

Child Protection Policy

Approved: January 2023 / Review: January 2024

bOunceT Innovative Occupational Therapy CIC referred to as "bOunceT". This policy applies to all staff, including Senior Managers and Board of Directors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of bOunceT. The Designated Child Protection Officers (DCPO's) are Callum MacKinnon (Executive Director & Occupational Therapy Lead) & Eliza Grier (Service Manager). They can be contacted via email hello@bouncet.com or phone 01786 643535.

The purpose of this Policy is:

- To protect children and young people who receive bOunceT services. This includes the children who use the service & any siblings/ friends brought along to their sessions.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guides our approach to protecting all children and young people from abuse.
- To ensure all staff are clear about how to identify and respond to concerns about child welfare and wellbeing and especially those that are of a child protection nature
- To ensure all staff have a clear understanding of the principles and practice involved in the protection of children within a GIRFEC framework and applying the principle that every child in Scotland has the right to be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Achieving Responsible, Respected and Included.
- To ensure all staff/volunteers understand the importance of prevention in responding proactively and efficiently to all concerns.

bOunceT believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people within the Scottish Government framework of **GIRFEC** (Getting It Right For Every Child) and keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal Framework

- Children Act (Scotland) 1995.
- Getting it right for Every Child (GIRFEC) 2005
- The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 Child and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland (2014)
- Local CPC procedures/guidance (check your local CPC website for these) We recognise that:
- The welfare of a child is paramount (Children Act (Scotland) 1995)
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their dependency, disability, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's wellbeing and welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening, and respecting them.

- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and training.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made through PVG membership and references.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff, and volunteers.
- Sharing concerns with agencies that need to know including the named person, social work, and police, and involving parents and children appropriately.

Definitions

Who is a child?

For the purposes of this policy the definition of a 'child' or 'young person' is anyone aged under 18 years of age as supported by the Children and Young Person Act (2014). The extension of the use of the term 'child' beyond 16 years of age is to ensure that there is not an abuse of the position of trust that exists in a position of trust relationship. Where a young person aged 16-18 requires protection it must be noted that the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 legislation may apply.

What is Child Protection?

Child protection means protecting a child from child abuse or neglect. Abuse or neglect need not have taken place; it is sufficient for a risk assessment to have identified a likelihood or risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect.

What is Child Abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. 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 or in an institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Assessments will need to consider whether abuse has occurred or is likely to occur. There are four main categories of abuse, Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. The following definitions show some of the ways in which abuse may be experienced by a child, but are not exhaustive, as individual circumstances may vary, staff should be alert to this.

Physical Abuse

The causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer feigns symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child. (This is known as fabricated or induces illness).

- Possible indicators of physical abuse are repeat injuries, inherent suspicious injuries, burns and scalds, fractures, and fabricated/induced illnesses.

Sexual Abuse

Any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or nonpenetrative acts. It may also involve non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, indecent images or watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- Possible indicators of sexual abuse are physical signs such as bruises, scratches or bite marks to thighs or genital areas; or behaviour such as precocity, withdrawal, or inappropriate sexual behaviour

Emotional Abuse

Is the Persistent emotional neglect or ill-treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve the imposition of age – or developmentally, inappropriate expectations on a child. It may also involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger or exploiting/corrupting children. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill-treatments of a child; it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

- Possible indicators of emotional abuse are excessive dependence, attention seeking and self-harming.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of a child's health or development. May involve parent failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, or to protect a child from physical harm or danger or to ensure access to appropriate medical treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, child's basic emotional needs

- Possible indicators of neglect are inadequate clothing, poor growth, poor hunger, and poor hygiene.

Other areas to be aware of...

Bullying

Although bullying is not on its own a category of abuse it is important that staff and volunteers are alert to the impact that bullying can have and this includes online cyber bullying and may be offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour.

- Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which a child/young person or groups feel threatened, abused, or undermined by another individual or group
- Bullying is behaviour that can be defined as a repeated attack of a physical, psychological, social, or verbal nature by those who are able to exert influence over others
- Bullying can take many forms. It may include physical aggression, intimidation, threatening, extorting, pressurising, name-calling or teasing and can be online cyber bullying
- Less obvious examples such as ignoring or excluding someone are also regarded as bullying and their possible effects should not be minimised.
- Bullying can cause stress and can affect a child's health; Further information can be found at <http://www.respectme.org.uk/>

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse in which a person(s), of any age takes advantage of a power imbalance to force or entice a child into engaging in sexual activity in return for something received by the child and/or those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. As with other forms of child sexual abuse, the presence of perceived consent does not undermine the abusive nature of the act.

Further information can be found at the Scottish Government website: <http://www.csethesigns.scot/>

Domestic Abuse

This takes the form of actions that can result in physical, sexual, and psychological harm and suffering for women and children. It is widely unreported, and it is crucial that staff are aware of the signs of domestic abuse.

Further information can be found at Police

Scotland: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/domestic-abuse/>

Forced marriage

This is not condoned in Scotland and is an abuse of human rights. Children who are forced or subjected to emotional, physical, or sexual abuse as a result, are protected by the Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Act 2011.

Further information can be found by calling the forced marriage

Helpline on 0800 027 1234 which is open 24 hours or by visiting:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/crimes/forced-marriage>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

It is an offence in Scotland to carry out this procedure or carry it out (or arrange to carry it out) abroad, even in countries where it is legal.

Further information on FGM can be found at:

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/resourcesforprofessionals/minorityethnic/female-genitalmutilation_wda96841.html A 24-hour FGM advice line is available through the NSPCC by calling: 0800 028 3550

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is a non-specific word and may mean different things to different people. In the Scottish Government's published Revised Prevent Duty guidance: for Scotland (2015), radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Staff and volunteers should understand what radicalisation means and why people may be vulnerable to it.

Further information can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445978/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_Scotland_V2.pdf

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Children are recruited, moved, or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- child sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- criminal activity such as pickpocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Further information can be found at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-trafficking-and-modern-slavery>

Designated Child Protection Officer

The Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) for bOunceT who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children is: Callum MacKinnon (Director/ Occupational Therapy Lead) & Eliza Grier (Service Journey Officer).

They can be contact via email on hello@bouncet.com or call 07903 323413.

The role of the DCPO is to:

- To act as the first point of contact for staff or volunteers concerned about the safety and welfare of a child.
- To be responsible for contacting the Child's 'Named Person' or Social Work Department in cases where a child is at risk of harm.
- To be familiar with Child Protection Committees (CPC) procedures
- To ensure that all staff/volunteers know where they can find the child protection policy and procedures.
- To liaise with appropriate local agencies for support and advice and know where to find local contacts.
- To organise training of staff about how to respond to child protection concerns and advise of training needs
- To collect monitoring data on all welfare, wellbeing, and child protection activities across the organisation.
- To support staff reporting concerns and advise as appropriate and make appropriate decision about the actions to take to protect children.
- To demonstrate an awareness and understanding of current issues within the field of keeping children and young people safe, such as child sexual exploitation and online safety.
- To lead on reviewing, updating, and developing training in child protection policy and procedures in Scotland – and monitoring its implementation.

Child protection procedures

Children and young people from birth to 18, or beyond if still in school, will have a Named Person to help support their wellbeing within the **GIRFEC** approach. The Named Person is a central point of contact if a child, young person, or their parent(s) want information or advice, or if they want to talk about any worries and seek support. They can also, when appropriate, reach out to different services

who can help. The Named Person will be the headteacher, or guidance teacher or other promoted member of staff - for a school age child. For Pre-school children this will be their health visitor.

The Named Person will be a point of contact for the bOunceT for any concerns about a child's welfare and wellbeing, the Named Person will carefully consider the situation by asking five questions:

1. What is getting in the way of this child's or young person's wellbeing?
2. Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
3. What can I do now to help this child or young person?
4. What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
5. What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

Once they have considered the situation, a Named Person will discuss this with the child's parent(s) and other appropriate professionals if required, to assess what needs to be done to improve the child's or young person's wellbeing. They will then plan what action(s) will be taken with the child or young person and their parent(s) and arrange appropriate review dates for the plan. Each situation and concern will be unique to the child or young person, and the way they are supported will be tailored to their individual needs. If a matter is serious enough then a referral will be made to Social Work Services or Police Scotland.

