



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Purpose and Scope

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines the measures our school will take to protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation. It is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all children under our care, in compliance with Scottish Government policies and guidelines. The policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors, and ensures that child protection procedures are in place to create a safe environment for all students.

#### 1.2 Legislative and National Guidance

This policy is based on the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#), updated in 2023, and incorporates the principles of **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**, which ensures that every child has the best possible start in life. It aligns with other key legislation and frameworks, including:

- [The Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014.](#)
- [The Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004.](#)
- [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995.](#)
- [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\).](#)

GIRFEC, a core part of Scottish educational and child protection practice, ensures that every child is safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included (SHANARRI indicators). This policy reflects the school's commitment to safeguarding children within the wider context of their wellbeing.

### 2. Definitions

#### 2.1 Child

A child is defined as any person under the age of 18, in accordance with Scottish law and the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

#### 2.2 Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to the proactive steps taken to promote children's welfare and protect them from harm, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect.

## 2.3 Types of Abuse

The **National Child Protection Guidance for Scotland** outlines the main types of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse:** Deliberately inflicting harm on a child's body through physical force.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment that can impact a child's mental and emotional health.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Involvement of a child in sexual activities, including exploitation.
- **Neglect:** Failure to meet a child's basic needs such as food, shelter, and medical care.
- **Exploitation:** Child sexual exploitation involves situations, contexts or relationships in which a person under 18 is given something, such as food, accommodation, drugs.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 Child Protection Coordinators

Albyn School has 3 **Child Protection Coordinators**

#### **Child Protection Coordinators (CPCs):**

- Nichola Crawford (Deputy Head, Pastoral)
- Nathan Davies (Head of Lower School)
- Zibby Brown (Deputy Head, Nursery to P2)

who is responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware of and follow child protection procedures in line with national guidance,
- Responding to concerns or allegations of abuse,
- Maintaining confidential child protection records,
- Liaising with external agencies such as Social Work Scotland, Police Scotland, and the Child Protection Committee.

### 3.2 Albyn School Staff and Volunteers

All school staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Being aware of child protection guidelines and indicators of abuse,
- Reporting any concerns or suspicions to the Child Protection Officer,
- Contributing to multi-agency meetings when appropriate, such as **Child's Plan** meetings in line with **GIRFEC**.

## 4. Procedures

### 4.1 Identifying Concerns

In line with **GIRFEC** and the **National Child Protection Guidance**, staff should be alert to a range of concerns, which could indicate abuse or neglect. These include:

- Unexplained injuries or a child's reluctance to discuss injuries,
- Consistent withdrawal or dramatic behavioural changes,
- Poor attendance or disengagement from school activities,
- Signs of neglect, such as poor hygiene, lack of clothing, or malnutrition.

Staff should consider the SHANARRI indicators (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included) when assessing whether a child's wellbeing is compromised.

### 4.2 Reporting Concerns

If a staff member has concerns about a child's welfare:

1. They must report the concern to the school's **Child Protection Officer** immediately.
2. If it is a well-being concern they must complete the Wellbeing form on [3sys](#) and email the Principal Teacher of Pastoral Support (PTPS) and CPO to state a concern has been raised by the end of that day 7pm.
3. If it is a Child Protection concern it must be reported immediately. Cover / support will be provided in order for you to report your concern. Once you have reported your concern you are required to complete the form on [3sys](#) under Child Protection Concern.
4. The Child Protection Officer will evaluate the concern, referencing **GIRFEC** principles and, if necessary, refer the case to the local authority's **Social Work Services** or other relevant agencies within 24 hours.
5. In urgent situations, where the child's immediate safety is at risk, the police should be contacted directly.

### 4.3 Recording and Confidentiality

All concerns or allegations must be recorded accurately and handled confidentially. Staff should ensure that child protection records are stored securely and only shared with authorised personnel on a need-to-know basis, following [Data Protection \(Scotland\) Regulations](#).

### 4.4 Allegations Against Staff

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the following procedure will apply:

1. The Child Protection Officer will be informed immediately and initiate a preliminary assessment.

2. If required, the staff member may be suspended while the matter is investigated further, either internally or by an external agency such as **Social Work Scotland** or **Police Scotland**.
3. The school will ensure that all actions are taken in line with the **Scottish Government's Guidance on Managing Allegations Against Staff in Schools**. This includes the following steps:
  - Immediate suspension may be considered where there is reason to believe a child may be at risk of significant harm, or where it is necessary to allow an investigation to proceed unimpeded.
  - A formal investigation will be conducted, involving relevant authorities such as **Social Work Scotland** and **Police Scotland**, in accordance with local **Child Protection Committees' guidelines**.
  - The individual facing the allegation will be informed of the concern and provided with appropriate support during the investigation, unless doing so would jeopardise the child's safety or the investigation process.
4. If an allegation is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, which may include dismissal and referral to the [General Teaching Council for Scotland \(GTCS\)](#) or other professional regulatory bodies, as required by law.
5. In cases where allegations are found to be unfounded, every effort will be made to support the staff member and restore their professional reputation. However, regardless of the outcome, the primary concern is always the protection of the child involved.

