

HMIPS Child Protection Guidance

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Introduction:

His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland (HMCIPS) is required to inspect the 17 prisons across Scotland in order to establish the treatment of, and the conditions for prisoners and to report publicly on the findings. In addition HMCIPS has overall responsibility for the monitoring of prisons, which is carried out on a day to day basis by volunteer Independent Prison Monitors (IPMs).

HMIPS has adopted this child protection guidance and expects every adult working or volunteering for HMIPS to support and comply with it. Consequently this guidance shall apply to all staff, volunteers or anyone else working full time or temporary on behalf of HMIPS.

HMIPS is based at:

Y1 Spur
Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
Edinburgh
EH11 3XD

Purpose of the Guidance:

This guidance is intended to help protect children who receive any service from HMIPS, including those who are the children of adults who may receive services from us. Under this guidance, the term children shall mean any person who is under eighteen years of age.

HMIPS believes that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and is committed to the protection of children and young people. This guidance is intended to provide overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

For further guidance please see:

[National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2021 \(A40778982\)](#)

The Risks to Children:

HMIPS understand that children can be vulnerable to different forms of abuse and harm. It is important to recognise that abuse and harm of children can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviours. For example, children can be at risk of:

- Physical or emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Grooming and exploitation
- Trafficking and modern slavery
- Exposure to or infliction of domestic abuse
- Bullying or cyber bullying
- Exposure to other inappropriate content or behaviour, such as violence or criminal behaviour
- Self-harm
- Physical harm when engaging with activities without adequate supervision

The causal factors of any such harm and/or abuse can also be wide-ranging. For example, children can be placed at risk by family members or by members of the community.

Safeguarding Principles:

Safeguarding children from harm and abuse is an essential responsibility for HMIPS who are committed to ensuring that any child who comes into contact with our services is properly safeguarded. Every person following this guidance must ensure that they play an active role in ensuring that children are properly safeguarded.

Every person following this guidance holds responsibility for:

- Remaining alert and aware of possible safeguarding risks to children
- Guarding children against harmful environments with appropriate actions (for example, adequate supervision or ensuring safe environments)
- Taking positive steps to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children engaging with us.

- Reporting concerns expeditiously and appropriately, in line with child protection procedures
- Understanding the duty to report specific concerns (and understanding how this interplays with confidentiality)
- Challenging any inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adult and reporting this accordingly
- Acting appropriately in the presence of children
- Not taking any inappropriate risks
- Not smoking, drinking or taking any form of illicit substances in the presence of children

All HMIPS staff and volunteers will be the subject of a Disclosure Scotland check prior to commencing any role.

Safeguarding Officers:

As HMIPS staff and volunteers do not work exclusively with children there is no requirement for a designated safeguarding officer within HMIPS.

HMIPS has however identified the need for a senior member of staff to have responsibility for the management and oversight of all child protection matters. This responsibility is allocated to the HMIPS Operations Manager and for the purpose of this guidance will be referred to as the “responsible person”.

Confidentiality and Data Protection:

All personal information we may process relating to children, shall be processed and stored in accordance with the Scottish Government data protection privacy guidance.

Responding to a child protection concern:

Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, any adult present should call 999. Thereafter, the HMIPS responsible person should be contacted as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Where there is a child protection concern but no immediate risk of serious harm, the adult who has heard or witnessed this concern should consult with the HMIPS responsible person as soon as practicable and by no later than the end of that same day.

Where any child makes a disclosure relating to harm or abuse to an adult, it is important for that adult to:

- Listen calmly and carefully, showing that their views are taken seriously.

- Provide an appropriate and honest level of reassurance.
- Avoid interrogating children and asking probing, intrusive and/or leading questions.
- Avoid making false promises regarding secrets and confidentiality with the child (because any concern of abuse/harm must be shared with partner agencies and any subsequent child protection referral).
- Make a confidential written record of the discussion either during the discussion or immediately afterwards. The record should include the key details of the disclosure together with any relevant times, dates, places and people concerned. Audio and video recordings of children making disclosures should be avoided.
- Refer all relevant information to the HMIPS person responsible for the management and oversight of all child protection matters as soon as practicable afterwards, and by no later than the end of the day.

Upon receipt of any child protection concern, the HMIPS responsible person shall consult with any other relevant persons and will make any appropriate referrals to the relevant authorities, such as the applicable Local Authority Children's Services department.

Reporting concerns about adult members of HMIPS:

Where any adult working or volunteering with HMIPS has a concern regarding the conduct of another adult working or volunteering with HMIPS, that poses or may pose a child protection risk to children such as:

- Harming a child either physically or emotionally.
- Exposing a child to behaviour which may cause physical or emotional harm.
- Engaging in criminal activity concerning a child.

This must be raised in the first instance with the HMIPS responsible person (or where this is not appropriate, a different senior member of the organisation) so that the next appropriate steps may be agreed and actioned. HMIPS recognise that there could be circumstances where a person may need to report a matter that has taken place in a setting outside of the person's engagement with HMIPS.

Usually, any appropriate steps following a child protection referral in respect of an individual connected to HMIPS will include either:

- Further initial enquiries.
- Escalation to the applicable Local Authority Children's Services department for assessment and/or the police for investigation.
- Instigation of any appropriate disciplinary, formal investigation processes and suspension of any person concerned with HMIPS.
- A referral to Disclosure Scotland or any other relevant regulatory bodies.

Any person within HMIPS who has allegations made against them shall be informed properly in a formal meeting of the particulars of the allegations and the relevant next steps which shall be taken. Such a meeting should ordinarily be held by the HMIPS responsible person and a senior member of HMIPS. On certain occasions, such a meeting may not be convened until this has been approved by any authorities involved (such as the police or the relevant Local Authority).

Any person from within HMIPS who has allegations made against them shall be treated fairly. All enquires, investigations and decisions taken shall be just and fair, with the safety of any child concerned at the heart of the process. HMIPS management will adhere to the Scottish Government guidance in respect of any allegations of serious nature made against HMIPS staff (not volunteers) and seek advice if required:

[HR People Advice and Wellbeing Team](#)

Any person from HMIPS who makes an allegation against another person from HMIPS shall be listened to, taken seriously and shall be treated fairly and justly throughout the process of enquiries, investigations and decision making.

HMIPS child protection process flow chart:

