

**Protecting Children -
Instructions and Procedures for
Staff in Educational Establishments
August 2024**

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SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL STAFF

INTRODUCTION

The procedures outline the responsibilities of education personnel in relation to protecting children. The procedures apply to all establishments including schools, nurseries, off-site education centres, and all support services. They are integral to the Council's [Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures](#) from Dundee's [Child Protection Committee Website](#), that outline child protection processes within the city and align closely with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021- updated 2023 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023/>

The [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) also sets out roles and responsibilities. These instructions sit within Dundee's staged intervention approach to GIRFEC, Team Around the Child, and aim to keep all of Dundee's children safe and well and to give them access to all necessary support.

The guidelines are set out in 5 parts to ensure that information is easily accessible and relevant to those accessing it. Hyperlinks have been included wherever possible.

Under the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021- updated 2023 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023/>, all agencies who work with children have a responsibility to protect them and to safeguard their well-being. In the event of a concern being raised about a child, all education personnel are expected to work closely with all other relevant agencies. Attentive listening and accurate recording is essential at all stages, from initial concern to disclosure, investigation and monitoring.

The term **child** within these procedures refers to all children and young people in educational provision and under 18 years of age. The term **parent** means all persons deemed in law to have parental responsibilities for the child. Note: some agencies have differing definitions of child and different parameters of service delivery.

Child protection sits within the [Getting it Right for Every Child](#) (GIRFEC) framework of support, within the context of [The Promise](#), with its emphasis on listening to children and understanding their lived experience, with the [Early Years Framework](#) and within a rights based approach, incorporating the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#).

GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people in eight areas, known as Wellbeing Indicators. Children and young people must be healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included and safe. The primary indicator for child protection is to keep a child **safe** and, in so doing, attention is given to other areas of wellbeing as appropriate.

See [CFS Getting it right for every child](#) for core GIRFEC information.

Child Protection processes use the key components of GIRFEC:

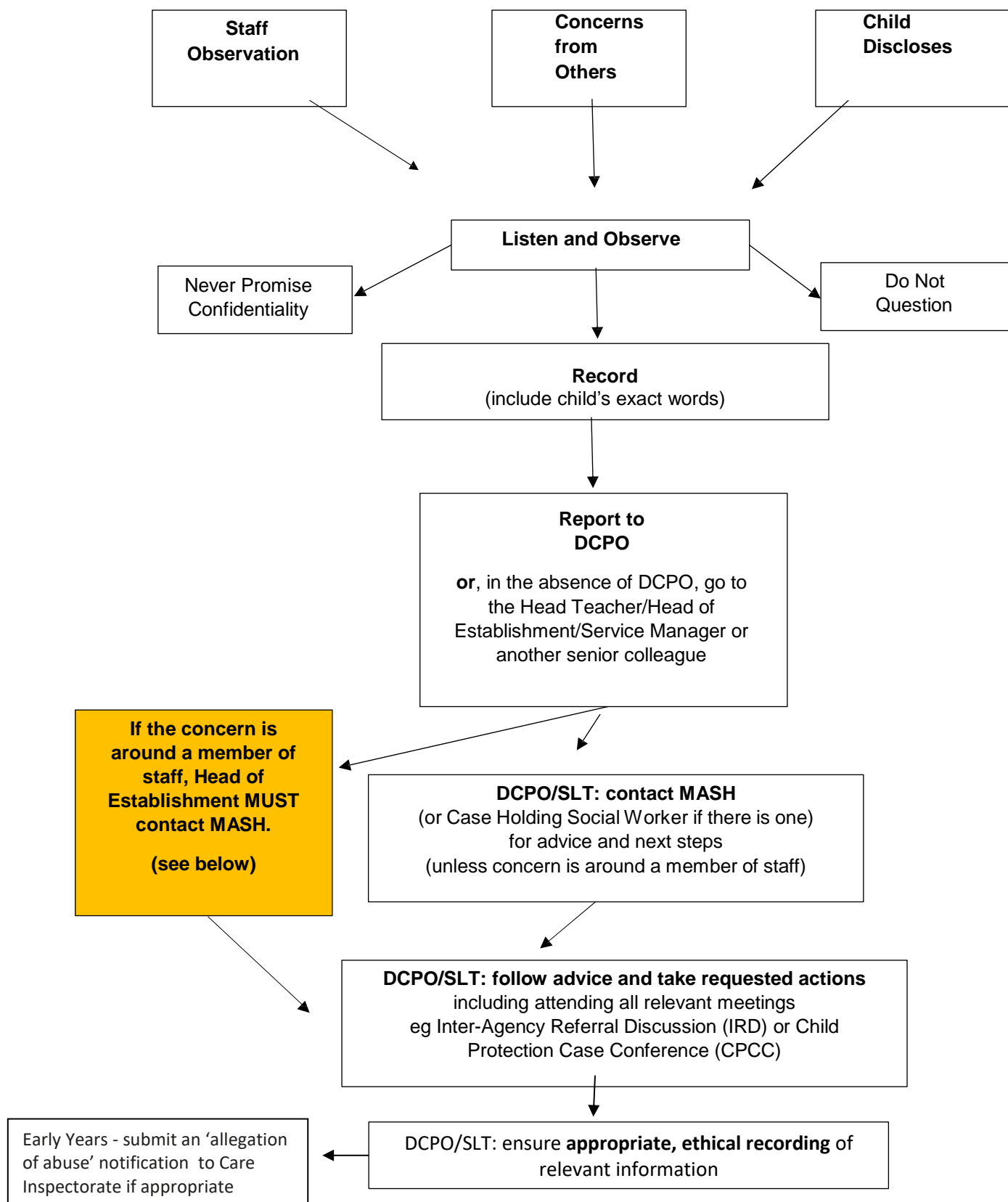
- a focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families based on a shared understanding of wellbeing;
- a common approach to gaining consent and sharing information where appropriate;
- an integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention;
- a co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the wellbeing indicators
- streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes so that children, young people and their families getting the right help at the right time
- consistent high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication
- a key contact in universal services for each child and a Lead Professional to co-ordinate and monitor multi-agency activity where necessary
- maximising the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks early

The role of a Support Coordinator is central to effective information sharing and to the management of concerns about children. This provides a single point of contact with responsibility for promoting, supporting and safeguarding children's wellbeing. Dundee's guidance on information sharing is at [Information Sharing Guidance](#)

MANAGING CONCERNS FLOWCHART

All staff within/linked to Education Establishments should follow this flowchart when faced with a concern about a child in their care and ensure they keep the DCPO informed at all stages.