Code of Safe Conduct for Staff/Volunteers –

- Wherever possible avoid spending time with young people unobserved.
- Where necessary invite young person to bring a friend, move into view of others or leave the door open.
- Where a private conversation is necessary inform another member of staff of your whereabouts and approximately how long you will be with the young person.
- Workers and volunteers should watch out for each other. Are colleagues being drawn into situations that could be misinterpreted? How colleagues' view each other's practice will be how outsiders will view it including parents.
- Be aware of any physical contact with a young person. Where necessary for example when there has been an accident ensure that you are treating the person for the injury. Do not continue with any additional contact wherever it is unnecessary.
- Do not have or be perceived to have favourites.
- Do not give lifts to young people outside agreed activities.
- Do not take young people to your home. Always make sure that you made a record of any home visit and your manager was aware of this.
- Where it is necessary to take a young person in your car ensure that your manager/colleague is aware of this and approximately how long you will be. Take a mobile phone to communicate any reasons for delays. Ask the young person to sit in the back.
- Do not use physical punishments or any action that involves locking up a child.
- Do not arrange meetings outside working hours
- Do not develop social relationships with young people using the service. If you come into contact with a service user in a social setting, try and move away, if this is not possible try and maintain a professional distance. Pay attention to your own behaviour in such a setting.
- Do not buy goods or use the services of service users or their friends.

- Do not accept any money or gifts from service users. Tell young people of the project policy and ensure the service user does not feel offended.
- Do not give money or gifts to service users.
- Do not borrow money from service users.
- Do not 'friend' or 'follow' on any social media sites.

Staff Codes of Conduct –

Royal College of Occupational Therapists Professional standards defined by the College raise the quality, safety and effectiveness of Occupational Therapy:

<https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/rcot-publications/downloads/rcot-standardsand-ethics> For more information please refer to:

- The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct describes a set of behaviours and values to promote and maintain good and safe professional practice in occupational therapy. It applies to all members, associate members and students and is available for reference by service users, employers, and commissioners. It also includes the College's Code of Continuing Professional Development – <https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/rcot-publications/downloads/rcot-standards-and-ethics>
- The Professional Standards for Occupational Therapy Practice will enable all occupational therapy staff to monitor and improve their practice and demonstrate to others the quality of service that can be expected from occupational therapists. The standards are underpinned by legislation, national policy and HCPC regulation requirements. They have been produced in alignment, and should be read in conjunction with, the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. The audit tool can be used to monitor, review and develop practice. The Professional standards for occupational therapy practice are produced by the College in consultation and collaboration with its members. They are developed in line with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) standards, in order to support members in meeting their requirements. Reviewed every five years, the standards are an essential and practical guide for all members of the occupational therapy profession. They should be read alongside the Code of ethics and professional conduct (COT 2015). <https://www.rcot.co.uk/publications/professional-standards-occupational-therapy-practice-conduct-and-ethics>

Audit

Is a cyclical process of setting standards and checking your practice against them. Where you do not meet the standards, you need to identify what changes need to be made, by whom and by when. After the changes have been made, you need to re-audit this area to see if you now meet the standard. The results of your audit should be included in your continuing professional development (CPD) portfolio, along with your other evidence of learning and development.

Disclosure of abuse

WHAT TO DO

- If a child discloses abuse, remember that this may be the beginning of a legal process, as well as of a process of recovery for the child. Legal action against a perpetrator can be

seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in any way. The following guidance should be followed as far as possible:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive (see bottom panel).
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push the child to tell you more than she wishes.
- Write an account of the conversation immediately. Put the date and timings on it, and mention anyone else who was present. Then sign it, and hand your record in to your designated child protection officer, who should contact the child's named person or local children and family social work office where appropriate.
- All subsequent events affecting the child need to be recorded, up to the time of any formal interview takes place.

