



**WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
AFFECTED BY PARENTAL LEARNING DISABILITY**

PROTOCOL BETWEEN

**PERTH AND KINROSS EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
(ECS) – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE**

AND

**PERTH AND KINROSS HOUSING AND COMMUNITY CARE (HCC) –
ADULT CARE TEAMS¹**

**Getting it Right
in Perth and Kinross**
Helping children be the best they can be

¹ Whilst this Joint Protocol refers to joint working between Children's Services and Adult Council Services, work is being taken forward over the summer/autumn 2011 to extend and include its provisions to other services and agencies, in particular with Health.

What to do if you are worried about a child or young person?

If you are worried or concerned about a child or young person you should contact the Perth and Kinross Child Protection Duty Team or Tayside Police Public Protection Unit:-

Perth and Kinross Child Protection Duty Team - (24 hours)	01738 476768
Tayside Police Public Protection Unit	0300 111 2222
In an Emergency	Call 999

child protection – it's everyone's job

Document Control

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1. Introduction

This protocol formalises the mutually agreed working arrangements between **Perth and Kinross Education and Children's Services (ECS) – Children and Families Service** and **Perth and Kinross Housing and Community Care (HCC) – Adult Care Teams, including Learning Disability, Access and Adult Service Teams** when *working with children and young people affected by a parental learning disability*.

This protocol relates equally to *unborn and/or pre-birth children* as well as *children and young people affected by a parental learning disability*. It is also in line with the [NHS Tayside Unborn Baby Protocol](#).

These working arrangements will include the mutual provision of professional information, advice, support, supervision and where necessary consultancy to staff working with *unborn and/or pre-birth children* and/or *children and young people affected by a parental learning disability* and will be underpinned by information sharing, risk assessment, joint visits and good case file note recording.

2. Aims

The aims of this Protocol are to ensure that **Social Workers and Social Care Officers, working within ECS – Children and Families Service** and **staff working within HCC – Adult Care Teams, including Learning Disability, Access and Adult Service Teams** are:-

1. aware of the agreed local arrangements to be followed when working with *unborn and/or pre-birth children*, whose parents and/or carers may be affected a parental learning disability;
2. aware of the agreed local arrangements to be followed when supporting *children and young people*, whose parents and/or carers may be affected by a parental learning disability;
3. aware of what to do if they need to seek child care and/or protection and/or parenting capacity information and/or advice regarding parents and/or carers who may be affected by a parental learning disability; and
4. aware of the respective roles, responsibilities and remits in terms of child protection.

3. Application

This protocol applies to:-

- **All practitioners and managers within ECS – Children and Families Service** who work with unborn and/or pre-birth children, as well as with children and young people, who may be affected by a parental learning disability; and
- **All practitioners and managers within HCC – Adult Care Teams, including Learning Disability, Access and Adult Service Teams** who identify any unborn and/or pre-birth children, as well as with children and young people, who may be affected by a parental learning disability.

4. Agreed Procedures

- **Within Perth and Kinross, all child care and/or protection concerns should normally be reported to the Child Protection Duty Team on 01738 476768 (24/7/365);**
- After initial screening, where there are still child care and/or protection concerns these will be investigated in compliance with existing local child protection procedures and/or arrangements, either by an ECS – Children and Families Service Social Worker or a Social Care Officer, very often in partnership with the Police;
- If any practitioner identifies a concern with an unborn and/or pre-birth child, or with a child or young person affected by a parental learning disability then that concern should be passed to the Child Protection Duty Team (24/7/365);
- All concerns relating to an unborn and/or pre-birth child are investigated in line with the [NHS Tayside Unborn Baby Protocol](#), via the Perth and Kinross CHP Senior Nurse Child Protection who can be contacted on 01738 564295;
- If an ECS – Children and Families Service Social Worker or a Social Care Officer carries out a home visit and has concerns about the parenting capacity or wellbeing of a parent and/or carer then, where that concern is either severe or indeed obvious, they should contact Community Care Service Social Worker;

Remember the care and welfare of the unborn and/or pre-birth child, or the child or young person is paramount

