



*Child Protection*

# **Child & Adult Protection Guidance for Community Groups in Highland.**



ADULT SUPPORT  
& PROTECTION

## **Child & Adult Protection Guidance for Community Groups in Highland.**

'Safer Highland' Leadership Group brings together the Chief Executives of Highland Council, NHS Highland and the Chief Constable of Northern Constabulary with the chairs of six committees involved in protecting the people of Highland. Highland Child Protection Committee and Highland Adult Support and Protection Committee are part of 'Safer Highland' and jointly responsible for this guidance.

'Safer Highland' Leadership Group 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. Whilst recognising that adults may choose to engage in unsafe practices or situations, the Leadership Group believes that adults who fit the definition of 'adult at risk' (below) should be given the opportunity to access support and protection, when this is needed.

This booklet has been designed to help your organisation protect these rights. Child & Adult Protection is the responsibility of every adult who has involvement with children, 'protected adults' and/or adults who may be 'at risk'. All agencies working with these groups, should have an appropriate protection policy and statement for all volunteers (including parents, carers and guardians) and staff.

This is the 5th edition of this booklet. In addition to Child and Adult Protection Policies it includes advice on The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 and The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2009 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.

Alistair Dodds  
Chair – Safer Highland Leadership Group

March 2012 - 5<sup>th</sup> edition

### **Do I need to read this document?**

If you intend to involve children\*, 'protected adults'<sup>†</sup> or adults who may be 'at risk'<sup>‡</sup> in your activities, whether as committee members, staff, volunteers or participants you **need to** read this document.

If you hire facilities from Highland Council or High Life Highland, 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 or adult protection policy in place. These are not always in line with Scottish law and Highland local protocols. For any further guidance on this please contact your local office as listed in Section 6.

Most of the content also applies to self-employed individuals who are involved in delivering activities or services to children, 'protected adults' or adults who may be 'at risk'.

*\*Whilst in Scottish law a 'child' is generally defined as under 16 years of age, for the purposes of this guidance, Section 97 of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 a 'child' is defined as an individual aged under 18 years. This brings it into line with the law covering the recruitment of adults to work or volunteer with children, and with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

*† Section 94 of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act defines a 'protected adult' as an individual aged 16 or over who is provided with (and thus receives) a type of care, support or welfare service. This definition of protected adult replaces the definition of "adult at risk" used for the purposes of eligibility for enhanced disclosure and avoids labelling adults on the basis of their having a specific condition or disability.*

*‡ Although Section 94 (above) replaces the old definition of 'adult at risk' that was used for enhanced disclosure, the term 'adult at risk' is now used in the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and is defined as an individual aged 16 or above who finds it difficult to keep themselves or their property safe and might be more vulnerable to harm from other people because of a disability, illness or mental disorder/infirmity. It doesn't mean that all people with learning disabilities, mental health problems or illnesses or disabled people are always 'at risk'. It means that there are certain people in this situation who find it more difficult to keep themselves or their property safe.*

**NB: Throughout this guidance any item beginning with [http://](#) or [www.](#) is a website address. In the electronic version this will appear in blue. You can access the link by pressing the Ctrl key and clicking the mouse at the same time. If you have downloaded this document then you will need to open the web browser on a computer and type the address in; then press the green arrow.**

### **What is this document designed to do?**

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

#### **Child & Adult Protection in context – Section 1:**

- Definitions 1.1
- What does this mean for my Group? 1.2
- Creating a safe environment. 1.3
  - A note for Hall Committees 1.3.1
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  - Is my organisation covered by these Acts? 1.3.4
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  - Ten Steps to a safer environment. 1.3.6
  - What is abuse and serious harm? 1.3.7
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#### **Dealing with a Child or Adult Protection situation– Section 2:**

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

#### **Support Systems – Section 3:**

- Selecting a Child & Adult Protection lead. 3.1
- Disclosure checks 3.2

#### **Sample Paperwork – Section 4:**

- Sample child protection policy. 4.1
- Sample adult 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 people who may be at risk of harm. 4.6
- Personal Profile Form. 4.6
- Vetting Checklist. 4.7
- Reference Form. 4.9
- Reference Follow-up Telephone conversation record. 4.10

#### **Appendices – Section 5**

- Good practice for staff & volunteers. 5.1

#### **Further information Sources– Section 6**

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

**Section 1**  
**Child & Adult Protection in Context:**

**1.1 Definitions**

**a) Child Protection:**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) says that each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation. It also says 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 put these rights into Scottish law 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'***– In other words, the safety and wellbeing of children must come before anything else. Because of this, sharing information and taking other steps to make sure that children are protected should come before dealing with any other concerns.

