

Towie School and Nursery



Child Protection Policy

Revised 2019

Article 19 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child.

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Towie Primary School

Child Protection Policy

In line with the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** all children have a right not to be abused and to be protected from abuse and neglect; therefore, child protection is the responsibility of everyone.

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

In order to achieve this we will:

- Seek to work in partnership with parents, carers, other agencies and Aberdeenshire Council to promote good practice in the area of child protection.
- Update any changes in child protection policy and practice.
- 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.

There are four identified categories of child abuse that must be recorded and acted upon:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

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

In our school the designated person is: **Daniel Frater**

In his absence (if not available), then with Class Teacher.

The role of members of staff is to inform the **designated 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.

Where the Head Teacher judges that there is cause for concern, evidence of abuse or potential danger to a child contact will be made with Social Services in accordance with the **Protecting Children and Young People in Education Book 3 Practice Guidelines**. A copy of these Guidelines are located in the **Office and on the GIRFEC website www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org** Also the **National Guidelines for Child Protection 2014** that are also available on the **GIRFEC website**.

We will always seek to work with families in a clear, positive and open way, bearing in mind that the welfare and safety of the children is paramount. We will publish information through parent handbooks and on school notice boards making parents aware of the school's Child Protection Guidelines. In particular this will bring to parents' attention that in situations where there is a possibility that a child could be at risk of abuse or neglect, the school is required to refer the child to Social Services, the Police or the Reporter and that in these circumstances, the parents would not normally be consulted first.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The legislative framework for intervention in child protection matters in Scotland is mainly found in the following:

- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 which requires Local Authorities to promote the welfare of children in need and to make enquiries when they receive information that a child may be in need of compulsory measures of supervision. It also requires the Children's Reporter and the Children's Hearing to consider children who are deemed to be in need of compulsory measures of supervision.
- The Police (Scotland) Act 1967
- The Criminal Procedure Act 1995

Child Protection Policy

Appendices

- 1 Pro Formas
- 2 Child Missing – Emergency Procedure
- 3 Runaway/Out of Bounds Child – Policy
- 4 Unexplained Absence Form
- 5 What is Child Abuse?
- 6 Categories of Abuse
- 7 Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse
- 8 Possible Signs of Physical Abuse
- 9 Possible Signs of Neglect

- 10 Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse
- 11 Index of Suspicion of Sexual Abuse
- 12 The Use of Language to Prevent the Contamination of Evidence
- 13 Record of Disclosure

CHILD MISSING

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

- 1 Search immediate area
- 2 Inform Head Teacher and other staff
- 3 Contact parents and/or emergency contacts
- 4 Contact child's friends/classmates
- 5 Phone Police – 0845 600 5700

Other useful contact numbers:

Janitors – Alford Academy - 019755 62251

- 6 Keep outwardly calm
- 7 Inform staff and pupils when child is found
- 8 Phone contact numbers to inform them that child has been found

TOWIE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Runaway/Out of Bounds Child Policy

If a pupil leaves the classroom, school building or school grounds without permission staff should:-

- not pursue
- remain calm
- inform Head Teacher immediately
- give the pupil the opportunity to return without further loss of self esteem

