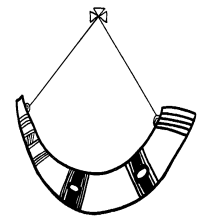




# CRATHES PRIMARY SCHOOL



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



# Crathes School

## Child Protection Statement

### Context

Protecting children and young people and meeting their needs is everyone's responsibility. We are all responsible for reporting concerns about a child's welfare.

Aberdeenshire guidelines for protecting children and young people form part of each and every employee's terms and conditions of service and therefore apply to all members of staff at Crathes School.

The guidelines which will be adhered to by all staff are based on the national guidelines [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014 \(pkc.gov.uk\)](http://pkc.gov.uk) which are set within the wider context of GIRFEC and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and set out common standards for protecting children through inter-agency working.



### Introduction

Children have the right to be protected from abuse and harm at all times and in all situations. This policy guides the school in protecting those rights to help ensure that the child is kept safe. This helps our children have the best start in life, to flourish and become:

- Responsible Citizens;
- Successful Learners;
- Confident Individuals;
- Effective Contributors.

The Children and Young People (SCOTLAND) Act 2014 placed certain aspects of the GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) approach into law. The Act is based on the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Children and Young People's rights and wellbeing are at the centre of how children are supported in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire Council follow the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland which was updated in 2021.

## Staff Roles and Training

The Head Teacher has undertaken Aberdeenshire training.

All staff engage with an annual update on the first day back after the summer break and can access additional training on ALDO (Aberdeenshire Staff Training portal). Detailed policies and procedures from Aberdeenshire Council can be found on the GIRFEC Aberdeenshire Website [GIRFEC Aberdeenshire | Getting it Right for Every Child in Aberdeenshire - Getting it Right for Every Child in Aberdeenshire \(girfec-aberdeenshire.org\)](http://GIRFEC Aberdeenshire | Getting it Right for Every Child in Aberdeenshire - Getting it Right for Every Child in Aberdeenshire (girfec-aberdeenshire.org)). There are also Aberdeenshire Council Child Protection Policy Booklets 1, 2 & 3 stored in Child Protection file in the school office.

At Crathes School Mrs Maureen Fraser (Head Teacher) is the Child Protection Coordinator with overall responsibility for all matters of child protection. In the absence of the HT, Mrs Hazel Crowley (Class Teacher) is the Child Protection Depute and should be contacted. In the absence of the Child Protection Coordinator and Depute, school staff should contact the Head Teacher of one of the cluster primaries or if not available the QIO should be contacted.

Child Protection Coordinator	Maureen Fraser	01330 833229
Child Protection Depute	Hazel Crowley	01330 833229
QIO	Deborah Masson	01467 535391
	Stonehaven Education Office	01569 766960
Social Work Team	Banchory	01330 700417

Staff and volunteers in schools are well placed to observe physical, psychological or emotional changes in children that may indicate some form of child abuse or neglect. Due to the close and trusting relationship that may exist between staff and pupils it may be that a child who is experiencing some form of abuse will share information in some way with them.

It is vital that all staff know what action to take should they have any concerns about a child, or should they receive information which suggests that the child may be experiencing some form of abuse. The procedures outlined in this policy are designed both to safeguard the wellbeing of the child and to ensure that all school staff know how to respond if they are concerned or become aware that a child may have been exposed to abuse.

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed each year. Staff will receive a regular annual briefing on the policy, its operation, and any amendments to it.

Staff and students joining the school during the session will be issued with the policy as part of their induction and Head Teacher should ensure this is the case.

Should anyone wish to talk further about child protection and the safety of children they are welcome to contact the Head Teacher. 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 work, the police or the reporter. Under these circumstances the parent would **not** normally be consulted first.

## Getting it Right For Every Child In Aberdeenshire

All children and young people have the right to be cared for and protected from harm and abuse to grow up in a safe environment in which their rights are respected and their needs are met. Children and young people should get the help they need, when they need it and their wellbeing is paramount.

