



Child Protection Policies for Your Community Group

Poileasaidhean Dì on Chloinne do Bhuidheann Coimhearsnachd

Highland Child Protection Committee believes that every child, regardless of age, has at all times, in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which results in the child being physically or psychologically damaged.

This booklet has been designed to help your organisation protect these rights. Child Protection is the responsibility of every adult who has involvement with children. All agencies working with vulnerable groups, particularly children, should have a child protection policy and statement for all volunteers (including parents and guardians) and staff.

This is the 4th edition of this booklet. In addition to a Child Protection Policy it now includes advice on Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 duties in respect of vetting and barring of staff and volunteers, Disclosure Scotland vetting procedures, and all the policies your group will require to implement.

During 2007 it is anticipated that an integrated policy for Children and Vulnerable adults will be produced. **In the interim, the principles in this document can be applied to policies for working with vulnerable adults.** A sample Policy on protecting Vulnerable People is included in Section 4.5.

Highland Child Protection Committee would like to acknowledge the help and guidance of those on the working group that produced this document.

Special thanks go to Highland Pre-school Services whose original document inspired much of the content.

Alistair Dodds
Chair - Highland Child Protection Committee



Do I need to read this document?

Am feum mi an sgrìobhainn seo a leughadh?

If you intend to involve children* in your activities, whether as committee members, staff, volunteers or participants you **are advised to** read this document.

If you also hire facilities from Highland Council, receive or wish to apply for a Highland Council grant towards your activities you **MUST** read this document and put this guidance into action. **Compliance will be audited.**

You may be affiliated to a national or larger organisation that already has a child protection policy in place. These are not always in line with Scottish legislation and Highland local protocols. For any further guidance on this please contact your local office as listed in Section 6.

Most of the content is equally applicable to self-employed individuals who are involved in delivering activities or services to children.



**Whilst in Scottish law a 'child' is generally defined as under 16 years of age, for the purposes of this guidance, a 'child' is defined as being under the age of 18 years. This is in accordance with legislation covering the recruitment of adults to work/volunteer with children and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.*



What is this document designed to do?

Dè nì an sgrìobhainn seo dhomh?

This document has been designed to help your group discuss and agree child protection policies. It contains the following help and advice:

Section 1: **CHILD PROTECTION IN CONTEXT**

- 1.1 What is child protection?
- 1.2 What does this mean for my Group?
- 1.3 Creating a safe environment
 - 1.3.1 - A note for Hall Committees
 - 1.3.2 - Selection of staff and volunteers
 - 1.3.3 - Action you **MUST** take (Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003)
 - 1.3.4 - Is my organisation covered by the Act?
 - 1.3.5 - Who do I need to check?
 - 1.3.6 - Ten Steps to a safer environment
 - 1.3.7 - What is child abuse?

Section 2: **DEALING WITH A CHILD PROTECTION SITUATION**

- 2.1 Being alert to signs and symptoms
- 2.2 Responding to children who may have been abused
- 2.3 What should I do if I have a concern?
- 2.4 What happens next?
- 2.5 **RESPONSE FLOW CHART**

Section 3: **SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

- 3.1 Selecting a Child Protection lead
- 3.2 Disclosure checks



Section 4: **SAMPLE PAPERWORK**

- 4.1 Sample child protection policy
- 4.2 A sample policy statement
- 4.3 Policy on recruitment of ex offenders
- 4.4 Policy on information & storage
- 4.5 Policy on protection of vulnerable people
- 4.6 Personal Profile Form
- 4.7 Vetting Checklist
- 4.8 Reference Form
- 4.9 Reference Follow-up Telephone conversation record

Section 5: **APPENDICES**

- 5.1 Examples of volunteering tasks that would need disclosure checks
- 5.2 Good practice for staff & volunteers

Section 6: **FURTHER INFORMATION SOURCES**

By following the contents, discussing and completing the attached policies your group will have considered how to respond to Child Protection issues.



SECTION I Child Protection in Context

EARRANN I Dìon Chloinne ann an Co-theacsa

1.1 What is Child Protection?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation. It also states that children have the right to express their views on any issues or decisions affecting them and to have those views taken into consideration.

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 legislated for these rights and placed a duty on anyone aged 16 or over, who has care and control of a child, to do all that is reasonable in the circumstances to safeguard a child's health, development and welfare.

'The welfare of the child is paramount'— consequently the sharing of information and other steps to ensure that children are protected should take precedence over other concerns.

1.2 What does this mean for my Group?

Every day in Highland children and young people take part in activities in their community. As a community group, you offer a very valuable service to children. Through your group they learn about how to take part in the activities you offer and you should already be taking steps to ensure that the environment and the equipment that you provide is safe, suitable for the activity and for the level of ability.

Most children participate safely, in the care of well-meaning adults. It is a fact, however, that a small minority of adults seek access to children, through organised activities, with the intention of harming them. It is important that you take steps to vet your staff and volunteers and to bar unsuitable adults from participating in, or supervising, activities which provide them with opportunities to befriend and harm children.

Children learn to trust and respect the adults involved in providing activities. This places your staff and volunteers in a unique position in children's lives. There may come a time when a child feels the need to confide in a member of staff or a volunteer or when someone working with the child feels that all is not well in the child's life.

Your group has a duty to ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped with the necessary information, knowledge and backup to give that child the support, guidance and help needed at the time. These policies have been produced to help you, your management committee, staff and volunteers to think through these issues and develop your own child protection guidelines for your group. It will also help you to consider any training issues that you may have and point you in the right direction for help and advice in the future.





