



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE
Leisure & Culture

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE LEISURE AND CULTURE

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

MARCH 2025

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Child Protection Policy

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1. Introduction

Vision

The shared vision for Child Protection in Lanarkshire is that;

All children and young people in Lanarkshire have the right to be cared for and protected from abuse and harm in a safe environment in which their rights are respected. All agencies will work together in a collaborative way to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in Lanarkshire.

Supporting this vision South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture will promote activities where children and young people are able to participate in sport, physical activity, art and cultural activities and play in an environment where they are safe, included, nurtured and respected. They should be able to maximise their full potential through access to good quality health, education and leisure and cultural services.

The key principles, which underpin this policy, are:

- Anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.
- The child's welfare is paramount.
- All children whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Staff working with children have knowledge of best practice and appropriate conduct in their work with children.

The guidelines, which will be reviewed annually, are procedural and should not therefore be deviated from, unless to do otherwise would jeopardise the safety and welfare of the child.

Getting it Right for Every Child

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is Scotland's national approach to supporting children, young people and their families by making sure they receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help them to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.

Most children and young people get all the help and support they need from their parent(s), wider family and community but sometimes, as they progress on their journey through life, some may have temporary difficulties, some may live with challenges and some may experience more complex issues. No matter what they may need a bit of extra help.

GIRFEC is a way for families to work in partnership with people who can support them, such as teachers, doctors and nurses.

The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach ensures that anyone providing that support puts the child or young person and their family at the centre. GIRFEC is important for everyone that works with children and young people; this includes the many staff and volunteers within our communities.

For a guide to GIRFEC and further information visit [Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)

2. What is Child Abuse and Child Neglect?

Child Abuse and Neglect is the term used to describe ways in which children are harmed and abused. The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (Updated 2023) defines Child Abuse and Neglect as forms of maltreatment. Children may be maltreated at home; within a family or peer network; in care placements; institutions or community settings; and in the online and digital environment. Those responsible for may be family members, previously unknown or familiar, or in positions of trust. (*Please note however that children can abuse other children and that coaches/instructors should be diligent in eradicating bullying, name calling etc).

Physical

Emotional

Sexual

Neglect

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is 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 or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

Additionally in the leisure and culture context physical abuse might also be deemed to occur if the nature and intensity of training or activity disregards the capacity of the child's immature and growing body, or predisposes the child to injury resulting from fatigue or overuse.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is continuous or intermittent pattern, which has caused, or likely to cause significant harm. Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse. It may involve...

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Exploitation or corruption of a child, or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age and stage of development
- Repeated silencing, ridiculing or intimidation
- Demands that so exceed a child's capability that they may be harmful
- Extreme overprotection, such that a child is harmed by prevention of learning, exploration and social development
- Seeing or hearing the abuse of another

Additionally in the leisure and culture context emotional abuse might also be deemed to occur where a child is placed under unrealistic pressure or bullied to perform to high expectations. Repeated failure to ignore or respond to a child's effort or progress would also constitute emotional abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child under 16 years of age 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.

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 years, into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial

advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child Sexual Exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can occur through the use of technology.

Neglect

Neglect exists in the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. The GIRFEC SHANARRI Indicators set out the essential wellbeing needs and Neglect of any of these can impact on health development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. 'Persistent' means there is a pattern which may be continuous or intermittent which has caused or is likely to cause significant harm.

It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment; to ensure the child receives education; or to respond to a child's essential emotional needs.

Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and lack of stimulation can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. For very young children the impact could quickly become life threatening. Chronic physical and emotional neglect may also have a significant impact on teenagers.

Additionally in the leisure and culture context neglect might be deemed to occur if an adult has not ensured the safety of a child, for example, has allowed play whilst exposing a child to undue cold or heat.

3. What is Child Protection?

Child Protection refers to the processes involved in consideration, assessment and planning of action, together with the actions themselves, where there are concerns that a child maybe at risk of harm. Child Protection is part of a continuum of duties upon agencies working with children, with Child Protection processes falling at the urgent end of a continuum of services which include prevention and early intervention.

The GIRFEC approach promotes and supports planning for such services to be provided in a way that best safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing of children.

4. What might make you worried about a child?

Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward. Even for those experienced in working with child abuse it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture staff are not experts at such recognition. As such any concerns with respect to the welfare of a child should be discussed immediately with the most senior person available (see section 5).