After consultation with the establishment's Designated Child Protection Officer or Senior Leaders, advice is always available from the Multi Agency Screening Hub on 307940 during office hours. Dundee's Child Protection Line is staffed 24 hours per day on 307999.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A team approach to child protection in every establishment is crucial. Ultimately, **every member of staff is responsible for ensuring that children are safe.**

Each establishment must ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team has a direct remit responsibility for Child Protection. In Nursery and Primary Schools this will be the Head Teacher or a Depute Head Teacher. In secondary schools, this will normally be the Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for Pupil Support. This person will lead and coordinate safeguarding and child protection activity within the establishment. Having more than one member of staff able to lead on CP issues provides a safeguard against staff unavailability.

Working with the Senior Leader responsible for Child Protection, the role of **Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)** is central to the Education service's strategy for protecting children and assisting staff in responding to and managing concerns. The appointment of DCPOs, therefore, needs careful consideration.

Every establishment must have *at least* two DCPOs. It is suggested that in secondary schools Principal Teachers of Guidance act as CP Coordinators for their caseload and are trained and briefed accordingly. **The lead DCPO should be a promoted member of staff** within the establishment although there is scope for staff who are not in promoted posts to take on a depute Child Protection Officer role e.g. in Early Years or off-site establishments. All DCPOs must attend Dundee City Council's Introduction to Multi-Agency Child Protection Training and complete all Dundee City online CP training modules.

Training on Child Protection for teachers, Child Protection Officers and Managers is coordinated by the Education service Child Protection Link Group, supported by the corporate Learning and Development service. This includes online modules, face-to-face events and networks (e.g. quarterly DCPO Forum).

Responsibilities of the Head of Establishment and Senior Leaders:

- ensure a climate in which there are mutually trusting and respectful relationships between staff, children and young people, and parents
- ensure that the school's mandatory [Safeguarding Audit](#) is complete and up to date using the Child Protection and Safeguarding – Quality Assurance Self-Evaluation Proforma
- ensure that the establishment's DCPOs are fully trained and supported in their role, including making arrangements for them to attend events arranged within the service as appropriate
- ensure that all school staff have completed mandatory Child Protection training
- convey the importance of care and welfare and child protection to all staff and make a visible commitment in the establishment to child protection, through prevention as well as responding to children's and young people's needs
- ensure children, young people and parents have information and understand the establishment's procedures on wellbeing and child protection, and that staff can be approached at any time
- ensure recruitment and induction procedures give due regard to child protection
- follow the procedures on dealing with allegations against staff detailed below
- take appropriate action when there are concerns or allegations about a member of establishment staff which do not require a child protection response
- ensure that training on child protection for all staff is given appropriate priority
- develop the establishment's response to the needs of other children and young people following child protection action

The Head of Establishment must maintain an overview, through the Senior Leadership Team as appropriate, of any information received by DCPOs, decisions on recording and referral, subsequent liaison with other agencies during investigation, proceedings and action planning to support children and young people.

The Head of Establishment is ultimately accountable for the actions taken in response to child protection concerns and establishment activities designed to keep children safe and well and to promote well-being.

Responsibilities of Designated Child Protection Officers:

- work with the Senior Leadership Team lead to develop, implement, monitor and review safeguarding and child protection processes in the school
- ensure that staff are informed about their role in keeping children safe, and maintain an awareness of child protection issues and knowledge of when and how to involve the DCPO with a concern
- keep staff who have reported concerns informed about outcomes and process - it is important that those who have referred know what has happened following referral
- inform staff about the availability of appropriate training and encourage uptake
- provide basic awareness-raising training to staff and ensuring that staff new to the establishment - including supply staff - are properly informed about procedures as soon as possible within the establishment's induction processes
- advise staff on aspects of their day-to-day work in which care and welfare and child protection issues may need to be considered (e.g. planning trips)
- ensure that establishment-based information on wellbeing concerns and child protection issues is up to date and easy to find
- act as the first contact for staff who hear a disclosure or identify child protection concerns
- liaise with other agencies to support investigations, court proceedings, child supervision requirements and case reviews
- liaise with establishment staff to ensure appropriate support for children, young people and parents affected by care and welfare and child protection issues
- liaise with the designated senior leader to ensure appropriate support to staff affected by wellbeing and/or child protection issues
- ensure appropriate measures are in place for the secure storage of information on children and young people and child protection information concerning individuals,
- liaise with the support coordinator/lead professional/Senior Leadership Team as appropriate
- ensure that the single agency chronology is kept up to date in respect of Child Protection concerns [CFS Getting it Right for Every Child](#)

Absence of Delegated Child Protection Officers

If an establishment's DCPO's are unavailable, the establishment's Senior Leadership Team must make arrangements to ensure that the vital role of DCPO is maintained.

Where it is likely that a DCPO's absence will persist over a longer period, the establishment's Senior Leadership Team should ensure that the role of the DCPO is adopted by another member of staff and make the new temporary arrangements known to all members of their establishment, the Principal Officer (Child Protection), and MASH.

CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS IN AN EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT

Education staff are uniquely placed to be aware of circumstances which give rise to wellbeing concerns for a child. Education staff who become aware of a concern about a child, for whatever reason and from whatever source must be proactive in their response and take immediate, positive steps to make things better (see flowchart on page 5).

See [Origins of CP Concerns.docx](#) **Origins of CP Concerns.docx** for indicators of concern for indicators of concern.

Staff will be aware that, for some children, the level of concern develops over time and reflects enduring or chronic circumstances. This is particularly the case with neglect where there may not be a significant trigger to the concern but rather that the concern relates to ongoing low level neglect. The neglect of children is defined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 as:

“the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm.

Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty and is an indicator of both support and protection needs” For other children, a sudden change in behaviour or the receipt of particular information will trigger a specific cause for concern.

It is important that all concerns are passed onto a DCPO as soon as anyone becomes aware of the incident or concern. This should always be recorded on the Mosaic workflow. This applies equally to children who are attending off- campus placements eg work experience, college – any information which causes concern **must** be shared by the person with the relevant DCPO (or support coordinator) at the child's school.

DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE - ADVICE FOR STAFF

Children who are being abused or neglected are dependent on others, usually adults, to help them. Next to parents, school staff are those professionals who see children most often. As such, adults in educational establishments are well placed to be seen by a child as a trusted adult to whom they can talk. This may cause apprehension for staff about how to deal with disclosures of abuse but all staff members have a duty of care. Adults in educational establishments have a relationship with the child which is trusting, hence young people choose to disclose. These adults also have knowledge of the child / young person's cognitive ability, emotional wellbeing and some idea of the home situation and so are well placed and skilled to deal with disclosure. The Dundee Protects website, www.dundeeprotectschildren.co.uk, provides useful information about processes, including a section on explaining these processes to children.

General responses:

- Don't panic - the main skill required is listening.
- Never promise confidentiality.
- Always listen attentively.
- Don't make promises you cannot keep. Usually, everything isn't 'fine' once a disclosure is made, at least initially. Things may get worse before they get better.
- Take the disclosure seriously (many children fear they won't be believed)
- Be aware of non-verbal messages you are giving out (Children will pick up on any reaction of yours eg shock, and in order to protect you, may stop talking)
- Do not show disbelief, no matter what the child discloses. It is important that you take all that you are told seriously
- Reassure the child that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Be open and non-judgemental.
- Where you have a question ensure it is "open", not closed or leading.

Specific responses:

- Establish the child's level of understanding.
- Avoid a "who dunnit" approach and only ask enough to gain the basic information - the pursuit of evidence is a matter for forensic interview and a component of formal investigation.
- Affirm the child's feelings i.e. It is okay to be angry, anxious or sad.
- Do not dwell on the identity of any alleged perpetrator and avoid being critical of the alleged perpetrator. Regardless of the abuse, the child / young person may love this person.
- Take advice / support from your designated child protection officer at **all** times
- Record, in the child's words, as far as possible, what the child said (If obvious bruising, describe, as accurately as possible, where it is, old or new bruise, size and shape). Write up and date the recording, after the disclosure to ensure it is accurate.

Remember:

If you hear, see or read anything that causes you to become concerned about a child or young person's safety, talk to a Designated Child Protection Officer about it. Don't hold on to information that worries you. No-one will criticise you if it turns out that there is no child protection concern. Acting now could save a child or young person from further harm.

SECTION 2

SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICERS/SENIOR LEADERS

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Education staff or linked workers (eg at College, Work Placements) who become aware of a concern about a child, for whatever reason/from whatever source, must be proactive in their response and take immediate, positive steps (see flowchart on page 5). There is greater risk of further harm due to a concern being ignored than due to the instigation of a child-sensitive enquiry to establish the nature of any concern.

DCPOs should check all sources for other information in order to make an informed assessment of the situation on Mosaic Case Management system and SEEMIS databases education staff must never assume that another agency will be involved and must make efforts to establish which other agencies are involved (Mosaic will show whether there is social work involvement and will list any partner agencies contributing to a Child's Plan, if one is in place). Their knowledge of the child and of their concern may be relevant whether the case is currently managed by another agency or not.

CONTACT WITH the MULTI AGENCY SCREENING HUB (MASH)

When there are specific concerns about a child, either from a singular incident or a culmination of events, which may require a multi-agency response, a call to MASH is made and then recorded on Mosaic. Initial contact with MASH should always be by telephone. This must then be followed up by recording the relevant information and any advice on the Child Protection Workflow on Mosaic. There are four possible outcomes from this contact: a child protection investigation; further information gathering by MASH; the convening of a TATC meeting by the school; and monitoring by the school. Any further information around this particular concern can be added to this workflow or in a Mosaic Case note.

RECORD KEEPING AND SHARING INFORMATION

Good record keeping is central to keeping children safe. All relevant Child Protection information must be recorded at the earliest opportunity and stored securely (separate from Pupil Progress Records) with relevant 'signposts.' If a Child Protection File exists on Mosaic for a child, this must be 'flagged' by an entry in Seemis Pastoral Notes. As always, ethical and defensible recording principles apply.

There are currently two areas for electronic recording of information regarding Wellbeing Concerns – SEEMIS Pastoral Notes (used to record information about children when it is 'lower level' and not of a highly confidential or child protection nature) and the Mosaic Case Management system. Mosaic Casenotes can also be used if a case is already open to Social Work. Advice on the contents of Seemis Pastoral Notes is available at [Recording in SEEMIS Pastoral Notes](#)

Schools use their own internal Wellbeing Concern processes; all records, paper or electronic, MUST be stored securely within a locked cabinet. In keeping with GDPR requirements, paper Child Protection Files are to be phased out; the Child Protection Workflow on Mosaic will be used to record all Child Protection information. All Child Protection records must transfer with the child through their school career in the city. Paper copies of information can be printed off if required, but need to be treated with the utmost sensitivity and care.

To maintain the requirements for confidentiality, only Senior Leaders and DCPO's should have access to Child Protection information within schools. Out-with the school the only other people who have access to CP concerns are the Principal Officer (Child Protection), Senior Officers (Locality) and relevant Education Officers.

CHILD PROTECTION FILE

When there are CP concerns about a child, a Child Protection File is held on Mosaic. This file will contain information that is inappropriate to store in the Pupil Progress Record. Under GDPR requirements an electronic solution to Child Protection recording is being developed, linked to the Mosaic Child Protection Workflow.

Information to be stored in the Electronic Child Protection file:

- Correspondence / Reports from the Children's Reporter
- Case Conference / Child Protection Core Group minutes
- Pupil Wellbeing Concern Forms - internal processes or EdCP1 forms
- IRD minutes / actions / debrief notes
- Records of discussions with MASH
- E-mailed updates from MASH meetings
- Any other written correspondence or records relating to Child Protection.

A **Child Protection Chronology** is a very important element of record keeping; every CP File should contain a chronology of significant events, which will contribute to single and multi-agency chronologies in line with the [CFS Getting it Right for Every Child](#)

Other care and wellbeing information can be stored in the Pupil Progress Record. Minutes of Team Around the Child Meetings and other processes are held within Mosaic and should not need to be stored in paper form.

Access to information will be dictated by the role of the staff member (e.g. DCPO specific information). The Head of Establishment will decide upon levels of access for staff members.

