

Child Protection
Committees
Scotland



Handbook for Child Protection Committees
Scotland – guidance for members

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Introduction and welcome

A warm welcome to you from Child Protection Committees Scotland (CPCScotland).

As we understand how busy you are, we have designed this booklet to guide you in your role as a member of CPCScotland; answer your questions about the role; and give you information about how to get support.

This handbook is for all members of CPCScotland.

Some key facts

CPCScotland is a non-statutory group comprised of:

- The Chairs and Lead Officers of all Child Protection Committees across Scotland.
- Associate members including Police Scotland, Care Inspectorate, Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), Social Work Scotland, NHS, Coalition of Care and Support Providers Scotland, the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS), Scottish Children's Reporters Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland and the Chair of Adult Support and Protection Conveners Scotland.
- The Head of the Scottish Government Child Protection Unit also attends CPCScotland, facilitating a partnership approach to improving the protection of children and young people in Scotland. Other members of Scottish Government may be invited to attend as and when appropriate.

This group meets on at least a quarterly basis, to work together to develop and drive forward national policies and best practice with the aim of protecting children and young people. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic meetings have taken place remotely although in due course some in person meetings may be reintroduced. The Governance Group will agree the format of future meetings.

About Child Protection Committees Scotland

CPCScotland has a pivotal role to play, in conjunction with the Scottish Government and other partners in the protection of children and young people across the country and in promoting their wellbeing, by supporting the development and delivery of efficient and effective processes, common standards, and continuous improvement.

All members are there to represent their Child Protection Committee, or organisation/professional body.

The key objectives of CPCScotland meetings are to:

- Share, exchange and promote child protection policy and practice developments: identify best practice and agree action on areas of shared concern.
- Inform national policy and practice developments in respect of child protection.

- Agree inputs from other parts of the Scottish Government or other agencies, as appropriate.
- Share issues in relation to impact and implementation of new legislation, policy and practice guidance in respect of child protection.
- Promote opportunities for peer support and networking including where appropriate with networks in the rest of the UK.
- Contribute to the wider public protection agenda.

Through CPCScotland and subgroups as well as our representation on national groups, we inform and influence policy and practice developments in respect of child protection.

CPCScotland has established subgroups which are aligned to the national child protection priorities. Short life task and finish groups are established as and when required.

[About the Centre for Excellence for Children’s Care and Protection \(CELCIS\)](#)

CELCIS is committed to building brighter futures for children in need of care and protection. As an intermediary organisation between research, policy and practice, it strengthens the skills and capacities of people who care for children and young people. It takes an evidence-informed approach to implement lasting and positive change, across the services and systems that affect the lives of children and families. CELCIS is part of the Institute for Inspiring Children’s Futures, based at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.

CELCIS is responsible for co-ordinating and facilitating the CPCScotland meetings and any related task.

CELCIS provides professional and administrative support to CPCScotland and subgroups, which includes support in developing the agenda, distribution of papers, coordinating pieces of work, and minuting CPCScotland meetings.

This support is provided by a Child Protection Consultant based at CELCIS who has these responsibilities within their job remit, alongside wider responsibilities as part of the Protecting Children Programme Team at CELCIS.

Additionally, CELCIS is a member of CPCScotland with a particular role in relation to engaging with CPCScotland in the Protecting Children Programme work of CELCIS and informing CPCScotland of pertinent research and practice developments nationally and internationally.

This role is provided by the Protecting Children Programme Lead at CELCIS.

Governance Group of Child Protection Committees Scotland

The Governance Group of CPCScotland is a forum designed to maximise the effectiveness of CPCScotland.

Responsibilities of the Governance Group:

- act as the governance body for CPCScotland.
- provide strategic direction for CPCScotland through agenda setting for network meetings.
- ensure appropriate linkage between all national groups and work streams relevant to CPCScotland.
- inform the development of CPCScotland meeting agendas to ensure current issues and emerging concerns are reflected.
- consider consultation opportunities and prioritise which to respond to, based on relevance and priority to CPCScotland work plan.
- review and approve CPCScotland consultation responses.
- interface with Scottish Government on behalf of CPCScotland.
- consider and develop any relevant funding opportunities for CPCScotland.