*Getting it right for every child in Aberdeenshire* is the local route by which the Scottish Government policy "Getting it right for every child" is delivered in Aberdeenshire.

It sets out a vision that we will:

- put the child (and their family) at the centre of everything we do.
- provide earlier intervention to ensure that all children achieve their potential.
- achieve the highest standards of joint working and collaboration to improve outcomes for children.
- take personal responsibility for ensuring that all children achieve their potential.
- focus on improving outcomes for children and young people.

In order to reach their potential our children and young people need to be:

- **Safe,**
- **Healthy,**
- **Active,**
- **Nurtured,**
- **Achieving,**
- **Responsible,**
- **Respected and**
- **Included**

The work on child protection that we carry out within Aberdeenshire Council and with partners is delivered to keep children **safe**. Where we believe that a child may be at risk we will act quickly using our child protection procedures to keep the child **safe**. We will act to ensure that children are protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.

### **What is Child Abuse and Child Neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Abuse or neglect may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be maltreated at home; within a

family or peer network; in care placements; institutions or community settings; and in the online and digital environment. Those responsible may be previously unknown or familiar, or in positions of trust....." (National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, page 20)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, significant harm to the child. Children may be abused in a family, in the community or in an institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

"Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission"

(Protecting Children: A Shared Responsibility)

### **Types of Abuse**

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021), pages 20 - 22 references different types of abuse. Types of abuse are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Child Trafficking
- Criminal Exploitation
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage

**Indicators of risk** include Domestic Abuse, Parental Substance Misuse, Parental Alcohol Misuse, Parental Mental Health, Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Nonengaging family, Child Placing Self at Risk, Neglect, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Trafficking, Female Genital Mutilation (FMG) and Forced Marriage.

### **3 key Questions in Child Protection**

1. Is the child or young person at immediate risk?
2. What is placing the child at immediate risk?
3. What needs to happen to remove this risk?

**If the answer to question 1 is yes, then Child Protection protocols must be followed immediately.**

## How to respond to a Child Protection Disclosure

- Observe
- Listen
- Record
- Report

### **Child Protection Procedures**

#### a) Designated Person

Each school is required to have a designated person responsible for the co-ordination and management of all matters relating to Child Protection. The designated person for **Crathes School** is the **Head Teacher**. In handling cases of suspected child abuse the Child Protection Coordinator works closely with staff in the school, Aberdeenshire Council and partners such as the NHS, Police Scotland and Social Work.

Any member of staff who is concerned about a possible allegation of child abuse should speak to the Child Protection Coordinator. In the absence of the Child Protection Coordinator, staff should contact the Depute Child Protection Coordinator, HT of a cluster primary school or QIO.

