

7 Minute Briefing – The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

What is coming next?

- Pre-birth pathway
- UBB Child Protection Planning Meetings

Introduction

Everyone who works directly with children, young people and their families has a responsibility to make sure that when children and young people are in need of protection, they get the right kind of help, from the right people, at the right time. In light of the publication of the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 \(revised\)](#), we are reviewing and updating our Child Protection Multi-Agency Guidance. New Multi-Agency Guidance will be implemented in the coming months. Single agency guidance is also being reviewed within each agency.

Background

The publication of the National Guidance for Child Protection in 2021 replaces the previous 2014 guidance incorporating a number of important policy, legislative & practice developments. It sets out the responsibilities and expectations of everyone involved in protecting children and young people (e.g. practitioners working in health, police, social work, third sector, local authority and education settings). The guidance integrates the principles of GIRFEC, strengthens the focus on children's rights (UNCRC) and aligns with the ambitions of The Promise.

In the interim it is your responsibility to

- Familiarise yourself with your own single agency child protection procedures
- Speak to your line manager /child protection co-ordinator/advisor/officer if you need advice or support

REMEMBER - if in doubt shout

Next steps

The Guidance Implementation Group, under the direction of Fife's Child Protection Committee, was formed in 2022 to undertake detailed implementation planning within the Fife Partnership. Fortnightly meetings are taking place to look at the guidance, recommend practice/process change and work towards implementation. In time we will be linking with the key people in your workplace to share information about the changes, what action you need to take and how best to support staff to understand and manage the changes that impact on your work.

What's changed?

The 2021 guidance builds on the four-part structure of the 2014 guidance, by adding a new section, Part 2(b): Approach to multi-agency assessment in child protection. The key differences include some changes in terminology which we will be adopting locally, for example Child Protection Case Conferences will become Child Protection Planning Meetings. The new guidance changes some child protection timescales. It incorporates the new, currently implemented, model for Joint Investigative Interviewing of Children. It requires us to consider children from pre-birth up to the age of 18 and includes detail on Health Assessment and Medical Examination.

The New National Guidance

While the publication of the National Guidance for Child Protection is a key milestone, it is not an end in itself. At the time of publication, an extended period was given to implement the guidance and Fife look to achieve this by April 2024.



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