

Auchinairn Early Years Centre



Domestic Abuse Awareness Policy

At Auchinairn EYC we recognise that domestic abuse can have a profound impact on both children and adults.

Our role is to provide a safe, supportive and nurturing environment, where families feel able to seek support and children feel secure.

By supporting both the child and the adult, we promote safer, stronger outcomes for the whole family.

Local & National Support Services

We recognise the importance of ensuring families have access to appropriate support. We can provide information and signposting to trusted local and national services.

Local Support (East Dunbartonshire)

- East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid

Provides confidential support, advocacy and refuge accommodation for women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Services include outreach support, safety planning and emotional support.

- East Dunbartonshire Association for Mental Health (EDAMH)

Offers emotional and practical support, including a Violence Against Women Recovery Project supporting women affected by domestic abuse and its impact on mental health.

- Ceartas Advocacy

Provides independent advocacy for adults, supporting individuals to have their voice heard, particularly where additional support needs or vulnerabilities are present.

- Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery (CEDAR) Project

A therapeutic programme supporting children and mothers to understand and recover from the impact of domestic abuse.

National Support Services (Scotland)

- Scotland's Domestic Abuse & Forced Marriage Helpline

24-hour confidential support line: 0800 027 1234

Text/WhatsApp: 07401 288595

Provides advice, support and signposting for anyone affected by domestic abuse.

- ASSIST Scotland

Specialist advocacy service supporting individuals involved in domestic abuse cases progressing through the criminal justice system.

- Abused Men in Scotland (AMIS)

Confidential support service for men experiencing domestic abuse.

- Scottish Women's Rights Centre

Provides free legal advice and information for women affected by domestic abuse.

Emergency & Immediate Support

- Police Scotland: 999 (emergency) / 101 (non-emergency)
- East Dunbartonshire Social Work Advice & Response Team: 0141 777 3000
- Out of Hours Social Work: 0300 343 1505

Our Commitment

We will:

- Support families to access appropriate services
- Provide information sensitively and confidentially
- Respect individual choices and readiness to seek support

Continue to offer a safe, supportive environment within our setting

- We recognise that seeking help can be difficult, and we are here to support families at their own pace.

Purpose

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and families.

We recognise that domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children's emotional wellbeing, development and sense of safety. As an early years setting, we are in a unique position to identify concerns early, provide support, and work in partnership with families and professionals.

Policy Statement

In line with Getting it Right for Every Child and guidance from Care Inspectorate, we:

- Recognise domestic abuse as a safeguarding concern
- Understand the impact on both children and adults
- Provide a safe, supportive and non-judgemental environment
- Respond appropriately to concerns
- Work in partnership with families and relevant professionals
- Maintain confidentiality in line with safeguarding procedures

We are committed to supporting both the child and the adult experiencing domestic abuse, recognising the strong link between adult wellbeing and child wellbeing.

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is any form of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual or financial abuse between partners or family members.

It may include:

- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Emotional harm or intimidation
- Physical harm
- Isolation from support networks
- Economic or financial control, where an individual's access to money, resources or independence is restricted

We understand that children may be directly or indirectly affected by domestic abuse.

Impact on Children and Families

Children experiencing domestic abuse may:

- Feel unsafe, anxious or withdrawn
- Display changes in behaviour
- Have difficulty regulating emotions
- Experience disrupted attachment relationships
- Be affected by trauma

We also recognise that adults experiencing domestic abuse may feel fearful, isolated or unable to seek support, which can impact on family wellbeing.

Understanding the Child – “The Invisible Backpack”

All children arrive with their own experiences and emotions.

Some children and families may carry heavier emotional experiences, including exposure to domestic abuse.

Our role is to:

- Provide consistent, nurturing care
- Support emotional development
- Help children feel safe and secure
- Offer strategies to manage feelings

We support children to gradually build resilience through trusting relationships.

Our Values

This policy is underpinned by:

- Children’s rights and wellbeing
- Trauma-informed practice
- Respect, dignity and compassion
- Inclusion and equity
- Early intervention and prevention
- Strong, trusting relationships

Staff Training & Awareness

All staff:

- Receive annual mandatory training in child protection, adult protection and trauma-informed practice
- Are supported to recognise signs of domestic abuse
- Understand how to respond appropriately and sensitively
- Engage in ongoing professional learning and reflection

This ensures staff are confident and competent in supporting both children and adults.

Creating a Safe & Supportive Environment

We aim to create an environment where families feel safe to seek support.

We do this by:

- Maintaining an open door policy
- Building positive, trusting relationships with families
- Being approachable, supportive and non-judgemental
- Providing opportunities for private conversations
- Promoting emotional wellbeing for children and adults
- Staff remain aware that concerns may relate to the safety and wellbeing of both the child and the adult.

Confidentiality

- We respect the privacy of children and families.
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis
- Records are stored securely
- Sensitive information is handled professionally

However, where there are safeguarding concerns:

- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, and information will be shared in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Responding to Concerns

All concerns relating to domestic abuse are taken seriously.

Staff will:

- Listen calmly and without judgement
- Reassure and support the individual
- Not investigate or ask leading questions
- Record information accurately
- Report concerns to the Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)

The CPC will:

- Assess the concern
- Seek advice where appropriate
- Make referrals in line with national guidance
- Ensure appropriate support is in place

Supporting Children

We support children by:

- Providing consistent, nurturing care
- Offering emotional support and safe spaces
- Using calm, predictable routines
- Supporting emotional regulation
- Working closely with Keyworkers

Supporting Adults & Families

We recognise that adults experiencing domestic abuse may need support.

We will:

- Provide a safe and confidential space to talk
- Offer a listening ear without judgement
- Signpost to appropriate support services where appropriate
- Work sensitively and respectfully
- Always prioritise safety

We understand that supporting the adult helps to improve outcomes for the child.

Partnership Working

We work with relevant professionals to ensure appropriate support is provided.

This may include:

- Health visitors
- Social work
- Police
- Specialist domestic abuse services

All partnership working is guided by GIRFEC principles, ensuring the right support at the right time.

Recording & Monitoring

We maintain clear, accurate records of:

- Concerns raised
- Observations
- Actions taken
- Communication with professionals
- Chronologies are used to identify patterns and support decision-making.

Links to Safeguarding

This policy links to:

- Child Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Inclusion / ASN Policy
- Emotional Wellbeing Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Legislation & Guidance

This policy is informed by:

Getting it Right for Every Child

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

Care Inspectorate

This policy has been updated after consultation with staff and parent/carer

Signed.....

April 2026