TRANSFER OF INFORMATION AND RECORDS TO A NEW SCHOOL / EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT

When any placing request for a pupil to move to another school has been successful, the Head Teacher / relevant DHT of the current school must confirm with that school's Child Protection Officer whether there are current child protection concerns. If the child is, or has been, on the Child Protection Register, the new school or setting must be informed by **direct contact** from DCPO to DCPO of the nature of the current concerns including Child Protection Registration status, **prior to** the child starting at the new school. This conversation should be recorded in a Mosaic Casenote. When the child is 'actively' involved in child protection processes the procedures outlined in the DCPC Inter-Agency Instructions (Section 8, page 43) apply.

A DCPO must transfer all information that is relevant to child protection concerns, current or historic and including any non-electronic Child Protection File, to a DCPO in the receiving establishment **within 5 working days of the child starting at the new establishment**. If the child is transferring to a Dundee education establishment, the information handover must be **face to face** and should include a discussion of current issues and actions. Liaison with any social work services staff involved should also take place.

Note: The Council's Courier Service **should not** be used for transporting PPR's or CP files.

If the child is moving to a school out with the city and a school to school handover is not practical, recorded delivery should be used to enable the items to be tracked. **Written confirmation of receipt must be obtained.**

When a young person leaves school, CP Files are archived in accordance with current Children and Families Service policy and in line with legal retention periods.

INFORMING PARENTS / CARERS WHEN THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

The service aims to work in partnership with parents/carers, and workers have ongoing communication with families when there are concerns about children. Despite this aim, there are sometimes concerns when it may not be in the best interests of the child to have the parents/carers involved immediately.

Parents need to be made aware, through normal school communications, that in order to keep children safe we use city wide, multi-agency child protection instructions which may involve communicating with other agencies, taking immediate action and recording sensitive information to safeguard children's safety.

Open communication with families is not appropriate, however, when the parent/carer is the alleged perpetrator. If this is the case, the parent/carer **should not** be informed immediately as this may influence any investigation and the outcome. Always seek advice from MASH prior to sharing information with parents if you have any concerns. Guidance will be sought from Police and/or Social Work staff who will be conducting the investigation about what the family can be told at each stage of the process.

CHILDREN AS WITNESSES

Normally, if a child is to be interviewed in school by the police as witness to any alleged action or offence, the police should gain the prior consent of the child's parent/carer. It would be sensible for Head Teachers to check with the police and parents/carers that this consent has been given and whether or not they wish to be present at any interview BEFORE giving permission for a child to be interviewed. If a parent/carer is not present, an adult from the school who is known to and trusted by the child should be present during any interview. **This may not apply in Child Protection cases eg forensic interview or when a close family member is suspected of an offence - social work staff will guide schools through this process. If in doubt, phone MASH.**

INFORMING PARENTS ONCE A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION HAS BEGUN

A child protection investigation may begin during the school day and a child may require to be removed from school without the knowledge of the parent or carer eg, in response to a disclosure when the decision is made to interview the child on the same day. If a decision is taken to interview the child, either at Interagency Referral Discussion (IRD) or prior to IRD, and the timing of this coincides with the end of the school day, the school will need to inform the parent why the child isn't at school and waiting to be collected. The school is required to inform the family of the ongoing investigation but needs to be able to reassure the parent that the child is safe. It is important that the family is not given too much information as a family member may be the alleged perpetrator. We also want to ensure that the family are reassured that Education staff have followed correct procedures in taking forward concerns.

Using the statement outlined below will allow schools to inform parents/carers why the child is not at school and will signpost to a professional involved in the investigation who can give more information. This allows education staff to feel confident in sharing information with families without any possibility of jeopardising any ongoing child protection investigation. This statement has been approved by the Executive Director of Children and Families Service for use in all schools where this situation may arise. As each situation is different, the statement allows for some tailoring to the situation and education staff can delete as appropriate and also include the name of the relevant contact person at Seymour House. If a child protection investigation is underway you will be given the name of one of the staff at Seymour House, from either Police or Social Work, who will be the contact.

There has been an incident *in school/that school has become aware of (delete as appropriate) involving inappropriate behaviour/an allegation from your child (delete as appropriate).* In line with education child protection procedures we have advised the Police and Social Work team at Seymour House. If you have any concerns or require further information you can contact *Team Manager of Intake Service* at Seymour House on 01382 307980 who will be able to provide any information and reassurances you require.

CHILD PROTECTION IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES

CARE EXPERIENCED/ [LOOKED AFTER](#) / CHILDREN OPEN TO SOCIAL WORK

For a concern about a pupil who is looked after by the Local Authority either at home or away from home, the **first point of contact should be with the case holding social worker** rather than the MASH. The caseholder's details can be found on the pupil's record on Mosaic. It is the role of the case holding social worker to instigate any child protection processes (eg, Inter-Agency Referral Discussion or Child Protection Case Conference). This will not be undertaken by the Intake Team at Seymour House in these circumstances.

CHILD PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX NEEDS / DISABILITIES

The purpose of this section is to identify some of the keys and barriers to effective protection of disabled children within a rights based GIRFEC approach to assessment, planning and support. **Child protection concerns about a disabled child must follow the same processes as for every child.** Particular circumstances and issues are detailed in [CP- Children with Complex Needs -Disabilities](#)

CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS OUTWITH NORMAL OFFICE HOURS

Any establishment which has concerns around child protection outwith normal working hours, e.g. early years establishments with extended hours, should contact the Dundee Protects CP line on **307999**. Depending on the time, this will be directed to either MASH or to the Social Work Out of Hours Team.

SCHOOL PUPILS AGED 16+

The term 'child' or 'children' should be taken to mean both children and young people unless the context indicates otherwise. The [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#) makes the point that 'Child' is defined as a child or young person up to 18 years of age in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) definition. In general terms, while respecting the implications of different legal definitions of a 'child', the Guidance considers the protection of unborn babies and of children under the age of 18 years.

PROTECTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 OR 17 WHO HAVE LEFT SCHOOL

The support coordinator role for these young people is provided by the Discover Opportunities section of Corporate Services. The current lead is Kylie West, Manager – Discover Work Service (434588). If a school has Child Protection concerns around a young person who is about to or has recently left school, relevant staff should liaise with this service if there is no other Social Work involvement.

HOME EDUCATION

Every child has a right to an education, and it is the duty of the parent of every school age child to provide that education, either by sending the child to school, or by other means.