1.3 CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

1.3.1 A note for Hall Committees:

Where Hall committees obtain financial assistance from Highland Council they **are required** to have a child protection policy in place, to minute its adoption and/or to include, in their constitution, a paragraph referring to the adoption of such a policy. In addition, they are required to request similar assurances from all groups applying to use the facilities for activities involving children and young people, and should include an appropriate question in their application forms. Council staff will audit compliance with these requirements.

Regardless of whether your Hall is owned or financially supported by Highland Council, it is good practice to have a child protection policy. Some Hall Committees have inserted a clause into their constitutions to the following effect:

The Hall Committee subscribes to the principles of child protection promoted by the Highland Child Protection Committee and shall take account of guidance issued by that Committee.

The Committee shall require the co-operation of all Hall users in measures for the appropriate protection of any child involved in activities on the premises, and shall also be mindful of the needs of any such child.

1.3.2 Selection of staff and volunteers:

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship. It is the commitment by individuals of time and energy for the benefit of the community. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.

It is good practice to apply the same standards to recruitment of volunteers as to paid staff. Both groups should:

- Know what is expected of them. Tasks to be performed should be clearly defined, so that all concerned with their activities are sure of their respective responsibilities.
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision.
- Be valued.
- Have safe working conditions.
- Be insured.
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong.
- Be paid agreed expenses where appropriate.
- Be provided with an induction, and appropriate levels of supervision to assess progress and to resolve any problems
- Receive appropriate and relevant training.
- Be free from any form of discrimination or harassment which contravenes good equal opportunities practice.
- Have access to grievance and disciplinary procedures.



1.3.3 **Action you MUST take:**

(Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003)

There are a number of people who actively seek to harm or abuse children. These people often do not have a criminal record. Scottish Executive figures highlight that these people are within our communities and are not necessarily strangers to our children; in 2002, 97.8% of all children who presented at a child protection case conference knew their abuser (Scot Exec 2002).

The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 aims to improve safeguards for children by preventing unsuitable people from working with them.

The Act provides for Scottish Ministers to maintain a List of persons unsuitable to work in a child care position. The List is known as the 'Disqualified from Working with Children List'.

An organisation **has a duty** to refer to Ministers any person working in a child care position who harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm **and** is dismissed or moved away from access to children as a consequence. This applies even if the person has left the organisation prior to the outcome of the allegation or incident being decided.

An organisation commits an offence if they fail to make a referral to the List in circumstances where they should do so.

The referral form can be found on the CRBS website:

www.crbs.org.uk/pocsainformation/PocsaDocuments.asp

When a referral is made, the Ministers will consider the evidence and decide whether to include the person on the List. Courts can also refer people who have committed an offence against a child and who are considered unsuitable to work with children.

A person who is on the List commits an offence if s/he applies to work in a child care position.

An organisation commits an offence if they knowingly employ or procure employment in child care for a disqualified person, or if they fail to remove a disqualified person from working in child care within their organisation.

1.3.4 **Is my organisation covered by the Act?**

The Act covers organisations of any size, from a large local or national concern to a small group of half a dozen or so individuals, whether formal or informal and regardless of whether there is a formal management structure or whether members run the group themselves. However, the purpose of the group must be clearly understood and everyone should be clear about who is in charge.



1.3.5 Who do I need to check?

You need to undertake disclosure checks for anyone, paid or unpaid:

- Whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children.
- Whose normal duties involve unsupervised contact with children under arrangements made by a responsible person (i.e. someone legally entitled to have charge of the child or to make arrangements for that child's care.)
- Whose normal duties include supervising or managing an individual in a child care position.

Where an organisation is also a Scottish charity then trustees concerned with its management or control may also be required to be disclosure checked.

Examples include:

Care worker; befriender; crèche worker; sports leader; music/drama/arts class leader; nursery assistant, life guard/pool attendant, youth worker/group leader, sports coach, volunteer helper.

Enhanced disclosure is applicable if the position involves caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of persons under 18. Otherwise, a standard disclosure is sufficient.

Voluntary Organisations can get **further information**, including a training pack, from:
www.crbs.org.uk

Training is available through Keeping Children Safe - 01463 235285
<http://www.kcs-highland.org.uk>

Advice and assistance with disclosure checks, for voluntary organisations in Highland, is available through Volunteering Highland - 01463 711393
<http://www.volunteerhighland.uklinux.net>

Many umbrella organisations, e.g. Youth Highland, are prepared to undertake checks for affiliated members.

Vetting allows us to screen all those who apply for paid posts or volunteer and it enables decisions to be made about their suitability for the task required. A clear Disclosure Scotland check simply indicates that an individual is not known to the police; it is not a guarantee of suitability to work with children. Additional precautions should be taken. It is good practice to require an application form to be completed, the lifting of a minimum of two references, followed up by structured phone conversations and a trial period (which will allow the service and staff/volunteers to ensure they are compatible). You should at all times use your professional judgement and the knowledge you and your staff may have about potential volunteers and their suitability. If you are unsure of which category a volunteer task falls into please seek advice from Volunteering Highland. A check list is included in Section 5.1





1.3.6 Ten Steps to a safer environment:

Remember - the protection of children and young people is the responsibility of everyone in your group, not just the people who run or manage the group. The following measures can help to create a safe environment for both adults and children. Policies and procedures will only be effective when they operate in a culture where children are respected and given every opportunity to thrive and flourish.

Adopt a Child Protection policy and make sure that it is clearly displayed. Give copies to all staff/volunteers, children and parents (sample – Section 4.1).

