



ESOL Scotland

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

ESOL Scotland provides English classes to adults (over 18). Staff and volunteers, however, do come into contact with children and young people from time to time. This policy reflects ESOL Scotland's commitment to child protection and advises all parties of the procedure that must be followed if a child or young person is at risk of harm (or suspected of being at risk of harm). All agencies have a duty to report child protection concerns, whether or not they work directly with the child. Social Work Services have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. It is entirely the task of Social Services and Police to investigate suspicions/disclosures of abuse.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that staff and volunteers are recruited with safeguarding in mind
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibility to safeguard any children and young people they come into contact with
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and learners are aware of their duties to take steps to prevent the abuse of all children and young people whom they come into contact with
- Clarify definitions of abuse
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Provide guidance on reporting suspected abuse
- Provide guidance on confidentiality
- Provide guidance on recognition and signs of abuse

Scope

- All staff and volunteers contracted by or working with ESOL Scotland
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to ESOL Scotland, including but not limited to the following: volunteers; consultants; contractors; visitors, including journalists, celebrities and politicians.



KEY PRINCIPLES

From the UN convention on the rights of the child:

- Every child has the right to be cared for and protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Every child has the right to grow up in a safe environment in which their rights and needs are respected.
- Every child has the right to be treated as an individual.
- Every child who can form a view on matters affecting him or her has a right to express those views if he or she wishes.
- Any intervention by a public authority in the life of a child must be properly justified and should be supported by services from all relevant agencies working in collaboration.
- Every child has a right to a positive sense of identity.

Further information on this can be found here

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/human-rights/childrens-rights/> and on ESOL Scotland's website.

In support of these principles, the overarching themes of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and Children Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011 are:

- The child's view should be taken into account in decisions that affect their lives
- The welfare of the child is paramount
- No court or children's hearing should make an order unless they consider that to do so would be better for the child than making no order

Under this act "child" means a person under the age of eighteen, and the standards protecting children and young people are:

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

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Scotland's national approach for supporting children is called Getting IT Right for Every Child (GIFREC). For more information on this in Glasgow, please visit <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/girfec>

CHILD ABUSE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Abuse and serious neglect occur in all sectors of our society. In all communities there will be children who are being abused, adults who have been deeply scarred by childhood abuse and people who are currently abusing or have abused children.

Not all abuse is wilfully perpetrated, by adults who are consciously seeking to harm a child. When social workers investigate allegation of abuse they are required to take into account a range of factors (e.g. social, environmental, emotional, financial), which may have led to a child being abused or neglected.

Categories of Abuse:

[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland \(2014\)](#) categorises abuse as below. Child abuse may be repetitive or serial or may be an isolated case.

Physical abuse: where a parent (or someone else caring for the child) physically hurts, injures or kills a child. This includes female genital mutilation (FGM).

Sexual abuse: involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activity they do not fully comprehend and to which they are unable to give informed consent.

Emotional abuse: where children are harmed by constant lack of love and affection. Emotional abuse includes taunting, shouting, ridiculing, negative criticism, threats or verbal attacks.

Neglect: where carers fail to meet the basic needs of the child such as adequate food and clothing and/or fail to ensure that appropriate medical treatment is obtained or that a child is appropriately supervised. This includes '**non-organic failure to thrive**'. Some children fail to thrive because of organic reasons (e.g. health difficulties). Others can fail to thrive because of non-organic reasons such as inadequate diet and lack of emotional support.

Specific circumstances

All families can be subject to challenging life circumstances and this can result in a harmful situation for children and young people. It is important to note that this is an increase in risk but not inevitable. Domestic abuse, poor parental mental



health and drug or alcohol abuse increases the risk to the child and this risk should be assessed with the child's needs as a priority. A child may also be at risk from abuse or harm from circumstances outside the home, including ritual abuse, trafficking, bullying and harm from online activity.