Home education is a key aspect of parental choice and is an equally valid choice alongside the option to send a child to school. However, it is a choice which only a minority of parents make. Each individual enquiry about home education, request to withdraw a child from school, or contact between a local authority and a home educating family should be dealt with as fairly consistently, timeously and accurately as possible.

The assessment of a request to Home education a child needs to be firmly based within the GIRFFEC and Team around the child Framework and decision making needs to take account of all aspects of Child's rights.

[Home Education Guidance](#)

DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Safe and Together programme (<https://socialworkscotland.org/projects/safe-and-together>) is being introduced across Dundee, including in schools, led by the Council's Protecting People team. Education staff should be aware of the effects of Domestic violence upon young people and how to support them. The Dundee- Learning module on Risk Identification and Assessment in Domestic Abuse provides a useful support.

UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) are children and young people who are seeking asylum in the UK but who have been separated from their parents or carers ([Refugees and Asylum Seekers](#)). Under [Section 25 of the Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#) local authorities are obliged to provide UC with accommodation and safeguarding, from which point they become [looked after children](#).

TRAFFICKING

Staff must be alert to the potential of a child being trafficked. National procedures are implemented when there are concerns about child trafficking and these are contained within the Dundee Child Care and Protection Committee [Multi-Agency Instructions](#).

Children trafficked into the country may be registered at an establishment for a term or longer, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad. This pattern of registration and de-registration may be an indicator that a child has been trafficked. It has been identified as a particular concern in establishments which are situated near ports of entry, but practitioners should be alert to this possibility in all establishments. However, practitioners should always bear in mind that not all children who go missing from education have been victims of trafficking. For example, there may be instances of children from communities that move around - Gypsy, Roma, traveller or migrant families - who collectively go missing from establishment.

Further Information:

[The Human Trafficking and Exploitation \(Scotland\) Guide 2015 – A guide Safeguarding Children in Scotland who may have been Trafficked.](#)

If you are concerned that a child may be a victim of trafficking, please contact MASH for advice on appropriate action. Remember that ‘trafficking’ affects not only children being brought into the country, but also applies to children living locally who are being taken to any location for reasons of exploitation (this may or may not be incentivised).

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse, in which a young person is manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act. This could be as part of a seemingly consensual relationship, or in return for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol or somewhere to stay. The young person may consider their abuser to be their friend, or even their partner, but this person will put them into dangerous situations, forcing the young person to do things they don't want to do. The abuser may physically or verbally threaten the young person, or be violent towards them. They may control and manipulate them and try to isolate them from friends and family.

Any concern that a child may be a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation must be treated as a child protection concern and contact made with the MASH. [CSE JOINT PROTOCOL 2015](#)

For further information:

[Child Sexual Exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners](#)
[CSE Indicators](#)

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Three protocols, on Female Genital Mutilation, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage, have been developed by the Tayside Harmful Practices Multi-agency working group. Each protocol contains a section on Operational Instructions followed by broader Guidance for staff. The implementation of this Protocol is intended to assist practitioners to effectively, consistently and safely deal with cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) towards any person.

Any concern that a child may be a potential victim or victim of Female Genital Mutilation must be treated as a child protection concern and contact made with the MASH.

For further information and guidance:

[FGM: DUNDEE AND ANGUS MULTI-AGENCY PROTOCOL ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION CONTEXT](#)
[DUNDEE AND ANGUS FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION CHECKLIST](#)

SCHOOL PUPIL IS AN ALLEGED OFFENDER IN A CHILD PROTECTION CONTEXT

There may be times when a pupil in your school is alleged to have been a perpetrator in the child protection incident. This can be further complicated when the alleged victim is also a pupil in your school. As with any other child protection concern, MASH should be approached for advice and the MASH rep may be able to access additional information that would provide further clarity on any risks to pupils that would need to be managed.

Schools need to take a risk management approach and to make any decisions in conjunction with their link Education Officer or Manager. If any of the pupils implicated in the incident have Social Work involvement, the case holding social workers must be made aware of the alleged incident. If there are case holding social workers involved they will take forward the Child Protection investigation (eg, IRD) rather than the Intake Team.

A Care and Risk Management Meeting (CARM) may be appropriate.

PUPILS WHO GO MISSING FROM SCHOOL

See [Missing from School Flowchart June 19](#) This is different to children missing in education – see below.

CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

There are many reasons why children may be removed from school without families informing school. Once a school has made initial attempts to ascertain the whereabouts of a child who is not attending, without success, the service's Children Missing in Education is followed.

See [Attendance Procedures - Children Missing in Education](#) for definitions and protocol.

Further details on Children Missing in Education (CME) can be found within the Scottish Government Safe and Well documentation and guidance at [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022](#)

Some reasons for non-attendance in this context may constitute a child protection concern. This would include forced marriages, trips abroad for female genital mutilation, a child who is being trafficked or a family who are evading statutory service input. In these circumstances, a child protection response may be appropriate depending on the concerns raised.

The Prevent strategy, published by the UK Government in 2011, is part of our overall counter-terrorism strategy, **CONTEST**. The aim of this strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as “prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. If a young person is at risk or involvement with radicalisation a referral to police Scotland and also the Multi Agency Screening Hub must be undertaken. For further information please refer to the link [Scottish Government Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland](#).

REFERRING TO THE CHILDREN'S REPORTER

Referrals from education to SCRA (Scottish Children's Reporter Administration) come from the **Team Around the Child** staged intervention process. All referrals to the Reporter should be an action from a Team Around the Child meeting, normally with social work present, where any concerns for the pupil's wellbeing that would meet the grounds for referral are discussed. See [SCRA Grounds of Referral](#)

Once the referral has been agreed, it will be completed by the Lead Professional or relevant support co-ordinator and sent to SCRA (by secure email). The Children's Reporter will assess the information and decide whether a Social Background Report (SBR) from by Social Work is required. Analysis of the SBR by the Reporter will determine whether a Children's Hearing takes place. The SBR may include a recommendation for compulsory measures of care for the child/ young person is being made - a request for a Compulsory Supervision Order.