**b) Adult Protection:**

Section 3 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines an **adult at risk of harm** as an adult who:

- is unable to safeguard his/her own well-being, property rights or other interests
- and**
- is at risk of harm
- and**
- because affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity is more vulnerable to being harmed than an adult who is not so affected.

**All 3 of the conditions above must be met in order for an adult to be defined as an adult 'at risk of harm'.**

However, it is important to note that vulnerability and risk are not condition specific. In other words, an adult may have a disability or illness but still able to keep themselves and their property safe.

The Act says that an adult is at risk of harm if:

- another person's conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed
- or**
- the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.

**In Highland, separate procedures exist for responding to young people aged between 16 and 18 years who are believed to be at risk of harm.<sup>1</sup> Referrals can be made to either child and family or adult services.**

### **1.2 What does this mean for my Group?**

Every day in Highland children, young people, 'protected adults' and adults who may be 'at risk' take part in activities in their community. As a community group, you offer a very valuable service. Through your group members learn about how to take part in the activities you offer and you should already be taking steps to make sure that the environment and the equipment that you provide is safe, suitable for the activity and for the level of ability.

Most children, 'protected adults' and adults who may be 'at risk' can take part safely, in the care of well-meaning adults. It is a fact, however, that a small minority of predatory adults try to get to children and adults who may be less able to protect themselves, through organised activities, with the intention of harming them. It is important that you take steps to check out your staff and volunteers and to prevent unsuitable adults from taking part in, or supervising, activities which provide them with opportunities to befriend and harm children and others less able to protect themselves.

Children and others learn to trust and respect the adults involved in providing activities. This places your staff and volunteers in a unique position in the lives of those taking part. There may come a time when a child or adult feels the need to confide in a member of staff or a volunteer, or when someone working with a child or an adult who may be 'at risk' feels that all is not well in that person's life.

Your group has a duty to make sure that staff and volunteers are given the information, knowledge and backup that will help them to give the support, guidance and help needed when they believe that someone is being harmed or at risk of harm. These policies have been written to help you, your management committee, staff and volunteers to think through these issues and develop your own child & adult protection guidelines for your group. They will also help you to consider any training that may be needed and point you in the right direction for help and advice in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Child Protection Inter-Agency Guidelines (2011)  
[http://forhighlandschildren.org/2-childprotection/publications\\_44\\_1060070483.pdf](http://forhighlandschildren.org/2-childprotection/publications_44_1060070483.pdf)

### **1.3 Creating a safe environment.**

#### **1.3.1 A note for Hall Committees:**

Where Hall committees get a grant or other financial help from Highland Council or use facilities owned or operated by the Highland Council or High Life Highland, they **are required** to have a child and/or adult protection policy in place. They should make a note in their minutes to show that they have agreed a policy and/or put a paragraph in their constitution to say that they have a policy. In addition, they **are required** to make sure that all groups applying to use the facilities for activities involving children, young people and adults who may be 'at risk', have a policy. This can be done by including a question in their application forms. Council staff will ask for proof that this has been done.

Whether or not your Hall is owned or financially supported by Highland Council or High Life Highland, it is good practice to have a child and/or adult protection policy. Some Hall Committees have put a clause into their constitutions like this one:

*The Hall Committee believes in the principles of child/adult protection promoted by 'Safer Highland' and will pay attention to guidance issued by committees under this umbrella, e.g. Highland Child Protection Committee; Highland Adult Support & Protection Committee.*

*The Committee will ask for the co-operation of all Hall users in taking steps to give protection to any child, 'protected adult' or adult who may be 'at risk' who takes part in activities at the Hall, and will also pay attention to the needs of any such person.*

#### **1.3.2 Selection of staff and volunteers:**

Volunteering is an important way to show that we care about our community. People give their time and energy for the good of the community. This is done freely and by choice, without expecting any payment.

It is good practice to use the same standards when recruiting volunteers as for paid staff. Both groups should:

- know what is expected of them. Tasks to be carried out should be clearly defined, so that everyone is clear about who is responsible for what.
- have clear lines of support and supervision.
- be valued.
- have safe working conditions.
- be insured.
- know their rights and responsibilities, how to make a complaint and how things will be dealt with if they do something wrong.
- be paid agreed expenses where appropriate.
- be provided with an introduction to their role in the community group, and given appropriate levels of supervision to assess progress and to sort out any problems
- receive appropriate and relevant training.
- be free from any sort of discrimination or harassment which breaks the law on equality.

### 1.3.3 Action you **MUST** take:

#### **Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 - (PVG Act)**

There are a number of people who actively seek to harm or abuse children and adults who are less able to protect themselves. These people often do not have a criminal record. They are within our communities and, in the majority of cases, are known to those they abuse.

