



Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to practice which protects children and young people from harm. Staff and volunteers in Cosgrove accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children and young people harm.
- 1.2 Cosgrove has a duty of care to protect all children and young people involved with Cosgrove from harm.
- 1.3 Protecting children and young people is everyone's responsibility. Children and young people are particularly vulnerable to abuse, so it is especially important to keep a watchful eye for signs of abuse or neglect.
- 1.4 This policy applies to everyone who works for Cosgrove, whether in a paid or voluntary role.
- 1.5 Everyone who works for Cosgrove whether in a paid or voluntary role, must take immediate action where a child appears to be at immediate risk of harm. Even if you are not sure about what is happening, you **MUST** take advice if you are worried.
- 1.6 Everyone who works for Cosgrove whether in a paid or voluntary role will be aware that they can report matters of concern to relevant external agencies if necessary.

2. Principles

- 2.1 This policy is based on the following principles:
- 2.2 The welfare of the child or young person is paramount
- 2.3 All children and young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- 2.4 All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- 2.5 All staff /volunteers have a responsibility to **report concerns immediately**.
- 2.6 Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred. A clear responsibility for all staff and volunteers is to report any concerns to their line manager, senior member of staff or the Designated Protection Officer immediately.
- 2.7 Cosgrove has a clear, comprehensive Whistleblowing Policy to help you protect vulnerable adults from those who might put them at risk. The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to protect you during the process of investigation; Whistleblowers are protected by the law. See the Whistleblowing Policy for more details.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 In the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 a "child" is defined for the purposes of all parts of that Act, as someone who has not reached the age of 18.
- 3.2 A 'vulnerable adult' is defined as anyone aged 18 years or over who may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm, abuse or exploitation by other people because they have a physical or sensory disability, learning disability, mental health needs or are frail older people.
- 3.3 Cosgrove uses the following definition of protection:

- **Protecting children and young people from maltreatment**
- **Preventing impairment of children and young people's health or development**
- **Ensuring that children and young people live in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care**
- **Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes**
- **Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children and young people who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.**

3.4 Harm is defined in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland. Harm means the ill treatment or the impairment of the health or development of the child, including, for example, impairment suffered as a result of seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. In this context, 'development' can mean physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development and 'health' can mean physical or mental health.

3.5 What is abuse? Children can be abused in different ways.

3.6 They can be physically injured, for example by shaking, punching, hitting or kicking or by any other means involving violence.

3.7 They can be abused sexually, which means they have been subjected to inappropriate sexual behaviour or language by others.

3.8 Emotional abuse, where a child is constantly criticised, ignored or humiliated, also causes harm.

3.9 Neglect is another form of abuse, where a child is not properly fed, cared for, clothed or sheltered, kept clean or safe or does not receive medical treatment when they need it.

3.10 Domestic Abuse is another form of abuse. This is where one person hurts or bullies another person who is or was their partner or who is in the same family.

3.11 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, accommodation, affection or status.

4. Policy statement and overview

4.1 We are committed to practice which protects children and young people from harm. Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children and young people harm.

4.2 All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse.

4.3 Protecting the welfare of the people we support is the responsibility of every Cosgrove worker, whether salaried or voluntary, whatever their role or status.

4.4 Cosgrove staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns of suspected abuse or poor practice immediately. Reports can be made to any line manager, the designated person for protection within their service or Designated Protection Lead with responsibility for child protection or to external statutory agencies. If there is risk of immediate harm, statutory agencies must be notified immediately.

4.5 This policy is intended to ensure that Cosgrove staff and volunteers play their part in the achievement of positive outcomes for children and young people we support.

4.6 Any child, whether with a disability or not, with whom a staff member or volunteer may come into contact in the course of Cosgrove duties has the same right to be protected from abuse or neglect.

4.7 Each child should be treated as an individual, encouraged to express their own needs and wishes, and be listened to by the worker.

4.8 Children and young people's complaints and concerns should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. In the context of child protection, you cannot keep something that has been shared in confidence. You must explain that to help keep the individual safe you will have to tell someone.

4.9 Cosgrove is committed to working in line with local inter agency procedures and Cosgrove staff will work co-operatively with all agencies who share responsibility for protecting children and young people from abuse.

4.10 Cosgrove encourages working in partnership with people we support, parents and carers, whenever possible, where there are concerns or suspicions about abuse.