POLICE CONCERN REPORTS

Information from Police Concern Reports (from the police Vulnerable Persons Database) may accumulate into a child protection concern. Guidance on the processing of these is at [PCR - VPD Guidelines \(Education\) June 2019](#)

DATA PROTECTION

The management and protection of information and the obligation to provide information is set out legally in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016. Individuals have a right of access to information about them and can make an access request for all information held on them. A parent can make a request on behalf of their child. The service is also required to describe the purpose for which information is held and to whom it is disclosed

SECTION 3

STRATEGIC AND CORPORATE STRUCTURES FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN IN DUNDEE

DUNDEE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

<https://www.dundeeprotectschildren.co.uk/>

Who is on it and what does it do?

The CPC is the key local body for developing and implementing child protection strategy across and between agencies. The Committee provides the framework and structure for services to come together to decide what the priorities are and how we meet them. The CPC is made up of people who work in the different agencies that are most closely involved in protecting children and young people.

It is set up under national guidance from the Scottish Government. There are committees in all areas of Scotland. Most are based on local authority boundaries, although there are some that cover more than one local authority. All the key agencies involved in the protection of children and young people are represented on the CPC.

The current Education link representatives on the CPC are John Lannon (Principal Officer, Child Protection) and Fiona Low (Education Officer, GIRFEC remit).

EDUCATION CHILD PROTECTION LINK GROUP

The ECPLG is made up of representatives from the range of different settings in education in Dundee.

Remit

- To represent educational sectors across the Children and Families Service in relation to child protection
- To offer support and advice as appropriate to establishment Designated Child Protection Officers and Senior Leaders in the capacity of sector representative,
- To link operational and strategic groups concerned with child protection
- To provide a direct conduit of communication between the service Senior Management Team and establishment DCPOs/Senior Leaders
- To assist the service Senior Management Team to deliver effective child protection in educational establishments
- To monitor, review and improve relevant policies and procedures
- To represent the range of educational establishments in relation to child protection

Current Members:

Lead Officer Child Protection	John Lannon	john.lannon@dundeecity.gov.uk
Education Officer (GIRFEC)	Fiona Low	fiona.low@dundeecity.gov.uk
Special Sector Representative	Anthony Revell	anthony.revell@dundeecity.gov.uk
Early Years Sector Representative	Caroline Fenwick	caroline.fenwick@dundeecity.gov.uk
Primary Sector Representative	Louise Reid	louise.reid1@dundeecity.gov.uk
Secondary Sector Representative	Sam Lowe	Sam.lowe@dundeecity.gov.uk
Learning and Organisational Development	Carie Burns	carie.burns@dundeecity.gov.uk
Senior Officer Locality	Verity Scott	verity.scott@dundeecity.gov.uk

SECTION 4

DEALING WITH INFORMATION RECEIVED ABOUT STAFF IN RELATION TO CHILD PROTECTION

This guidance is for **Head Teachers, Heads of Establishments, Education/Service Managers and Heads of Service** in Dundee City Council Children and Families Service. It is included within Education Child Protection Instructions for the information of all staff. It should be used alongside procedures for dealing with breaches of discipline and sub-standard work performance and also DNCT/2 Disciplinary Procedures for Teachers and Associated Professionals. Reference should also be made to Inter-Agency Child Protection Instructions produced by the Dundee Child Protection Committee.

When concerning information is received, the process below, summarised in the flowchart at the end of this section, must be rigorously adhered to by all concerned. All information which causes concern must be recorded appropriately.

- a. When a member of Children and Families Service staff receives concerning information about a member of staff in a School/ Establishment, they must ensure that the Head Teacher/Head of Establishment is informed immediately. The Head Teacher/Head of Establishment must then immediately inform the Education/Service Manager who will consult with Human Resources.
- b. Following the discussion with the Education/Service Manager, **information which may have a child protection dimension must be referred without delay** to the Multi- Agency Screening Hub (MASH) by the Head Teacher / Head of Establishment. MASH can be contacted on 307940. The establishment's designated Lead Child Protection Officer must also be informed as they may have a key role in supporting and protecting the child or children involved.
- c. Members of staff about whom concerning information in relation to child protection is received must be informed and advised, at the appropriate time, following MASH guidance. When a referral is made by the Head Teacher / Head of Establishment to the MASH, advice will be given as to whether this matter will be taken forward through an IRD or not and what to tell the member of staff involved.
 - (i) If advised **not to inform** the member of staff, the Head Teacher/Head of Establishment must ensure that the member of staff is given no information at this stage.
 - (ii) If advised **to inform** the member of staff, the Head Teacher/Head of Establishment will immediately inform the member of staff that information of concern has been received and that a referral has been made to the MASH for a decision on how best to proceed under child protection processes. The member of staff will be advised that they have the right to seek support and advice from a colleague or their trade union.
- d. When a referral to MASH is made from an external source (out with the school) this will be recorded by the receiving member of the MASH Team who will then inform the Head Teacher / Head of Establishment. Points a) and c) above would then be followed. The MASH Team member will also inform the MASH Team Manager. The Head Teacher/Head of Establishment will also inform the school/establishment's Lead Child Protection Officer in case support for the child is required. All such information and action must be recorded appropriately by the school/establishment.
- e. In all matters relating to child protection the child's needs are paramount and must be considered by all involved. Steps will be put in place to support and protect any children involved. The information received will not be shared within the establishment. This is designed to protect the child and the member of staff involved.
- f. Staff must be careful not to do anything which could prejudice any future child protection investigation and/or prosecution. The child or children involved must not be interviewed unless the MASH advises that further clarification is required to help establish initial facts and concerns.
- g. Responsibility for advising who makes contact with and appropriately advises the parent/carer will lie with the MASH or Police Scotland Public Protection Unit

- h. Where information received concerns **professional competence** or **conduct without a child protection dimension**, it will be considered in accordance with the appropriate section of DNCT/2 (for teachers) or the Council's agreed disciplinary procedures (for support staff). If child protection concerns arise during the course of an investigation, a referral must be made to MASH at once.
- i. Information received about **professional competence** or **conduct** may also have a potential **child protection dimension**. Information gives rise to concerns about child protection may refer to verbal, physical or sexual abuse. It can be received from a number of sources and in a number of ways, including:
- from a parent or child directly to the Head of Establishment or another member of staff
 - from a parent/carer or other person via the Children and Families Service
 - from a member of staff of the school (Note: every staff member has a professional obligation to report any such concerns)
 - from a partner agency or other Council services
 - from information received by Police Scotland Public Protection Unit, Children and Families Service or NHS Tayside
 - through the Council's Complaints Procedure
 - from an anonymous source
 - from an overheard conversation
 - from something a child has written in a piece of work
- j. If at any time, during the process of dealing with information received, a concern about departmental or establishment practice becomes apparent and the concern is of a general nature, the relevant Manager must immediately bring it to the attention of the Head of Service. The nature of the concern will be relayed to all establishments in order that it can be addressed promptly. If the concern is specific to practice within the establishment, it must be addressed promptly by the Head of Establishment.