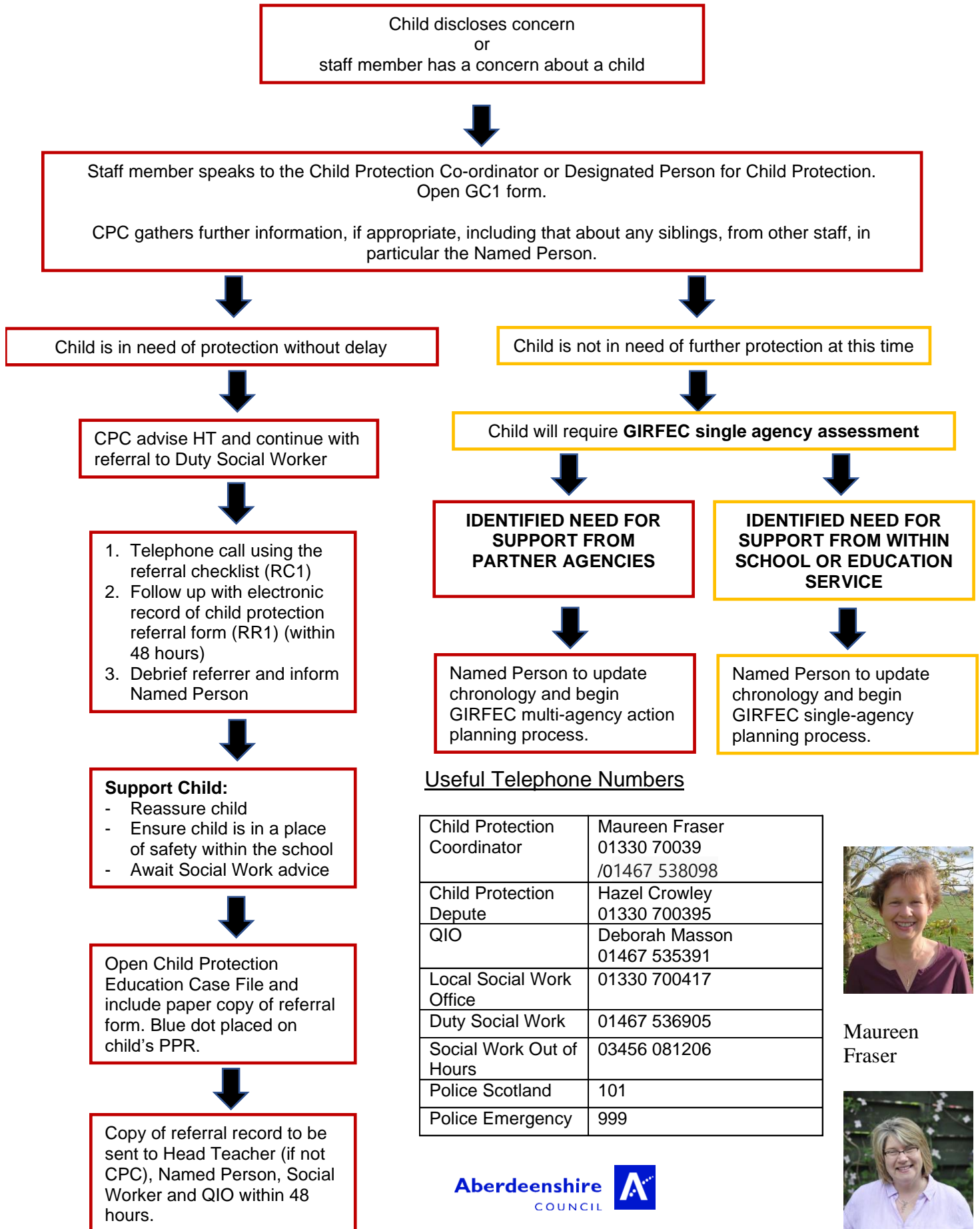
If you become aware of an incident out of hours, or it is not possible to speak to a school contact, **DO NOT WAIT**. Immediately contact the school social work team, 'out of hours' Social Work, or the Police.

#### b) Procedures for school staff to follow in cases of possible child abuse.

Full details of the steps that all staff must follow in cases of suspected child abuse are given in the following flow chart.



# Flow Chart: Child Protection Procedure in Schools Recognising actual or potential harm to a child



## Useful Telephone Numbers

Child Protection Coordinator	Maureen Fraser 01330 70039 /01467 538098
Child Protection Depute	Hazel Crowley 01330 700395
QIO	Deborah Masson 01467 535391
Local Social Work Office	01330 700417
Duty Social Work	01467 536905
Social Work Out of Hours	03456 081206
Police Scotland	101
Police Emergency	999



