

## **BRIGHT SPARKS PLAY GROUPS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT 2018**

**This policy applies to all staff and volunteers.**

### **RATIONALE**

We are committed to practice in a way that protects all children and young people and fully adhere to the processes and procedures contained within Edinburgh and Lothian's Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures 2015 [http://emppc.org.uk/file/Child\\_Protection/Inter-agency\\_Child\\_Protection\\_Procedures - Edinburgh the Lothians Oct 2015.pdf](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Child_Protection/Inter-agency_Child_Protection_Procedures_-_Edinburgh_the_Lothians_Oct_2015.pdf)

The purpose of this policy is;

- to protect children and young people attending Bright Sparks.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Bright Sparks staff believe that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people and to keep them safe.

Child protection procedures and policies should be seen as part of the wider context of providing support to families and meeting children's needs. The principle national policy that drives this agenda is [Getting It Right For Every Child](#) (GIRFEC).

*GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.*

*It puts the rights and wellbeing of children and young people at the heart of the services that support them – such as early years services, schools, and the NHS – to ensure that everyone works together to improve outcomes for a child or young person.*

GIRFEC:

- puts children's needs first;
- ensures that children are listened to and understand decisions that affect them; and
- ensures that they get the appropriate co-ordinated support needed to promote, support and safeguard their wellbeing, health and development.

The approach encourages earlier intervention by practitioners to avoid crisis situations at a later date and ensures that children and young people get the help they need when they need it. With its emphasis on shared assessment based on common language, it facilitates information-sharing and stresses the importance of understanding risks and needs across all aspects of the child's wellbeing.

### **Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- National Guidance for Child Protection (2014)  
[http://emppc.org.uk/file/Child\\_Protection/Scottish\\_Government\\_-\\_National\\_guidance\\_for\\_CP\\_in\\_Scotland\\_2014.pdf](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Child_Protection/Scottish_Government_-_National_guidance_for_CP_in_Scotland_2014.pdf)
- Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures – Edinburgh and the Lothian’s (2015)  
[http://emppc.org.uk/file/Child\\_Protection/Inter-agency\\_Child\\_Protection\\_Procedures\\_-\\_Edinburgh\\_the\\_Lothians\\_Oct\\_2015.pdf](http://emppc.org.uk/file/Child_Protection/Inter-agency_Child_Protection_Procedures_-_Edinburgh_the_Lothians_Oct_2015.pdf)
- Getting it Right for Every Child Policy  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>
- National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland (2012)  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/child-protection/national-framework-cp-learning-2012>
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2011/08/04111811/1>
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child  
<http://www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/Our-mission/UN-Convention/>

**We recognise that:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare and wellbeing.

**We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Member of Staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection for the school Centre
- Adopting the processes and procedures contained within Edinburgh and Lothian’s Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through training, support and quality assurance measures
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely

- Using our procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agency's who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistle blowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one to one discussions

At BRIGHT SPARKS all staff working in the centre, will be regularly trained and updated in Child Protection Policy and Procedure. This training will include updates on categories of abuse and understanding of risk factors for children. All new staff will be given information on Child Protection policy and procedures as part of their induction to the centre.

All staff are expected to use the GIRFEC Wellbeing indicators to identify concerns for children they regard are at risk. All Child Protection concerns should be recorded on the Child Protection Referral form and given to the Lead Co Ordinator as soon as possible.

On an annual basis staff are expected to review the categories of abuse and risk factors for children and remind themselves of current Child Protection Procedures. This may be part of the initial inService Day Training in August or at a Staff Meeting at the beginning of the year.

### **BRIGHT SPARKS PROCEDURES**

- All staff have a duty to protect children from risk and harm. All staff are expected to record any Child Protection concerns they have and pass this directly to the LEAD CO ORDINATOR or if the LCO is unavailable, to the Management Committee.
- The Lead Co-ordinator will monitor and collate all Child Protection concerns and take appropriate action. Where necessary a referral may be made to Midlothian's Children and Families Contact Centre. The Lead Co-ordinator will keep relevant individuals within Bright Sparks informed of any action(s) taken.
- Key contact numbers for Midlothian's Child Protection key agencies are:  
[Child Services Duty Team](#) 0131 271 3413 (01312716674 out of office hours  
 ESCS 0800 7316969  
 Police 101 / 999  
 Health 0131 536 8107 ( Ask for Paediatrician On Call Child Protection)  
 Public Protection Office 01316535150

- If a child discloses information which you consider to be a child protection matter, stay calm and follow the procedures for dealing with a disclosure:

**1. Guidelines for responding:**

- First:** Listen with care. Do not prompt or suggest an answer.  
Use open-ended questions to establish the facts then STOP.
- Second:** Reassure the child that you know it is not his/her fault.
- Third:** Do not show disbelief
- Fourth:** Do **not** give a guarantee of confidentiality.
- Fifth:** Take the allegation seriously

**2. Procedures for dealing with a disclosure**

- **A guarantee of confidentiality must not be given to the child**
- Any discussion must be limited to establishing basic facts only, i.e.
  - When did it happen?
  - Where did it happen?
  - Who did it?
  - What happened?Do not ask leading questions.
- Tell the child that the Designated Member of Staff within the centre will have to be informed.
- Record the basic facts (handwritten) as accurately as possible in the child's own words, signed and dated on the day of disclosure.
- Refer immediately to the LCO or, Management Committee. At this stage the LCO will ask you to complete the first section(s) of the Child Protection referral form. Again, this should be handwritten.
- You will be informed of the outcome of the disclosure when it is appropriate to do so.

In circumstances where there is a significant concern that a child or young person has, or is at risk of being harmed or abused, Bright Sparks is required to pass information to the Police, Social Work Department and Health colleagues who have a legal duty to investigate further.

The LCO will follow the Child Protection Procedures for Midlothian Council and make an Initial Child Protection Referral to the Duty Social Worker at Midlothian's Contact Centre as detailed on the Child Protection contact sheet.

To ensure accuracy in reporting and follow up investigations, all staff involved in each step of the process involving a child protection concern should keep (handwritten) notes of conversations, calls and correspondence related to the concern. This information should be collated by the LCO and kept as attachments to the child protection referral form.

**Contact details**

The Designated Member of staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Bright Sparks is:

Susan Melville Lead Co Ordinator

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

**This policy will be reviewed by end December 2019**

Signed: Louise Gough

**Chair Mangement Committee**