Following Referral to MASH (from school or any other source):

MASH will inform the Head Teacher / Head of Establishment **and** the Education / Service Manager, as soon as possible, whether

(i) An Inter-Agency Referral Discussion is to be held

OR

(ii) the matter does not indicate child protection concerns and is being referred back to the relevant section of the Children and Families Service

IF AN IRD IS TO BE HELD:

The establishment's Education / Service Manager, or delegate if they are unavailable, and the Principal Officer from the Children and Families Service, will seek relevant information from the school / establishment and will attend the IRD* . A Human Resources Officer may also be asked to attend. Head Teacher / Head of Establishment or other Establishment staff will not normally attend an IRD, to maintain neutrality in case of other Service proceedings at a later stage.

* if the Service Manager is the subject of the information received another appropriate representative of the Children and Families Service will attend

If the IRD decides that a Child Protection Investigation is required:

- a. If a child protection investigation is an action from the IRD, this will be conducted by the Public Protection Unit (PPU) and the Care and Protection Intake Team (CAPIT) and they will have the responsibility for advising on what the member of staff can be told. Police Scotland will advise regarding ongoing contact with children by the member of staff as part of a Safety Plan for the child. The final decision regarding a staff member's contact with children in the school/establishment and potential suspension will be made by the Education/ Service Manager, in consultation with the Head of Service and advised by Human Resources.

- b. The Head Teacher/Head of Establishment or Education/Service Manager must follow the advice given and continue to act as supportively as possible towards any member of staff involved. If permitted to tell the member of staff involved that information has been received about them which causes concern and has a child protection dimension, this will include explaining how matters will progress following the Initial Referral Discussion. Any information shared must have the prior agreement of the PPU.
- c. If remaining at work could worsen the situation, hamper the PPU/CAPIT investigation, or potentially place children at risk, the member of staff may be suspended on full pay. Suspension is a neutral action without prejudice to facilitate the formal investigation, and no judgement or censure is implied. This action will not be taken without prior agreement of the Executive Director of Children and Families Service in consultation with Human Resources.
- d. Any member of staff facing investigation will find this stressful. It is important, therefore, that they are encouraged to seek support from their Trade Union. They should also not be discouraged from maintaining contact with colleagues if they are absent from the workplace. However, they must be advised that such contact **must not include any discussion about the details of the investigation** or seek to influence the outcome of that investigation. Where an employee is suspended they should not attend their work or any other Council premises unless given permission to by an Education/Service Manager.
- e. All investigations by the PPU/CAPIT will be completed as promptly as possible. However, the process can take some weeks to complete as the time taken to conclude is dependent on the complexity of the information received, the number of potential witness interviews to be carried out, and the ages and capacities of those being interviewed.
- f. Following the conclusion of the PPU/CAPIT investigation and irrespective of the outcome of this, the Children and Families Service may decide subsequently that it is necessary to carry out its own internal investigation in accordance with the Council's agreed disciplinary procedures and DNCT/2 Disciplinary Procedures for Teachers and Associated Professionals.
- g. The Head Teacher/Head of Establishment/Service Manager will make decisions regarding employment matters with advice from Human Resources and will keep the Senior Management Team informed of progress. The Chief Social Work Officer is routinely informed of the progress of all disciplinary cases with a potential link to protecting children.

If the IRD decides that a Child Protection Investigation is NOT required:

- a. The Education / Service Manager will ensure that relevant information is fed back to the Head Teacher / Head of Establishment and will advise of next actions. They will agree either:
 - (i) that it is necessary to carry out internal investigation in accordance with the Council's agreed disciplinary procedures and DNCT/2 Disciplinary Procedures for Teachers and Associated Professionals.
 - or
 - (ii) that no further action is required
- b. The Education / Service Manager will liaise with Human Resources on what, if any, information is to be recorded in the Staff Member's Personal File, in line with agreed procedures.

IF NO IRD IS TO BE HELD

- a. The matter is referred back to the relevant section of the Children and Families Service
- b. The Education / Service Manager and Head Teacher / Head of Establishment will discuss next actions. They will agree either:
 - (i) that it is necessary to carry out internal investigation in accordance with the Council's agreed disciplinary procedures and DNCT/2 Disciplinary Procedures for Teachers and Associated Professionals.

- (ii) or
that no further action is required and the member of staff is advised that the matter is now closed.

