



Child Protection Policy 2023/24

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1. Introduction

For over 50 years Cyrenians has worked with individuals who are excluded from family, home, work or community on their life journey. Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm, including physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm and neglect. Cyrenians' Safeguarding Statement describes and confirms that we have the appropriate policies, practices, training and procedures in place, and that they are regularly monitored.

This Child Protection policy specifically applies to children and young people under the age of 18.

2. Parties covered by this policy

The Scottish Government's National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014 defines a child as someone under the age of 18. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) also recognises children to be under the age of 18 and thus all guidance in this Child Protection policy applies to this age group.

This policy applies to all members of Cyrenians, including: Trustees (see also section 5); staff (full-time, part-time and sessional); volunteers; Ambassadors; independent advisors; contractors; and staff and representatives of partner agencies with whom Cyrenians has a formal contractual agreement – hereafter all referred to as Cyrenians' staff, representatives and volunteers. This policy provides a clear, unambiguous statement of our intent and values-led way of working. It also provides context to ensure we are aware of our responsibilities to the welfare and protection of children, both individually and collectively. Everyone in Scotland is responsible for the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

2. Definitions of Abuse and Risk of Harm

The following abridged definitions of risk of harm, neglect, physical and sexual abuse have been taken from the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014.

A child / young person is at risk of harm if another person's conduct is causing, or is likely to cause, the individual to be harmed or the individual is engaging, or is likely to engage, in conduct which causes, or is likely to cause, self-harm.

Harm 'includes all harmful contact' and includes:

- Conduct which causes physical harm
- Conduct which causes psychological harm (e.g. by causing fear, alarm or distress)
- Unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (e.g. theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion)
- Conduct which causes 'self-harm'

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child in their care.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening and can involve non-contact activities such as using sexual language towards a child.

Neglect is the persistent failure of a parent or carer to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs.

It is important to note that children and young people can be abused in other ways, including bullying, domestic abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

For further information about recognising the signs of abuse and relevant information on child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation can be found by following these links:

Child Sexual Exploitation – involves a child or young person being manipulated, forced or coerced into taking part in a sexual act in exchange for something
<http://csethesigns.scot/>

Domestic Abuse – takes the form of actions that can result in physical, sexual and psychological harm and suffering for men, women and children. It is widely unreported and it is crucial that staff are aware of the signs of domestic abuse. Further information can be found at Police Scotland
<http://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/advice-for-victims-of-crime/domestic-abuse/>

Forced Marriage – is considered to be an abuse of human rights. Children who are forced or subjected to emotional, physical or sexual abuse as a result, are protected by the Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Act 2011. The Act protects people from being **forced to marry**, or who are already in a **forced marriage**. Further information can be found by calling the Forced Marriage helpline 0800 027 1234 (open 24 hours) or by visiting
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/crimes/forced-marriage>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – it is an offence to carry out this procedure in Scotland or carry it out (or arrange to carry it out) abroad, even in countries where it is legal. Further information on FGM can be found at
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/resourcesforprofessionals/minorityethnic/female-genital-mutilation_wda96841.html

4. Cyrenians' Staff – Training and PVG membership

Cyrenians ensures that a designated Child Protection Officer has responsibility to support staff across all geographical areas where we are currently working.

All Cyrenians' staff, representatives and volunteers have a responsibility to the welfare of children and young people; even those who do not work directly with those groups.

All staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised contact with children or young people as part of their role are checked under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme. Once someone is a PVG member, Cyrenians becomes an interested party on the individual's membership, if any breach occurs we would be informed by Disclosure Scotland. All checks are carried out, and repeated, in line with current legislation.

Any convictions obtained during employment with Cyrenians must be disclosed to the People team at the earliest possible time.

In-house staff training by the designated Child Protection Officer is offered twice a year and is a compulsory part of the induction process for all staff.

Those working directly with children and young people must attend accredited safeguarding / child protection training no less than every three years in the local authority where they will be predominately working.

5. Cyrenians' Board of Trustees

Cyrenians' Board of Trustees are responsible for the governance of safeguarding and child protection for the organisation. Their responsibilities are as follows:

- Ensure the child protection policy is fit for purpose by participating in an annual review alongside the People team.
- Identify possible risks, including risks to beneficiaries or to anyone else connected to the charity, and any emerging risks on the horizon.
- Ensure that everyone involved with the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report and record concerns.
- Evaluate internal child protection training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant.
- Review which posts within the organisation require membership to the PVG scheme.

