

Our quality standards form the foundation of our day-to-day work

PURPOSE

To protect all babies and children, prevent harm through abuse and neglect and promote their wellbeing by upholding children's rights. This standard applies to all employees, volunteers and trustees.

OUR COMMITMENT:

- Taking action to protect children and babies.
- Making the prevention of and protection from harm of children and babies our priority.
- Putting children and families at the heart of all we do.
- Being accountable to children, families and our stakeholders.
- Being a connected, restorative and learning organisation.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS:

- We prioritise the rights of all children in all we do.
- We understand that preventing and protecting children from harm is our priority.
- We are always vigilant to the needs and experience of all children.
- We assess children in the context of their individual and family circumstances.
- We take timely action to protect children and babies to prevent harm, abuse, neglect, trauma and online harm.
- We strengthen children's key attachments to keep children in their own family network where it is safe to do so.
- We actively promote the participation and agency of children and families in any decision making that affects them.
- We promote the Children First values: love, purpose and strength to build quality relationships with families.
- We are attentive to their current and previous experience in particular trauma and the impact of this.

- We are particularly mindful of the impact of poverty, discrimination and racism on children and their families.
- We work in a collaborative way with partners and multi-disciplinary professionals.
- We listen, learn and improve.

HOW WE WILL KNOW THIS:

- Listening to stories from children, adults and families.
- Surveys and feedback.
- Evaluation and research.
- Supervision, file audit and performance reviews.
- Organisational reporting.
- Incident reporting and service reviews.
- Delivery and monitoring of Organisational Child Protection Plan.

1 Taking action to protect all children

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

Where there is a baby or child in immediate danger, we will:

- Gather basic facts and refer to Police Scotland without delay.

Where there are concerns for a baby or child's safety, we will immediately:

1. Gather basic facts by listening to children and families. Record the child's own words where possible and the child's and families' views throughout.
2. Always retain a child centred focus as well as a family minded approach.
3. Consider our observations of the baby, child or young person in the context of their safety, health and wellbeing.
4. Contextualise our observations alongside reports and views gathered from wider family, community and other professionals or agencies connected with the baby or child.
5. Consider the needs and impact of other children in the family.
6. Share with a line manager without delay.
7. Share immediately with social work services, recording this succinctly on a Notification of Concern Form (CFS-SUR-F014), within 24 hours, or other local form as required, **signed off by team leader/line manager.**

8. Share the Notification of Concern form with an assistant director.
9. Record information and concerns clearly, factually and where expressing a view, judgement or analysis make this obvious. Record the reasons for concern and why a Notification of Concern is in the best interests of the child.
10. Share our concerns and intended action with the family, **unless this places anyone at risk** or will interfere with any investigation – consult with senior colleagues if need be.
11. Reflect and record strengths and protective factors, as well as risks, key timeline moments and multi-agency views.
12. Review support plans when there has been a significant change to a child's circumstances.
13. Be mindful of the support needs of children and family members in this process.
14. Work with multi-agency partners and within local and national child protection procedures.
15. Escalate any concern when we do not think that concerns are being taken seriously or children's rights are not protected and upheld.

② Making the prevention of and protection from harm to all children our priority

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

We will:

1. Respond to any concern for a baby or child's wellbeing or safety by discussing this with a line manager without delay.
2. Ensure our employees and volunteers Recognise, Respond, Report, Refer and Record in line with our Child Protection and Wellbeing Procedure.
3. Build strong relationships with children and families, acknowledging their hopes, strengths and challenges, to understand their experience.
4. Provide practical and emotional support to protect and promote children's key attachments and work to build parents and carers capacity.
5. Through our recording practice take the time to reflect on any concerns and consider how best to respond.
6. Understand our responsibility to use robust assessment and evidence-informed practice that takes a chronological view of patterns, trends and incidents which significantly impact on the child/children.

7. Have a culture of openness and support for our staff members and volunteers to make sure they know how and what to do when they are worried about a child.
8. Have leaders who are available, responsive and informed.
9. Recognise the specific and unique needs of every child, family and community in the context in which they live.
10. Challenge and question where we see racism, discrimination and bias that impacts decision making.
11. Understand the impact of poverty, trauma and discrimination on the child and their family.
12. Work with parents and caregivers to remove the barriers they face in caring for their children safely and take steps to protect children where significant risks of harm remain.
13. Provide our staff with regular supervision and opportunities for reflective discussions with line managers on children's wellbeing and safety.
14. Have an open and learning culture that values and encourages a questioning and curious approach.