The PVG Act aims to improve safeguards for children and protected adults by preventing unsuitable people from working with them.

The PVG Act requires two lists to be maintained: one which contains the names of all those individuals who are unsuitable to do regulated work with children; and another for those who are unsuitable to do regulated work with protected adults.

The PVG Act aims to provide a robust system by which unsuitable people are prevented from doing regulated work with children or protected adults, and by which people who become unsuitable are identified. For it to work effectively, it is necessary for organisations to pass on information to Disclosure Scotland that indicates an individual may be unsuitable to do regulated work so that it can be properly evaluated and appropriate action taken.

The process of providing such information to Disclosure Scotland is called 'making a referral'. The PVG Act places **a duty** on organisations and personnel suppliers to make a referral when certain criteria are met. Broadly speaking, the criteria are that: (a) an individual doing regulated work has done something to harm a child or protected adult and (b) the impact is so serious that the organisation has (or would) permanently remove the individual from regulated work. The first of these criteria is known as the referral ground.

The PVG Act also gives organisations and personnel suppliers **a power** to make referrals where the criteria were met before the PVG Act comes into force.

Making a referral is very important. Failure to refer an individual may mean that an individual who is unsuitable to do regulated work does not get barred from doing that type of work and can go on and harm other vulnerable people in other settings.

The referral form can be found on the Disclosure Scotland website:

<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/documents/DSProtectionUnitDeterminationsEMPLOYERREFERRALFORMFeb11.doc>

When a referral is made, the evidence will be considered and a decision made whether to include the person on the List of people barred from working with Children, adults or both. Courts can also refer people who have committed an offence against persons in either group and who, as a consequence, are considered unsuitable to work with them in future.

**It is an offence for an individual to do, or seek or agree to do, regulated work of the type from which they are barred.**

**It is also an offence for an organisation to knowingly recruit an individual who is barred to do regulated work of the type to which the barring relates.**

However, it is a defence for the organisation to show that they did not know, and could not reasonably be expected to know, that the individual was barred. Conviction for either of these offences may result in a fine, imprisonment up to five years, or both.

In order to avoid committing the offence, you must work out whether or not the work you are asking a person to do is regulated work and, if it is, should ask for one of the types of disclosure record discussed in chapter 1 of the PVG Guidance:

[http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/guidance/infofororg/chap1\\_intro/1\\_0\\_introducing.html](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/guidance/infofororg/chap1_intro/1_0_introducing.html)

#### **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?**

The PVG Act defines regulated work by reference to: the activities that a person does; the establishments in which a person works; the position that they hold; or the people for whom they have [day to day supervision or management responsibility](#). There are two types of regulated work:

- regulated work with children;
- and
- regulated work with adults.

The reason for having two types of regulated work, and two corresponding lists of individuals who are unsuitable to do such work, is to allow for the fact that unsuitability to work with one group does not always go hand in hand with unsuitability to work with the other

You need to undertake disclosure checks for anyone, paid or unpaid, ***whose normal duties fit the definitions for regulated work with children or adults.***

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

Voluntary Organisations can get **further information**, including a training pack, from: <http://www.crbs.org.uk/Home/tabid/288/Default.aspx>

For further information about the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme visit: [http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/guidance/infoforindivid/chap1\\_intro/1\\_0\\_introducing.html](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/guidance/infoforindivid/chap1_intro/1_0_introducing.html)

Many umbrella organisations, e.g. National Governing Bodies of Sport, are prepared to undertake checks for affiliated members. **To find out about intermediate bodies and umbrella organisations that may be able to assist with disclosure checks, search:**

<http://www.crbs.org.uk/EnrolledOrganisations/EnrolledOrganisationsSearch/tabid/449/Default.aspx>

Vetting allows us to screen all those who apply for paid posts or volunteer and it helps us to make decisions about their suitability for the task required. A clear Disclosure Scotland check simply shows that an individual is not known to the police; it is not a guarantee of suitability to work with children or protected adults. Additional precautions should be taken. It is good practice to require an application form to be completed, taking up 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 Disclosure Scotland.

### **1.3.6 Ten Steps to a safer environment:**

Remember - the protection of children, young people and adults less able to protect themselves is the responsibility of everyone in your group, not just the people who run or manage the group. The following actions 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 and adults are respected and given every opportunity to thrive and flourish.

Adopt a Child and/or Adult Protection policy and make sure that it is clearly displayed. Give copies to all staff/volunteers, children and parents/carers (sample – Section 4).