- The ECS – Children and Families Service Social Worker or a Social Care Officer should then carry out a check of the Social Work SWIFT system to ascertain whether or not that parent and/or carer is known to the HCC – Learning Disability, Access and Adult Service Teams. If so, they should be contacted for immediate information and advice. The Social Work SWIFT system should always be updated and the contact recorded;
- If the parent and/or carer is not known to the HCC – Learning Disability, Access and Adult Service Teams or the case is no longer an active case, then the ECS – Children and Families Service Social Worker or a Social Care Officer should make contact with the HCC – Access Team, Duty Social Worker:-
 - Access Team, Duty Social Worker – 0845 30 111 20
 - Outwith Hours Service (OOHS) Telephone Number – 0845 30 111 20
- On being informed of such a concern, the Duty Social Worker will also carry out a check of their database/system to ascertain whether or not the parent and/or carer is known to them. If the case is active, that information will be recorded and passed on to the appropriate key worker/ key team;
- The respective workers in the ECS – Children and Families Service and HCC – Learning Disability, Access and Adult Service Teams will then liaise and work together on the child care and/or protection concern; supporting any assessment from their own area of responsibility;

Key areas to consider-

It may be necessary to consider several options, depending on the nature of the child care and/or protection concern under investigation:-

1. The allocated Community Care Social Worker should arrange for a joint-visit with the ECS – Children and Families Social Worker or Social Care Officer, which will permit the ECS – Children and Families Social Worker or Social Care Officer to focus on the child/young person whilst the HCC – Social Worker focuses on the parent and/or carer;
2. Consult with the parent and/or /carer's GP;
3. Where a person with an identified Learning Disability requires intervention a referral to the Learning Disabilities Team should be made. There may be occasion where an initial assessment may be required in the first instance by the Access Team;

4. ECS – Children and Families Social Worker or Social Care Officer may also wish advice on appropriate communication in respect of parenting issues which might present themselves when a caregiver has a parental learning disability;
5. Arrange a joint-visit with the GP or Approved Medical Practitioner, if available, depending on the severity of the disorder displayed and the urgency of the situation;
6. To ensure that the appropriate referrals are made if nursing or medical intervention is required;
7. ECS – Children and Families Social Worker or Social Care Officer will complete a Children and Families Child Protection Risk Assessment whilst the HCC Social Worker will complete a Sainsbury Risk Assessment, which they will copy to each other if required. This information should be shared appropriately;
8. The [Getting it Right for Every Child](#) (GIRFEC) approach and practice model, requires practitioners from all agencies to consider the following *five* key questions and to seek additional support as required:-
 - *What is getting in the way of this child or young person's well-being?*
 - *Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?*
 - *What can I do now to help this child or young person?*
 - *What can my agency do to help this child or young person? and*
 - *What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?*

5. Related Policy and/or Legislative Documents (Electronic Links)

There are a number of key policy and/or legislative references including the [Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents With Learning Disability](#) which describes the policy and/or legislative framework within which practitioners in Scotland should be working with parents/carers who may have a parental learning disability.

They provide details of resources that are available to support professional judgement. The good practice examples offer evidence-based approaches to support, that can promote improvements for families in which parents/carers have a

learning disability. It gives a clear message that parents/carers with learning disabilities can be good parents and with the right support, contribute much to family life and to society.

In Perth and Kinross, all child care and/or protection concerns are investigating in compliance with the [ECS Child Protection Procedures 2008](#).

The [NHS Tayside Unborn Baby Protocol](#) is also relevant for all unborn and/or pre-birth children.

- [Getting our Priorities Right \(GOPR\)](#)
- [Early Years Framework](#)
- [Children's Charter](#)
- [Framework for Standards](#)
- [*Getting it Right for Every Child*](#)
- [Scottish Government National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2010](#)
- [Perth and Kinross Inter-Agency Child Protection Guidelines 2011](#)
- [Perth and Kinross Initial Screening and Inter-Agency Referral Discussions \(IRD\) Multi-Agency Protocol](#)
- [Perth and Kinross Information Sharing Protocol for Staff Working with Children and Families in Need or at Risk](#)
- [ECS Child Protection Procedures 2008](#)
- [NHS Tayside Unborn Baby Protocol](#)
- [Scottish Good Practice Guidelines for Supporting Parents With Learning Disability](#)
- [Perth and Kinross Joint Protocol – Working with Children and Young People Affected by Parental Mental Health](#)
- [Perth and Kinross Guidance – Working with Hostile and Non Engaging Parents and Carers](#)