1. Agree a code of conduct for those who work/volunteer with children and young people which clearly states behaviour which is acceptable and unacceptable towards children, including bullying (see Section 5.2). Give copies to all staff/volunteers, children and parents.
2. Make sure everyone involved in the group and parents know who to speak to and what to do if they are concerned about a child or the conduct of a staff member/volunteer towards a child. Give them information on how they can complain.
3. Encourage parents to get involved in the activities you offer.
4. Find out who your local social services and police contacts are.
5. Make sure that everyone who works/volunteers with children and young people has been safely recruited (see sections 1.3.2 and 4.7) and ensure they receive adequate support and supervision.
6. Those who work/volunteer with children and young people will benefit from some basic training in child protection. See www.protectinghighlandschildren.org for information about local training.
7. Make sure the group has a procedure for dealing with concerns about the conduct of staff/volunteers i.e. disciplinary procedures. This could be a concern about poor practice, bullying or child abuse.
8. Make sure that safeguards are in place when taking children and young people away from home and when using photographs or images. (See Section 5.2)
9. Make sure that all policies and procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed.
10. It is a good idea to designate someone in the organisation who will take a lead in ensuring that policies are being followed and are up to date. This person is often referred to as the Child Protection Lead, monitor, advisor or designated person. **(For the remainder of this guidance the term 'Child Protection Lead' is used.)**

Any concerns about child abuse or the conduct of a member towards children should be reported to the Child Protection Lead in the first instance (see Section 3.1).



1.3.7 What is Child Abuse?

The formal definition of Child Abuse is:

‘Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or a carer (i.e. the person(s) while not a parent who has actual custody of the child).’

This is a broad definition which includes placing children at risk through something a person has done to them or something a person is failing to do for them. It encourages us to be open minded and think about a wide range of behaviours and actions which may be harmful to children. For those working in the field of Child Protection the definition gets broken down further into categories of abuse, namely:

- Physical injury (hit, kicked, punched)
- Physical neglect (not being properly fed or clothed, poor hygiene)
- Sexual abuse (inappropriate sexual behaviour or language, indecent assault, sexual intercourse)
- Emotional abuse (constantly criticised, ignored, humiliated, exposed to family violence)
- Non-organic Failure to Thrive (failure to develop normally for which there is no medical explanation)

More detailed descriptions of these categories are to be found in the publication ‘Protecting Children - A Shared Responsibility’. See Section 6 of this booklet for details.





SECTION 2 Dealing with a Child Protection Situation

EARRANN 2 A' dèiligeadh ri Suidheachadh Dì on Chloinne

2.1 **Being alert to signs and symptoms:**

Children and young people rarely tell if they are being abused, however there may be signs which make you concerned and may be an indication of a child being abused or neglected.

The child or young person may:

- have unexplained bruising or bruising in an unusual place
- appear afraid, quiet or withdrawn
- appear afraid to go home
- be left unattended or unsupervised
- have too much responsibility for their age
- be acting out in a sexually inappropriate way
- be misusing drugs or alcohol

The adult may be:

- acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child
- misusing drink or drugs whilst caring for a child
- verbally abusive towards a child

If you notice any of these signs and/or are worried, please take action to protect the child.





2.2 Responding to children who may have been abused:

There may be a time when a child approaches a person in your group as a trusted adult to discuss their life outside the organisation. It is vital that individual adults in your group know how to react to this in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

It is not your job to decide if a child has been abused - it is your responsibility to report concerns.

Whether you are a volunteer or a paid member of staff you must, at all times:

- Acknowledge the age group you work with;
- Allow the child time to speak and do not interrupt nor make suggestions to them which could imply making an investigation;
- Do not interrogate or question other than to clarify your understanding. **If the matter is to be investigated further this will be done by trained professionals.** No matter how well you know the child, spare them having to repeat themselves over and over. Apart from anything else, the child may begin to think that you don't believe them;
- Listen to the child - **REALLY LISTEN** - take what they say seriously. Tell them that they've done the right thing by telling you;
- Reassure the child that s/he was right to tell you what happened and that you feel privileged that they chose to confide in you;
- Be honest, tell the child that you cannot keep it a secret, you have to talk to someone else that can help;
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it is to listen to the child - think of how hard it must be to say it. Some things are very difficult to talk about, you've been chosen because the child feels able to talk to you. If you show anger, disgust, disbelief then the child may stop talking for fear of upsetting you further or feel that your negative feelings are being directed towards them;
- Never trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues;
- As soon as practical write down everything the child told you, but remember that this is a confidential matter between you and the child. The only person you should be discussing it with is the committee member for your organisation who has agreed to act as lead for child protection issues. (See Section 3.1)

2.3 What should I do if I have a concern?

If your organisation has appointed someone to be the Child Protection lead, this person will be responsible for making decisions about where to take child protection concerns. In the first instance you should take your concerns to the Child Protection lead.

If the Child Protection lead is not available and the situation is clearly urgent, e.g. the child is too frightened to go home or you have very serious doubts about the child's safety, then the information should be passed to the Social Work Service or Police without delay. You should not be afraid to contact them for advice and guidance.

REMEMBER - you may not be the only one to have concerns. All referrals are discussed thoroughly by professionals prior to any action being taken. Your concerns will be genuine and treated as such by them.



If the concerns are more general about a child's welfare, you should initially discuss these with your organisation's Child Protection lead. The lead will be able to speak with another professional who is familiar with the child and its family, e.g. Health Visitor, Teacher, GP, Social Worker, and can find out whether they also have concerns. Depending on the level of concern a single agency may be able to provide additional support to assist the family or a multi-agency liaison group meeting may be called to look at more complex support needs.

Concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff/volunteer/committee member must be reported to the organisation's Child Protection Lead without delay. If necessary s/he will seek advice from Social Work Services and/or the Police immediately and take any appropriate action to protect children.

If the concerns are about the Child Protection Lead, the matter should be reported to the person in charge of the organisation. In the event that the person in charge is also the Child Protection Lead the concern should be taken directly to the Police or Social Work Services.

2.4 What happens next?

All information received by Social Work Services and the Police is treated seriously and will be acted upon. This will include checking agency records and gathering information from other agencies involved with the child.

If it is decided to investigate they will seek to speak to the child and to the family in order to assess the situation and to make sure that the child is safe.

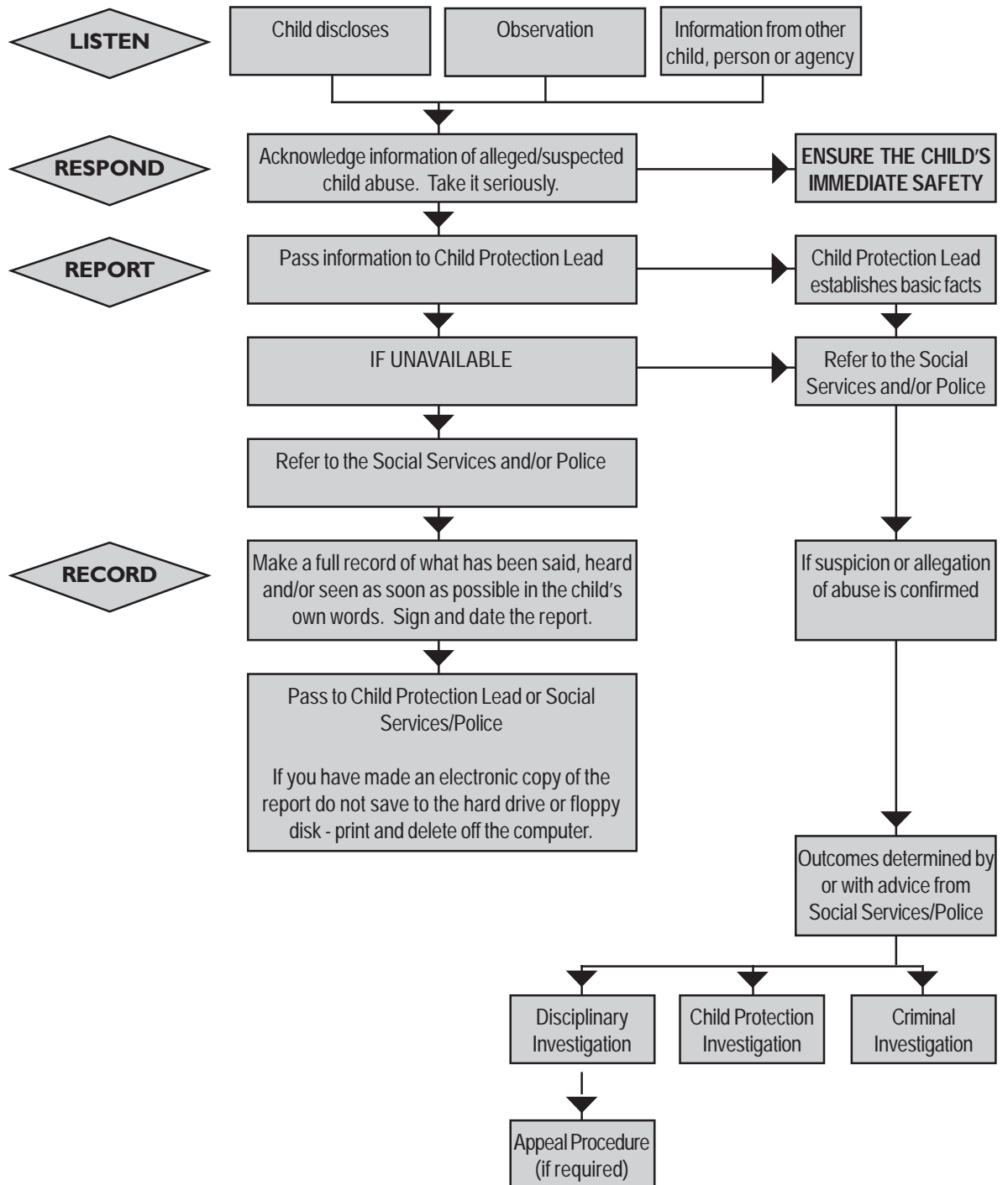
Following these enquiries one or more of the following might happen:

- No further action.
- A named professional will keep regular contact with the child to ensure that needs are met.
- A multi-agency meeting will be called to decide what action is best to protect the child and support the family.
- If an illegal act has taken place or it is felt that the only way that the child can be protected is through compulsory measures, there will be a referral to the appropriate legal system.





Responding to suspicions or allegations of child abuse:





SECTION 3 Support Systems

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3.1 **Selecting a Child Protection Lead:**

Everyone within your group has responsibility to be aware of child protection issues, however it is important to have one person on your committee or steering group who has agreed to monitor child protection.

