

Equal Protection (EP)

From 7 November 2020, it became illegal to physically punish a child. This applies to everyone over the age of 16 in charge of a child. Physical punishment can mean different things such as:

- Smacking
- Skelping
- Hitting
- Slapping

We know you want to do what is best for your child and you might be unsure about what this new law means for you. This doesn't mean you can't take your child away from danger or stop them from getting hurt, if they reach for a boiling kettle or try to run across the road for example. This change is just about making sure that children are protected in the same way as adults are.

All staff have a responsibility to report these incidents or disclosures to the head teacher who then may contact parents / carers to discuss the matter. ***If the head teacher/Head of Centre, or the person deputising for the head teacher/ Head of Centre is of the view that there may be grounds for concern, they will seek advice from the appropriate agency e.g. Police Scotland and/or duty social work.*** They will also signpost parents who require support to appropriate agencies and partners.

You can find out more about this on the Scottish Government [website](#).

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/physical-punishment-and-discipline-of-children-how-the-law-is-changing/>

Some useful contacts in Education can be contacted via the Education Department on 01389 737309

- Senior Officer for Child Protection & Safeguarding – Claire Cusick
- Link Officer for Child Protection & Safeguarding (Clydebank) – Tracy King
- Link Officer for Child Protection & Safeguarding (Dumbarton & Alexandria) – Jo Scott
- Principal Educational Psychologist – Ellen Moran
- Child Bereavement Link Psychologist – Iain Walker
- Health Development Officer – Claire Hubler
- WDC Social Work - 0141 562 8800
- Police 101

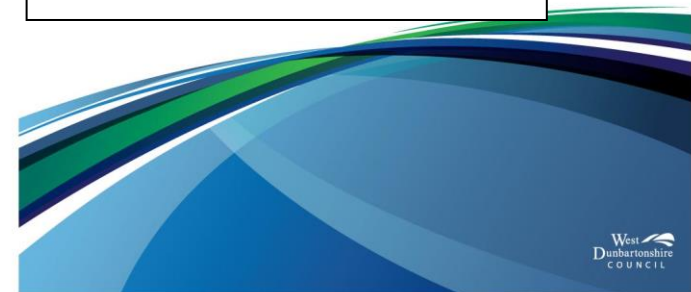
The Child Protection Officer for this establishment is Mrs Joanne Oliver and can be contacted on 01389 774560

Where she is unavailable please contact Mrs Alison Boyles on the same number.

Child Protection & Safeguarding in Education

Our common aims and responsibilities;

- To protect children from abuse and exploitation
- To respond appropriately when abuse is identified
- To ensure that all children are able to exercise their right to be raised in a warm and safe environment with the support of staff, their families and carers
- Staff have a professional and contractual obligation to report suspicions of child abuse



Child Protection is working together with statutory partners to protect a child from abuse or neglect and aims to intervene early enough to prevent abuse or neglect happening in the first place.

Significant harm can result from a specific incident or series of incidents over time.

Categories of Abuse and Indicators of Risk include;

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Non Organic Failure To Thrive
- Domestic Abuse
- Mental Health Issues
- Drug and Alcohol misuse

Some examples of what may make staff concerned can be

- have bruising that is unexplained
- appear angry, afraid or quiet
- appear afraid to go home
- appear hungry, tired or unkempt
- be left unattended or unsupervised at a young age

The child may:

- have too much responsibility for their age
- be acting in a sexually inappropriate way
- be misusing drugs or alcohol

Child Protection (CP)

All staff in educational establishments are required to be aware of child protection issues and are provided with regular information on Child Protection Policy and Procedures. The school maintains close working relationships with all other relevant agencies to ensure appropriate information is shared and that professionals from Social Work and Police Scotland work collaboratively for the wellbeing of the children and young people.

All staff have a responsibility to report concerns regarding the welfare or safety of a child or young person to the head teacher immediately.

If the head teacher/Head of Centre, or the person deputising for the head teacher/Head of Centre is of the view that there may be grounds for concern, they are obligated to contact duty social worker without delay and advise them of the circumstances.

Social Work will then determine how and when parents/carers will be notified.

A triage phone call will always take place with duty social work to agree

Other situations that may be cause for concern can be **if an adult is**

- verbally abusive towards a child (tone, threatening)
- misusing drink or drugs while caring for a child
- acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child
- reporting instances of abuse endured by them when they were younger
- is a member of staff displaying inappropriate behaviour

Grounds for Concern;

- A child says that abuse has taken place or that they feel unsafe
- A third party or anonymous allegation is received
- A child's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statement causes suspicion of abuse.

Any staff concerns about a child's welfare should be reported to the Head/ CP Co-ordinator immediately.

When a child protection concern arises, the establishments Child Protection Coordinator will work with our colleagues in Social Work and/or Police who will then determine how and when parents are contacted. Early Years establishments are also required to notify the Care Inspectorate

