



# Barra Children's Centre

## Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Board of Trustees on: 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018

It will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures. This policy will be next reviewed on or before December 2019.

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents

Barra Children's Centre aim to provide an environment in which children and young people will feel safe, secure and cared for. We acknowledge the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

Barra Children's Centre works in accordance with "the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003". We also refer to the following legislation;

- The National Guidelines for Child Protection in Scotland 2014
- GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child)
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Scottish Government wants Scotland to be the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up so that they become; successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. All children and young people (including unborn babies) have the right to be cared for and protected from harm and abuse and grow up in a safe environment in which their rights are respected and their needs met. Children and young people should get the help they need, when they need it and their safety is always paramount.

### Definitions

For child protection purposes this policy refers to any child aged 0 - 16 years (18 years for Children with Additional Support Needs). When the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 comes into force, a "child" will be defined for the purpose of all parts of the Act, as someone who has not attained the age of 18.

A **parent** is defined as any person who has parental responsibilities over a child. For example: a mother or father. We may also include in this; foster and adoptive parents and carers, including those who may have substantial care of a child.

A **childcarer**: These people may not have specific parental responsibilities but nonetheless have a duty of care for the child.

### What is Child Abuse?

Child Abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are intentionally or inadvertently harmed or placed at risk of harm, usually by adults, and often by people that they trust.

### Categories of Abuse

**Physical Injury**: This is defined as any injury inflicted or knowingly not prevented by any person having custody or care of a child. Physical abuse is often defined by injuries that cannot be explained by the normal play activities of a child, and is defined as hitting or hurting a child on purpose.

**Neglect**: This is defined as the wilful failure to meet the basic needs of a child, for example, not clothing, feeding or caring for a child adequately and leaving them without adequate supervision.

**Emotional Abuse**: This is defined as any abuse or torment which would have an effect on the mental health and wellbeing of a child. Most commonly emotional abuse is categorised as shouting at a child, making a child feel worthless, exposing a child to inappropriate and never punishment and inconsistency of behaviour towards a child.

**Sexual Abuse**: This is defined as the exploitation of children in order to meet the demands of adults or other children. Sexual abuse may include: involvement of children in masturbation, involvement of children in pornographic activity, including taking pornographic photographs and involving children in watching or viewing pornographic materials, involvement of children in sexual activity, including; rape, sodomy, oral sex and sexual intercourse with a child, even with their consent.

**Bullying**: Bullying is defined as any form of abuse on a child which is inflicted upon them by their peers, this abuse can be subtle, including, teasing, being ignored or left out, being pushed or pulled about, or having money or possessions taken.

### Recognition of Child Abuse

It is not in the remit of members of staff or volunteers at Barra Children's Centre to identify the specific category of abuse that a child may be experiencing but rather to highlight any causes for concern to the appropriate person and organisations.

The following list although not exhaustive may be indicative of some of the signs and symptoms of child abuse, it should be noted that some children may display some of these signs in times of stress; it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused.

### Indicators of Abuse

- ✦ Injuries to the child that are not consistent with the normal play activities of a child, either in position or type.
- ✦ Inconsistent or unreasonable explanation of an injury by a child, parent or carer
- ✦ Inconsistent or inappropriate behaviour such as sexually explicit remarks or actions, mood swings, uncharacteristically quiet/aggressive, severe tantrums.
- ✦ Becoming isolated socially
- ✦ Overeating, loss of appetite, weight loss, weight gain.
- ✦ Inappropriately dressed or ill-kept and/or dirty
- ✦ Self inflicting injury
- ✦ Open distrust of, or discomfort with, parent or carer
- ✦ Delayed social development, poor language and speech
- ✦ Excessively nervous behaviour, such as rocking or hair twisting
- ✦ Low self esteem

### **General indicators of abuse, though often typical of sexual abuse**

- ✦ Recurring Abdominal Pain
- ✦ Reluctance to go home
- ✦ Flinching when approached or touched
- ✦ Recurring headaches

### **Recording and Reporting of an Incident - Suspicions of Abuse**

All staff, volunteers and board members should be aware that any incidents must be recorded. It is also very important for staff to communicate about matters of this kind.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is under threat there are a number of steps that must be taken.

**1. Inform** the manager, Theresa Irving. In the event that the manager is not available, one of the designated persons for Child Protection should be contacted;

Katie Denehy  
Lydia Berry

**2. Report** the specific concerns that you have to the manager or the person responsible for child protection for the setting

**3. Record** your suspicions and give them to the manager or the person responsible for child protection for the setting, records of suspicions must include the following information:

- The nature of the suspicion
- Details of any injury

- Dates, times and names of other adults involved with the child who may substantiate the suspicion
- The manager or person in charge will then determine the situation and refer the case to Social Work Children and Families or the police

### **Disclosure of Abuse**

If a child discloses to you that they have been abused, the member of staff should:

Inform the child that in order to help them you have to tell your line manager, the member of staff should tell the child who this person is and reassure the child that they can trust them and that they have done the right thing in telling you what has been going on.

