



**WILLIAMSBURGH**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

## **Child Protection Policy**

Endorsed by the Operations and Performance Sub Committee	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
Next Review Date	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2025

This policy is available in different languages and other formats such as Braille or tape on request.

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## **1. Introduction**

Williamsburgh Housing Association has a specific duty of care to children living in or visiting our properties and will take all necessary precautions to safeguard their wellbeing.

All children and young people have the right to be protected and kept safe from harm from others. We all as individuals have a responsibility to help protect them, whether we work with children or families, are a parent, family member or a concerned member of the community.

The Association consider it the duty of all those employed or involved with the organisation to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of all children with whom they come into contact, including reporting any abuse discovered or suspected.

We will make sure that all children and young people we work with have the same protection regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

## **2. Equal Opportunities**

The Association is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and good practice. In this regard, we acknowledge the Scottish Social Housing Charter (2012): 1 - Equalities, which states:

“Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services”.

Accordingly, we shall ensure that specifically regarding our Child Protection Policy, all tenants, are treated equally, irrespective of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

### **3. Scottish Social Housing Charter and Legal Framework**

The Association, in preparing this policy and the related procedures has given consideration to and sought compliance with the following:

Scottish Social Housing Charter, as defined by The Scottish Housing Regulator – the regulatory body for housing associations. The relevant Charter Outcome numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 state:

#### 2: Communication

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

“Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides”

#### 3: Participation

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

“Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with”

#### 6: Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes

Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably possible that:

“Tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe”

#### 11: Tenancy sustainment

Social landlords ensure that:

“Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations”.

## Legal Framework

Employees should familiarise themselves with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 which can be accessed through the Scottish Government Website.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021/>

This guidance highlights that child protection must be seen within the wider context of supporting families and meeting children's needs through 'Getting it right for every child' [GIRFEC] (Scottish Government). <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

GIRFEC:

- Puts children's needs first
- Ensures that children are listened to and they understand decisions that affect them
- Ensures they get the appropriate coordinated support needed to promote, support, and safeguard their wellbeing, health and development
- Emphasises early and effective intervention and the sharing of wellbeing concerns to prevent more serious crises developing

## **4. Aims Of the Policy**

The aim of this policy is to make all Willamsburgh Housing Association staff aware of their responsibilities for child protection under the Scottish Government 'National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland', which provides a national framework within which all agencies, organisations, and services work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It recognises that children and their families can come into contact with a range of services at different points for different reasons and with different and changing needs – all services, agencies and organisations now have a responsibility to recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child, irrespective of whether the child is the main focus of their involvement.

Protecting children means recognising when to be concerned about their safety and understanding when and how to share these concerns.

## 5. Responding to suspected or alleged abuse

If a member of staff suspects abuse or has received a report of abuse, they will:

- report it to their line manager or Chief Executive immediately
- refer any concerns over the abuse to neglect of a child to Social Services in the first instance and where appropriate, Police Scotland
- record any discussions and actions carried out following suspected to alleged abuse or neglect accurately, thoroughly, and promptly
- co-operate with any agencies involved with cases of alleged abuse or neglect
- work with other agencies to investigate any alleged breach of tenancy agreement and act through policies and procedures where appropriate

Whilst adult client confidentiality guidelines should be adhered to, concerns regarding Child Protection will always override the confidentiality requirement in order to protect children and young people. No guarantees of confidentiality should be given to a tenant, customer, service user or professional in Child Protection cases.

Child Protection concerns may come from a number of sources. For example:

- events witnessed by workers during home visits
- information from service users or other professionals
- things children tell them directly

In all of these circumstances, staff must try to establish as much information regarding the child as possible. Staff must keep accurate records at all times, preferably written in the child's own words. Times and dates must also be recorded. If it is believed that a child is at risk, staff must take action to ensure it is referred to the Social Work Departments Child Protection Team.

Social Work General - 0300 300 1199  
Evenings and weekends - 0300 343 1505  
Police Scotland – 101

You can read more about the signs to look out for and the importance of reporting concerns on the Child Protection Scotland website

<https://www.childprotection.scot/>

You can also find out more information via the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee's No Worries website  
<http://www.no-worries.org.uk/>

## **6. Staff Training**

We will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and receive appropriate training.

## **7. Complaints**

Although we are committed to providing high levels of service, we accept that there may be occasions where you may not be satisfied with the service you have received from us. We value all complaints and use this information to help us improve our services. Our Complaints Policy describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint.

## **8. Data Protection**

The Association will store personal information provided securely on both our computer and filing systems. At all times we will act in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

## **9. Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Committee on a 3 yearly basis, to ensure that it responds to any changing circumstances.