Head Teacher will:-

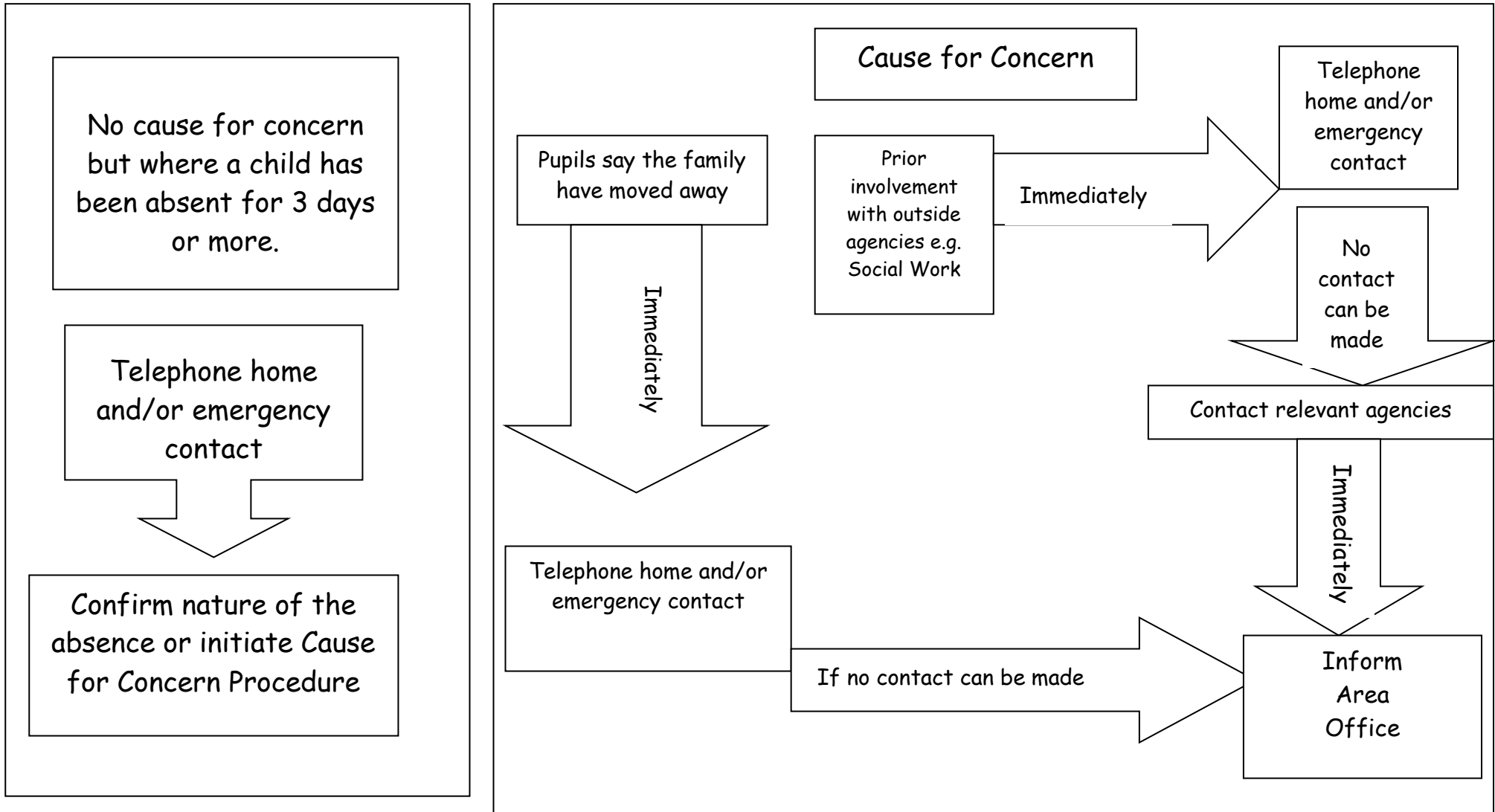
- inform Janitor/relevant teachers
- monitor discreetly – other staff may be delegated to do this
- call the parent and/or the police if the pupil is in danger or has left school grounds and is out of sight
- talk to pupil on return to building
- decide next steps

Pupil must be allowed to return to the class with dignity.

There will be an opportunity for de-briefing and sharing of information later.

When a pupil has a history of running away, an individual action plan and risk assessment will be completed along with the pupil, parent and appropriate staff.

Unexplained Absence



PHYSICAL INJURY

Actual or attempted physical injury to a child, including the administration of toxic substances, where there is knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

All children where there is physical injury and where:

- a) it is known, admitted or reasonably suspected that the injury was inflicted by any person caring for the child or any person likely to be a member of the same household, or
- b) anyone caring for the child knowingly failed to prevent the injury or acted without due regard for the safety of the child, or the nature of the injury is inconsistent with the account of how it occurred.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE/EMOTIONAL NEGLECT

This is the failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs so as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child.

This can include:

- Persistent coldness, hostility, criticism, inappropriate punishment or rejection by a caregiver.
- Denying the child opportunities for exploration, play and socialisation appropriate to their stage of development;
- isolating the child from normal social experiences;
- preventing the child from forming friendships;
- the 'wilful destruction or significant impairment of a child's confidence';
- encouraging the child to engage in anti-social behaviour;
- Placing the child in a state of terror or extreme anxiety by the use of threats or practices designed to intimidate them.

Children who are left on their own for long periods, especially in infancy, who do not experience adequate nurturing or who are subject to a large number of caregivers may also come into this category.

Other types of abuse, including Physical Injury, Neglect, Non-organic Failure to Thrive and Sexual Abuse, are likely to include some degree of emotional abuse which, because of its damage to the child's emotional growth and development, may have serious long term effects.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Any child below the age of consent will be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person by design or by neglect cause that child to be involved in any activity that might reasonably be expected to lead to the sexual arousal or gratification of that or any other person, including organised networks. This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated the behaviour.

Sexual abuse may include activities such as incest; rape; sodomy or intercourse with children; lewd and libidinous or homosexual practices towards children; indecent assault of children; taking indecent photographs of children; encouraging children to become prostitutes; or to witness intercourse or pornographic material.

PHYSICAL NEGLECT

This occurs when a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, sleep, nappy changing, clothing, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. A lack of appropriate care (including depriving a child of access to health care) may result in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances that endanger the child. , in its extreme form children can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation. This can lead to serious long term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illness, reduction in potential stature, long term developmental and behavioural problems.

Physical neglect can also occur when an adult carer persistently pursues, or allows a child to pursue, a lifestyle inappropriate to the child's developmental needs or which puts the child's health in jeopardy. It can also arise when a child is left unattended or inadequately supervised, though careful judgment is required as to the appropriateness of any care arrangements.

Possible Signs of a Cause for Concern

Physical Abuse

- Injuries, particularly if they are recurrent.
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
- Refusal to explain and discuss injuries.
- Untreated injuries or delay in reporting them.
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive.
- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Fear of returning home.
- Fear of medical help.
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather.
- Withdrawal from physical contact.
- Self-destructive tendencies.
- Aggression towards others.
- Chronic running away.

Sexual Abuse

- Hint about secrets they cannot tell.
- Say that a friend has a problem.
- Ask if you will keep a secret if they tell you.
- Seem to be keeping secret something which is worrying them.
- Begin lying, stealing, blatantly cheating in the hope of being caught.
- Have unexplained sources of money.
- Exhibit sudden inexplicable changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn or regressing to younger behaviour patterns.
- Stop enjoying previously liked activities, such as music, sports, art, Scouts, Brownies.
- Be reluctant to undress for gym.
- Become fearful of or refuse to see certain adults for no apparent reason.
- Having terrifying dreams.
- Act in a sexual way, inappropriate to their age.
- Draw sexually explicit pictures depicting some act of abuse.
- Start wetting themselves.
- Have urinary infections, bleeding or soreness in the genital, anal or throat areas.

Emotional Abuse

- Fear of parents being contacted.
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive.
- Physical, intellectual and emotional development lags.
- Significant decline in concentration.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Continual self-deprecation.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, constant hair-twisting, excessive thumb-sucking).
- Self-mutilation.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging.
- Indiscriminate friendliness.
- Socio-emotional immaturity.