It is not the responsibility of staff to decide that child abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to follow through on identifying and reporting of concerns they may have.

The following list, although not exhaustive highlights some signs which may make you concerned about a child and may be an indication of a child being abused or neglected.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describes an abusive act involving him/her. Someone else expresses concern about the welfare of another child.

- Unexplained/uncharacteristic changes in behaviour e.g. becoming quiet and withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness and/or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour /concern of being sexually exploited.
- Fear or distrust of particular adults, especially with those whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- The child has difficulty making friends and is always alone and/or is prevented from socialising with other children, being bullied or exploited online.
- Overeating/loss of appetite, weight loss or gain for no apparent reason.
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt and/or is inappropriately dressed.
- Signs of discomfort and pain especially recurring abdominal pain.
- Nervousness or flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to return home.

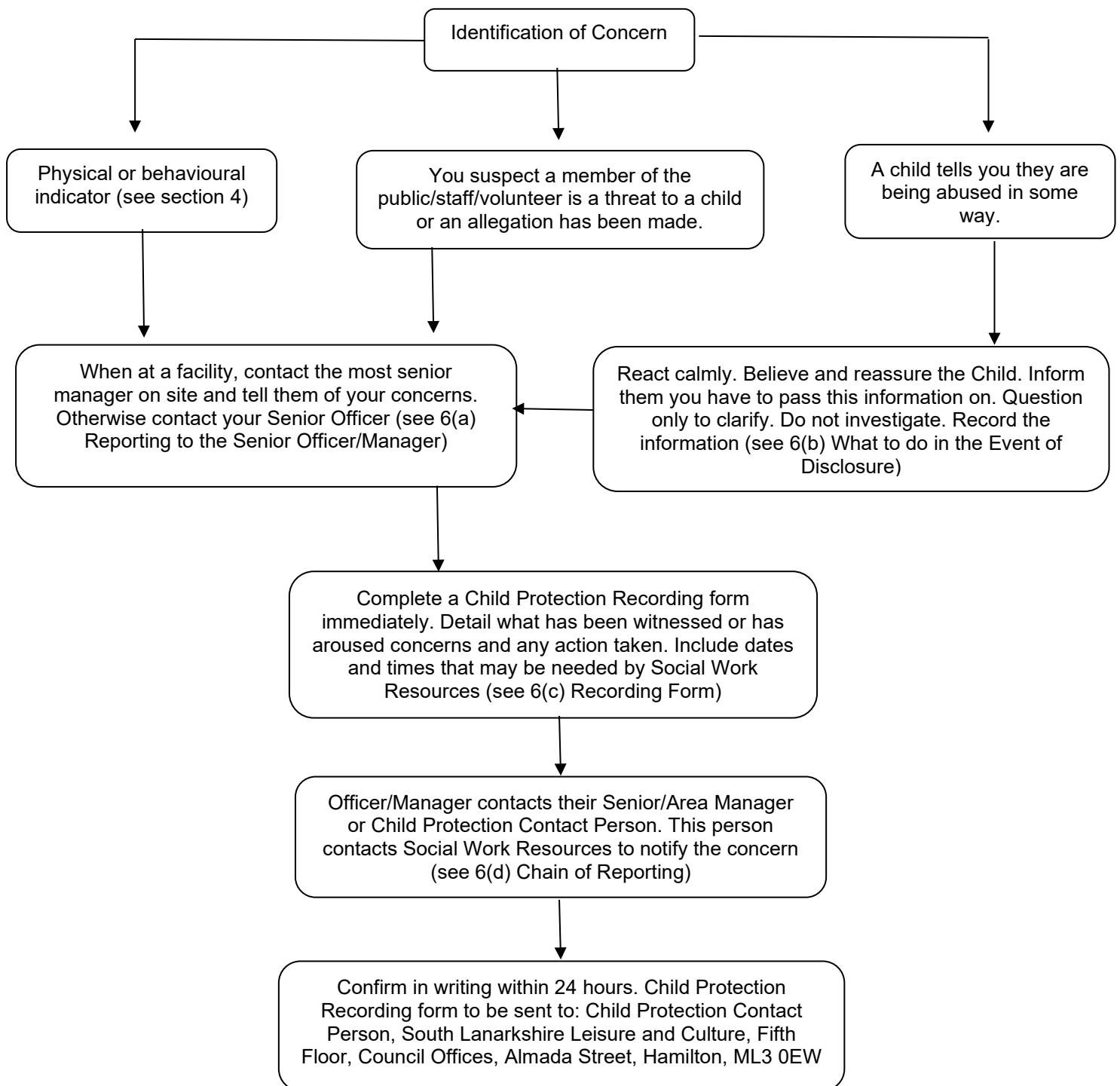
What is the Child Protection Register?

