



West Dunbartonshire
**Child Protection
Committee**

**West Dunbartonshire
Child Protection Committee
Inter-Agency Child Protection
Learning and Development Strategy
2022 – 2025**

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What to do if you are worried about a child or young person?

If you are worried or concerned about a child or young person, you should contact

West Dunbartonshire Social Work Resources	0141 562 8800
Out of hours Social Work	0300 343 1505
NHS Child Protection service	01414516605
NHS Out of Hours	0141 201 0000 ask for on call CP Paediatrician
Police non-emergency number	101
In an emergency	999
Childline Scotland	08001111
Parent line	0808 800 2222
NSPCC	0808 800 5000

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Introduction

West Dunbartonshire's Child Protection Committee (CPC), in partnership with partnering services, agencies and other stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors across West Dunbartonshire, has developed this three year CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Strategy for 2022 – 2025.

This strategy is robust and ambitious and replaces all previous CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Training Strategies.

This strategy does not replace any existing single service and/or agency child protection training and/or learning and development strategies. Instead, it aims to complement and support them. This strategy aims to ensure a competent and confident workforce and deliver improved outcomes to children and young people across West Dunbartonshire.

West Dunbartonshire CPC has published this strategy as an evidence-based demonstration of its strategic approach and commitment to inter-agency child protection learning and development opportunities for all practitioners and managers across the public, private and third sectors across West Dunbartonshire. It also evidences our commitment to continuous professional development and improvement by means of promoting lifelong learning.

What is child protection?

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021) defines child protection as the processes involved in considering, assessing and planning for any required action, as well as the actions themselves, where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm.

Child protection procedures are initiated when police, social work or health professionals determine that a child may have been abused or may be at risk of significant harm.

Child protection involves:

- Immediate action, if necessary, to prevent significant harm to a child
- Inter-agency investigation about the occurrence or probability of abuse or neglect, or of a criminal offence against a child. Investigation extends to other children affected by the same apparent risks as the child who is the subject of a referral
- Assessment and action to address the interaction of behaviour, relationships and conditions that may, in combination, cause or accelerate risks
- Focus within assessment, planning and action upon listening to each child's voice and recognising their experience, needs and feelings
- Collaboration between agencies and persistent efforts to work in partnership with parents in planning and action to prevent harm or reduce risk of harm
- Recognition and support for the strengths, relationships and skills within the child and their world in order to form a plan that reduces risk and builds resilience

Child protection is part of a continuum of collaborative duties upon agencies working with children. The Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach promotes and supports planning for such services to be provided in the way which best safeguards, supports and promotes the wellbeing of children, and

ensures that any action to meet needs is taken at the earliest appropriate time to prevent acute needs arising.

Child protection processes fall at the urgent end of a continuum of services which include prevention and early intervention. The GIRFEC principles and approach are consistently applicable. Children who are subject to child protection processes may already be known to services. They may already have a child's plan in place. Child protection processes should build on existing knowledge, strengths in planning and partnerships to reduce the risk of harm, and to meet the child's needs. Preventative and protective work may be needed at the same time and preventative, restorative, supportive, collaborative and therapeutic approaches do not stop because compulsory measures or urgent protective legal steps are taken. A tailored blend of care and professional authority may be needed whether a child at risk is at home with family or accommodated, or when the child is to transition between placements or to be reunified with birth family after a placement away from home.

The level of risk a child is exposed to can shift, often rapidly, as circumstances change or information emerges. Services may be organised in response to 'thresholds' of risk.

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021) states single- and multi-agency agency training should be available to promote the knowledge, skills and values needed to support effective this inter-disciplinary work. Child Protection Committees will ensure mechanisms are in place for the delivery and evaluation of local training and will publish, implement, review and evaluate an inter-agency child protection training strategy.

Strategic Objectives

In compliance with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and the National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland 2012 the strategic objectives of this strategy across West Dunbartonshire are as follows:

1. To provide a strategic framework, common understanding and collective approach to inter-agency child protection learning and development opportunities.
2. To provide a common understanding of child protection, risk and risk thresholds.
3. To develop a competent and confident workforce by the provision of inter-agency child protection learning and development opportunities that complement existing single agency child protection staff development provisions.
4. To ensure that all workers have the necessary core competences, key knowledge, skills and values to deliver a consistently high standard of support to children and young people.
5. To provide good quality, evidence-based, inter-agency child protection learning and development opportunities which are robust, fit for purpose, highly evaluated and regularly quality assured.
6. To contribute towards the care and protection of children, young people and their families by promoting the principles of early identification, intervention and support, reflective of the GIRFEC practice model and approach.