1. Agree a code of conduct for those who work/volunteer with your client group which clearly states behaviour which is acceptable and unacceptable towards clients, including bullying (see Section 5.1). Give copies to all staff/volunteers, clients and parents/carers.
2. Make sure everyone involved in the group and parents/carers know who to speak to and what to do if they are concerned about a child/adult or the conduct of a staff member/volunteer towards a child/adult. Give them information on how they can complain.
3. Encourage parents/carers 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, young people and adults who may be less able to protect themselves has been safely recruited (see sections 1.3.2 and 4.7) and ensure they receive good support and supervision.
6. Those who work/volunteer with children, young people and adults who may be less able to protect themselves will benefit from some basic training in child and/or adult protection. See <http://forhighlandschildren.org/3-icstraining/>

and/or [www.fhcommunities.org](http://www.fhcommunities.org) for information about local training. Highland Keeping Children Safe specialises in providing child protection training for early years and voluntary sector groups – see <http://www.kcs-highland.org.uk/courses.asp>

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 abuse.
8. Make sure that safeguards are in place when taking children, young people and adults who may be less able to protect themselves away from home and when using photographs or images. (See Section 5.1)
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 making sure that policies are being followed and are up to date. This person is often referred to as the Child/Adult Protection lead, monitor, advisor or designated person. ***(For the remainder of this guidance the term 'Designated person' is used.)***

Any concerns about child/adult abuse or the conduct of a member towards children, young people and adults who may be less able to protect themselves should be reported to the Designated Person in the first instance (see Section 3.1).

### **1.3.7 What is Abuse and Serious Harm?**

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

#### **Defining Adult Abuse and Harm:**

'Abuse' is the harming of another individual usually by someone who is in a position of power, trust or authority over that individual." *(Centre for Policy on Aging 1996)*

'Abuse' includes violence, harassment, threatening conduct, and any other conduct giving rise, or likely to give rise, to physical or mental injury, fear, alarm, or distress. *(Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001)* 'Abuse' can denote both positive actions, such as violence, physical restraint or misappropriation of state benefits and other property, and omissions such as neglect, and denial of rights.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines 'harm' as: conduct which causes physical harm, psychological harm, self harm, and unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights, or interests.

### **Types of abuse and harm**

All of the following are types of abuse:

- Physical
- Psychological (Mental/Emotional)
- Financial
- Sexual
- Discriminatory (Including withholding information and denial of rights)
- Neglect (including self-neglect)

### **1.3.8 Tackling Bullying:**

In 'A national approach to anti-bullying for Scotland's children and young people' (2010), <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/330753/0107302.pdf> the Scottish Government sets out its vision, that: *"Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards."*

To achieve this ambitious vision **all those working or involved with children and young people** will aim to:

- develop positive relationships amongst children, young people, and adults which are mutually respectful, responsible and trusting; and promote their emotional health and wellbeing
- build capacity, resilience and skills in children and young people, and parents and carers, to prevent and deal with bullying
- prevent bullying of children and young people through a range of policies, strategies and approaches
- support children, young people and their parents and carers who are affected by bullying

**Wider sectors and agencies covering children and young people's services and groups**, will aim to:

- provide leadership and ensure accountability
- support organisations working with children and young people to develop a positive and inclusive ethos and culture; and effective policies and practices which proactively prevent and deal with all types of bullying behaviour
- ensure provision of information, training, advice and support to those working with children and young people in Scotland as well as their parents or carers
- ensure a co-ordinated and cohesive approach to anti-bullying in Scotland

Based on the legal and policy frameworks, the principles of the national approach are:

- We respect the rights of children as paramount
- We will work together to develop a culture of mutual respect and responsibility amongst all children and young people and adults around them
- We will seek to prevent and tackle bullying, through the development and implementation of effective anti-bullying policies and practices
- We will highlight bullying based on prejudice and perceived differences, and ensure our policies and practices are effective in dealing with these issues
- We will highlight different aspects of prejudice in order to make sure all types of prejudice-based bullying are treated with the same importance
- We will address the needs of children and young people who are bullied as well as those who bully within a framework of respect, responsibility, resolution and support
- We will share information and work jointly to make sure we are co-ordinated and cohesive in all that we do

Organisations will have different ways of putting the principles of anti-bullying into practice to reflect local environments and culture. However, all organisations that work with children and young people should develop and implement an anti-bullying policy.

Policies should include:

- a statement which lays out the organisational stance on bullying behaviour
- a definition of bullying, developed through consultation creating a shared understanding between all parties involved
- expectations or codes of behaviour and responsibilities for staff and children and young people
- preventative and reactive strategies showing what an organisation commits itself to, what strategies it will employ when faced with bullying incidents or allegations and to prevent bullying from happening
- clarity on how and how often the organisation will communicate its anti-bullying policy and to whom; and how parents and carers will be informed of incidents
- the recording and monitoring strategies that will be used for management purposes
- how and how often the policy will be evaluated to understand how successful and effective the policy is.