Composition

- The membership is Chair, Vice-Chair, Chairs of Regional Consortia, or other regional representatives (up to 3 from across Scotland), Chairs of CPCScotland Subgroups, Chair of the National CPC Lead Officers Group, and the Past Chair of CPCScotland.
- Other CPCScotland members could request to attend or be invited to attend the governance group, depending on the agenda
- The meeting is quorate if the Chair or Vice-Chair of CPCScotland plus two other members are present.

Arrangements

- The Governance Group is chaired by the Chair of CPCScotland and Vice-Chair in their absence.
- The Governance Group meets quarterly or more frequently as required, in order to plan the forthcoming CPCScotland agenda.
- Ad hoc meetings will be arranged as circumstances require or at the request of a member of the Governance Group.
- Decisions made by the Governance Group will be recorded and shared with CPCScotland members for information.

Expectations of CPCScotland members

These include:

- Shared ownership of development and implementation of the CPCScotland work plan.
- Take emerging issues from their local CPCs and organisations to CPC Scotland meetings for discussion and action as required.
- Contribution to development of CPCScotland agenda.
- Attendance at, and participation in, CPCScotland meetings (including sending deputies if unable to attend).
- Preparation for CPCScotland meetings; for example, reading papers issued in advance and consideration of agenda items.
- Progress action between meetings, independently of the group or in partnership with other members and/or other agency representatives, when appropriate.
- Provision of brief written updates from those members who are either representing CPCScotland on other groups; or are representing an organisation at CPCScotland (associate members). Where there is more than one representative, those members are expected to agree amongst themselves who will fulfil this responsibility.
- Promote and disseminate the work of CPCScotland locally after meetings.

Chair and Vice-Chair

Appointment

The Chair and the Vice-Chair will be Child Protection Committee Chairs.

The Chair and the Vice-Chair posts will be agreed by a vote of all full members of CPCScotland. Associate members will not be eligible to vote in the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Group will agree and appoint from its membership a Chair whose term of office will be two years, or for such further period or periods as the Group may determine.

The Group will agree and appoint from its membership a Vice-Chair to support the Chair and his/her term of office will be two years, or for such further period or periods as the Group may determine.

Any motion to approve a nomination for the Chair or Vice-Chair must be proposed and seconded by two members of CPCScotland.

Remuneration

The Chair and the Vice-Chair will receive remuneration for the duties undertaken.

Payment to the Chair and Vice-Chair will be by mutually agreed arrangement between the Scottish Government and the post holders.

Responsibilities

The Chair and the Vice-Chair are responsible for:

- Promoting the work of CPCScotland.
- Spokesperson for CPCScotland as well as other nominated spokespersons.
- Working collaboratively with the Governance Group.
- Liaison with Scottish Government.
- Representing CPCScotland on Ministerial groups.
- Approving the agenda and papers.
- Chairing the meetings and ensuring that they are kept to time.
- Ensuring discussions are focused.
- Ensuring required actions/tasks are agreed and allocated appropriately.
- Liaison between CPCScotland and CELCIS.

Representing Child Protection Committees Scotland

When an organisation or group requests that a representative from CPCScotland joins their membership, this will be brought to the next meeting of the CPCScotland Governance Group for consideration.

Factors to be considered include: relevance of organisation or group to CPCScotland work plan and agreed priorities; expectations of the group requesting CPCScotland representation; and capacity of CPCScotland membership to take up the opportunity (this includes breadth of experience as well as time).

If there are a number of CPCScotland members who are keen to become the CPCScotland representative on a particular group, this will be discussed collectively with a view to selecting the member who can exert most influence on the work being undertaken by that particular group.

There are different types of meetings where you may be asked to represent CPCScotland. Each has a different role and purpose.

CELCIS, on behalf of CPCScotland, holds details of representatives on national committees, subgroups and professional networks.

When a member agrees to represent CPCScotland on a committee, working group or at a meeting, the details of the representative and activity they are engaging in on behalf of the organisation should be notified to CELCIS.