4.11 All workers who have direct contact with children and young people and their families will be recruited, trained and supervised to ensure that they are properly equipped to:

- a) Identify where there may be a concern
- b) Know how and where to record this
- c) Know who to speak to internally about this concern
- d) Know how to obtain speedy and professional advice if necessary
- e) Refer concerns appropriately to specialist workers as necessary
- f) Contribute to the maintenance of a safe working environment
- g) Protect themselves from allegations of abuse

4.12 All line managers and protection leads will be aware of procedures to report concerns to external agencies where appropriate.

4.13 Cosgrove will ensure that those who work with children and young people and their families are subject to satisfactory references and a satisfactory Disclosure from Disclosure Scotland, in accordance with the Police Act 1997 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. **Any individual who is to carry out a regulated role (paid or voluntary) with children, protected adults or both, must be a member of the PVG scheme, prior to carrying out that role as per Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020.**

4.14 All workers are required to work within the **Cosgrove Code of Conduct**

4.15 Cosgrove is committed to responding to any allegations of abuse by staff or volunteers promptly. Managers must implement the appropriate complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures as necessary. Where there is an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

4.16 Information sharing will be compliant with current data protection and human rights legislation.

4.17 This policy and the procedures and guidance document will be reviewed annually for legislative changes and fully every three years.

5. Using the Child Protection Policy, Flowchart and Leaflet

5.1 The Cosgrove Child Protection Policy and associated documents support your work in protecting the people we support. It will help you to develop good practice protect people we support.

5.2 In order to do this effectively, you must complete child protection training as appropriate to your role. Some roles will require you to undertake more detailed training.

5.3 Throughout this document, certain words, phrases and names of policies are highlighted in order to help you find the information you need.

5.4 This **policy** tells you about protecting children and young people and the principles the organisation supports.

5.5 The **policy** tells you what you must do if you have a concern about a child, what your responsibilities are and how to respond even if it is out of hours. This is simplified in the **flowchart**.

- 5.6 The **policy** also tells you how to respond if you think a child may be abusing another child and what to do if you think an adult working with children and or young people is unsafe to do so. This is simplified in the **leaflet**.
- 5.7 The **policy** contains information about some of the signs which might indicate that someone is suffering abuse or neglect. This is simplified in the **leaflet**.
- 5.8 The **policy** and **leaflet** gives **contact information** which should help you with your responsibilities.
- 5.9 There is a **Form** to help you record clearly any concerns about a child and any action taken.

6. Cosgrove Child & Adult Protection Committee

- 6.1 The Cosgrove Designated Protection Lead is Mairi Monaghan.
mmonaghan@cosgrovecare.org.uk
- 6.2 The Designated Protection Lead has responsibility for child and adult protection within the organisation and co-chairs a quarterly meeting of the Protection Forum, which has a focus on child and adult protection.
- 6.3 The forum reviews organisational practice and learning and takes responsibility for sharing information in relation to these areas of protection across the organisation.
- 6.4 Registered Managers along with designated protection officers from each area of service and the volunteer coordinator attend the meeting to share best practice.



7. Useful Contacts

Head of Quality & Participation

Mairi Monaghan

Designated Protection Lead

mmonaghan@cosgrovecare.org.uk

07889 574802

Adult & Child Outreach Manager

Liz Grant

LGrant@cosgrovecare.org.uk

07841 461317

Supported Living Manager

David Hughes
dhughes@cosgrovecare.org.uk

07841 461460

Volunteer Coordinator

Lauren Jarvis
lj Jarvis@cosgrovecare.org.uk

0141 620 2500

External Agencies Contact details:

Care Inspectorate: 0345 600 9527

Police Scotland – 101 then ask for Public Protection Unit

Police emergency – 999

Police Protection Hub 0141 532 6763

Mental Welfare Commission: 0131 313 8777

Scottish Children and young people's Reporter Administration via local offices, find details at
<http://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us/office-locations/>

Child Protection contact numbers in the areas Cosgrove works:

East Renfrewshire Social Work (children and families) 0141 577 8300

East Renfrewshire Social Work Standby Service: 0300 343 1505

East Renfrewshire Lead Officer Child Protection: 0141 577 3381

Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Service: 0300 343 1505

North Lanarkshire Council Social Work Standby: 0800 811 505

South Lanarkshire Emergency Social Work Service: 0303 123 1008