Anti-bullying policies may be located within wider organisational policies such as child protection, health and safety or relationship and behaviour policies.

For further information on writing an anti-bullying policy visit 'RespectMe' on:  
<http://www.respectme.org.uk/About-respectme.html>

**Section 2**  
**Dealing with a Child or Adult Protection Situation:**

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

People who abuse others often do so in a manner that makes it difficult for children, young people and adults 'at risk' to tell someone else if they are being abused. However there may be signs which make you concerned and may be an indication of abuse or neglect.

The child, young person or adult 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 inappropriate levels of responsibility for their age
- be acting out in a sexually inappropriate way
- be misusing drugs or alcohol

The parent/partner/carer may be:

- acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child, young person or adult who is less able to protect him/herself
- misusing drink or drugs whilst caring for a child, young person or adult who is less able to protect him/herself
- verbally abusive towards a child, young person or adult who is less able to protect him/herself

If you notice any of these signs and/or are worried, please take action to protect the child, young person or adult who is less able to protect him/herself.

**2.2 Responding to children or adults who may have been abused:**

There may be a time when a child, young person or adult who is less able to protect him/herself 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. Use the term '*discloses*' as it is referred to in the flow chart at the end of this section.

**It is not your job to decide if abuse has taken place – 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, young person or adult who is less able to protect him/herself 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 individual, spare them having to repeat themselves over and over. Apart from anything else, the person may begin to think that you don't believe them;

- Listen to the individual - **REALLY LISTEN** - take what they say seriously. Tell them that they've done the right thing by telling you;
- Reassure the person 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 person 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 person – think of how hard it must be to say it. Some things are very difficult to talk about, you've been chosen because the person feels able to talk to you. If you show anger, disgust, disbelief then the person may stop talking for fear of upsetting you further or feel that your negative feelings are being directed towards them;
- Never trivialise or exaggerate abuse issues;
- As soon as practical write down everything the person told you, but remember that this is a confidential matter between you and that individual. The only person you should be discussing it with is the committee member for your organisation who has agreed to act as Designated Person for child/adult 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 Designated Person for child/adult protection issues, this person will be responsible for making decisions about where to take child/adult protection concerns. In the first instance you should take your concerns to the Designated Person.

If the Designated Person is not available and the situation is clearly urgent, e.g. the child, young person or adult who may be in need of protection, is too frightened to go home or you have very serious doubts about that person'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 person's welfare, you should initially discuss these with your organisation's Designated Person. The Designated Person will be able to speak with another professional who is familiar with the child/adult and its family/carer, 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 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 Designated Person 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/adults.

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

#### **2.4 What happens next?**

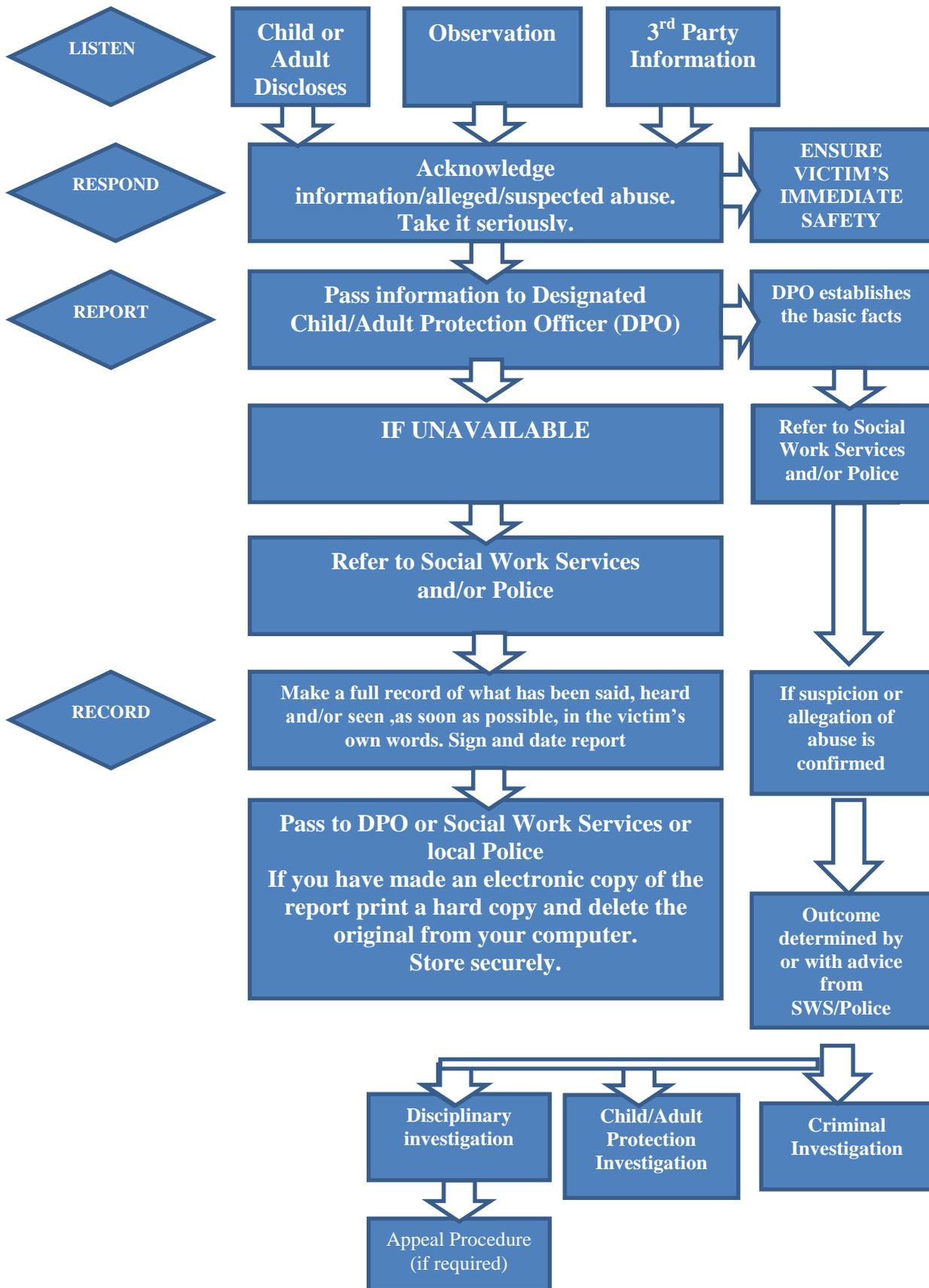
All information received by Social Work Services and the Police is treated seriously and will be acted upon. This will include checking agency records and gathering information from other agencies involved with the child, young person or adult who may be in need of protection.