Listen to the child and note down what they say to you **in their own words**. It is important at this stage that you do not interrupt the child and you do not ask questions.

Report the disclosure to the owners / manager or person responsible for child protection in the setting the manager will then contact the relevant agency or the police who will investigate the disclosure. If the manager or member of staff dealing with the situation at the time thinks that the case is serious enough to involve Social Work Children and Families immediately, then please contact the social work children and families office on 01871 810431 , or contact social work out of hours service, 01851 701702. If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger then the manager or member of staff should contact the police on 999.

It should be noted that if a member of staff is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be as discrete as possible and inform the owners / manager as soon as possible. In addition to this if a member of staff observes another member of staff harming a child they should report this to the owners / manager who will act according to the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003.

In addition to this if the manager is named in the disclosure the member of staff should be discrete and contact the board of directors or any authorities detailed below:

### **General Information on Child Protection**

Child Protection involves several agencies working together, these include; Local Authority, Social Work Departments and Childcare organisations.

In order to maintain the levels of protection, all persons working with children must have a Disclosure / PVG through Disclosure Scotland and have completed an application process, interview and have 2 references.

### **Responding to a Child who confides in you**

- ✚ Stay Calm
- ✚ Do not make promises you cannot keep
- ✚ Offer reassurance and support
- ✚ Immediately tell your line manager
- ✚ Record the facts and discussion in the child's own words and give a copy to your manager
- ✚ Do not take control of the situation yourself
- ✚ Maintain confidentiality

- ✚ Keep records
- ✚ Talk to the right people

### **End Note**

All parents should be aware that members of staff attend regular child protection training in order that we keep your children safe from harm.

### **Child Protection Code of Conduct**

Barra Children's Centre supports the **Protection of Children Scotland Act 2003** and as such all members of staff are required to abide by the code of conduct as detailed below;

#### **All Members of Staff Should:**

- Play your part in helping to develop an ethos where all people matter and are treated with equality, and respect and dignity.
- Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of a child first.
- Respect a child's right to be involved in making choices and decisions which directly affect them.
- Listen attentively to any ideas and views a child wants to share with you.
- Respect a child's culture (for example, their faith and beliefs)
- Respect a child's right to privacy and personal space.
- Respond sensitively to children who seem anxious about participating in certain activities
- Speak to a member of staff immediately if you suspect that a child is experiencing bullying or harassment.
- Be aware of the vulnerability of some groups of children to being isolated and hurt.
- Ensure that when you are working with children you are at least within sight or hearing of other adults.
- Listen carefully when a child 'tells you' (sometimes through drawings and behaviour as well as words) that they are being harmed and report what you have discovered immediately to your line manager.
  - Report immediately any suspicion that a child may be at risk of harm or abuse.
  - Never dismiss what a child tells you as lies or exaggeration
  - Only restrain a child who is at imminent harm of inflicting harm to themselves or others.

- Never underestimate the contribution that you can make to the development of safe communities for children.

### **Members of Staff Should Not:**

- Spend time alone with young people away from others.\*
- Contact young people out with the activity or the project.\*
- Take young people alone in a car on journeys, however short.\*
- Take a young person to your home.\*

\*When occasions arise where it is unavoidable that these things happen, then they should only occur with the full knowledge of your line manager, senior worker or the young person's parents.

### **Members of Staff Should Not**

- Exaggerate or trivialise another workers concerns about a child or ignore an allegation or suspicion of abuse in the hope that it will either go away or that someone else will deal with it.
- Discuss personal issues about a child or their family with other people except where it concerns the wellbeing of the child.
- Be drawn into derogatory remarks or gestures in front of the children or young people.
- Allow a child or young person to be bullied or harmed by anyone else in the organisation
- Allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.

### **Members of Staff Should Never:**

- Engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Never allow others to or yourself engage in touching a child in a sexually provocative manner
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun

- Engage in rough or physical contact unless it is permitted within the rules of a game or sports activity or conforms to the guidance on appropriate physical restraint
- Never form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children
- Harass or intimidate a child or worker because of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, socio-economic status or disability
- Unnecessarily invite or allow children to stay with you at your home. \*

\*Where members of staff invite or allow children to enter their own homes (for example, when playing with the staff members own children or upon request of the child's parent), this must be done with the express permission of the child's parent or carer. In addition, the member of staff should inform the manager of the setting of the arrangement and follow the child protection policy and the code of conduct as expressed above at all times. Barra Children's Centre accepts no responsibility for the actions of its employees when they are not within their working hours. Parents and carers should be aware that where they request a member of staff to look after their children out with setting hours this is done by personal arrangement and has no bearing on Barra Children's Centre.