



## **Looked after and cared for children policy**

Clyde Nursery Ltd is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive quality environment for all children and families.

The legal framework for this policy is underpinned by or supported through:

Childcare Act 2018

Children Act (1989)

Children (Scotland) Act (2018)

Adoption & Children Act (2002)

Children & Young Person Act (2014)

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2018)

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland Act 2021

The description ‘looked after and cared for’ is generally used to describe a child who is looked after by the Local Authority and in some cases family members. This includes children who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. Most looked after children will be cared for by foster carers, with a very small minority in children’s homes, looked after by family members or even placed back within the family home.

Clyde Nursery Ltd uses the GIRFEC approach – Getting It Right for Every Child – a programme which aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. The GIRFEC approach is designed to be flexible enough to support all children and families whatever their need, whenever they need it. It is about responding in a meaningful, supportive way, working with parents wherever possible. It considers that everyone involved with the family has an important part to play and puts the wellbeing of the children and families at the heart of any support. To do these eight indicators of well-being are used: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included. These are often referred to as the acronym “SHANARRI”. These indicators represent the basic requirements that all children need to grow and develop. They are used in the planning process for any child in need to ensure the best possible outcomes for children to improve their life chances and well-being.

The GIRFEC approach enables practitioners to meet the needs of children and young people, working together where necessary to ensure children reach their full potential. It promotes a shared approach and accountability that:

- Puts the best interests of the child at the heart of the decision making

- Takes a holistic approach to the wellbeing of a child
- Works with children, young people, and their families on ways to improve wellbeing
- Advocates preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people, and their families
- Believes professionals must work together in the best interests of the child

For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be securely settled with their carer. At Clyde Nursery, we treat each child as an individual and endeavour to meet their personal needs with regards to their home life situations. Discussions will take place regarding the length of time the child has been with their carer before they start nursery to distinguish if they have secured a relationship and are ready to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

We are aware that there are a number of reasons why a child may go into care and these reasons may or may not include traumatic experiences or abuse. All practitioners are committed to doing all they can to support all children to achieve their full potential. The nursery staff team are all trained to understand our Child Protection policy and procedures and additional training to support children's individual needs will be planned, where appropriate. Practitioners are always supported by management and there is an open-door policy if staff need to discuss any sensitive issues regarding the child. Practitioners should not discuss anything pertaining to the child within his/her hearing. Confidentiality should always be maintained.

All children who are looked after must be considered to have additional support needs unless it has been assessed and documented otherwise. Clyde Nursery use the GIRFEC assessment and planning process for this.

As soon as a child becomes 'Looked After':

- There will be a GIRFEC 'Child's Plan' in place for all looked after children and social work will be the lead professional in all cases. The Health Visitor will continue to be the named person but will work closely with the lead professional and monitor both developmental needs and wellbeing.
- Make sure the child is placed on the correct stage of intervention and has support in place. The educational objectives and supports should be made clear in the Child's plan.
- Make sure that you review this in line with the Child's plan review schedule
- For all children with a multi-agency Child's Plan a 'Child's Support Plan' (CSP) should be considered at the first appropriate review. Where a CSP is required, it would become part of the 'Child's Plan'. The criteria for a CSP are as follows:
  - If the child has additional support needs arising from complex or multiple factors requiring a high degree of coordination
  - That these factors were likely to continue for more than a year and required substantial input from another agency to meet educational objectives

Each child will be allocated a Key Person. The Key Person will support the child initially with transition and settling in and then continue to support and build up a relationship with the child, carers and other agencies involved. Regular contact will be maintained with the carers throughout the child's time at the nursery (and with the Social Worker, where applicable).

Regular ongoing practice such as observations will be carried out to build up a picture of the child's interests, and activities will be planned accordingly to support the child's stage of Learning and Development. This information will be shared with carers as well as any concerns surrounding their developmental stages.

A Personal Care Plan will be developed with carers and professionals. This will include:

- The child's emotional needs and how they are to be met.
- How any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed.
- The child's sense of self, culture, language/s, and identity – how this is to be supported.
- The child's need for sociability and friendship.
- The child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway.
- How any special needs will be supported?

In addition, the Personal Plan may also consider on a regular basis:

- How information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the corporate parent) as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored.
- What contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact.
- What written reporting is required.
- Wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return to their home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; the Social Workers agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in nursery activities that normally include parents/carers, such as outings, fun days etc alongside a foster carer.
- Educational milestones set and achieved by the Personal Plan.

Where applicable, an Educational Support Plan will also be completed for 3-5-year-olds in partnership with the Social Worker and/or Care Manager and Carers. The Key Person or a Senior Member of Staff will attend all appropriate meetings and contribute to reviews.

Transition to school will be handled sensitively with the Key Person and designated 'looked after' carer working together with the child to ensure that this is as smooth as possible and all requested information is shared. The child's individual file, including observations, photographs and pieces of artwork and mark making will be passed on to the appropriate person at this stage.

## Key Contact Details:

Organisation	Contact Number
Argyll and Bute Council Customer Contact Centre	01546 605522 (Mon – Fri, 9.00am – 5.00pm) <a href="http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk">www.argyll-bute.gov.uk</a>
Adoption & Fostering Team Argyll and Bute or Appropriate Authority	01546 605517
Social Work Emergencies	01631-566491/569712

A copy of this policy is available to view in the Policy Folders held in the Nursery Office and Nursery Playrooms.

Reviewed: November 2024

Date of Next Review: November 2025

Appendix: Child's Personal Care Plan  
Shanarri Documents  
GIRFEC Policy (see policy in folder)  
Child's Chronology