Maureen Fraser



Hazel Crowley



1. A designated member of staff is responsible for co-ordinating action on child abuse within the establishment. Referrals should normally be through this designated person (HT) but every employee has the responsibility to make a direct referral if this is necessary.
2. Any member of staff suspecting or identifying child abuse, should, without delay, contact the designated member of staff. If contacting the designated person implies delay beyond the end of the school day or community education session, an assessment should be made of the child's safety and, if necessary, a direct referral should be made.
3. Where the designated member of staff judges that there is evidence of abuse or potential danger to a child then he/she must ensure that Social Work is contacted (this to include discussion as to how parents are engaged). It is important that all staff understand that investigation only needs to establish evidence of the need to investigate abuse. A full inquiry by Education staff must be avoided because collection of evidence is a specialist Police/Social Work role. Inappropriate inquiries may prevent successful prosecution.
4. If it is considered that the child required immediate medical attention, contact the Health Centre, Health Visitor, School Doctor or Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital as appropriate. If there is a view that the child may risk further abuse if returned home, the Police and Social Work must be informed as soon as possible and preferably well before the end of the day.
5. When the designated member of staff considers that further investigation is required before suspicions can be confirmed or rejected, he/she can contact social work and any other agency who may be able to assist in any such inquiries or who may have information about the child or family.
6. A Head of Establishment may, of course, at any time draw to the attention of the Reporter (Authority Reporter - Aberdeenshire - 0131 244 8720) to the Children's Panel the circumstances of a child who is believed to be in need of compulsory measures of care. Out of hours emergency number 03456 08 12 06
7. In all cases, incidents should be logged, action taken and recorded in written form using **Appendix 1**. A copy of any such report should be forwarded to the Head of Service designated for the school.

8. It is possible that employees are implicated in abuse. Indeed, any adult or child may be an abuser and research shows that some abuse may be perpetrated by women or men, or women and men acting in partnership. Disclosure should not be discounted because of the status or role of the alleged abuser.
9. A Chronology will be maintained for any concerns that occur on a day to day basis. These should be recorded using the Chronology Form inserted in each pupils PPR. Actions from the concerns should be followed up. Chronologies are also recorded in SEEMIS (Scottish Education Management information System) - Latest Pastoral Notes.

### **Confidentiality**

It is essential that staff do not promise confidentiality to a child or young person. Staff who become aware of a possible child protection case should discuss the matter only with the essential personnel referred to above. Any notes made by staff must be passed on to the designated person.

### **Parental/Carer Information**

Parents/carers are informed that the school has a responsibility to take action if we think that any child has come to harm as a consequence of possible abuse. This information is given through a statement published annually in the School Handbook. This statement informs parents that we are required to refer any cases of possible abuse or neglect directly to the Social Work Department, the Police or the Reporter. Parents are not normally informed if the school has to refer a child to one of these agencies.

### **Advice on dealing with disclosures**

Children will decide for themselves if or when they will disclose information about situations which are worrying them. It is this person's role to reassure the child and gather the information which the child chooses to share with them.

The following guidance on dealing with disclosures are provided to assist staff who may have to respond, either as part of their work role or because they have been trusted by the child.

#### **Listen to what the child has to say**

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Do not interrupt, if the child is swearing, for example.
- Take notes.

## Reassure

- Reassure the child.
- Do not make promises you may not be able to keep, like *"I'll stay with you"*
- Don't promise confidentiality: you have a duty to refer.
- Provide reassurance and alleviate guilt if the pupil refers to it. For example you could say: *"You're not to blame"*.

## Speaking to the child

- Do not 'interrogate' the child for full details. You are not investigating the allegation.
- Do not ask leading questions, for example:  
*"Did he touch your private parts?"*
- Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court.
- Do ask open questions like: *"Anything else to tell me?"*
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Do not ask the child to repeat it all for another member of staff.
- Explain what you must do next and who you have to talk to.

## Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.
- All information recorded should be **clear, concise and factual**.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required later.
- **Record date, time, place**, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, and the **exact words used by the child**. If the child uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used rather than translating them.
- Do not take photographs or video any injuries or bruises. Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising.
- Record statements and what you observe, rather than your interpretation or assumptions.
- Updating and maintaining a child's chronology should include any concerns which have been previously addressed by school. This can help identify emerging child protection concerns and also contributes to the wider assessment of risk / need in a child protection situation. All PPRs have chronology inserted in front of file.

## School Procedures

- Follow the School guidelines.