Individual Responsibilities Single Services and Agencies

Across West Dunbartonshire, all services and/or agencies in the public, private and third sectors remain responsible for the induction, learning and continuous professional development of their staff. This is particularly relevant to all staff, paid or unpaid, who work directly with children and families. This remains a single service and/or agency responsibility and this strategy complements, but does not, replace that requirement.

West Dunbartonshire CPC and the CPC Learning and Development Subgroup will provide all single service and/or agencies with advice and guidance on basic child protection learning and development for staff. This will be supported by access to -

- The CPC Child Protection Self Learning Pack, available to all services who work directly and in-directly with children and young people
- A Inter-Agency Basic Child Protection Awareness training module
- Access to CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Opportunities/Courses agreed in West Dunbartonshire's CPC Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Strategy 2022-2025.

West Dunbartonshire CPC and CPC Learning and Development Subgroup will also require all services and/or agencies to provide regular updates on the child protection learning and development opportunities and programmes they provide to staff.

West Dunbartonshire CPC Learning and Development Subgroup

The CPC Learning and Development Subgroup is one of a number of CPC Subgroup that reports directly to West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee. The additional subgroups are –

- Performance
- Policy, Practice and Improvement
- Quality Assurance and Evaluation
- Communication and Engagement

The CPC Learning and Development subgroup was established in 2021, the group meets approximately every 6 weeks.

The CPC Learning and Development Subgroup is compliant with the requirements specified in *The Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protecting Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities* (Scottish Government, 2019). This states CPCs are responsible for publishing, implementing and reviewing an inter-agency child protection learning and development strategy.

In addition, CPCs should quality assure and evaluate the impact of that learning and development activity.

West Dunbartonshire's CPC Learning and Development strategy's aim is to ensure that each partner has a suitably skilled, confident and competent workforce to deliver the CPC's priorities and meet the needs for children and young people within West Dunbartonshire.

The learning and development sub group is fundamental in overviewing the needs of staff from Health, Local Authorities, 3rd Sector and Voluntary organisations, with the aim of ensuring they are equipped to support the needs of individuals, children and adults within the Partnership.

The CPC Learning and Development Subgroup and its constituent members have a *specific* role, remit and responsibility in respect of Child Protection learning and development.

The CPC Learning and Development Subgroup will have ownership of this strategy.

Role and Remit for Learning and Development

In respect of Learning and Development, the CPC Learning and Development Subgroup role and remit is:

1. To ensure single services/agencies have in place their own child protection staff learning and development programmes.
2. To ensure single service/agency and inter-agency child protection staff learning and development programmes are developed; delivered; quality assured and evaluated.
3. To ensure inter-agency child protection staff learning and development programmes complement and build on the work already done by individual services/agencies.
4. To ensure single service/agency child protection staff learning and development needs are identified on an ongoing basis and respond quickly to gaps identified by Learning Reviews, inspection reports and other inquiry reports.

5. To ensure an inter-agency child protection staff learning and development framework is in place; quality assured, reviewed and evaluated.

Membership

Core membership includes representation from:

- Child Protection Lead Officer
- West Dunbartonshire Social Work Services
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
- NHS Child's Health
- West Dunbartonshire Education Services
- West Dunbartonshire Housing Services
- CEDAR
- Scottish Fire and Rescue
- Public Protection Training Assistant (post currently vacant)

West Dunbartonshire Annual Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Programme

West Dunbartonshire's Child Protection Committee and the CPC Learning and Development Subgroup will publish a CPC annual inter-agency Child Protection Learning and Development Programme by April of each year.

Once published, it will be widely circulated and promoted by members of the CPC and CPC Learning and Development Subgroup members across West Dunbartonshire. Inter-agency Child Protection Learning and Development opportunities will also be published in the quarterly CPC newsletter and on the CPC website.

West Dunbartonshire Protocol for Evaluation of Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Programmes

The CPC Learning and Development Subgroup will monitor and evaluate inter-agency child protection learning and development courses to ensure they are compliant with the strategic objectives specified in this strategy.

All delegates attending inter-agency child protection learning and development courses are required to complete an on-the-day evaluation report. Evaluation reports will be collated and regularly reviewed by the Child Protection Lead Officer and the Public Protection Learning and Development Assistant. This will be stored on the CPC Learning and Development electronic drive.