That person is responsible for ensuring:

- That your policies are up to date.
- That they are clearly displayed (if possible).
- That volunteers and staff are aware of the policy and have read and understood it.
- That you know how to access specialist child protection advice.
- That you have to hand the telephone numbers of both social work and police.
- That records are made of concerns about any child and information is shared appropriately.
- That disclosure checks for staff and volunteers are carried out and records kept to prove this.
- That records are kept and reports are made to Ministers in cases where staff or volunteers are suspected or known to have harmed a child, and that these individuals are removed from unsupervised contact with children until such time as the Ministers decide whether their names should be added to the Disqualified from Working with Children List.

This is a very responsible role and it is important that this person is properly trained and supported. Training for voluntary groups is generally free or offered at reduced cost. Details of training providers can be found in Section 1.3.5.

It is also important to carry out a disclosure check in respect of your Child Protection Lead. The results of this should go to a member of your committee/steering group other than the individual being checked. The person receiving the information should be unrelated to the prospective Child Protection Lead to ensure independence.





3.2 Disclosure checks:

Voluntary Sector agencies can get help with accessing Disclosure Checks from Volunteering Highland. Independent organisations may need to apply for Disclosure Checks from the Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS). (Before registering with CRBS check with your parent body that this is necessary, it may be that they have already registered and are able to carry out checks on your behalf.) In order to register you will need to prove that you have the following policies in place:

- Child Protection Policy.
- Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders
- Policy on secure handling, use, storage and retention of Disclosure information
- Policy on vulnerable adults (If required – check with CRBS)

We have included examples of such policies, which your organisation should feel free to adapt or amend as required. Throughout the policies please fill in your organisation's name as appropriate.

The policy on protecting vulnerable people does not cover types of abuse or how your organisation should handle suspected abuse or allegations of abuse. The information found in the Child Protection Policy will help with these issues.

The implementation of such policies will require support and training for your staff and volunteers. There are a number of places you may be able to access such training. Useful contact numbers are included in section 1.3.5 of this document.

Once you have these policies in place and are registered with CRBS, or affiliated to an organisation that is already registered with CRBS (See Section 1.3.5), you will be supplied with all the forms necessary to access Disclosure checks.

Your organisation will not be able to obtain the background checks necessary if you do not have these policies in place.





SECTION 4 Sample Paperwork

EARRANN 4 Sampall Obair Pàipeir

4 Sample Paperwork

The following pages contain examples of policies:

- 4.1 Sample child protection policy.
- 4.2 A sample policy statement.
- 4.3 Policy on recruitment of ex offenders.
- 4.4 Policy on information & storage.
- 4.5 Policy on protection of vulnerable people.
- 4.6 Personal Profile Form.
- 4.7 Vetting Checklist.
- 4.8 Reference Form.
- 4.9 Reference Follow-up Telephone conversation record.





4.1 Sample Child Protection Policy:

Child Protection Policy for <i>(name of group)</i> :	
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Date:	
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We recognise that child protection should not be treated in isolation - we will take on board guidance given by Highland Child Protection Committee and will address recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees by doing the following:

- 1) We accept that it is our responsibility as a group to check that all adults in positions requiring disclosure checks have been appropriately vetted (See Sections 1.3.2 and 4.7);
- 2) We will ensure the every new volunteer or member of staff will complete a Personal Profile Form. Please photocopy Section 4.6 of this document.
- 3) We will make a request for previous addresses on volunteer/ job application forms;
- 4) We will ask for the names of two referees who will be prepared to provide a written reference;
- 5) We will follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicant's suitability to work with children. A record of this discussion will be kept in the applicant's file (See Section 4.9);
- 6) We will interview prospective volunteers and staff;
- 7) We will note at interview all previous experience of volunteers and staff in working with children;
- 8) We will carry out a probationary period for all volunteers and staff of at least months.
- 9) We will notify Ministers if anyone on the Disqualified from Working with Children List applies to work for or volunteer with our group (See Section 1.3.3);
- 10) We will ensure that all staff are given Codes of Practice to adhere to (See Section 5.2);
- 11) We will remove from unsupervised contact with children any member of staff or volunteer whom we know or suspect to have caused harm to a child or to have placed a child at risk of harm and we will notify Ministers of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our group (See section 1.3.3).





We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged. In our group, if we have suspicions about a child's physical, sexual or emotional well being, we will take action.

All volunteers or staff are encouraged to share concerns with the group's Child Protection Lead. If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the child's safety, we will contact Social Work Services or Police immediately.

If our concerns are more general about a child's welfare, then we will discuss these with our group's Child Protection Lead, who would then make a referral to an appropriate professional for assessment of the child's needs. It is important that all volunteers and staff communicate concerns accurately. To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below;

- 1) Upon the receipt of any information from a child or suspicions, it is necessary to make an accurate and detailed written record of what they have seen, heard or know, at the time the event occurs;
- 2) Share their concerns with the Child Protection Lead for the group and agree what action to take;
- 3) Avoid asking any more questions than are necessary to clarify whether there is a concern. Always REFER to statutory services to undertake in depth INVESTIGATION of any suspicions or allegations about abuse.

If we have concerns we must act- it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child - or we may prevent, further children from being hurt.

Both the local Area Social Work Office and Police Office telephone numbers are to be found in the telephone directory. For ease of reference note them below:

Area Social Work Office	
Local Police Station	
Out of hours Social Work Emergency Service	08457 697284
General Child Protection Enquiries	01463 703488





4.2 Sample Policy Statement:

Policy Statement for <i>(name of group)</i> :	
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Date:	
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We will:

- Hold a register of every child involved with the group including relevant medical details and have a contact name and number close to hand in case of emergencies;
- Treat everyone with respect;
- Remember that some issues are confidential;
- Provide an example we would wish others to follow;
- Where possible consider activities which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others;
- Be aware that someone else might misinterpret our actions even if they are well-intentioned;
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy;
- Provide time for children to talk to us;
- Encourage children to respect and care for others;
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- Have a group policy for the collection of children after meetings have finished;
- Remember to REFER not INVESTIGATE any suspicions or allegations about abuse;
- Only share concerns and seek support from those identified in the group's child protection policy;
- Complete the vetting checklist. Please photocopy Section 4.7 of this document.





