



Scalloway Preschool

Child Protection Policy

Purpose of Policy

Scalloway Preschool aims 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 Scalloway Preschool with guidelines and support on the subject of child abuse and how they can act to assist in the protection of children and young people in the setting.

The policy aims to ensure that all members of staff are informed about child abuse, the forms that it can take, signs and symptoms of possible abuse and the steps that they can take in recognising and preventing child abuse.

This policy is underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which states in Article 19: Protection from Abuse and Neglect

- States parties should take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse whilst in the care of parents, legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child.
- Such protective measures should, as appropriate include effective procedures for the establishment of social programme to provide the necessary support for the child and those who have the care of the child, as well as other forms for prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of incidences of child maltreatment described heretofore, and as appropriate for judicial involvement.

It also takes account of the National Guidelines for Child Protection in Scotland 2014 and Shetland Inter Agency Child Protection Procedures 2012.

Definitions

For child protection purposes this policy refers to any child aged 0 - 16 years (18 years for Children with Additional Support Needs)

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 **childcarer**: These people may not have specific parental responsibilities but nonetheless have a duty of care for the child. This is **inclusive** of Scalloway Preschool 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 that 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 willful 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 which would have an effect on the mental health and wellbeing 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 in order 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 on a child which 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.

Recognition of Child Abuse

It is not in the remit of members of staff at Scalloway Preschool 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, severe tantrums.
- Becoming isolated socially
- Overeating, loss of appetite, weight loss, 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

- Recurring Abdominal Pain
- Reluctance to go home
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Recurring headaches

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 a number of steps that must be taken.

1. Inform the manager or the [named] person responsible for Child Protection in the setting, in the event that the co-ordinator is not available staff should refer to the local authority child protection guidelines for details of their local social work area office or the out of hours telephone number.
2. Report the specific concerns that you have to the manager or the person responsible for child protection for the setting
3. Record your suspicions and give them to the manager or the person responsible for child protection for the setting, 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 or person in charge will then determine the situation and refer the case to Social Work Children and Families 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 in order to help them you have to tell your line manager, 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 or person responsible for child protection in the setting The project manager will then contact the relevant agency or the police who will investigate the disclosure.

If the manager or member of staff dealing with the situation at the time thinks that the case is serious enough to involve Social Work Children and Families immediately please contact the relevant social work children and families office for the area, or contact social work out of hours service. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger the co-ordinator 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 discrete as possible and inform the manager 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 project co-ordinator who will act according to the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003.

In addition to this if the co-ordinator is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be discrete and contact the correct authorities such as the Social Work Department or the Police. Scalloway Preschool recognises that it can be a traumatic experience for a member of staff to be witness to a child's disclosure of abuse; therefore all staff may be offered information on counselling services to help them through this time.

General Information on Child Protection

Child Protection involves several agencies working together, these include Local Authority Social Work Departments, Childcare organisations, etc

Scalloway Preschool follows **Shetland Inter Agency Child Protection** guidance document.

In order to maintain the levels of protection, all persons working with children must have a PVG through Disclosure Scotland and have completed an application process, interview and have 2 references. Some settings may also ask for a doctor's reference.

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
- Do not take control of the situation yourself
- Maintain confidentiality
- Keep records
- Talk to the right people