Neglect

- Constant hunger.
- Emaciation.
- Constant tiredness.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Poor state of clothing.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school;
- Low self-esteem.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. rocking; constant hair-twisting; excess thumb-sucking.
- Limited social relationships.
- Chronic running away.
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging.
- Significant lack of growth.
- Weight loss.
- Hair loss.
- Poor skin or muscle tone.
- Circulatory disorders.

INDEX OF SUSPICION OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Key: **Red** = high probability of sexual abuse occurring
Green = sexual abuse possibly occurring
Blue = one hypothesis amongst many

Under 5

Red

Disclosure
 Genital injuries
 VD
 Vivid details of sexual activity (such as penetration, oral sex, ejaculation)
 Compulsive masturbation (contextually abnormal)
 Sexual drawings
 Sexualised play, with explicit acts

Green

Person specific fear
 Nightmares
 Chronic genito-urinary
 Soreness of genitals/bottom
 Fears of specific situations:
 Fear of being bathed
 Fear of being changed
 Fear of being put to bed

Blue

Developmental regression
 Hostile/aggressive behaviour
 Psychosomatic condition
 HIV

5-12 years

Red

Pregnancy/abortion
 Disclosure
 Genital injuries
 VD
 Explicit sexual stories/poems
 Exposing themselves
 Masturbation in contextually inappropriate fashion
 Promiscuity
 Suicide attempts
 Running away
 Alcohol and drug abuse

Green

Arson
 Soreness of genitals/bottom
 Chronic genitor/urinary infections
 Obsessive washing
 Depression
 Bedwetting/enuresis
 Anal incontinence/encopresis
 Anorexia
 Glue sniffing
 Nightmares
 Truancy
 Unexplained large sums of money/gifts

Blue

Abnormal pains
 Developmental regression
 Peer problems
 HIV
 School problems
 Psychosomatic conditions

12 – 16 years

Red

Disclosures
 Genital injuries
 self mutilation of breasts/genitals
 Pregnancy (under 14)
 VD (under 14)
 Prostitution
 Sexual offending
 Gender identity difficulties

Green

Sexual boasting/stories/jokes
 VD (over 14)
 Pregnancy (over 14)
 Rebellious against men (specific gender)
 Drug and alcohol abuse
 Suicide attempts
 Self mutilation truancy
 Running away
 Hysterical symptoms
 Obsessional washing
 Psychotic episodes
 HIV (though not necessarily a sexually transmitted virus)

Blue

Depression
 Anorexia
 Refusing to attend school
 Peer problems
 Authority problems
 Delinquency
 Psychosomatic conditions

IMPORTANT POINTS

1. Recurrent injuries and concerns
2. Unexplained injuries
3. Untreated injuries
4. A number of different concerns
5. Change in child's behaviour

The Use of Language to Prevent the Contamination of Evidence

All of the following are dependent on the age of the child and the concern or disclosure:

- If you are concerned about a child it is ok to ask them if there is anything that they want to talk to you about. It is all right to explain that you have been a bit worried about them because they seemed a bit down or sad or angry etc.
- Always leave 'the door' open for a child to come back and talk to you.
- "If ever you want to talk to me about anything, I am always here for you, and will make sure I find time to sit and listen to you"
- Never refer to the alleged incident unless a child clearly told you
- Only use words that the child has used
- Do not promise to keep secrets. The very nature of abuse is secretive and you must not collude with this.
- Remember you are not investigating. This is the job of the Social work Department and the Police
- You only need to ask the child one or two questions
- Use very open-ended questions e.g. 'Can you tell me ...?'
- Never introduce new ideas into the conversation
- If a child wants to continue speaking without encouragement from you let them carry on but do not ask any questions
- Explain to the child that you want to help stop what has been happening to them and that means have to talk to
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame

Record of Disclosure

(to be handwritten and handed to the Safeguarding Lead Officer as soon as possible)

Completed by:		Date	
Child's name			
Notes:			
Signed: (person reporting)			
Action Taken:			
Signed: (Head Teacher)		Date:	