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

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

- No further action (Either because none is necessary or, in the case of an adult with capacity to make their own decisions, refusal of help.)
- A named professional will keep regular contact with the child, young person or adult in need of protection to ensure that needs are met
- A multi-agency meeting will be called to decide what action is best to protect the child/adult and support the family/carers
- If an illegal act has taken place or it is felt that the only way that the child/adult can be protected is through compulsory measures, there will be a referral to the appropriate legal system.

**RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**



**Section 3**  
**Support Systems:**

**3.1 Selecting a Child/Adult Protection Lead/Designated Person:**

Everyone within your group has responsibility to be aware of child/adult protection issues, however it is important to have one person on your committee or steering group who has agreed to monitor child/adult 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/adult 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/adult who may be in need of protection 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 referrals are made to Disclosure Scotland in cases where staff or volunteers are suspected or known to have harmed a child or adult who is less able to protect him/herself, and that these individuals are removed from unsupervised contact with children/adults 'at risk' until such time as a decision is made whether their names should be added to the Disqualified from Working with Children/Adults Lists.

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 1.3.6 - pt6.

It is also important to carry out a disclosure check in respect of your Child/Adult Protection Lead/Designated Person. 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/Adult Protection Lead/Designated Person to ensure independence.

### **3.2 Disclosure checks:**

Voluntary Sector agencies can get help with accessing Disclosure Checks and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme 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 a policy on secure handling, use, storage and retention of Disclosure information.  
[http://www.crbs.org.uk/Resources/XC0303%20Intermediary%20Body%20PVG%20Contract%20Form%20Guidelines%20\(Non%20Affiliated\).pdf](http://www.crbs.org.uk/Resources/XC0303%20Intermediary%20Body%20PVG%20Contract%20Form%20Guidelines%20(Non%20Affiliated).pdf)

We have included an example of such a policy in Section 4, together with examples of Child and Adult protection policies and a policy on recruitment of ex-offenders, 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 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 1.3.6, pt6, 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 and the PVG Scheme.

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:**

The following pages contain examples of policies:

- 4.1 Sample child protection policy.
- 4.2 Sample adult protection policy.
- 4.3 A sample policy statement.
- 4.4 Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders.
- 4.5 Policy on information & storage.
- 4.6 Policy on protecting people who may be at risk of harm.
- 4.7 Personal Profile Form.
- 4.8 Vetting Checklist.
- 4.9 Reference Form.
- 4.10 Reference Follow-up Telephone conversation record.

