



Scottish Registered Charity SC030069
ELPA SCIO SC050202

East Lothian Play Association (ELPA)

- Child Protection**
- 1) Policy**
 - 2) Procedures**
 - 3) Code of Conduct**

Introduction

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014) is explicit that everyone in Scottish society has an important part to play in preventing the abuse and neglect of children and young people, and in responding to any situation where they think a child may be at risk of abuse or harm.

The Scottish Government's vision for Scotland's children is called 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) and threads through all existing policy, practice, strategy and legislation affecting children, young people and families. It impacts on all services for children: building from universal services, providing early intervention and crisis intervention and thereby streamlining process to support best practice and outcomes for children.

'Getting it right for children and families affected by parental problem alcohol and drug use': Guidance for Agencies in Edinburgh and the Lothians sets out best practice for professionals working with families where drugs and/or alcohol are issues, and complies with these procedures.

Overarching principle: The welfare of the child is paramount

ELPA's policy and procedures should be read in the context of Edinburgh and the Lothians Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures [child-protection-procedures \(edinburgh.gov.uk\)](http://child-protection-procedures.edinburgh.gov.uk) These procedures set out what agencies will do when children or young people may be at risk of abuse or neglect or have been harmed. The protection and wellbeing of the child must remain at the heart of all considerations and decisions. Professionals must constantly demonstrate this throughout their planning and actions. Professionals must consider the child who is the subject of the referral, but must also consider the safety and wellbeing of any other child who may be at risk of harm.

1) Policy

Purpose

ELPA is committed to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of children as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy sets out ELPA's commitment to article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Article 19 states that all children, wherever they may live and whatever their circumstances, have the right to be protected, nurtured and to be free from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation. The ELPA Child Protection policy is designed to safeguard children when they take part in ELPA events or projects.

The objectives of this policy are:

1. To make it clear that it is ELPA's policy that all children have the right to feel safe, be safe and to live free from harm, exploitation and abuse.
2. To ensure that all people associated with ELPA understand and share our commitment to this principle. This includes trustees, staff and volunteers (including: interns, freelance contractors, implementing partners and other representatives) who undertake work in partnership with ELPA.
3. To ensure that ELPA has procedures in place which will contribute to safeguarding of the children with whom we come into contact with,
4. To avoid adults being placed in a vulnerable position due to that contact (trustees, staff and volunteers. as above.).
5. To ensure that there is a clear set of actions that ELPA will take in the case of any breach of this policy.

Policy Statement

ELPA considers it the responsibility of everyone involved with ELPA projects and events to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people. We will always try to ensure that our trustees, staff and volunteers (including interns, freelance contractors, implementing partners and other representatives) who undertake work in partnership with ELPA are carefully selected and screened.

ELPA recognises that abusers might seek association, employment or volunteer in organisations that provide opportunities for access to children. This policy is a clear message that child exploitation or abuse will not be tolerated.

ELPA is committed to the safeguarding of children and young people and to creating a working culture where children and young people are valued and protected.

ELPA aims to ensure the views of children and young people are listened to and taken into account at all times.

ELPA works within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

ELPA believes that:

- all children have the right to be protected
- all children should be listened to and their views taken seriously
- children's needs should be looked at holistically
- any interventions must be child-centred
- to effectively protect children, professionals must identify and work with safe and protective adults within children's families and communities
- professionals need to be aware of how issues of race, gender, disability, culture, sexuality and age impact on an individual's life experiences
- professionals need to be aware of how issues of race, gender, disability, culture, sexuality and age impact on their understanding of and response to keeping children safe
- joint working between agencies and disciplines is essential for the protection of children.

ELPA works to safeguard children by:

- maintaining an organisation that is safe for staff and volunteers and children and young people and an environment where poor practice is challenged;
- empowering and listening to children and young people;
- ensuring safe practice when working in partnership with other organisations.

2) Child Protection Procedure

ELPA takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of children including grooming behaviour. ELPA will ensure that any actual or suspected breach of this policy by any of its staff or representatives is investigated and ensure the matter is reported to the relevant authorities for possible criminal proceedings or safeguarding procedures.

Recruitment and Selection of trustees, staff and volunteers (including interns, freelance contractors, implementing partners and other representatives) who undertake work in partnership with ELPA

ELPA will make sure candidates are suitable to take part by recruitment, selection and assessment.

1. Applications

Candidates for contract or project work will complete an application form. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to provide references about their suitability to work with children. These will always be taken up before confirming an appointment.