4.3 Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders:

Policy Statement for <i>(name of group)</i> :	
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Date:	
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We will treat any applicant for any position (paid or voluntary) within our organisation fairly and not discriminate unfairly against the subject of a disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

We will request a Standard or Enhanced disclosure only where it is necessary and relevant to the position sought.

Where a position requires a disclosure we will make this clear on the application form, job advert and any other information provided about the post.

At interview we will ensure that open and measured discussions can take place on the subject of offences.

Failure to reveal information at interview, that is directly relevant to the position sought, could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

At interview or when receiving a disclosure which shows a conviction or which contains intelligence of significance to working with children and families, we will use our professional judgement and take into consideration –

- Whether the conviction/intelligence is relevant to the position being offered.
- The seriousness of the offence revealed.
- The length of time since the offence took place.
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour.
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since offending took place.

We will ensure that all our members (staff or volunteers) involved in the recruitment process are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.

Any applicant for any post that requires a disclosure may receive a copy of this policy and the Code of Practice.





4.4 Policy on the Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure Information:

Policy Statement for <i>(name of group)</i> :	
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Date:	
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In accordance with the Scottish Executive Code of Practice, for registered persons and other recipients of Disclosure Information, we will ensure the following practice.

- Disclosures will only be requested when necessary and relevant to a particular post and the information provided on a disclosure certificate will only be used for recruitment purposes.
- We will ensure that an individual's consent is given before seeking a disclosure, and will seek their consent before using disclosure information for any purpose other than recruitment.
- Disclosure information will only be shared with those authorised to see it in the course of their duties.
- Where additional disclosure information is provided to our designated signatory and not to the disclosure applicant, our designated signatory will not disclose this information to the applicant, but will inform them of the fact that additional information has been provided, should this information affect the recruitment decision.
- Disclosure information will be stored in a locked non-portable container, for a maximum of 6 months. Only those authorised to see this information in the course of their duties will have access to this container.
- Disclosure information will be destroyed by shredding.
- No image or photocopy of the disclosure information will be made, however the following details may be retained:
 - Date of issue of disclosure
 - Name of subject
 - Disclosure type
 - Position for which disclosure was requested
 - Unique reference number of disclosure
 - Recruitment decision taken
- If the subject of the Disclosure check is found to be on the 'Disqualified from Working with Children List' we will notify the Police that an attempt has been made to acquire work with children.
- We will ensure that all staff with access to disclosure information are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.
- We will make a copy of this policy available to any applicant for a post (paid or voluntary) with us that requires a disclosure.





4.5 Policy on protecting Vulnerable People:

Policy Statement for <i>(name of group)</i> :	
---	--

Date:	
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We aim to ensure that any vulnerable people, whether children, young people or vulnerable adults*, are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff or volunteers in this organisation. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

All applicants, for paid and unpaid positions, will complete an application form.

- Short listed applicants will be asked to attend interview.
- Short listed applicants will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of appointment. We will follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicants suitability to work with vulnerable individuals.
- Where relevant to the post, the successful applicant will be asked to agree to an appropriate disclosure. Disclosures will be requested prior to the applicant taking up post.

The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure.

- Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practicing skills needed for the work.
- Training on specific areas such as health & safety procedures, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers, and will be reviewed regularly.

All staff and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support.

- Every member of staff and volunteer will attend an annual review, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. Annual reviews will be minuted and copies made available to the member of staff/volunteer. We will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision, are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.

* A vulnerable adult is defined as 'an adult aged (16 or over) who is unable to safeguard his or her personal welfare, property, or financial affairs, and is: in need of care and attention arising out of age or infirmity, or suffering from illness or mental disorder, or substantially handicapped by any disability.'

Para 22 consultation document.





4.6 Personal Profile Form
To be completed by all new volunteers/employees

1. Organisation's Name:

Title: Forename: Surname:

Date of Birth: Telephone No (incl STD code):

Address:

..... Postcode:

Occupation: Currently Employed: **Yes** **No**

3. **Qualifications/Training** - Please enter details of any qualifications or training courses you have attended which are relevant to caring for young children.

Date(s)	Title of Qualification/Training	Subjects Studied	Length of Course	Name of Organisation

4. **Experience** - Please give details of experience of working with under 16's or vulnerable people

Where previously have you worked with young people under the age of 16?	In what capacity?	Between which dates?
Other comments:		

5. **Referees** - Please provide the names and addresses of TWO responsible persons for reference purposes. Referees should not be related to you and, where possible, should have a knowledge of your ability to care for or be in the proximity of children. All references will be taken up. *You should secure prior agreement of referees before providing their names.*

<p>Referee 1</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>_____ Postcode: _____</p>

<p>Referee 2</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>_____ Postcode: _____</p>

6. **Declaration** - I have read and understood the organisation's Child Protection Policy and agree to CONFIDENTIAL vetting procedures. I agree to inform the organisation of any change in circumstances.