The member should give consideration as to whether a depute representative would be useful (in the event, for example, that the substantive representative cannot attend a meeting). If a

depute would be helpful, this request should be notified to CELCIS. CPCScotland representatives on such groups are also expected to provide a brief written update on the progress of their group, quarterly, highlighting whether any decision or action is required by CPCScotland.

If any CPCScotland representative becomes unable to meet the expectations of the group they are involved with, or if they experience other difficulties such as the group not functioning effectively, this should be brought to the Governance group for discussion on the best way forward.

Representation will be reviewed annually to ensure that the information held by CPCScotland is up to date.

Papers

Papers for CPCScotland meetings are issued one week in advance of each meeting.

Unless otherwise stated by the author, all papers are considered suitable for wider release. If any member has a concern about information within the minute or any paper that they would not wish circulated, they must bring this to the attention of the meeting.

Minutes will be distributed to members two weeks after each meeting.

CPCScotland members may circulate CPCScotland minutes and papers across their professional networks, as appropriate.

Child Protection Committees Scotland – Sub Groups and Task & Finish Groups

Subgroups and Task and Finish Groups drive forward the priority areas of work for CPCScotland. These groups are convened to focus on specific policy and practice areas which link to the CPCScotland work plan. It is where policy and practice are fully considered, commented on and where recommendations are developed for consideration by CPCScotland members.

If Chairs of any subgroups or task and finish groups identify any barriers to implementing their agreed work plan, these must be brought to the attention of the Governance Group.

Subgroups of CPCScotland have a Terms of Reference and a work plan endorsed by CPCScotland.

Regional Child Protection Consortia

There is the potential for local groupings of Committee representatives to form informal Consortia. These consortia are forums where CPCs can come together on a regional basis to share, exchange and develop best practice, responding effectively to emerging local issues. The work of Consortia is shared nationally, via CPCScotland, in order to benefit all.

Professional networks

A professional network is a network of individuals looking at key issues within particular areas and with a dual focus of strategic planning as well as overseeing any emerging practice issues. The following groups are professional networks in terms of CPCScotland.

1.) National Child Protection Committees Lead Officers' Group

The National CPC Lead Officers' Group aims to make a positive contribution to child protection practice in Scotland. As lead officers, they work with each other collaboratively across Scotland and with CPCScotland. Meeting quarterly, the Chair of the group reports to CPCScotland on behalf of its members on key matters of local or national importance and what action is being taken with / for, or on behalf of CPC Chairs.

One of their key objectives is to support, influence and inform the design, development, implementation, review and evaluation of child protection policy and practice. They have a specific role to develop aspects of national child protection policy and practice identified by CPCScotland and to identify and / or raise issues, make proposals and progress aspects of work on their behalf.

Those who represent CPCScotland on a working group, subgroup or national committee (whether a chair or a lead officer) can expect support from the National CPC Lead Officers' Group to fulfil this role. This can include an opportunity to discuss, seek advice and test current thinking on a particular issue, practical support such as the provision of information or contact details, sharing of information through local networks or facilitating benchmarking or other activity.

2.) National Child Protection Learning and Development Group

The National Child Protection Learning and Development Group has a national overview of inter-agency child protection learning and development in Scotland. The group has the following key objectives:

- 1 Development of learning and development skills for those with responsibility for multi-disciplinary child protection training.
- 2 Support the development of new materials that meet the changing context of child protection in line with the National Learning and Development Framework.
- 3 Ensure all CPC areas are represented within the Group and can share good practice and work collaboratively in a supportive network.
- 4 Link learning and development to lessons learned from Inquiries, Inspections and Initial / Significant Case Reviews.
- 5 To establish and maintain robust links with other relevant national networks and other training providers.

- 6 To develop and support development of inter-agency child protection programmes which reflect and contribute to continuous improvements in services to protect children and young people and ensure links with the wider public protection agenda.
- 7 To review the national group remit and chairing of the group biannually.

The National Child Protection Learning and Development Group works collaboratively with the National Lead Officers Group' and CPCScotland. The Chair of the group participates actively in both these groups, making appropriate links and supporting the work plan of CPCScotland.

Both professional networks are organised and administered by members of each network.

Arranging a meeting.