Other important issues

- Children need to know that they will be listened to, and their concerns will be taken seriously, so it is a good idea to display information about helplines and peer support schemes.
- Children will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust. The person a child talks to will not necessarily be a senior staff member.
- Any member of staff or volunteer who is approached by a child wanting to talk should listen positively and reassure the child.
- The way a staff member talks to a child in such situations may have an effect on the evidence that is put forward if the case goes to court. It is important that staff do not jump to conclusions, ask leading questions, or put words in a child's mouth.
- Staff and volunteers should be aware that: -
 - it is not their responsibility to investigate suspected cases of abuse
 - they should not take any action beyond that in their organisation's procedures and
 - they cannot promise a child complete confidentiality
 - they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

If we have concerns, we MUST ACT – it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child, or we may prevent other children from being hurt.

If you wish to remain anonymous when you report a case of suspected child abuse, you can. However, it is helpful if you give your contact details as there might be further information you could give. The family will not be given your details unless you agree. Any information about you will be treated with care. Any details, including your name, will not be revealed unless the child's safety requires it. Even if you do not give your name, enquiries can still be made into the child's care and welfare. However, withholding your name may make it more difficult for those looking into these concerns. Any information you give may need to be shared with other professionals to ensure appropriate action is taken to protect the child. What happens next? When you contact a professional about your concern that a child is being abused, unless the child is in immediate danger, they will make some initial enquiries before taking action. They will check whether the child is known to Services, such as

Education, Health, Police and Social Service professionals. All information will be treated seriously and acted upon. This may lead to immediate action or a more planned response. You will be advised of the process in the case of suspect child abuse, but the outcome of an investigation will remain confidential.

Police Scotland – 999 (Emergencies) / 101 (concerns about a child) Children’s Panel: 0300 200 1555

Recording Purpose of recording

- Allows for a chronology of what happened and when it happened • Shows history of events and allows analysis of any patterns
- Allows for continuity in absence of worker
- Shows actions taken by staff
- Provides accountability – agency, staff, and caller
- Provides a basis for evidence in court
- Provides information for enquiry, statistics, research
- Highlights staff training and development needs.

Checklist for a good record

- Structured and easily accessible
- Legible
- Clear and concise
- Author’s meaning clearly conveyed
- Includes all relevant information
- Free from jargon and abbreviations
- Separates fact from opinion
- Professional judgment supported by evidence
- Decisions reached with worker are clearly recorded
- Signed and dated and timed.

Practice issues

1. Be specific – what is the exact nature of the concern and which category of abuse does it suggest.
2. Show the evidence – what did you see, hear? Who said what, when how?
3. Be precise with time words – what does always, frequent, never mean.
4. State your professional judgment.
5. Ensure your professional judgment is support by the evidence.

Numbers to contact:

NSPCC – 0808 800 5000 (365 days per year, 24/7)

Social Work:

Stirling Council: Stirling Council, Viewforth, 14-20 Pitt Terrace, Stirling, FK8 2ET

During the day you can contact Stirling Council Social Work with concerns on 01786 471177.

Out of Hours (after 5pm and weekends) you can contact the team on 01786 470500.

If it is an emergency, contact the Police: 999 emergency number or 101.

Falkirk Council: Municipal Buildings, West Bridge Street, Falkirk, FK1 5RS

If you're worried about a child, please tell us. You can contact us: *Contact: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm: 01324 506070. All other times: 01786 470500*

Clackmannanshire Council: Kilncraigs, Greenside Street, Alloa, FK10 1EB

Contact: Day time- 01259 225000. Night time/ weekends- 01786 470500

Approved by Director with Significant Control

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What happens next?

When you contact a professional about your concern that a child is being abused, unless the child is in immediate danger, they will make some initial enquiries before taking action. They will check whether the child is known to Services, such as Education, Health, Police and Social Service professionals. All information will be treated seriously and acted upon. This may lead to immediate action or a more planned response. You will be advised of the process in the case of suspect child abuse, but the outcome of an investigation will remain confidential. Just remember: if you are concerned about a child speak to someone. This might be a health visitor, nursery staff, teacher, GP, police officer, your social worker or a member of staff from social work locality offices.

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- Highlights staff training and development needs.

Child Protection Policy Flowchart

Steps to be taken by staff when an allegation of possible harm or risk of harm and abuse is reported which **does not** implicate a worker.