At least one Board member will be a designated Safeguarding Lead, ensuring that they are trained specifically in safeguarding governance for trustees, and this will be refreshed no less than every three years.

6. Staff Responsibilities

All Cyrenians' staff and volunteers will cooperate fully with the statutory authorities in all cases and have safeguarding responsibility whether or not their role involves direct contact with children and young people. All must adhere to the following:

6.1 All staff and volunteers

- Strictly observe this policy.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect the wellbeing of children and young people who are engaging with Cyrenians.
- Take appropriate action if an incident occurs.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children and young people who are engaging with in Cyrenians.
- Report any incident or suspicion of abuse to the designated Child Protection Officer, Senior Safeguarding Lead or member of the Leadership team.
- Use the *Wellbeing Concern Form* to record a signed note of details relating to the incident, concern, date and time (see Appendix 1).
- Ensure that appropriate adult to child ratios are applied when children and young people are accompanied as part of a Cyrenians' organised event.

Cyrenians follow the NSPCC recommendations outlined below for appropriate adult to child ratios. Where possible, at least two adults should be present when working with or supervising children and young people. We recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum to help keep children safe:

- 0-2 years – one adult to three children

- 2-3 years – one adult to four children
 - 4-8 years – one adult to six children
 - 9-12 years – one adult to eight children
 - 13-18 years – one adult to ten children
- Ensure that photographs of persons are not taken without the consent of the individual, and if a child, their parent or guardian; or if an adult at risk of harm, their carer (Section 7).
 - Be aware of the possibility that children and young people may have experienced trauma and have complex backgrounds, which could mean they are sensitive to certain issues.
 - If a member of staff is in a situation where they are alone with a child or vulnerable young person, they should make sure they can be clearly seen or observed by other members of staff.
 - Do not offer, take or borrow money, or offer to take gifts from a child or give either in a personal capacity. Prizes as part of activities are acceptable; personal gifts / presentations of money are not.

6.2 Managers

- Ensure that their team members, whether employees or non-employee workers, are fully aware of this Policy.
- Advise and support their team members on child protection issues.
- Advise the People teams of any posts that will have regular or unsupervised contact with children or young people. Agree with the People team the correct level of Disclosure required for these posts.
- Consider all posts they manage are appropriately designated under the PVG Scheme.
- Ensure that people who will have contact with children and young people are informed of the requirement for appropriate checks, and also ensure that no such person is permitted contact with children or young people until the checking process is satisfactorily completed.
- Supervise staff and volunteer contact with children and young people as appropriate and ensure they adhere to the provisions of this policy.

6.3 People Team

- Liaise with managers on the appropriate levels of Disclosure required for staff and volunteers who are likely to be working with children or young people.
- Check the identity, recent employment history and criminal conviction statement of employees and volunteers.

- Provide guidance and training on child protection and wellbeing issues to managers, employees and volunteers, as required.
- Advise and assist managers, employees and volunteers in dealing with any child protection concerns, including the possibility of seeking expert help.
- Act as the counter signatory for Disclosure Scotland.

6.4 Volunteering Support Officer

- Liaise with Service volunteer supervisors and People team on the appropriate levels of Disclosure required for volunteers who have regular contact with children and young people.
- Working with the People team, ensure every volunteer has completed an application and criminal conviction statement.
- Ensure volunteer induction material contains staff and volunteer responsibilities in regards to Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- Ensure volunteers have sufficient Child Protection training (Section 4).

6.5 Designated Child Protection Officer

- Offer support and advice to members of Cyrenians across all services and geographical areas of work.
- Review and update the Child Protection policy on at least an annual basis, or as required by changes in legislation / guidance.
- Design and deliver in-house child protection training twice yearly.

