



Workforce Brief No.9

Support and Protection of Children and Young People Procedure

Audience

- Professionals with lead responsibilities for child protection
- Practitioners required to contribute towards child protection processes
- Senior managers across all agencies,

Moray Children Services Partnership has undertaken the revision of the 2023 Multiagency Child Protection procedure to incorporate the 2023 update of the National Guidance on child protection, actions and learning from learning reviews, as well as feedback from members of staff, young people, Care Inspectorate and CYCJ.

From 20 August 2024

The **five** major changes to the procedure are:

1. The procedure was expanded in scope so that protective processes are to be applied when there is a risk of significant harm from:

- The community (criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation)
- The behaviour of a young person to themselves or others
- Neglect and abuse
- The circumstances/behaviour of the parent/carer.

The above is in line with national direction of travel as well as feedback from young people. According to CYCJ, local authorities are moving away from separate processes for assessing and planning for harmful behaviour posed by young people; instead, these are included in child protection to ensure that young people are not stigmatised, and that the harmful behaviour is viewed through a 'protection' lens.

2. Addition of sections about the importance of listening to children's voice and communication with children and families:

- The importance of child's voice is emphasised because there is evidence that capturing and listening to the voice of children is an area of weakness. Further, under the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, children have the right to be heard in decisions affecting them; the young people we consulted on also highlighted that they would like their voice heard and listened to.
- The importance of communication with families/children and with colleagues in other services was highlighted given that these are areas that have been identified for further development.

3. Updated language

The young people we consulted told us that they do not want a bespoke, separate procedure to focus on them. Rather, they prefer to be explicitly included in the child protection procedure. What this meant is that the revised procedure, meeting titles and paperwork references 'children and young people' throughout (e.g., title of procedure, young person protection planning meeting; young person's plan; etc.).



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4. Addition of protection from serious harm

The protection from serious harm process is to be used for exceptional cases, where:

“there is a likelihood of harmful behaviour, of a violent or sexual nature, which is life threatening and/or traumatic and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, may reasonably be expected to be difficult or impossible” (FRAME)

The key elements of the procedure:

- Places protection from serious harm within child protection (including risk to self and others)
- Tiered approach to child protection
- Provision of senior oversight to the most serious and exceptional cases
- Meets requirements set by CARM guidance
- Multiagency approach to the assessment and management of serious risk whilst not losing focus regarding the context of the harm (e.g. considers family situation that may well pose significant risk to the young person)
- Inclusive of contingency planning
- Mirrors established child protection processes

5. Inclusion of a toolkit

A toolkit was developed to support practitioners and professionals. This can be found on [Moray Protects](#).

What does this mean for staff?

Practitioners who have a role working alongside young people must familiarise themselves with the procedure.

Senior Social Workers/Management/Child Protection Leads are asked to provide guidance and support to staff. Specific responsibilities of key staff members are outlined in the procedure.

For more information, click [here](#) to read the national guidance.

Agency specific queries can be directed to your Child Protection representative:

Education: Lynne Riddoch & Hazel Sly

Social Work: Donna Forbes & Lizette Van Zyl

Police: Graeme Forbes

Health: Joanna McAulay

Or email mcpc@moray.gov.uk with your questions and feedback.



Workforce briefings for the implementation of the [National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2021](#) in Moray. Brought to you on behalf of the Moray Child