Delegates attending inter-agency child protection learning and development courses may be selected to complete a post-course/workplace evaluation report. These will be issued between three months and six months after participants have completed an inter-agency child protection learning and development course.

These will measure the impact of inter-agency child protection courses on practice in the workplace. Evaluation reports will be collated and regularly reviewed by the Child Protection Lead Officer and Public Protection Learning and Development Assistant.

Agencies are also encouraged to promote learning and development opportunities and explore learning and development needs via their agencies supervision and appraisal processes.

Data Protection

Personal information provided by applicants when applying for Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development opportunities will be used by West Dunbartonshire Council on behalf of West Dunbartonshire CPC to register and process applications and quality assure learning and development opportunities.

All personal information will be deleted from our records/database on completion and evaluation of the Annual Inter-Agency Child Protection Learning and Development Programme.

Personal information will be retained and stored securely in strict compliance of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and The Data Protection Act 2018.

Where appropriate, information may be shared with partner organisations; groups; service representatives; internal and external training facilitators and Line Managers – but only for the purposes of processing, delivering and quality assuring our learning and development courses and ensuring the wellbeing and protection of children and young people. Similarly, information may be shared with Line Managers of any attendees who have been negatively impacted by any of the training delivered in order to ensure they continue to receive support if this is required. Individual agencies supervision polices are key in supporting staff to identify their learning and development needs, but also in ensuring staff receive any ongoing support they may require following any training they undertake.

The National Framework for Learning Development in Scotland (2012)

In December 2012, the Scottish Government published the National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland 2012.

This guidance provides a useful framework for meeting learning and development needs of three specific workforce groups:-

- **The general contact workforce group**
- **The specific contact workforce group**
- **The intensive contact workforce group.**

It also identifies overall roles and responsibilities in protecting Children and Young People and highlights the core competences, knowledge and skills required by different workforce groups.

The general contact workforce	<i>“The general contact workforce is defined in this Framework as those who, as part of their job are likely to come into contact with children, young people and other family members. The frequency of the contact will vary, but these workers will not usually be involved in any in-depth personal work with them. However,</i>
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	<p><i>these workers need to have the confidence and awareness to recognise when a child or young person may be in need of protection, and how to respond”.</i></p>
<p>The specific contact workforce</p>	<p><i>“The specific contact workforce is defined in this Framework as those who: carry out direct work with children, young people or other family members; and / or form more in-depth relationships with them; and / or provide specific services to them. These workers may carry out regular work with a child, young person or adult (although this will not always be the case). Contact may take place in the home or another setting (e.g. an office, school, community facility etc.). It may involve one to one work, or work in a group. These workers may be asked to contribute to the risk assessment and risk management process and may be involved in providing ongoing support to some children, young people and other family members. These workers require the competences, knowledge and skills associated with the general contact workforce, and some additional competences, knowledge and skills to reflect the nature of their involvement with children, young people and their families”.</i></p>
<p>The intensive contact workforce</p>	<p><i>“The intensive contact workforce is defined in this Framework as those who have specific designated responsibility for child protection issues as part of their role (e.g. where this is linked to their post, or where they are the Named Person or Lead professional); and / or those who will be involved in undertaking child protection investigations or working with complex cases (e.g. providing particular forms of support relating directly to child protection). These workers require the competences, knowledge and skills associated with the general and specific contact workforces, but need additional competences, knowledge and skills to carry out their tasks”.</i></p>

National Child Protection Learning and Development Group

West Dunbartonshire's CPC and the CPC Learning and Development Subgroup are affiliated to the National Child Protection Learning and Development Group.

All CPC Training or Learning and Development Officers across Scotland are invited to attend this Group. This Group meets nationally on a regular basis and promotes shared learning and good practice.

West Dunbartonshire's CPC and Learning and Development Subgroup will be presented on this group by the Lead Child Protection Officer.

West of Scotland Child Protection Learning and Development Group

The West of Scotland Child Protection Learning and Development Group comprises of representatives from CPCs and or CPC learning and Development staff from across the West of Scotland.

All CPC Training or Learning and Development Officers across the West of Scotland are invited to attend this Group. This Group meets on a regular basis and promotes shared learning and good practice.

West Dunbartonshire's CPC and Learning and Development Subgroup will be presented on this group by the Lead Child Protection Officer.