Sources of harm

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting or failing to act to prevent significant harm to a child. This is usually an adult the child trusts. Children may be abuse or harmed by:

- family member(s) -immediate or extended
- other adults or children know to them
- professionals or
- more rarely by a stranger.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Within ESOL Scotland everybody has responsibility to reduce harm to children and address any concerns arising. There are specific responsibilities for each role with the organisation.

- All parties will contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that is safe for learners and children.
- All parties will report any concerns about child protection to the appropriate person IMMEDIATELY.
- **Child protection concerns need to be reported verbally immediately and followed up by a written (or typed) referral on a Child Protection Concern form (Appendix 1) as soon as practically possible.** It is not appropriate to report child protection concerns in an email or staff updates as these are not guaranteed to be dealt with promptly.

ESOL Scotland responsibilities

The Board of Directors have responsibility for the overall governance of organisational practice and decision making including child protection.

The Board of Directors have a responsibility to:

- Ensure all staff (and volunteers) have access to, are familiar with and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- Ensure staff will be provided with proportionate and role specific training in relation to their role and responsibilities in promoting the well-being and protection of children.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are recruited, with safe recruiting procedures and no one will come into to contact with vulnerable people without this.

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- Ensure that any staff or volunteer working in direct contact with children is subjected to an Enhanced Disclosure (PVG)
- Ensure staff carry out their responsibilities with regards to this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects children
- Ensure partners, including creche providers have child protection policies, procedures and risk assessments in operation.
- Ensure risk assessments are in place and consider child protection.
- Ensure all concerns about child protection are followed up and this policy is implemented.
- Ensure staff and volunteers have access to support and supervision.
- Monitor and review this policy annually

Managers have a responsibility to:

- Carry out the organisational responsibilities, as delegated.
- Take verbal reports from staff/volunteers/learners/partners where a child is thought to be at risk from harm or abuse
- Assess what action is required to keep a child safe and considers whether the risk is immediate or cumulative
- Report concerns to Social Work Services and/or police
- Ensure concerns are recorded and open an incident file, noting any times, dates.
- Support staff member or volunteer, following an incident
- Regularly participate in support and supervision, with their line manager.
- Maintain confidentiality, but informing staff team on a need to know basis
- Follow up case with Social Work Services and/or police as required.
- Keep board informed of incidents

Staff have a responsibility to:

- Have an awareness of child protection concerns
- Identify when they think a child is at risk from harm or abuse
- Take verbal reports from volunteers/learners/partners where a child is thought to be at risk from harm or abuse
- Speak immediately to a manager about any concern
- Call the police in an emergency
- Complete a Child Protection Concern Form (as soon as possible)
- Support a volunteer to complete a form (where necessary)
- Support a volunteer, following an incident
- Regularly participate in support and supervision, with their line manager.
- Ensure Child Protection Concern Forms are available at each site.



Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Have an awareness of child protection issues
- Report any concerns or disclosures to a member of staff immediately
- Fill in a Child Protection Concern Form (using guidelines)
- Call the police in an emergency

HANDLING DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE and REPORTING

Children and young people do disclose abuse to trusted adults. Most abuse is identified by teachers, health visitors, doctors, social workers and other children's workers who are in regular, often daily contact with children and their families.

Many people worry about this aspect of child protection work. This is understandable. Hearing a child disclose abuse can be very hard indeed for the listener. Disclosure of abuse can trigger all kinds of responses in us and make us want to react in ways that will not necessarily help the child or the situation. We should always aim to ensure that our feelings, thoughts and actions are kept in balance.

People in contact with child may have concerns that they are at risk of abuse or harm without the child disclosing anything.

