORD:

Respond without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock. Take what the child/young person says seriously.

Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why the child/young person appears upset. Confidentiality must not be promised to children or adults in this situation.

Observe carefully the demeanour or behaviour of the child/young person.

Record in written detail, as soon as possible, what has been seen and heard.

Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations: rather encourage the child/young person to say what he/she wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.

8. Duty to disclose

All those who work for Growing2gether in whatever capacity, have a duty of care to act promptly when they have concerns about a young person's well-being – their exposure to abuse or harm and within 12 hours will notify those who have the capacity and the power to intervene.

All staff have an ethical duty to report any reasonable concern that a young person may be in danger of harm. It is not advised for the member of staff to wait for verification, nor to investigate or gather evidence of abuse. Our policy is to work with school partners to protect young people when alerts are raised. In the first instance concerns absolutely must be reported to the project manager, Marjie Beach, who will contact the designated lead for safeguarding within the school.

Although facilitators have a confidentiality agreement with the young people they work with, when a young person discloses abuse, the facilitator should listen carefully and compassionately to what the young person is saying, although do not go into detailed questioning. You need to inform the young

person that this is a moment when you are unable to maintain confidentiality, as you are concerned for their well-being or the well-being of others. Always inform the young person that you must do this (break confidentiality) before taking it further. However, you do not need a young person's permission to report your concerns. It is in the confidentiality agreement with the teens that confidentiality will be maintained unless concerns for their well-being arise.

Members of staff must not:

- Investigate suspected/alleged abuse themselves
- Evaluate the grounds for concern
- Seek or wait for proof
- Discuss the matter with anyone other than SMT/Named Person.

9. Reporting procedures

Each school or institution has a designated lead for safeguarding. In the event of a disclosure by a young person, the member of staff will reassure the young person, explain what action they will take to report their concern and how and where they will record the information.

The member of staff will:

- notify the designated lead for the school
- notify the designated Growing2gether manager immediately by phone or email
- record the incident and the actions taken and ensure these are stored securely in accordance with the charity's *Data Privacy Policy*.
- the Safeguarding Lead on the Board of Trustees will be notified about the incident.

Further information can be found in the Highland Child Protection Committee's 'Inter-agency Guidelines to Protect Children and Young People in Highland'¹ as follows:

Definitions section 1 Collective Responsibilities for Child Protection section 2 Other responsibilities for schools (nursery primary, secondary, home educated) section 8

10. Other useful publications

Highland Children's Services Practice Guidance – Getting It Right For Every

Child² Children (Scotland) Act 1995³

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021⁴

11. Confidentiality

In every Growing2gether programme, the facilitators will deliver a session on Confidentiality and issues of safeguarding with participating young people. Young people will know that confidentiality will be honoured unless there is a risk of danger to themselves or others. They are informed of what the procedure would be if their facilitator needs to break confidentiality and that they will be first informed of this.

1 http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/2-childprotection/index_62_4235895155.pdf

2 <http://www.forhighlandschildren.org/5-practiceguidance/high-pract-model.pdf>

3 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/36/contents>

4 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021/>

12. Whistle-blowers

We believe that whistleblowers who raise a child protection concern, should be protected. See Growing2gether Whistle Blower Policy.

13. Risk assessment

Before the beginning of every Growing2gether programme, facilitators will conduct an 'Educational Risk Assessment by visiting the route walking to the Nursery that young people will take, including: significant hazards (how people might foreseeably be harmed and control measures (what steps are being taken to reduce the risk of the hazard?); including assessment of nursery mentoring and classroom time. The Risk Assessment should be shared and discussed with all the leaders of the visit, and should only be approved once all significant hazards have been identified, the control measures are agreed and will be implemented and the overall risk ratings are considered acceptable.

14. Digital safeguarding

Although our core programme Growing2gether does not regularly use e-learning, we aim to demonstrate a strong culture of supporting the online safety and digital resilience of children and young people. Growing2gether staff are all trained in Digital Safeguarding through the NSPCC's Online Safety Training.

Staff will be alert and responsive to the online safety for young people. If an online safeguarding issue arises, staff are required to follow Growing2gether's standard procedures and must report the issue to their Programme Manager who will take appropriate action. Please see Growing2gether OnLine Safety Policy alongside its Code of Conduct.

15. Training

All staff, volunteers and Trustees must undertake Child Safeguarding Training. This is provided by Highland Council and others alike and it includes:

- Child Protection: Basic Awareness
- Recognition and Response in Child Protection
- Developing Competence in Child Protection
- Graded Care Profile
- Workshop to Raise Awareness of PREVENT (WRAP)
- Working Towards Positive Outcomes

All Growing2gether staff must undertake a Child Protection: Basic Awareness before beginning their work with us and it must be topped up annually every year. Staff are encouraged to work their way through all the CP offerings of Highland Council, by partaking of one CPD on CP a year. We also train staff in this policy and other organisational policies at induction and on an ongoing basis. All staff must sign agreements that they have read and understand our policies.

Everyone with access to children must also undertake NSPCC's Online Safety Training.

16. Further information and resources

[For Highlands Children](#)

[Children Missing from Education](#)

[Highland Underage Sex Protocol](#)

[For Highlands Children Publications & Information](#)

[NSPCC Safeguarding children and child protection](#)

[NSPCC Example safeguarding policy statement](#)
[Disclosure checks for Scotland](#)

[Children England's Everyone's Business: Safeguarding for Trustees Social](#)

[Care Institute for Excellence Guidance on safeguarding Adults at Risk](#)

[Education Scotland Support for all \(Inclusion\)](#)

17. Other Relevant Policies

Growing2gether Staff Behaviour Code

Growing2gether Online Safety Policy Statement

Growing2gether Online Safety Agreement

Growing2gether Disciplinary Procedures

Growing2gether Whistleblowing Policy

Growing2gether GDPR Procedure

Growing2gether Young Person's Complaints Policy

18. Contact details

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are

Name: Dawn Price

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Name: Gavin Morgan

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We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on: **26th June 2023**

Name: Sara Trevelyan

Safeguarding Lead, Board of Trustees

Signed: Sara Trevelyan

Date: 29th June 2023