

Child Protection Policy

1 Introduction

1.1

Child protection is the responsibility of **ALL** employees working within PKAVS as well as directors, students, volunteers, and temporary workers, even if their work does not involve direct contact with children or young people.

1.2

Child abuse is any action by another person, it can be an adult, a child, or a young person, that results in significant harm to a child or young person. The harm can take many forms including physical, sexual, exploitation, or emotional, but can just as often be withholding basic human rights or a lack of love, care, and attention. We know that this neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child or young person as physical or sexual abuse.

1.3

Child protection is the actions, processes, and cultures that protect children or young people from abuse or harm. It is not just one policy, but a collection of practices, procedures, and systems, as well as education, awareness, and vigilance that ensures the risk of children and young people experiencing abuse or harm is as low as it can possibly be.

2 Our Commitment

2.1

PKAVS has a zero tolerance approach to the harm or abuse of children and young people, and will ensure that their welfare, safety, and wellbeing are our overriding priority.

2.2

We realise that the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people who we support, come into contact with, and know of is paramount in our day-to-day work.

2.3

We recognise that children and young people are generally individuals less than 16 years of age, but in certain circumstances may be 18 years of age and under.

2.4

PKAVS has made a commitment that by working together, all staff, with the support of students and volunteers, will improve services to children and young people ensuring they get the help they need when they need it, and are protected from harm. All individuals will have a clear and unequivocal responsibility to ensure that they are competent and able to take appropriate actions to protect and promote the wellbeing of a child or young person.

3 Our Approach to Child Protection

3.1

Our safeguarding activities are guided by legislation including the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014, Perth and Kinross Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines 2017, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Children's Charter & the Framework for Standards (2014), and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

3.2

Our **Safeguarding Handbook** is PKAVS child protection point of reference and guidance for all directors, staff, volunteers, and students who will be given access to a copy of this and it will be easily accessible on PKAVS network.

3.3

All staff, volunteers and students are subject to suitability checks before direct work begins - through the seeking of references and, where regulated work is undertaken, a Disclosure Scotland Application (for new or existing members) is requested and processed.

3.4

All staff and volunteers within PKAVS will undergo child protection training at induction and regular intervals afterwards; this may be face-to-face or online training.

3.5

Staff who are service user facing will undergo regular face-to-face training either by external partners or by PKAVS Designated Child Protection Officer.

3.6

PKAVS shall have at least one Designated Child Protection Officer who has undergone required external training.

3.7

Everyone will be aware of the procedure for raising child protection concerns as well as how to respond to a child or young person who discloses concerns about child abuse. This is found in **PKAVS Safeguarding Handbook** and a flow chart located around PKAVS premises.

3.8

PKAVS shall have an established Safeguarding Committee that meets 6-monthly to circulate good practice, updates, concerns, and other child protection issues.

4. Policy Review

This policy (and associated Safeguarding Handbook) will be monitored and reviewed on the following occasions:

- When there is a change in legislation or guidance on the protection of children and young people or changes within PKAVS
- Following any significant child protection events where learning points are identified
- In all other circumstances annually