All local authorities are responsible for maintaining a central register of all children – including unborn babies – who are the subject of an inter-agency Child Protection Plan. This is called the Child Protection Register. The register has no legal status but provides an administrative system for alerting practitioners that there is sufficient professional concern about a child to warrant an inter-agency Child Protection Plan. Local authority social work services are responsible for maintaining a register of all children in their area who are subject to a Child Protection Plan, though the decision to put a child on the register will be based on a multi-agency assessment. South Lanarkshire Council has its own Child Protection register which provides a central resource for practitioners concerned about a child or young person's safety or care. If legal safeguards are required to protect the child or ensure compliance then a referral must be made to the Children's Reporter to allow consideration as to whether Compulsory Measures of Supervision are required.

5. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All staff who work and/or come into contact with children and their families have a role to play in child protection. As previously highlighted, it is not the responsibility of those working within South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns. The decision to react to allegations of, or suspicions about, abuse can be a very difficult one. There is however a responsibility to protect the child in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take the necessary action. Do not be afraid to report your concerns, remember you may not be the only one to have them. You can also be reassured that all referrals are discussed thoroughly by the statutory agencies prior to any action being taken. Your concerns will be genuine and treated as such by them.

6. Reporting Procedure



6. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse Procedure

6 (a) Reporting to the Senior Officer/Manager

- Any concerns that a child has been abused by either a member of the public, or staff or a volunteer should be reported to the most senior person on site. This person shall take steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- When working in another area e.g. school facility/village hall/non-supervised outdoor facility, the first point of contact is the SLLC Officer in charge of the programme.
- If this person is not available, the report must be made to this person's Line Manager.
- This officer shall then contact their Senior/Area Manager (listed in section 7 under SLLC contact numbers) who shall report this to Social Work.

For Development teams, report to the Senior Development Officer, for Facility Managers report to the appropriate Senior/Area Manager etc.

Please note that if any staff member is the subject of the allegation:

- The report must be made to the Child Protection Contact Person in South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture who is the Sport and Physical Activity Area Manager (Operations).
- If the Child Protection Contact Person is unavailable then direct contact must be made with the Local Social Work Office (of where the child lives) or, if out of hours, the Emergency Social Work Service or Police (Tel: 101) stating that you want to make a child protection referral. (see section 7 - South Lanarkshire Contact Numbers).
- Where the allegation is made against a paid or unpaid coach/instructor or tutor the most senior person must, following advice from Social Work Resources, notify the appropriate National Governing Body Senior Officer.

6 (b) What to do in the Event of Disclosure

If a child says or indicates that they are being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child is being abused the person receiving this information should:

- Stay calm and do not rush into any inappropriate action.
- Listen to what the child has to say and show them that you take them seriously.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you what happened and that they are not to blame.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum, this could be critical to any legal process that might ensue later. The child should be allowed to speak freely without any undue interruption or questioning, but a clear account should be ensured. Affirming what the child tells you is best practice.
- Reassure the child of discretion but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in light of subsequent developments.
- Make a full written record of what was said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible. This should include:

Name, address, age and telephone number of child

The nature of the allegation or concern (A description of any areas of concern)

A description of any visible bruising or injuries

The child's account, if he/she can give one, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries incurred

Any times, date or relevant information

A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

The South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture worker's name and status/title reporting

the claim

Name and status/title of whom the worker reported the claims to.

6 (c) **Child Protection Recording Form**

A full record of what was said, heard and/or seen should be recorded on the Child Protection Recording form for South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Ltd. These are available on site at Facilities, from the Child Protection Contact Officer or the Coach and Volunteer Development Co-ordinator. Forms are also available on the I drive and Q Pulse.