#### 4.1 Sample Child Protection Policy:

Child Protection Policy for....*(name of group)*  
*Date.*

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 are members of the appropriate Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and have been appropriately vetted (See Sections 1.3.2 and 4.8);
2. We will ensure the every new volunteer or member of staff will complete a Personal Profile Form. Please photocopy Section 4.7 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 4.10);
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 Disclosure Scotland 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 work to (See Section 5.1);
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 Disclosure Scotland of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our group (See section 1.3.3).

Child & Adult Protection Guidance for Community Groups in Highland  
March 2012

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/Designated Person. 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/Designated Person, 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/Designated Person 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 Adult Protection Policy:

Adult Protection Policy for....(*name of group*)  
*Date.*

We recognise that adult protection should not be treated in isolation - we will take on board guidance given by Highland Adult Support & 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 are members of the appropriate Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and have been appropriately vetted (See Sections 1.3.2 and 4.8);
2. We will ensure the every new volunteer or member of staff will complete a Personal Profile Form. Please photocopy Section 4.7 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 protected adults. A record of this discussion will be kept in the applicant's file(See Section 4.10);
6. We will interview prospective volunteers and staff;
7. We will note at interview all previous experience of volunteers and staff in working with protected adults;
8. We will carry out a probationary period for all volunteers and staff of at least ..... months.
9. We will notify Disclosure Scotland if anyone on the Disqualified from Working with Adults 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 5.1);
11. We will remove from unsupervised contact with protected adults any member of staff or volunteer whom we know or suspect to have caused harm to a protected adult or to have placed a protected adult at risk of harm and we will notify Disclosure Scotland of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our group (See section 1.3.3).

Child & Adult Protection Guidance for Community Groups in Highland  
March 2012

We believe that everyone 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 protected adult being physically or psychologically damaged. In our group, if we have suspicions about a protected adult's physical, sexual, emotional or financial well being, we will take action.

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

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 protected adult 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 Adult Protection Lead/Designated Person 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 adult - or we may prevent, further protected adults 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 Adult Protection Enquiries

0800 902 00 42

#### **4.3 Sample Policy Statement:**

Policy Statement for ..... (*Name of Group*)  
*Date*

*We will:*

- Hold a register of every child/protected adult 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/adult's right to personal privacy;
- Provide time for children/protected adults to talk to us;
- Encourage children and adults 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/protected adults after activities/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/adult protection policy;
- Complete the vetting checklist. Please photocopy Section 4.8 of this document.

#### 4.4 Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Policy Statement for:

.....

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.

Where appropriate we will require membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and request a Standard or Enhanced disclosure as 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 make sure 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 or protected adults, we will use our professional judgement and take into consideration –

- Whether the applicant is banned from working with our client group
- 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.

#### **4.5 Policy on the Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure Information.**

##### **Policy Statement for:**

.....

In accordance with the Disclosure Scotland 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/Adults) List' we will notify the Police that an attempt has been made to acquire work with children/adults.
- 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.

<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/documents/PoliceAct1997--CodeofPractice--18February2011.pdf>

#### 4.6 Policy on protecting people who may be at risk of harm.

##### Policy Statement for:

.....

We aim to ensure that anyone, whether a child, young people or protected adult\*, is protected and kept safe from harm whilst 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 applicant's suitability to work with children/protected adults.
- Where relevant to the post, the successful applicant will be asked to apply for membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme, if not already a member, and agree to 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 regularly reviewed.
- 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.

*\*Section 94 of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act defines a **'protected adult'** as an individual aged 16 or over who is provided with (and thus receives) a type of care, support or welfare service. This definition of protected adult supersedes the definition of "adult at risk" used for the purposes of eligibility for enhanced disclosure and avoids labelling adults on the basis of their having a specific condition or disability.*

#### 4.7 Personal Profile Form

To be completed by all new volunteers/employees.

1. Organisation's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Personal Details

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 protected adults  
Where previously have you worked with young people under the age of 16 or protected adults?  
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/protected adults. All references will be taken up. You should secure prior agreement of referees before providing their names.

Referee 1

Referee 2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4.8 Vetting Checklist:

Name of Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

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/Adult Protection Personal Profile Form? (Please attach the completed form to this check list) Yes/No
5. Have you carried out appropriate vetting? Have you ensured that the volunteer is a member of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme or is prepared to join? 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? Yes/No  
(Please attach the references to this check list)
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
10. Have you carried out an induction explaining the organisation's code of conduct and the volunteer's/employee's role in the protection of Children and Protected Adults? Yes/No

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (in block capitals): \_\_\_\_\_

Position held in Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4.9 Reference Form

##### Details of Referee

Name:			
Relationship to the Applicant:			
Address:			
Postcode:			
Telephone No's:	Day:	Evening:	Mobile:
E-mail Address:			

##### Details of Applicant

Name:
Address:
Postcode:

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

The post involves caring for children/protected adults. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children/protected adults, we are anxious to know if there is any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children/protected adults.