Signed: Date:



4.7 Vetting Checklist:

Name of Organisation:	
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Name of Volunteer/Employee:	
-----------------------------	--

This Checklist and a Child Protection Personal Profile Form must be completed for all new volunteers/employees in your organisation who have substantial access to children.

1. Have you explained the need for vetting to the potential volunteer/employee?
Yes No
2. Have you given the volunteer/employee an opportunity to read your Child Protection Policy and discussed any issues arising out of this with him/her?
Yes No
3. Have you set up a personnel file for the potential volunteer/employee?
Yes No
4. Has the volunteer/employee completed a Child Protection Personal Profile Form? (Please attach the completed form to this check list)
Yes No
5. Have you carried out appropriate vetting? Has the volunteer consented to a disclosure check (where this is required) and completed the appropriate paperwork and has this been followed through?
Yes No
6. Were the results satisfactory?
Yes No
7. Have you taken up two written references? (Please attach the references to this check list)
Yes No
8. Have you followed up these references with either a telephone call or conversation? (Please attach a written record with full details including the date of the call or conversation to this checklist)
Yes No
9. Has the above individual been approved as a volunteer/employee with your organisation? (You must be able to answer YES to questions 1-8 above before you sign this form)
Yes No

Signed: Date:

Name (in block capitals):

Position held in Organisation:





4.8 Reference Form

DETAILS OF REFEREE

Name:

Relationship to the Applicant:

Address: Postcode:

Telephone No's:

Day Evening Mobile

Email Address:

DETAILS OF APPLICANT

Name:

Address: Postcode:

The above person..... (name of applicant) has expressed an interest in working with..... (name of club).

The post involves child care. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if there is any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people.

If you are happy to complete this reference, any information will be treated confidentially and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.

Information will only be shared with the person conducting the assessment of the applicant's suitability for the post/voluntary work, if he/she is offered the position in question. We would appreciate you being extremely candid, open and honest in your evaluation of this person.

- How long have you known this person?.....
- In what capacity (e.g. friend, work colleague)?.....
- What personal qualities does the applicant have that would make them suitable to work with children/young people?

.....
.....
.....





Please rate the applicant on the following personal qualities by ticking one box for each statement.

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maturity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trustworthiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concern for Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This post involves substantial and unsupervised access to children. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and young people.

Please tick relevant box. If concerned tick **YES** if not tick **NO** If you have answered YES we will contact you in confidence.

Yes No

Signed: Date:

Print Name:

Please return in the envelope supplied marked Private and Confidential to the Child Protection Lead:

Name:

Address: Postcode:

Telephone No:





4.9 Reference Follow Up Telephone Conversation Record

Please use block capitals and black ink only

Volunteer/Employee Name:

Referee Name:

Referee Address:

..... Postcode:

Relationship to Volunteer/Employee:

How long have you known the Volunteer/Employee:

As far as you are aware has this person ever been responsible for:

- The physical abuse of a child?
E.g. hitting, striking with implements Yes No
- The emotional abuse of a child?
E.g. threats, berating, criticism Yes No
- The sexual abuse of a child?
E.g. inappropriate touching or contact Yes No
- The physical neglect of a child?
E.g. not ensuring their health and wellbeing Yes No
- Do you believe that this person is suitable for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults? Yes No

Further Comments:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed: Date:





SECTION 5 Appendices

EARRANN 5 Pàipearan-taice

5.1 Examples of volunteering tasks that would need disclosure checks

This type of volunteering task would include:

- Sports coaching, arts activities, etc.
- After school clubs
- Swimming lessons
- Playground supervision
- Overnight trips
- Regular provision of transport
- Youth club activities
- Outdoor education

Other volunteering tasks that will require to be assessed would include:

- Classroom activities
- Assisted reading & library schemes
- Golden time activities
- Breakfast clubs
- After school clubs
- Holiday activities

Examples of volunteering tasks that are not considered to be child-care positions. This type of volunteering task would include:

- School & youth club disco duties
- Outings, day trips
- Fundraising events
- Occasional transport duties

These are not definitive lists, but give examples of the tasks you should be considering.

If you are unsure of which category a volunteer task falls into please seek advice from the Highland Child Protection Committee.

Children under the age of 16 years should not be used in these capacities without adult supervision. Research has shown that most paedophiles become aware of their sexual preferences before reaching adulthood and sexual offences are sometimes perpetrated by children against other children. Young people aged 16 and 17 years may be used in an unsupervised capacity but will require Disclosure checks. This is not only a necessary precaution in respect of substantial access but should also be viewed as a helpful step for those wishing to pursue a career working with children. Having once been disclosure checked, the young person will acquire a unique identifier which will speed up subsequent disclosure checks for employment purposes. It will also give the young person an instant advantage in the baby-sitting market.



5.2 Good Practice for Staff and Volunteers

GENERAL POINTS:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Always respect a child's right to personal privacy.
- Never make salacious, suggestive or demeaning remarks/gestures towards a child.
- Avoid any physical horseplay with a child or any actions another adult may misinterpret, no matter how innocent and well intentioned your actions may be.
- Always encourage children to feel comfortable and confident to point out to you attitudes or behaviours they do not like (including your own).
- If you suspect that a child or young person is becoming inappropriately attracted to you (or another volunteer), you must share your concerns with a member of senior management.

ONE-TO-ONE SITUATIONS:

- It may be important for you to be alone with a child. In these circumstances try to ensure that others are within earshot and preferably within vision.
- If you are on your own with a child NEVER have the door locked.
- Where possible maintain a gap/barrier between you and the child.
- Do not isolate yourself from the rest of the group.
- Try to find a room with a window in the door, or use a ground floor room with windows.
- If possible consider leaving the door open or ajar.
- Ask a colleague to carry out random spot checks.