All concerns should be dealt with in the following way:

Follow the reporting procedure, Appendix 1

- **Listen** to disclosure OR **observe** something of concern
- **Tell** the development worker/line manager IMMEDIATELY
- Maintain **confidentiality** by referring the incident to the line of reporting **only**
- **Write** down what happened (Appendix 3 available at all venues)
- Get **Support**

In the event that a child discloses abuse or harm, be familiar with this good practice (appendix 3)

CONFIDENTIALITY

Child protection concerns must be passed on to a manager and cannot remain confidential. Personal information given to ESOL Scotland staff about



learners and their families is confidential (see confidentiality policy) but **must be disclosed for the purposes of protecting children**. However, all information will remain confidential within the line of reporting. (Appendix 1) Information will be shared with social work services promptly and effectively when necessary, in line with this policy. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and will be kept securely at all times.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The usefulness and implementation of the policy will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team and will be monitored using:

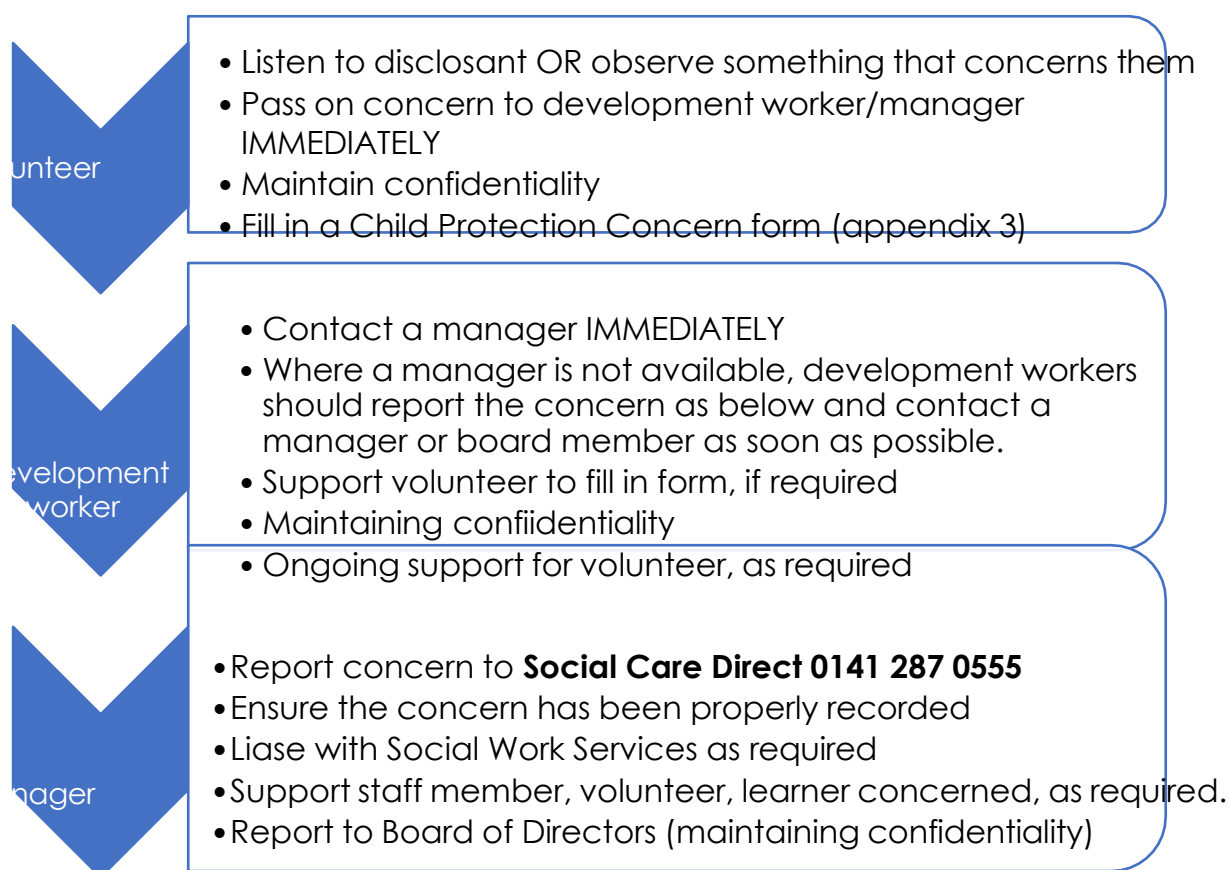
- reviewing incidents that have occurred
- monitoring compliance with legislation.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Code of Conduct | Safeguarding Policy |
| Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy | Whistleblowing Policy |
| Recruitment Policy | Adult Protection Policy |
| Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy | Volunteer Policies |
| Complaints Policy | Confidentiality Policy |

APPENDIX 1 – CHILD PROTECTION - REPORTING A CONCERN OR DISCLOSURE

Volunteer has a concern about child protection or receives a disclosure of harm from a child or adult, regarding the safety of a child.