## 5. Training and Awareness

### 5.1 Training Requirements

Our school is committed to ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and contractors receive regular and appropriate child protection training. This includes:

- **Induction Training:** All new staff and volunteers must complete mandatory child protection training as part of their induction process. This will cover the basics of safeguarding, recognizing signs of abuse, and the procedures for reporting concerns.
- **Annual Refresher Training:** All staff and volunteers will undergo annual refresher courses to ensure they remain informed of the latest child protection legislation, updates to **GIRFEC**, and any changes in school or national procedures. This will be recorded on PASS and in Google.
- **Role-Specific Training:** The **Child Protection Officer** and senior staff will receive advanced training tailored to their responsibilities, including training on managing allegations against staff, responding to complex cases, and multi-agency collaboration.

### 5.2 Raising Awareness

The school is dedicated to fostering a culture of vigilance and awareness about child protection issues. To promote this:

- Copies of this policy will be provided to all staff and volunteers, ensuring they are familiar with the procedures for reporting concerns.
- The **Child Protection Officer** will regularly update staff on child protection issues through meetings, newsletters, and briefings.
- Information for students and families, including how to raise concerns, will be readily available, ensuring children and their families understand their rights and where to go for help.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

### **6.1 Policy Review**

This Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains consistent with current Scottish legislation, government guidance, and best practices. Updates to the **National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland** and **GIRFEC** will be reflected in policy revisions.

### **6.2 Monitoring Compliance**

The **Child Protection Officer** will be responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy. This will include:

- Reviewing all child protection cases handled within the school to ensure they were dealt with appropriately and in accordance with established procedures.
- Conducting audits of child protection training to confirm that all staff are up to date.
- Reporting regularly to the school leadership team and external bodies (such as the **Child Protection Committee**) on child protection matters, as required.

## **7. Code of Conduct for Staff**

### **7.1 Professional Conduct**

All staff and volunteers working in the school are required to adhere to a high standard of professional conduct when working with children. This includes:

- Always acting in the best interests of the child's safety and well-being.
- Ensuring that physical contact with children is appropriate and only occurs in contexts such as first aid, physical guidance, or comforting a distressed child.
- Avoiding being alone with a child in isolated settings without another adult present, where possible.

### **7.2 Prohibited Behavior**

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from:

- Engaging in any form of inappropriate relationship or communication with a child, whether in person or through digital platforms.
- Using abusive, degrading, or inappropriate language when addressing children.
- Failing to report any concerns about the welfare or safety of a child.

## 8. Multi-Agency Partnerships

### 8.1 Collaboration with External Agencies

In line with **GIRFEC** and **National Child Protection Guidance**, our school works closely with external agencies to safeguard children. This includes regular collaboration with:

- **Social Work Scotland** for investigating and managing cases of abuse,
- **Police Scotland** for serious or criminal allegations of abuse,
- **Health Services** to provide additional support to children who may be at risk,
- **Local Child Protection Committees** to ensure our practices remain in line with national and regional child protection protocols.

### 8.2 Child's Plan Meetings

As part of the **GIRFEC** framework, our school participates in multi-agency [Child's Plan](#) meetings to support the well-being of children who require additional support or are at risk of harm. The **Child Protection Coordinator** will attend these meetings and ensure that the school contributes to developing and implementing the child's individual care and protection plan.

### 9.0 Home Education

If a child leaves school to be home educated, the school will always inform the 'home' local authority so that the necessary arrangements can be put in place but most importantly so that LA can identify a suitable names person (as stated in the GIRFEC guidance)

## 10. Conclusion

This Child Protection Policy outlines the commitment of Albyn School to safeguard all students under our care. By aligning with Scottish legislation, **National Guidance for Child Protection**, and **GIRFEC**, we aim to provide a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for every child. Our procedures ensure that any concerns are handled professionally, confidentially, and with the utmost regard for the child's well-being. All staff and volunteers are expected to act in accordance with this policy and to work collaboratively with external agencies to protect children from harm.

### Approved by:

Nichola Crawford- Child Protection Coordinator

**Date:** 1 September 2024 - Updated 2 June 2025 from SCIS Guidance

**Review Date:** 1 June 2026