Z. Photography, video and publishing of images

Cyrenians' staff and volunteers may only take images of children and young people for use on official Cyrenians' social media sites and marketing materials in appropriate circumstances, within the following guidelines:

- If the child is under 18, any photograph, video or image will not be kept or published without written consent
- If the child is under 16, written consent must be given by a parent or guardian
- Identifying information will not be stored or published alongside images / video unless express permission has been given
- Photographs / video will only be taken on Cyrenians' issued cameras, including phone cameras
- Photographs / video will be stored on a secure server

- At large scale events where individual permission is impossible to obtain, signs at the entrance and exit to the venue must be prominently displayed highlighting the taking of photographs / video with instructions on how to withdraw consent
- Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable individuals e.g. those fleeing domestic violence, and consideration given to whether publication or use of the pictures / film would place a child at risk
- Consent may be withdrawn at any time, with no exception

8. Digital Communication and service delivery

Cyrenians' staff and volunteers may communicate with children and young people via text, email, and any other means of digital communication in appropriate circumstances; this includes service delivery online within the following guidelines:

- In the first instance, parent / carer consent must be obtained for all children under 16 years
- Consent must be granted by the child / young person
- A thorough risk assessment concluding that the child / young person has a safe and confidential place to communicate from has been completed
- The terms of use of the social media platform being used, including age restrictions, must be suitable for the child/young person who is engaging
- Any recording or data storage must adhere to our photography and video policies (see Section 7), as well as fully adhere to GDPR legislation (see Section 10)
- All communication should be open, transparent and appropriate
- All communication should be limited to Cyrenians' issued phone numbers, email addresses and media accounts
- Where possible, Cyrenians' issued equipment should be used for communication and service delivery
- This information should only be 'need to know' information such as the last-minute cancellation of a training session
- Messages should not include offensive, abusive or inappropriate language
- Messages should be clear and not be able to be misinterpreted
- Digital conversations should be logged in client case notes

- Parents / carers should be offered the option to be copied into any messages their child will be sent
- Consent may be withdrawn at any time without need of explanation

9. Responding to concerns - timeline and support

It is not the job of anyone in Cyrenians to decide whether or not a child or young person has been abused. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to report concerns.

If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 straight away.

If you have concerns about a child but do not believe they are in immediate danger, please follow the flow chart (Appendix 2).

Full support will be given to staff through regular 1-to-1 sessions, and specialist support may be requested if required. Anyone who reports any child protection concerns or allegations to Cyrenians will be treated with respect. All welfare concerns and allegations will be dealt with in accordance with statutory child protection and safeguarding guidance and Cyrenians' own policies and procedures.

9.1 Concerns about children and young people

Parents / carers have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children. Where the concern does not involve the possibility of abuse, concerns should be discussed with parents / carers. Any significant, untoward or unusual incidents which cause concern about the welfare of a child or young person should be recorded on the Wellbeing Concern Form (Appendix 1) and reported to Cyrenians within 24 hours.

Advice should be sought from Cyrenians' Child Protection Officer / line manager if there is any uncertainty about the appropriate course of action where there are concerns about the general welfare of a child or young person.

9.2 Concerns about staff members

Any concerns for the welfare of a child or young person arising from the conduct of a member of staff / volunteer must be reported to the line manager / Child Protection Officer on the day the concern arises, as soon as practically possible.

If the concern is about the line manager or Child Protection Officer it must be reported to the Senior Safeguarding Lead, a member of the Leadership team, the designated Safeguarding Trustee, or a member of the Board of Trustees.

A written document must be completed with the following:

- Name and date of birth
- Areas for concern
- Detailed description of concern

- Information about the person making the report, including name, contact details and position
- Action taken

Reporting must not be delayed by the gathering of information.

All subsequent actions taken and reasons for decisions shall be recorded (in the order in which they happened). This should be signed and dated by the line manager / Child Protection Officer or the person appointed to manage the response to the concerns.

10. Recording and storage

Cyrenians is committed to ensuring that we have the systems and procedures in place to protect all sensitive and personal information and data. Cyrenians has a legal duty to record and store all personal records and sensitive information safely and securely, in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The following points are relevant to safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm in line with this policy; full organisational details can be found in our dedicated Data Protection policy.

GDPR legislation specifies that personal data must be accurate and up to date and not retained for any longer than necessary. Records of concerns relating to potential / actual sexual offending must be retained for 100 years

- Records relating to child protection concerns must be retained for 50 years.
- Records relating to adult protection concerns must be retained for 50 years.
- Advice from the Safeguarding Service must be retained for 3 years (unless it falls under one of the previous categories, in which case it must be dealt with as set out above).
- All safeguarding information must be securely retained. If it is held electronically, it should be stored on encrypted devices in password protected files. If it is held physically, it should be in a locked cabinet or other secure storage.

