



# Child Protection Policy

Implementation Date: 13/09/2023

Last reviewed: 27/01/2026

Our Child Protection Policy is designed so that you can follow it and keep people safe.

## How to contact the Safeguarding Lead

If you have a safeguarding concern, report it.

The Safeguarding Lead from the Board is: Kalpana Ratnam-Roarty

Get in touch with the Safeguarding Lead on:

[kalpana@nextchapterscotland.org.uk](mailto:kalpana@nextchapterscotland.org.uk), marked "Private and Confidential. For the attention of the Safeguarding Lead"

## Purpose

Next Chapter Scotland is an adult-based service; however we understand that a child may be in the family or network of those we support and are committed to the safety and protection of children recognising that the safeguarding of children is different. Next Chapter Scotland will adhere to a child safeguarding practice that aligns with legal obligations, adhere to government guidance and meets best practice standards.

## Definitions

In Scotland, the term 'child' or 'children' refers to persons who have not yet attained the age of 18 years as stated in section 97(1) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, this includes unborn babies as stated in section 68(5) of the 2014 Act. Child protection refers to the procedures involved in

considering, assessing, and planning essential action, as well as the actions themselves, when there is concern that a child may be harmed.

## **Categories of concern**

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Criminal exploitation
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Parental use of alcohol and/or drugs
- Female genital mutation
- Honour based abuse and forced marriage
- Any other concerns not listed and impacts on the child.

## **Key Principles of Child Safeguarding:**

- Prioritising the needs of children and young people.
- Ensure children and young people are heard and understand decisions affecting them.
- Provide the appropriate coordinated support to promote and safeguard their wellbeing, health, and development.

## **Legal Framework:**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in Scotland.

Key policies include:

[Getting it Right for Every Child](#) (GIRFEC) is Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of children and young people.

This framework enables individuals who work with children and their families to provide the right support at the right time.

[Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) this is a major piece of legislation in Scotland governing children's rights and services.

[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland](#) a national framework within which agencies and practitioners at local level, both individually and collectively can understand and agree processes for collaborative working to support, promote and safeguard the wellbeing of all children.

[The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) highlights every child's fundamental rights, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or ability.

A useful summary of legislation in relation to child protection is given here:

- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/scotland>
- <https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/protecting-children/legislation-and-policy/current-legislation-and-policy>

## **The Prevent duty:**

- Where a child is felt to be in immediate danger, any staff member should report, without delay, directly to the police. Similarly, where a child is thought to require immediate medical assistance, this should be sought as a matter of urgency from the relevant health services.
- Where the risk of harm is significant and immediate, the focus of risk assessment is about what needs to happen to keep the child safe right now. Inter-agency discussion out of hours may be essential. The need to gather information must always be balanced against the need to take any immediate protective action.
- Other children affected. Where a child is at risk of harm from neglect, abuse or exploitation, consideration should always be given to the needs and potential risks to other children in the same household or family network, and to children who are likely to become members of the same household or family network



## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing:**

Next Chapter Scotland will share information with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed

## **Recording and Record Keeping:**

Next Chapter Scotland will record any concerns pertaining to a child's safeguarding needs. This record will include the individual involved, the type of concern raised, and the subsequent actions taken, including the decisions made and the reasoning for those choices. All records will be signed, dated and securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

## **Safe Recruitment & Selection:**

Next Chapter Scotland is committed to safe recruitment and employment practices that aim to diminish the risk of children being exposed to individuals deemed inappropriate for working with or being in contact with them.

## **Social Media:**

Next Chapter Scotland is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for everyone that accesses their platforms this includes children.

## **Whistleblowing:**

Next Chapter Scotland is committed to hearing from their staff if they are dissatisfied with anything and encourages staff to come forward to raise concerns about inappropriate activity within their organisation, this includes employees or volunteers. Next Chapter Scotland is committed to protecting whistleblowers, this means that the continued employment and future



promotion or training of the Trustee, staff member, or volunteer will not be prejudiced.

## **Staff, Trustees and Volunteers:**

Next Chapter Scotland is committed to effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance to ensure they understand and follow our safeguarding policies, processes, and behavioural codes with confidence and competence.