③ Putting children and families at the heart of all we do

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

By:

- Building strong respectful relationships with children and families based on our Children First values: love, purpose and strength to know children in the context of their family and their strengths as well risks and concerns.
- Being open and honest with families about our assessments of risks and worries, as well as strengths.
- Listening to children and families and making sure we understand what they are telling us by checking and reflecting back what we have heard.
- Providing early flexible support to families where possible to prevent concerns escalating.
- Taking a child-centred, children's rights approach which is family-minded and aware of structural inequality.
- Promoting and protecting children's key relationships and attachments where they are safe.
- Making sure that children and families' views and voices are heard in child protection processes and plans.

- Remaining vigilant to the safety and wellbeing of children at all times.
- Always acting in the best interests of children.
- Promoting children's access to Bairns Hoose where there is one available and their right to receive advocacy, care and therapeutic services to support recovery from trauma and harm.

④ Being accountable to children, families and stakeholders

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

All Children First children and family services staff and volunteers will:

1. Identify circumstances and share information which could increase risks of harm without delay.
2. Have access to our Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure.
3. Review our policies and procedures in line with changes to national or local policy, legislation or practice guidance.
4. When allegations of harm are shared, limit initial questioning to establishing basic facts only: what happened, where, when and by whom.
5. Make an initial assessment of the risk to the baby, child or other children, and share with their line manager immediately.
6. Support our employees and volunteers where they have a concern for a baby or child and keep them informed of any follow up actions.
7. Update dynamic records within 24 hours of concern being noted.
8. Where possible, record in the child's own words, together with details of the time, place and response of the agency referred to.
9. Consider and cross reference with any other child that could be affected.
10. Prioritise this work over all other tasks (gathering initial information, sharing with line manager, referring to agencies and recording of this process).
11. Alert line managers of any significant change in the circumstances, child protection, registration or legal position without delay and closer planning, risk assessment and supervision of this work should take place.
12. Inform your line manager without delay if a planned appointment with a child or family is missed and this raises concern, particularly when it is part of a child's plan or Child Protection Plan. Also report immediately if a vulnerable child goes missing or moves out of the area, so that relevant information can be shared with partner agencies as appropriate.

- 13.** Report to senior management immediately (assistant director) when any baby, child, young person or adult we have been engaged with or supporting is significantly harmed, injured or dies.
- 14.** A plan of action put in place in collaboration with agencies such as Police Scotland and social work services – a significant incident report (CEX-F001) should be completed immediately and passed on as per the significant incident procedure (CEX-P001).
- 15.** Share with line manager immediately any “near miss” situation for any baby, child, young person or adult we are involved with. This may require the Significant Incident Procedure (CEX- POO1) to be implemented, learning will be shared appropriately.

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

Line managers/team leaders will:

- 1.** Have access to a clear Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure.
- 2.** Create the conditions in their team and service to support this Standard.
- 3.** Ensure team members understand and implement the Child Protection Standard and process for notification of concerns in line with procedure.
- 4.** Ensure wellbeing and protection risks are discussed at every staff supervision.
- 5.** Team leaders and line managers facilitate team wide learning opportunities to promote best practice.
- 6.** Monitor individual practice and raise issues with assistant director and, where appropriate, People and Culture, seeking to address issues appropriately (e.g. through local team support, L&D opportunities, performance management etc).
- 7.** Quality check-ins to audit children and parents/carers connection records, with review of identification and management of risk and appropriate recording of safety and wellbeing.
- 8.** Data Protection.

Every employee and volunteer will:

- Comply with Data Protection legislation in recording, storing and sharing information.
- Inform children and families of their right to request copies of their information.

5 Being a connected, restorative and learning organisation

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT:

- We support and develop our employees and volunteers with this priority and responsibility.
 - We provide clear key messages and responsibilities in induction, probation and supervision.
 - We have an open and honest culture that invites question and reflection based on high support and high challenge.
 - We regularly review our concerns, plans and actions for children, to protect them.
 - We take responsibility for regularly discussing any concerns for children and any increased risks with line managers at supervision and out-with supervision.
 - We collaborate effectively with other statutory or third sector support agencies, communicating clearly our assessment and support plans and working within any children's/child protection plans.
 - We have a clear process in place for sharing and escalating concerns with line managers that all employees and volunteers understand.
 - We have a Significant Incident Procedure (CEX-P001) in place for internal notification and to support learning and continuous improvement.
 - We are aware of the Whistleblowing Policy and the circumstances in which this would apply. Whistleblowing Policy (HRM-P029).
 - We have an organisational child protection development plan in place.
 - We provide child protection training, learning and development opportunities for staff and volunteers, proportionate to their roles and responsibilities.
 - We have audit cycles in place for continual learning and improvement.
 - We continue to review our practice, process and this Standard.
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