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11. Contact details

Trustee Safeguarding Lead:

Name: Isobel Wylie

Email: isobel.wylie@advocates.org.uk

Senior Safeguarding Lead

Name: Euan MacLean

Phone/email: 0131 475 2354 euanmaclean@cyrenians.scot

Child Protection Officer

Name: Alan Jeffrey

Phone/email: 0131 475 2431, 07495470742, alanjeffrey@cyrenians.scot

Deputy Child Protection Officer

Name(s): Tess Hamilton

Phone/email: 07590 047554, tesshamilton@cyrenians.scot

12. Out of hours / emergency reporting

Call 999 in an emergency or if a child or young person is in immediate danger. Do not wait to speak with Child Protection Officer if this is the case.

In a situation that does not call for police intervention, such as immediate danger to a child or young person, the following numbers may be of use should you need advice / support and not be able to contact the Child Protection Officer or Senior Safeguarding Lead.

- [Report that a crime has been committed to police: Call 101](#)
- [NSPCC Helpline for advice / information: 0808 800 5000](#)
- [Out of hours / emergency social work: 0800 731 6969](#)

13. Related Policies and procedures

Cyrenians recognises that safeguarding is much wider than child protection. Our [Safeguarding Policy](#) covers a number of policies and procedures that are in place to ensure the prevention of abuse, including but not limited to:

Type of Document	Links to documentation
Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whistleblowing• Equal Opportunities• Child Protection• Adult support and protection• Anti-social behaviour• Alcohol• Drugs• Data Protection• Confidentiality

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints • Disclosures • Customer care • Acceptance and refusal of Gifts • Lone-working • Risk assessment • Grievance • Social Media • Recruitment • Recruitment of ex-offenders • Volunteer • Disciplinary • Bullying and Harassment
Procedures/Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting suspected abuse • Media and Communications • Data Storage
Guidelines/strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing publicity materials • Media strategy • Staff Handbook

14. Review

This policy is subject to change and review when necessitated by changes in Cyrenians' policy and/or Scottish or UK legislation and national guidance. A full review of the policy and good practice is to be completed annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 10/11/23

Date of next review: 10/11/24

Signed: (Senior Safeguarding Lead):

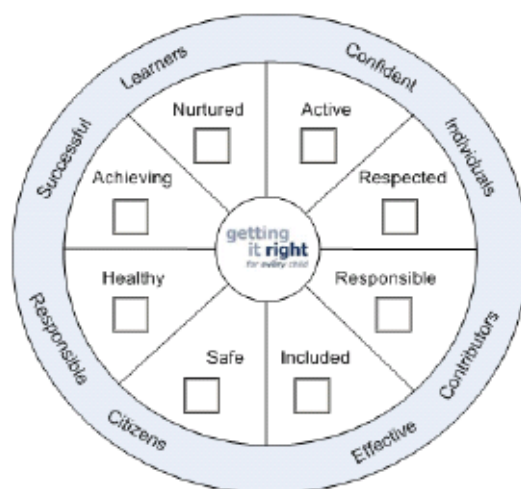


Euan MacLean

Appendix 1:

Wellbeing Concern Form

Baby / Child / Young Person - details
Name:
Date of birth:
Person recording details
Name:
Agency/ Establishment:
Area of concern(s)
Please tick relevant box(es) on 'Wellbeing Wheel' and use these headings to record the details below.



Description of Concern(s)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

It does not have to be the recorder that discusses the concern(s) with the parent or carer, but agreement should be reached about who is the most appropriate person within the agency to do this and the parent or carer's views recorded here.

Has the concern(s) been shared with the parent / carer? Yes No

What is the parent / carer saying about the concern(s)?

Has the concern(s) been shared with the child / young person? Yes No

What is the child / young person saying about the concern(s)?

Only complete this section if relevant to agency structure

Has the concern(s) been shared with anyone else? Yes No

If 'Yes', please specify:

Comments / Action:

This section must always be completed by named person (or person acting on their behalf)

- Action being taken in relation to this Wellbeing Concern?
- Continue to monitor
 - Initiate Child Protection Procedures
 - Carry out Assessment of Need
 - Discuss with Lead Professional (if allocated)

Comments / Action:

Feedback given to the referrer?

Yes No

Date:

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

Appendix 2

