



Child Protection Policy

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

In order to achieve this we will:

- Seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, other agencies to promote good practice in the area of child protection.
- Update any changes in child protection policy and practice under guidance from the designated person in the school.
- Endeavour to ensure that all staff has access to appropriate child protection training, supervision and support in order to implement this policy effectively and with the minimum of stress.
- Plan and organise the centre so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.

Highland Council Care and Learning Services and Little Staggies has legal duties to protect children. All service staff have responsibilities to be alert and respond to the needs of children.

Children with additional support needs are particularly vulnerable and staff often have to provide assistance with personal care, which may include the physical handling of a child.

- Where a child is fully dependant on a member of staff to provide such assistance there is a need to be responsive to the child's wishes, and to give the child choices where possible.
- Children should not be assisted to do things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- The centre recognises that, in common with all organisations providing activities for children, there is the possibility that allegations of abuse could be made against members of staff.

The centre will always seek to work with families in a clear, positive and open way, bearing in mind always that the welfare of the children is of paramount concern.

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

Child Protection

Procedure checklist for Centre Staff:

If

- A child discloses abuse, or
- A member of staff suspects a child may have been abused, or

Updated September 2019

- A third party expresses concern
- A staff member witnesses an abusive situation involving another staff member

The member of staff must: - RECORD and REPORT

- R Respond without showing any signs of disquiet, anxiety or shock
- E Enquire casually about how an injury was sustained or why a child appears upset
- C Confidentiality must not be promised to children or adults in this situation
- O Observe carefully the demeanour or behaviour of the child
- R Record in detail what has been seen and heard
- D Do not interrogate or enter into detailed investigations: rather encourage the child to say what he/she wants until enough information is gained to decide whether or not a referral is appropriate.

Then REPORT to manager without delay

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 the manager