Trustees are elected by members at the Annual General Meeting; they will submit information on their experience and suitability for the role and provide two references from suitable referees with first-hand knowledge of their suitability who can vouch for their character.

2. Interviews and assessment of staff and volunteers

Face-to-face interviews should be used.

For roles working with children, the interview will include a minimum of two child protection questions. The ELPA Board may delegate responsibility for interviews to a suitability experienced person.

All selected applicants are required to comply with the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures and be members of the PVG scheme.

If a project staff member or volunteer has no unsupervised access to children, they will not be required to be a member of the PVG scheme.

Before employment is offered, all those selected must provide a minimum of two work-based written references.

Prior to employment, all staff and volunteers will be given a copy of this Policy and are required to sign the ELPA Code of Conduct.

This process also applies to trustees who might be directly involved in the delivery of any contract or project work.

3. Training and suitability

ELPA will make sure that everyone involved with ELPA projects and events, and representatives involved in recruitment, training and supervision, know about this policy. Those involved in recruitment, training and supervision should provide evidence that they have appropriate experience or training and are able to put the necessary procedures in place.

Everyone involved with ELPA projects and events will receive an induction. This will include an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, and policy.

4. Supervision

All staff will have a designated contact who will provide support and feedback.

Risk management on the part of delivery partners

ELPA will carefully consider child protection issues and ensure that partners undertaking new projects understand procedures to reduce identified risks.

In its partnerships with other organisations and individuals, ELPA will make clear its commitment to the protection of all children from harm, exploitation and abuse. ELPA expects that any organisation ELPA works with must make a similar commitment to safeguarding children, implementing child protection actions and reporting any allegations of abuse.

ELPA will strive to influence good practice by promoting a commitment to safeguarding children with all its stakeholders.

3) Code of Conduct on Child Protection for trustees, staff and volunteers

Every person who shares in the work of ELPA also shares in the responsibility to safeguard children and young people with whom we come into contact. This **includes trustees, staff and volunteers** (including interns, freelance contractors, implementing partners and other representatives).

ELPA is committed to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of children as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and will seek to safeguard children from harm, abuse and exploitation through our operations.

ELPA considers it the duty of all those involved with, representing or contracted by the organisation, to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact or work with. To achieve this, we will ensure that trustees, staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened and trained as appropriate to the project.

This Code will support ELPA trustees, staff and volunteers to work in a way that ensures the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children with whom we engage.

This Code is to be read in conjunction with all other ELPA policies.

As a trustee, member of staff or volunteer you must sign and abide by this Code of Conduct, which requires you to:

- 1. Read, understand and comply with the ELPA Child Protection Policy and Procedures.*
- 2. Follow relevant local and national regulations pertaining to working with children, including any mandatory reporting requirements.*
- 3. Be respectful of children's rights, background, culture and beliefs as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

I agree to:

1. Safeguard children at all times and not place a child at risk of abuse or condone behaviour which is unsafe or harmful.
2. Treat all children with respect and act in a way that does not show unfair differential treatment or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.
3. If carrying out a task of a personal nature is necessary (such as toileting and dressing) avoid one-on-one situations with children, by ensuring that there is always another adult present. If an unavoidable situation arises then communicate with other adults about the situation.
4. Always act in the best interest of children balancing the benefit of any activities against the risks.
5. Always avoid any potentially harmful physical contact with children.
6. Never physically punish a child.

7. Use appropriate language for the age and understanding of the child, and avoid confusing or inappropriate discussions with sexual, discriminatory or violent references.
8. Never use any actions or words intended to threaten, intimidate, shame, humiliate, belittle, embarrass or degrade children.
9. Ensure that any gifts given to children are from ELPA and not from any individual.
10. Only photograph children appropriately for the circumstances and with the necessary consent of the child/ and his/her parents/guardians.
11. Never expose children to inappropriate images for any reason.
12. Use social media appropriately and do not engage in private and personal social networking with any child under the age of 18 or their siblings who were met as a result of ELPA projects, work or membership.
13. Do not attend ELPA events, meetings or projects adversely affected by prescription medication, drugs or alcohol.
14. Report any concerning conduct towards children or any suspected risk of harm to a child to the ELPA Board.
15. Ensure that all concerns regarding suspected child abuse and exploitation are reported to the relevant authorities as soon as possible,
16. Ensure that any breaches of this code of conduct are reported to ELPA Board or the respective project lead.

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times. I understand that this is to safeguard the children who I come in contact with and myself as an ELPA Trustee, volunteer or staff member.

Name _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Role with ELPA _____