RECORDING OF INFORMATION

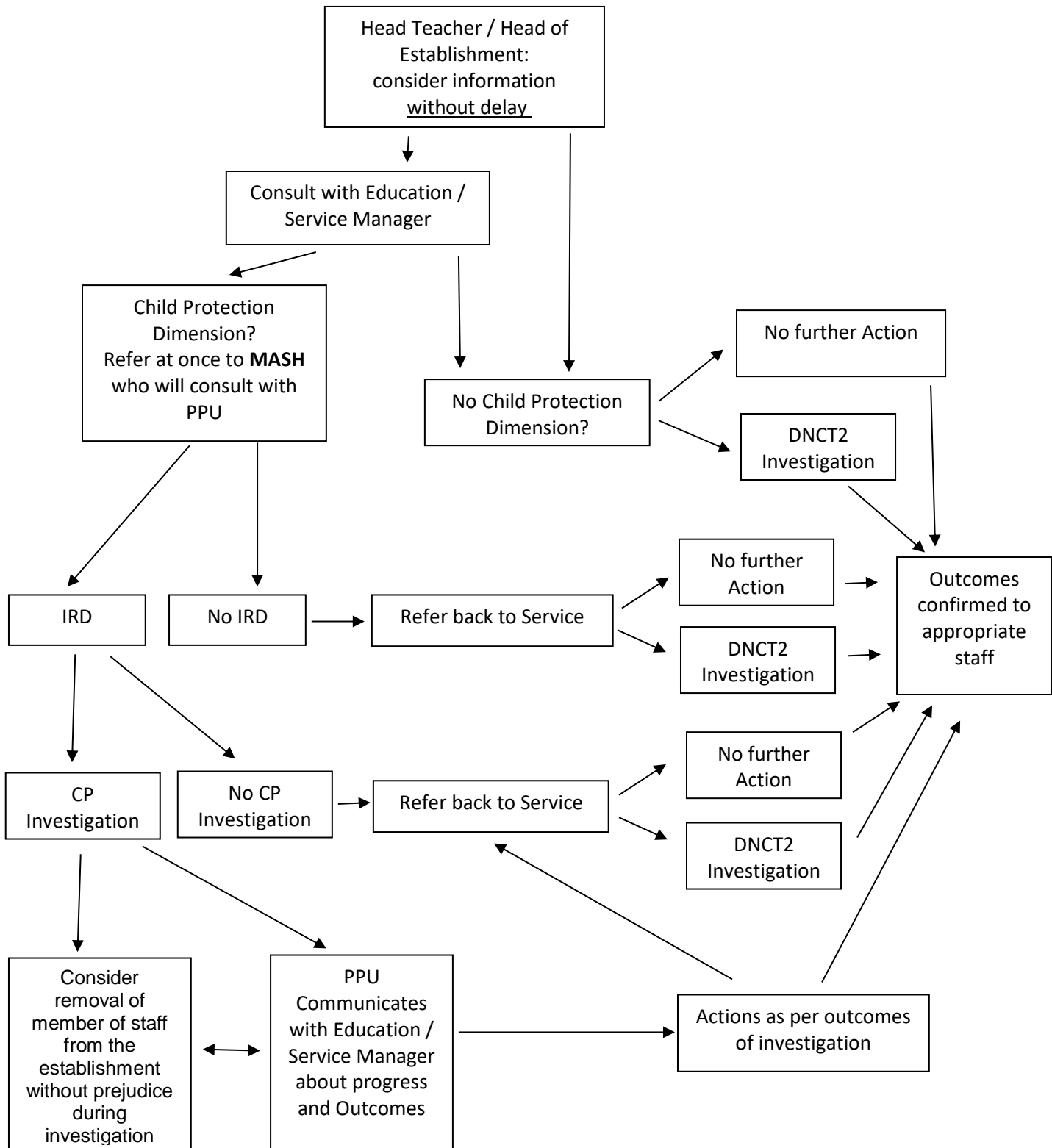
- a. Following the conclusion of any matter or investigation, all references to a case should be retained in an employee's personal file for 12 months. A record of any formal complaint, findings of the investigation and any form of redress for the complainant will be retained electronically in a separate file for 5 years, in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure. No reference will be made to any action taken against the teacher as a result of the complaint. A Human Resources Officer will be responsible for recording this information in the staff member's Personal File and setting appropriate retention periods.
- b. For any complaint which has a child protection dimension, and where the outcome falls short of requiring formal action but has been judged to be a cause for sufficient concern to warrant advice being provided to the teacher, consideration will be given to retaining a note on their personal file regarding the circumstances, and the information which caused concern (in line with DNCT 2 / Corporate investigation processes). This decision will be taken by the Head Teacher / Head of Establishment in consultation with the Education / Service Manager and under advice from Human Resources. A Human Resources Officer will be responsible for recording this information in the staff member's Personal File and setting appropriate retention periods.

'NO CASE TO ANSWER'

- a. Following a MASH referral or an internal investigation where there is no case to answer and where the information had become widely known within the establishment, with the consent of the member of staff involved, it should be equally widely communicated that there is no case to answer.
- b. In cases where it is reasonable to conclude that the information was provided with malicious intent by a child, the Head Teacher/Head of Establishment, in consultation with the Education/Service Manager and Human Resources will give consideration to carrying out the following:
- i Recording the incident fully and keeping the record in the child's personal file
 - ii Informing the pupil's parents/carers, discussing and agreeing appropriate actions
 - iii Considering whether the child remaining in their current class or school is in his/her or the member of staff's best interests.
 - iv Raising awareness of the whole staff and other professional support, such as the Seniors Officers (Locality), Dundee Educational Psychology Service and any other relevant professionals within Children and Families Service, about any general issues of that may have come to light.
- c. Where there is a concern that parents or members of the public have provided information which is judged to be malicious or vexatious, the matter should be taken forward with the Executive Director/Head of Service and Human Resources.
- d. Consideration will also be given to measures to support the member of staff. It must be recognized, however, that there are circumstances where it is difficult for the school or department to pursue matters further, and in these cases, it may be appropriate to seek advice from the Legal Division within the Corporate Services Department.

DEALING WITH INFORMATION RECEIVED ABOUT STAFF (CHILD PROTECTION)

- Information received by MASH will be communicated to Head of Establishment
- Information received directly by Police or Social Work may go straight to IRD – PPU will contact Head of Establishment directly – no requirement to contact MASH in this situation.
- Role of School Lead CPO: support for the child/children involved, whatever pathway is followed above**



SECTION 5 – RESOURCES

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

REMEMBER: IF A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK CALL THE POLICE.

Dundee's Child Protection Line (staffed 24 hours per day)	30 7999
Multi-Agency Screening Hub (MASH) (8.45am – 4.45pm)	30 7940
Out of Hours Social Work (answerphone 9:30am - 4:30pm)	30 7964
Children's Reporter	0300 200 1818
Dundee Educational Psychology Service	432980
Dudhope Centre for Child Health, NHS Tayside	204004
Tayside Police Non-emergency Helpline	101 or 0300 111 22 22
Responsible Officers:	
Principal Officer for Child Protection (Education) - John Lannon	437151
Education Officer (GIRFEC Remit) - Fiona Low	434070
Lead Officer. Safe and Together (Domestic Abuse, DCC) – Sophie Gwyther	434068
Support and Advice:	
Senior Officer (Locality) (West) - Verity Scott	437122
Senior Officer (Locality) (East) - Ashley McIntosh	437122
Senior Officer (Children with Disabilities) - Gill Simpson	438384

CHILD PROTECTION POSTERS

[Child Protection School Posters 2018.pdf](#)

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

Mandatory eLearning for all education staff:

Dundee-Learning – Protecting Children Module 1

Additional CP Training eModules:

[Dundee-learning CP Modules.PNG](#)

Mandatory for all DCPOs:

Introduction to Multi Agency Child Protection – dates on My Learn

Additional Training opportunities for DCPOs/Interested Staff:

[CP eLearning](#)