If you are asked to organise a subgroup or task and finish group, you should be aware that CPCScotland does not have an allocated budget for costs associated with meeting arrangements. Members are asked to make use of accommodation that is available to them within their own organisation or local authority area when arranging meetings or alternatively to collaborate with colleagues across the network to secure suitable meeting rooms. Consideration should also be given to holding meetings virtually where appropriate.

Frequently asked questions

As a CPCScotland representative, you may have some questions. This FAQ section should answer most of them, but please let us know if there are others and we can add them in.

Claiming of expenses to attend meetings.

Expenses incurred to travel to meetings or to stay at events will be covered by the member's employer.

Who can speak for Child Protection Committees Scotland?

Members of CPCScotland are encouraged to proactively engage in national policy discussions on the development of and improvements to child protection arrangements, particularly when they are aware of the agreed view of CPCScotland. There will however be occasions when a member will not be in such a clear position and in these circumstances should consult with the Chair or Vice-Chair of CPCScotland or the chair of the relevant subgroup.

Members are asked to be clear at any meeting as to their role i.e., whether they are representing CPCScotland, their employer or providing a personal view.

Can I make a decision on behalf of Child Protection Committees Scotland?

Members are empowered to be active decision makers when representing CPCScotland at national meetings, particularly when they are aware of the agreed view of CPCScotland. There will however be occasions when a member will not be in such a clear position and in these circumstances should not make an immediate decision until they have spoken with the Chair or Vice-Chair of CPCScotland or the chair of the relevant sub group.

Who can speak to the media on behalf of Child Protection Committees Scotland?

At CPCScotland, we have an agreed Communications Strategy which is supported by an independent Communications Specialist. CPC Chairs who are interested in becoming a spokesperson for CPCScotland should contact the Chair of the Communications Subgroup.

This subgroup works with members, particularly chairs of our other sub and associate groups; regional consortia and representatives on external national groups, to develop and agree key messages to be used in media work on behalf of CPCScotland.

In order to become a media spokesperson, given the sensitive nature of public communication about child protection and associated issues via the media, you will be provided formal training / coaching on media interview skills by the consultant. Only those chairs who have successfully completed this training will be able to speak to the media on our behalf.

Any direct approach to any CPCScotland member from a journalist or reporter seeking a view from CPCScotland should be routed through the independent Communications Specialist, who will liaise with the Chair of Communications Subgroup or Chair of CPCScotland as appropriate. Contact details are as follows:-

Mairi Damer, WORD UP Communications, 07809 597901, hello@wordupscot.co.uk

Can I speak at a conference on behalf of Child Protection Committees Scotland?

CPCScotland may be asked to provide speakers for externally organised events and conferences. If asked to speak on behalf of CPCScotland, members are expected to clearly represent the CPCScotland position or view as opposed to their own personal view or that of their individual organisation.

Members are asked to ensure that the Chair of CPCScotland is made aware of any such speaking engagement. This ensures that relevant publicity can be achieved around the event if that is appropriate.

Can I submit a consultation response?

The decision on whether to collate a collective response in relation to any given consultation shall be made by the Governance group, based on consideration of relevance and priority of the issue to the CPCScotland work plan or other identified emerging issues. Practical issues such as timing, capacity and resourcing will also be critical in making the decision of whether or not to pursue a CPCScotland response to a consultation.

CPCScotland will only ever submit one response to a consultation or call for views or evidence. Any number of subgroups, task & finish groups and professional networks might be involved in discussing and pulling a response together, but a final draft should be discussed with and approved by the Governance group. Once the response is agreed, the response will be submitted and circulated to members.

Can I write a letter or email on behalf of Child Protection Committees Scotland?

If you are writing formally to a person or organisation, then it is useful to let the Chair know so that they can review and link it with any other ongoing work. Copies of final versions should be sent out on headed paper and copied to CELCIS for filing and monitoring. Any letters to government ministers need to come from the Chair or Vice Chair.

What do I do if I am approached about a research project?

If you are approached by people conducting research asking you to either to participate in that research or to endorse that research, please contact the Chair to discuss and agree any involvement of CPCScotland in the project.

Child Protection Committees Scotland Structure