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/protected adults? \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference Form**

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

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
<b>Responsibility</b>					
<b>Maturity</b>					
<b>Commitment</b>					
<b>Energy</b>					
<b>Trustworthiness</b>					
<b>Reliability</b>					
<b>Concern for Others</b>					

<b>This post involves substantial and unsupervised access to children/protected adults. As an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children/protected adults, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and/or protected adults?</b>	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Please tick relevant box. If concerned tick YES if not tick NO</b>		
<b>If you have answered YES we will contact you in confidence</b>		

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return in the envelope supplied marked Private and Confidential to the Designated Child/Adult Protection lead:

Name:  
Address:

Tel No:

**4.10 Reference Follow Up Telephone Conversation Record**

**Please use block capitals and black ink only**

**Volunteer/Employee Name:**

.....

**Referee Name:** ..... **Referee Address:** .....

.....

.....

**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:**

**1. The physical abuse of a child? E.g. hitting, striking with implements**

**Yes/No**

**2. The emotional abuse of a child? E.g. threats, berating, criticism**

**Yes/No**

**3. The sexual abuse of a child? E.g. inappropriate touching or contact**

**Yes/No**

**4. 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 protected adults?**

**Yes/No**

**Further Comments:**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Signed:** .....

.....

**Date:**

## **Section 5**

### **5.1 Good Practice for Staff and Volunteers**

#### **General Points:**

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Always respect a child/protected adult's right to personal privacy.
- Never make salacious, suggestive or demeaning remarks/gestures towards a child/protected adult.
- Avoid any physical horseplay with a child/protected adult or any actions another adult may misinterpret, no matter how innocent and well intentioned your actions may be.
- Always encourage children/protected adult 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, young person or protected adult 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/protected adult. In these circumstances try to ensure that others are within earshot and preferably within vision.
- If you are on your own with a child/protected adult NEVER have the door locked.
- Where possible maintain a gap/barrier between you and the child/protected adult.
- 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/protected adult
- Hit a child/protected adult
- Strike or use an implement on a child/protected adult
- Grab or pull at a child/ protected adult's clothing
- Have inappropriate touching or contact with a child/protected adult whether 'invited' or not.

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

### **Special situations.**

#### **Transporting children/protected adults and trips away:**

If it is necessary to transport children/protected adults 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 or with adults who lack capacity to assess risk for themselves.
- Vehicles should be roadworthy and appropriately taxed and insured.
- Written consent should be obtained from the child's parent/carer, the protected adult or, if they lack the capacity to consent, their guardian.
- Always plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities, undertake a risk assessment and ensure copies are available for other members and parents/carers.
- A collection point and drop off point should be identified and all parents/carers notified of these points.
- Ensure an adequate adult-child/protected adult ratio and, where possible, both male and female staff should accompany mixed groups of children/protected adults. 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/carers when the children/or any adults who lack capacity to assess risk for themselves will be returned to the drop off point.

- Children and adults who lack capacity to assess risk for themselves should not be left alone at the drop off point; at least two adults should remain until the parents have collected ALL the children/protected adults.

### **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 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 same may apply to some protected adults.

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

- Consent should always be obtained from the parent/carer and child/any adult whose picture may be taken or used and, in the case of adults who lack capacity to consent, the guardian.
- Anyone wishing to photograph or film children/adults who lack capacity to consent must obtain permission from the Designated 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/adult, guardian and Designated 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 Designated Protection lead for the organisation and/or the Police.

### **Publications and Websites:**

- Always obtain consent before displaying pictures or information.
- Never include personal information that could identify a child/adult or place them 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/protected adults in a provocative, demeaning or tasteless manner.

**Section 6**  
**FURTHER INFORMATION**

**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.
6. Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
7. Adult Support and Protection in Highland – Inter-agency Procedures, Highland Adult Support & Protection Committee
8. Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

**Useful Addresses**

Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS)  
Phone: 01786 479593

Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS)  
Phone: 01786 849777

Both at  
Stirling Enterprise Park . Stirling . FK7 7RP  
Volunteering Highland  
The Gateway . 1a Millburn Road  
Inverness . IV2 3PX  
Phone: 01463 711393

**Useful Websites**

[www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)  
[www.vds.org.uk](http://www.vds.org.uk)  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)  
[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)  
[www.crbs.org.uk](http://www.crbs.org.uk)  
[www.forhighlandchildren.org](http://www.forhighlandchildren.org)  
[www.fhcommunities.org](http://www.fhcommunities.org)  
[www.kcs-highland.org.uk](http://www.kcs-highland.org.uk)  
[www.highlifehighland.com](http://www.highlifehighland.com)

**For Further Information Contact:**

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CVS North  
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