- Quickly contact the school Child Protection Coordinator or Depute.
- Ensure you have briefed the Child Protection Coordinator or Depute.

### **Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Checks**

The PVG scheme is a Scottish Government scheme. It helps to ensure that those who have regular contact with children through paid or unpaid work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour. The school follows Aberdeenshire Council's Policy on the application of the scheme. Staff and volunteers who work with children will need to be members of the PVG scheme.

## **JOINT INVESTIGATION - POLICE, SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH**

### **Initial Referral Discussion:**

- Discuss with Social Work
- Decide at what stage parents/carers should be informed.
- Plan joint investigation in line with joint investigation guidance.

### **Joint Interviews**

- Presence of person to support child.
- Consideration should be given to whether or not interviewing the child is the most appropriate first step, or whether an alternative course of action for example, interviewing other adults/children is more appropriate.
- The child may wish to have an adult present at the interview for support. This should not be the alleged perpetrator.

### **Parental consent**

It is the responsibility of the Police and Social Worker carrying out the investigation to:-

- a) Arrange for the appropriate parent/carer to be informed of a referral alleging abuse.
- b) Where possible obtain their agreement for any interviews.

The School Child Protection Policy will be revised annually using the following checklist:

<u>Checklist</u>	<u>Evidence</u>
1. Is there a named person responsible for Child Protection?	Head Teacher - Maureen Fraser
2. Is there a copy of the School/ Authority Child Protection Guidelines available for Teachers and new staff?	Sharepoint Office - Child Protection File
3. Is there an annual review of Child Protection requirements?  4. Are there arrangements to inform staff how to keep a chronology record? (Appendix 3)	Annually August In Service training.  Sharepoint and staff signposted to Aberdeenshire Council additional training  Information on filing cabinet in office
5. Are there appropriate curriculum experiences where children may learn about the value of family life?  6. Well-being survey/self-evaluation checks.  7. Pupil Voice opportunities are given to find out if children feel safe and/or what we can do.	Health and Wellbeing (HWB) programme/resources available.  SHANARRI Wellbeing Web - completed termly  Pupil voice through classroom, committees, pupil focus groups and assemblies. Worry Bag - checked daily
8. Do children know who they can talk to about bullying and Child Protection matters?	Teachers Support staff Family Friends Prefects



**For further information and Support:**

Protecting Children in Aberdeenshire - 3 Booklets for Schools

Reporting Child Protection Concerns - Initial Referral Discussions

National Child Protection Guidelines (2021)

Aberdeenshire GIRFEC website [www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org](http://www.girfec-aberdeenshire.org)



**Child Protection Referral form for Establishments**

<b>School Establishment</b>							
<b>Name of Child/Young Person</b>							
<b>Date of Birth</b>		<b>Sex</b>		Male		Female	
<b>Group/Project</b>		<b>Age</b>					
<b>Member of Staff</b>							

**Concerns**

<b>Reported by</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Report received</b>  (Line Manager/Managing Body)			

**Action (what, when, by whom)**

<b>Information shared with</b>	<b>Social Work</b>		<b>Police</b>		<b>Other (Please state)</b>	
<b>Response received from</b>	<b>Social Work</b>		<b>Police</b>		<b>Other (Please state)</b>	
<b>Filed in</b>	<b>Child/Young Persons File</b>				<b>Other (Please state)</b>	

**APPENDIX 2: Framework for Standards****Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards**

- Standard 1** Children get the help they need when they need it.
- Standard 2** Professionals take timely and effective action to protect children.
- Standard 3** Professionals ensure children are listened to and respected.
- Standard 4** Agencies and professionals share information about children where this is necessary to protect them.
- Standard 5** Agencies and professionals work together to assess needs and risks and develop effective plans.
- Standard 6** Professionals are competent and confident.
- Standard 7** Agencies work in partnership with members of the community to protect children.
- Standard 8** Agencies, individually and collectively, demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness

**Policy Reviewed with staff: 21.08.23**

Head Teacher: M Fraser