In an immediate emergency, call the police on **999**

Managers will contact:

Social Work Direct **0141 287 0555**

Out of hours **0300 343 1505**

Or Scottish Police non-emergency **101**

For more information:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/19752/Report-Concerns-About-a-Child>



APPENDIX 2 - GOOD PRACTICE

CHILD PROTECTION - Disclosures of harm or abuse

Do not attempt to investigate – investigation of abuse is the responsibility of the police and/or social work departments.

Don't promise confidentiality– any concerns **must** be passed on immediately to your named contact. You can tell the child/young person/adult this. Adults or parents do not need to be informed, especially when it is likely to increase harm to the child. In cases of child protection, data protection does not apply in the usual way.

Listen and only ask open questions – Listen carefully and be fully attentive to the child or adult during their disclosure or allegation of abuse. Avoid asking leading questions and keep your questions to a minimum. Open questions ensure that we do not put words into a child's mouth. Children like to please and be seen to say the right things. Closed or leading questions can lead to children agreeing to, or saying things that they think adults want to hear. This could affect a case at a later date.

Don't make value judgements – making value judgements about an abuser and what has taken place will do nothing to help the child. It is worth remembering that even when children have been abused by their parents, they usually still love them and do not want to hear them condemned by another person.

Reassure – remember that, for most children, it will have taken tremendous courage to tell. We should reassure a child by making sure they understand that they were right to have told us.

Describe the next step – always tell the child what you will do next, who you are going to tell and why you need to do something.

Speak to the person in the organisation who has responsibility for child protection – remember that this is the person who has the responsibility for ensuring that disclosure or concerns about abuse are effectively handled.

Write down what you have been told – try to write exactly what the child said to you and the phrases he or she used. This should be written on a child protection concern form and passed on to a manager and stored confidentially.

Ask for support for yourself – handling a disclosure of abuse can leave you feeling overwhelmed and vulnerable.



**APPENDIX 3 –
CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN FORM - Initial report form for disclosure/allegations
of abuse**

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Name of person noting concern: | Date (reference): |
| Please circle: Volunteer Staff Member Manager Other | |
| Name of child (if known): | |
| Age (if known): | |
| Address and telephone number (if known): | STAFF ONLY |
| Name of parent/carers (if known): | |
| Name of other siblings (if known): | |
| Any special circumstances relating to the child (e.g. special needs, health and welfare issues): | |
| What is the nature of the concern? (Please circle) Disclosure Incident Signs or Indicators Other | |
| If a child has disclosed abuse, Date: Name(s): Time: | |



Details of the concern.

If a child has disclosed abuse, record as quickly as possible what the child said.
Remember that this should be as accurate as possible

Who else was present at the time of disclosure/incident/initial concern?

If known, record the name(s) of the person or persons implicated in the abuse.

Date and time discussed with development worker (if relevant) Date: Name(s):
Time:

Date and time discussed with manager
Date: Name(s):
Time:

Date and time referral to social work or police
Date: Name (of caller):
Time: Name (of SS or police):

Advice given from social services or police

What advice was given about liaising with the child's parent/carers?



Concerned Person Signed

Name (print):

Date

Development Worker Signed

Name (print):

Date

Manager Signed

Name (print):

Date

This form must be kept in a confidential file. Information given in this form must only be disclosed to relevant persons on a need to know basis.

☐ Additional paper attached (number of pages)



APPENDIX 4 –

CHILD PROTECTION – Follow up recording

To be filled in by managers, or staff member appointed by manager ONLY

Case number: initial concern date: _____

| Date | Brief facts e.g. appointment made, referrals | Staff present | Ma nag er Sign atur e |
|------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
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