End Note

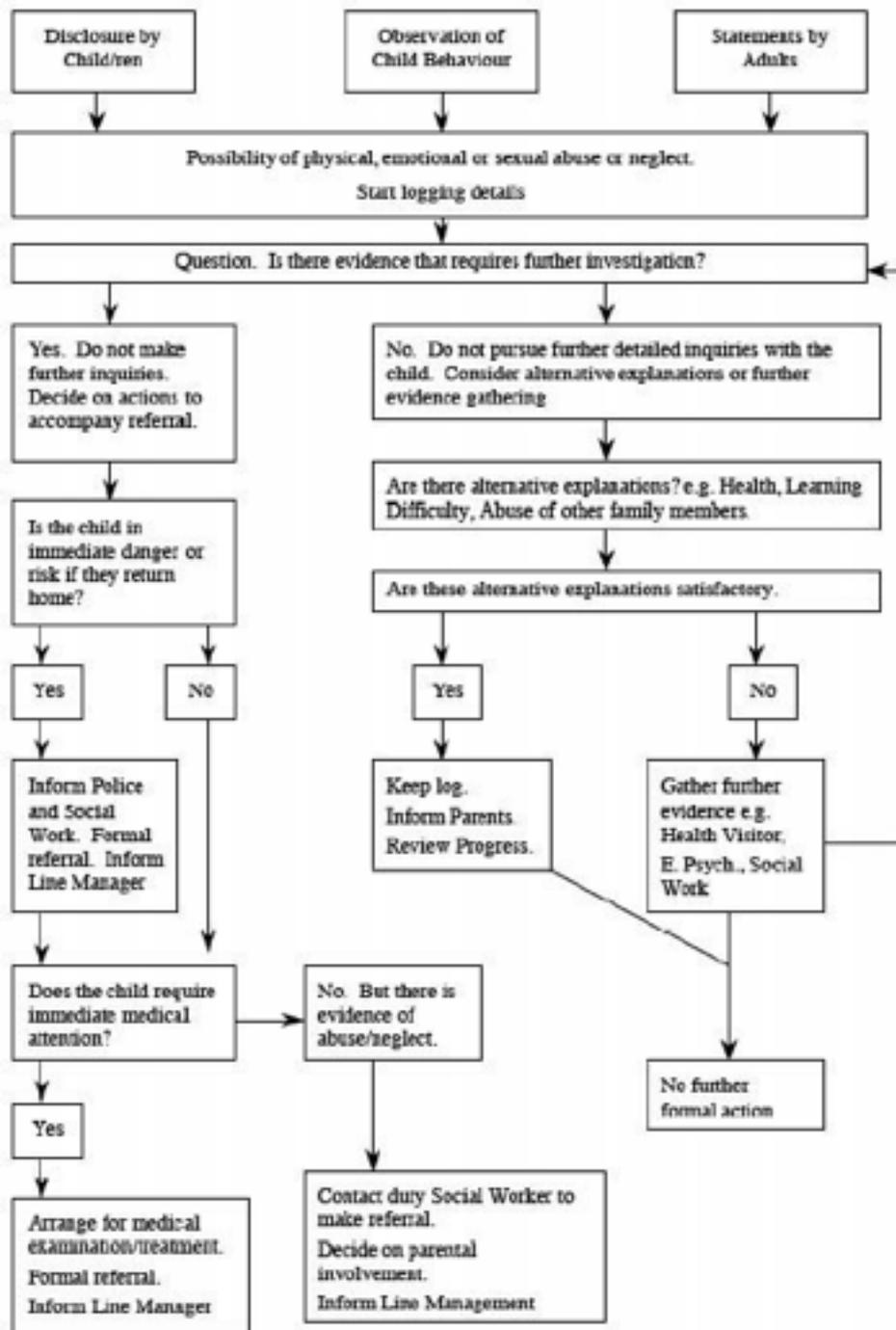
All parents should be aware that members of staff attend regular child protection training in order that we keep your children safe from harm.

The Scalloway Preschool has a duty to report any suspicions of abuse and neglect to any of the contacts below who have a duty to investigate such matters:

- Duty Social Work Service-Monday to Friday 9am-5pm -01595744400
- Duty out of hours Service (outwith above times) -01595695611
- Children & Families Social Work-Monday and Friday 9am-5am-01595744400
- Police-24 hour cover-Lerwick Police Station -01595692110
- Scottish Children's reporter Administration-03002002200

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 Child Protection Guidelines.



Child Protection Code of Conduct

Scalloway Preschool 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, and 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 which 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
- 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 your line manager.
- 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 at imminent harm 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 workers 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 wellbeing of the child.
- Allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Never allow others to or yourself 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
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- Never form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children
- Harass or intimidate a child or worker because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic status or disability

Where members of staff invite or allow children to enter their own homes (for example, when playing with the staff members own children or upon request of the child's parent), this must be done with the express permission of the child's parent or carer. Scalloway Preschool accepts no responsibility for the actions of

its employees when they are not within their working hours. Parents and carers should be aware that where their children come into contact/personal arrangements with the member of staff out with their setting hours has no bearing on Scalloway Preschool.

