

Child Protection Policy

Health and Social Care Standards:

3.14 I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

3.20 I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

3.21 I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm.

3.22 I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made.

Stramash, as an organisation, is committed to ensuring the wellbeing and welfare of all children in its care. Stramash acknowledges that the child's welfare and wellbeing are paramount and that there is a duty of care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding all children in accordance with the guidance produced by the Scottish Government and the Care Inspectorate, as well as support from local authority social work teams.

Stramash recognises the responsibility to recognise and report any signs of abuse or harm in the children in its care. The ***National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014)***¹ sets out expectations that agencies should work together, where appropriate, to respond to concerns early and effectively, ensuring that practice is consistent and of high quality. Stramash will report to and work in partnership with relevant agencies to ensure the wellbeing and safety of each child in its care.

Stramash also takes guidelines from the ***Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)***² approach and the ***United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child***³ when dealing with matters of child protection. Stramash fully advocates keeping the child at the centre, and doing what is best for each child's individual welfare and wellbeing.

This policy will outline the intentions of Stramash to:

- Prevent abuse to those in its care;
- Ensure staff understand what their responsibilities are;
- Ensure staff are trained to recognise abuse and how to report abuse;
- Promote best practice in regards to child protection (disclosure, recording, on-going cases)

¹ [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland \(2014\) Scottish Government](#)

² [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) Scottish Government](#)

³ [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Stramash recognises that it is the responsibility of all adults (staff, volunteers, students and visitors) to prevent abuse from occurring: either during session times by adults in the setting, or where suspected out with session times by other adults.

In order to protect the children in its care, Stramash follows the guidelines outlined in the ***Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment*** (2016)⁴ guidance, released by the Care Inspectorate. This guidance outlines the safe protocols for the recruitment of staff - from screening to seeking references from a previous employer. Stramash staff will ensure that the protocols laid out in this guidance, and then replicated in the Recruitment Policy and Process document are followed through for each recruitment.

In addition, Stramash's Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Policy outlines that no adult will be allowed to work on site with children without an updated check being carried out **before** their start date.

Each adult will receive an induction upon the acceptance of their role at Stramash. Stramash recognises the importance that staff are trained right from induction to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse (including the signs known as softer signs of abuse), understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be facing abuse either in or outwith the setting.

Information on child protection, signs of abuse, contact details and reporting protocol are available on all Stramash sites, and online on the Stramash Google Drive. Stramash staff are expected to be aware of these information packs as highlighted in the induction process, in weekly team meetings and as standing agenda points on the senior team meetings (held monthly).

Each setting will ensure that there is a designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) with overall responsibility for child protection. They will be responsible for ensuring all relevant procedures are followed when a child protection case arises - in most cases this will be the Team Leader.

Procedures

All staff have a role in relation to Child Protection and it is imperative that the appropriate procedures are followed in relation to Reporting, Recording and External Agency Recording. Staff need to understand their own role and the roles of other services when responding to concerns about a child.

In order to enable staff to fulfil their responsibilities, Stramash will ensure annual Child Protection awareness raising and training for **all** staff regardless of their role within the organisation. *For more information about the responsibilities of each staff member, please see the Roles and Responsibility Guidance in the Child Protection Pack.*

⁴ [Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment \(2016\) Care Inspectorate](#)

In addition to annual Child Protection training, all staff will be involved in the process of continuous reflection and evaluation of practise and understanding of child protection through team meetings. Child protection is a standing topic for all staff meetings (local and senior team) where reflection upon practise, scenarios and understanding of detecting, recording and reporting are regularly reviewed.

Stramash staff must ensure that recording devices are only used in line with the Stramash Photographs/Recording Devices policy. At no point will footage be taken of a child that puts them at risk of harm or exploitation. *For more information, please see the Stramash Photographs/Recording Devices Policy and Guidelines on use of photographs and video document in the Child protection pack.*

Reporting

Staff must report any concerns they have about a child to the Team Leader within the setting. Information can be disclosed in a number of ways including:

- A child indicates or discloses harm
- A third party discloses the possibility of harm
- You are concerned that a child is or may be being harmed
- You have witnessed or heard something that causes you concern about a child's safety.

Staff are not to investigate further into any concerns of potential harm whether they are reported to you by another person or are identified and raised by you personally. All relevant information must be reported without delay, and the Team Leader will decide upon subsequent action.

Initial information and basic facts that relate to that concern must be recorded: what, where, when and by whom. Write these down as soon as possible after the discovery/disclosure. Staff must not ask leading questions or make assumptions. All information must be recorded on the Child Protection Chronology Form. Furthermore, a Record of Concern may be completed depending on the circumstances and may be held in house or sent to external agencies as deemed appropriate.

It is recognised that each local authority documents Child Protection reports slightly differently, although all within the same premise - where there is an official council document to be used, this will be in the place of the Stramash equivalent - ie under the Highland Council a Form 1 will replace the Record of Concern form from Stramash. In all instances, data must be recorded and stored appropriately.

Recording

It is important to record all information about children and their families within the Child Protection Chronology. This will ensure a record of all facts and procedures that have been followed as well as agencies that have been spoken to or consulted with as appropriate.

When completing the Child Protection Record Form only facts are to be recorded, including what has actually been said by a child or another person. The **actual words** used must be recorded as well as details of the time and place and any other relevant information.

These documents are shared with only the appropriate agencies, and are otherwise stored in the child's personal file.

External Agency Reporting

The CPO will make the decision as to when to report to external agencies with regard to reported concerns relating to the safety of a child and child protection. Staff may be required to cooperate and work with multi agency colleagues in responding to and supporting children and families who may be subject to ongoing child protection procedures and responses.