Behaviour to Avoid

General behaviour, avoid the following:

- Losing your temper
- Raising your voice unnecessarily
- Inappropriate language or behaviour

NEVER:

- Raise your hand
- Threaten a child
- Hit a child
- Strike or use an implement on a child
- Have inappropriate touching or contact with a child whether 'invited' or not.
- Grab or pull at a child's clothing

Physical contact, avoid the following:

- Hitting
- Inappropriate restraint
- Throwing objects

Emotional comments, avoid the following:

- Sarcasm
- Isolation
- Unfavourable comparisons
- With-holding praise
- Threats/Intimidation
- Berating
- Scapegoating
- Criticism



Sexual behaviour, avoid the following:

- Inappropriate touching
- Innuendo
- Suggestive remarks/gestures/materials
- Flattery
- Sexual harassment

SPECIAL SITUATIONS:

Transporting children and trips away:

If it is necessary to transport children other than by use of hired transport e.g. bus company, minibus etc then the following good practice should be implemented.

- Drivers should be vetted, in accordance with these guidelines and should not be left unaccompanied with a child.
- Vehicles should be roadworthy and appropriately taxed and insured.
- Written parental consent should be obtained.
- Always plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities, undertake a risk assessment and ensure copies are available for other members and parents.
- A collection point and drop off point should be identified and all parents notified of these points.
- Ensure an adequate adult-child ratio and, where possible, both male and female staff should accompany mixed groups of children.
- Ensure the accommodation and sleeping arrangements are suitable.
- Always have a list of emergency contacts and medical information available.
- If the return time is not certain then a 'phone round' system should be set up to inform parents when the children will be returned to the drop off point.
- Children should not be left alone at the drop off point; at least two adults should remain until the parents have collected ALL the children.

Photographing, videoing and filming:

Publications and websites are a great way to promote the achievements of children, however, there is evidence that some people have used activities as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children. Some children may be subject to statutory Child Protection measures or may be living with parents or carers who have had to flee domestic abuse or other threatening situations. To reveal their whereabouts may place them at risk.

The following measures are recommended as good practice and will contribute to a child's safe participation in your organisation:

- Consent should always be obtained from the parent and child.
- Anyone wishing to photograph or film children must obtain permission from the Child Protection Lead for the organisation.





- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions are to be permitted unless this is absolutely necessary and has been approved in advance by the child, parent and Child Protection Lead.
- The organisation reserves the right at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.
- People are made aware where they can report concerns about the use of photographs and films, i.e. the Child Protection Lead for the organisation and/or the Police.

Publications and Websites:

Always obtain consent from the child and parent before displaying pictures or information.

- Never include personal information that could identify a child or place a child at risk e.g. full name, home address, e-mail address, telephone number, dates, place and times activities take place. Instead give the contact details of a group leader who can deal with requests for information about the organisation.
- Never depict children in a provocative, demeaning or tasteless manner.





SECTION 6 Further Information

EARRANN 6 Tuilleadh Fiosrachaidh

●●● USEFUL PUBLICATIONS ●●●

- 1) Scottish Office (1998) Protecting Children: A Shared Responsibility Edinburgh: HMSO
- 2) Volunteer Development Scotland (1995) Protecting Children: A Code of Good Practice for Voluntary Organisations in Scotland working with children and young people Stirling: Volunteer Development Scotland
- 3) Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- 4) Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- 5) Working Together to Protect Children in the Highlands, Inter-agency Guidelines, Highland Child Protection Committee.

●●● USEFUL ADDRESSES ●●●

Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS)

Stirling Enterprise Park, Stirling FK7 7RP
Phone: 01786 479593

Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS)

Stirling Enterprise Park, Stirling FK7 7RP
Phone: 01786 849777

Volunteering Highland

The Gateway, 1a Millburn Road, Inverness IV2 3PX
Phone: 01463 711393

●●● FURTHER INFORMATION ●●●

Development Officer (Child Protection)

Highland Child Protection Committee
Kinmylies Building, Leachkin Road
Inverness IV3 8NN
Phone: 01463 703483

Education, Culture & Sport

The Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX
Phone: 01463 702811

●●● USEFUL WEBSITES ●●●

www.disclosurescotland.co.uk
www.vds.org.uk
www.scotland.gov.uk
www.highland.gov.uk
www.crbs.org.uk
www.protectinghighlandchildren.org

●●● LOCAL CONTACTS FOR ●●●

The Highland Council Education, Culture & Sport

BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY

Council Offices, Ruthven Road, Kingussie PH21 1EJ
Phone: 01540 664530

NAIRN

Library Building, High Street, Nairn IV12 4AU
Phone: 01667 458513

CAITHNESS

Rhind House, West Banks Avenue, Wick KW1 5LU
Phone: 01955 602362

ROSS & CROMARTY

Council Offices, High Street, Dingwall IV15 9QN
Phone: 01349 868479

INVERNESS

Town House, High Street, Inverness IV1 1JJ
Phone: 01463 724217

SKYE & LOCHALSH

Area Education Office, Elgin Hostel, Dunvegan Road,
Portree IV51 9EE
Phone: 01478 613697

LOCHABER

Mamore House, The Parade, Fort William PH33 6BD
Phone: 01397 702102

SUTHERLAND

Council Offices, Main Street, Golspie KW10 8RB
Phone: 01408 635211

The Highland Child Protection Committee includes representatives from Highland Council, Highland Health Board and Northern Constabulary.