6 (d) **Chain of Reporting**

- The Senior/Area Manager shall refer the allegation to the Social Work Resources in the area where the child lives (see section 7 - South Lanarkshire contact numbers).
- Social Work Resources may involve the Police in investigations. If this happens you will be advised of what happens next. This will result in a Social Work inquiry and a separate Police inquiry running in parallel to investigate any allegations.
- The parents/carers will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from Social Work Resources.

7. **South Lanarkshire Contact Numbers**

The first point of contact for all staff is the most Senior Officer in the facility they are working or the Development Officer in charge of the programme. However, if you require further information or advice, help is available from a number of agencies including Social Work and the local Police. The telephone numbers are as follows:

South Lanarkshire Council, Social Work Resources/Police Contact Numbers

Social Work Resources	0303 123 1008
Emergency Social Work Service (out of hours only)	0303 123 1008
Police Scotland	101

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Senior/Area Manager Contact Numbers

Sport and Physical Activity

SPA Area Manager (Operations)	01355 234078
Child Protection Contact Person)	
Area Manager (Development Services)	01698 454303
Recreation Officer (Coach and Volunteer Development)	01355 245309

Country Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Countryside and Heritage Manager	01698 426213
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Cultural Services

Venue Manager (North)	0141 613 5700 01355 261000
Venue Manager (South)	01698 452299 01555 667999
Venue Manager (Halls and Arts Development)	01698 453423

Libraries and Museums

Libraries Co-ordinator (North)	01698 452220
Libraries Co-ordinator (South)	01698 452149

South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Headquarters

Support Manager (Training and Development)	01698 454325
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8. Good Practice for South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Staff

To ensure that all forms of abuse are prevented within the sports and culture context and to also help protect the staff who work with children in this context, situations where abuse may occur can be minimised by:

- Always being publicly open when working with children. Avoid situations where you and a child are completely unobserved.
- Where possible, parents should take responsibility for their own children in changing rooms. If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure that adults work in pairs.
- Male and female staff should supervise mixed activities, where possible.

Those working with children should never:

- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, even if it is considered horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow a child to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Allow allegations by a child to go unreported, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves.

If a member of Leisure and Culture staff accidentally hurts or distresses a child in any way or a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done it should be reported as soon as possible to the most senior person available and a brief note made. Parents or carers should also be informed of the incident as soon as possible.

9. Employment of Casual Coaches/Instructors, Tutors, Self-Employed and Voluntary Staff

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and vulnerable adults. It is essential that the appropriate procedures are used consistently whether staff are paid, unpaid, in part time or full-time employment, permanent, casual or self-employed. For a copy of the recruitment procedures for staff, please contact the Human Resources section of South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Ltd, tel: 01698 476209.

Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme

Staff working within SLLC programmes and facilities that have regular contact with children less than 18 years of age may be subject to checks through the Disclosure Scotland PVG scheme. Candidates considered for appointment will be required to consent and pay for a criminal records check provided through Disclosure Scotland.

Induction Procedure

Each new member of staff, coach/volunteer, instructor or tutor shall receive an induction session prior to commencing their role within South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture's programmes and facilities. The following information shall be included in the induction meeting - health & safety, Child Protection Policy, administration, payment details and HR Induction.

10. Social Media and Photography Guidelines

The use of social media has become more prevalent as a means of communication and can bring many benefits. However, it can also be used in ways that are harmful to the sender, the recipient and the service provider. In particular, there is the risk of inappropriate photographs and film footage of children being taken and shared. Permission must be sought for taking photographs or filming within SLLC facilities by completing the appropriate forms.

11. Where can I get more information?

- South Lanarkshire Child Protection
[South Lanarkshire Child protection | Homepage](#)
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021
[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 \(Updated 2023\)](#)
- Children 1st is one of Scotland's leading child welfare charities whose vision is a happy, healthy, safe and secure childhood for children in Scotland.
www.children1st.org.uk

Tel: 0141 418 5670

- sportscotland is the national agency for sport in Scotland who work closely with Children 1st to promote good practice in safeguarding children in sport.

[Child wellbeing and protection - sportscotland the national agency for sport in Scotland](#)

Tel: 0141 534 6500

- Creative Scotland in a joint venture with Children in Scotland promote Creating Safety (2011) which is a child protection guide for the creative community in Scotland.

[Children in Scotland](#)

Tel: 03303 332000

- NSPCC Scotland
[Child protection system for Scotland | NSPCC Learning](#)