

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2022

REVISED NATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR CHILD PROTECTION

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland was originally published in December 2010, replacing the 1998 publication, 'Protecting Children - A Shared Responsibility'. The Guidance has been regularly reviewed since publication, with a substantive revision taking place throughout 2020 and into 2021.
- 1.2 Revised [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#) was published on 2 September 2021. Publication was recognised as a key milestone but not an end in itself.
- 1.3 Implementation of the revised Guidance is envisaged to take 18 to 24 months.

2. SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION

- 2.1 A key change in the 2021 Guidance is to reflect the greater integration of child protection within the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) continuum and use GIRFEC language and core components to frame proportionate responses to child protection concerns. The Guidance outlines the continuum of support for all children, from universal support through to protection from significant harm, underlining that the wellbeing and safety of children are indivisibly connected. There is a clear articulation of the importance of GIRFEC to protecting children, particularly in recognising that all children must receive the right help at the right time. The leadership of Children's Services Planning Partnerships alongside Child Protection Committees is instrumental in supporting implementation of this Guidance within the broader context of local GIRFEC practice.
- 2.2 The Guidance has a strengthened focus on children's rights, engagement and collaboration with children and families, and on building on strengths. It incorporates the experiences and views of children, young people and families and includes a greater emphasis on ensuring that a child's views are taken into account in all decision-making that affects them. These views have also informed the development of the series of [Practice Insights](#) published alongside the Guidance, ensuring a central focus on the child's voice and perspective.
- 2.3 In terms of child protection practice, the guidance brings a shift in language away from Case Conference to focus on Child's Planning Meetings. Timescales for review have been revised from 3 months to 6 months. There is an increased focus on Interagency Initial Referral Discussions and Joint Investigative Interviews.
- 2.4 Child Protection leadership is referenced early on in the guidance with strong emphasis on collective responsibility of Chief Officers, Child Protection Committees, local communities and general public. [Guidance for Child Protection Committees and Chief Officers](#) was published in 2019.
- 2.5 At a national level, a new subgroup of the National Child Protection Leadership Group has been established in recognition that supported, co-ordinated and consistent implementation will be needed to ensure that the Guidance assists in securing the best outcomes for children and families. The group are currently engaging via CoSLA on what kind of support will be helpful to local areas as they work over the next 2 years to fully implement. Support is likely to include training and access to supporting tool kits.
- 2.6 Locally, Angus Child Protection Committee are responsible for assessing, planning and implementing the Guidance locally. Work is already underway to assess the impact of the changes required with the current assessment that Angus are very well placed with existing

process and practice and that changes required are not significant. An action plan is progressing through the Child Protection Committee's Practice and Policy Sub Committee.

- 2.7 It is important for members to be sighted on our local implementation position with the revised Guidance.

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