

## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

**CODE** DM5J 12

### COURSE

#### SUMMARY

The purpose of this Unit is to give candidates the knowledge and understanding of a child's right and entitlement to protection from abuse and exploitation. The candidate will explore the broad issue of rights and also specific children's rights. This will lead candidates to explore the nature of child protection, including the categories and signs and indicators of child abuse. Candidates will also evaluate means that can be used to protect children from abuse and exploitation with particular emphasis on equipping children to assert their right to protection from abuse and exploitation. The age range of the child will be birth to twelve years.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit in the *National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare* but is also suitable for candidates wishing to study the Unit on its own or as part of other awards. The Unit is suitable for candidates who wish to gain employment, or may already be employed, in the early education and childcare sector working under supervision. They may wish to progress onto higher level early education and childcare qualifications. Whilst this is a Unit that relates specifically to early education and childcare it may also be suitable for candidates who have an interest in the wider Care sector.

#### OUTCOMES

1. Explain the importance of children's rights and entitlements in protecting them from abuse and exploitation.
2. Explain issues relating to child protection.
3. Evaluate ways of equipping children to assert their right to protection from abuse and exploitation.

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#### Administrative Information

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## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

### **UNIT**      Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

#### **RECOMMENDED ENTRY**

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it is expected that candidates will have a clear understanding of the principles of child development. In addition, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- Standard Grade at Credit level in any relevant subject
- A Course or Units in Care at Intermediate 2
- Courses or Units at Intermediate 2 in Communication or any relevant subject
- Care Scottish Group Award at Intermediate 2
- SVQ or SVQ Units at level 2 in a related subject.

It is acknowledged that there are a variety of prior learning experiences which are relevant to candidates wishing to undertake this Unit. Candidates may have completed or are working towards completion of units within the National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare (Higher)

**NB Due to the sensitive nature of this Unit centres should ensure that candidates have a professional interest in the subject.**

#### **CREDIT VALUE**

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6\*)

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

#### **CORE SKILLS**

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT**      Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit Specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

#### **OUTCOME 1**

Explain the importance of children's rights and entitlements in protecting them from abuse and exploitation.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- a) In relation to current research, policy and practice, describe what is meant by 'rights'.
- b) Explain a range of rights and entitlements relating to children.
- c) Explain a child's right to protection from abuse and exploitation in current Scottish policy and legislation.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Explain issues relating to child protection.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- a) Describe categories of abuse which require child protection intervention according to current policy and national and local guidelines.
- b) Describe the physical signs and behavioural indicators of the categories of abuse in relation to the development of the child and family/cultural context.
- c) Give alternative explanations for apparent physical signs and behavioural indicators of abuse which may not require child protection intervention.
- d) Describe appropriate ways of responding to possible abuse according to national and local guidelines.

#### **OUTCOME 3**

Evaluate ways of equipping children to assert their right to protection from abuse and exploitation.

##### **Performance Criteria**

- a) Investigate agencies, individuals and programmes that equip children to assert their right to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- b) Evaluate agencies, individuals and programmes that equip children to assert their right to protection from abuse and exploitation.

## National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

### UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

#### EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Written and/or recorded oral evidence is required to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

#### Specific Advice

**Outcomes 1 and 2:** The evidence for this part of the Unit should be obtained under controlled, supervised conditions and should last no more than one hour in total. A single question paper based on a case study with associated extended and restricted response questions, such as illustrated in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit, could be used. The case study should reflect the age range of the Unit and also feature a range of possible signs and indicators of abuse. This should be taken on the completion of the relevant learning outcomes. Achievement can be decided by the use of a cut off score.

PC1(b): Candidates should describe at least **three** rights relating to children

PC1(c): Candidates should identify **one** piece of current policy or legislation within a Scottish context.

PC2(a): The assessment should include **three** of the five categories of abuse listed in Appendix 1 of the Statement of Standards.

**Outcome 3:** The evidence for this part of the Unit should be through the completion of an investigation into one of the agencies, individuals or programmes that equip children to assert their right to protection from abuse and exploitation. This can be completed in class and/or within the candidate's own time. Candidates should show evidence of personal research and emphasis should be placed on the evaluation of the chosen subject matters in relation to the rights and entitlements of the child. This investigation should be between 500 -750 words.

The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit. If a Centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)**

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours. It is suggested that the time spent delivering each outcome could be as follows:

Outcome 1: 8 hours

Outcome 2: 16 hours

Outcome 3: 6 hours

The remaining hours could be used for assessment and remediation purposes, as well as allowing time for candidates to carry out personal research relating to Outcome 3

### **GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

#### **Outcome 1**

The content of this Outcome should allow the candidate to identify rights in a broad context and then to narrow this down to examine specific child rights and those related to child protection. Throughout the Outcome candidates should consider that rights and basic human rights are something that everyone is entitled to. This Outcome is intended to put the child's right to protection from abuse and exploitation into a human rights framework. It is not necessary for candidates to study legislation and policies in depth but to become familiar with the underpinning principles and an overview of content.

PC(a): Rights are principles that protect us and the fundamental things we believe we are entitled to are known as human rights. Candidates should be able to describe and give examples of different types of rights. Such as:

- ◆ Moral rights
- ◆ Legal rights
- ◆ Civil rights
- ◆ Political rights
- ◆ Economic rights
- ◆ Social rights
- ◆ Cultural rights.

Candidates should consider rights as a global as well as a national issue and consider times when humans have been denied particular rights and have struggled to obtain them.

Candidates should consider the sources of human rights as they have developed over the centuries. They should consider that rights have often come about as the result of the beliefs and values of others. Candidates should briefly consider the significance of documented sources of human rights such as:

- ◆ The Magna Carta (1215)
- ◆ The American Declaration of Independence (1776)
- ◆ The UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948)
- ◆ The Human Rights Act (Britain)1998

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

PC(b): Candidates should make the link between universal human rights and that of specific children's rights. They should consider why children should be accorded particular rights and what these should be. As with human rights these should be placed in a global context. They should consider a range of participation, survival, development and protection rights.

Candidates should be familiar with the development of children's rights historically, globally and nationally. They should be aware of the significance and have an overview of the following, this list may be added to:

- ◆ Victorian 'child saving' legislation, e.g. Factory Acts of late 19<sup>th</sup> century
- ◆ UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1948)
- ◆ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- ◆ Children's Act Scotland (1995)

They should be aware of the underpinning principles of children's rights particularly those relating to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. They should be aware of the influence of the UN Convention on other legislation and policy.

PC(c): This PC is intended to put the child's right to protection from abuse and exploitation into a human rights framework. It is not necessary for candidates to study legislation in depth but to become familiar with the underpinning principles. Candidates should consider which rights relate specifically to protecting children from abuse and exploitation. They should be familiar with the relevant articles in the UN Convention on the right of the child which intend to protect children from abuse and exploitation. Legislation and policy as covered in Outcome 1(b) should be considered in a child protection context as well as other legislation and policy specifically relating to child protection.

#### Outcome 2

Lecturers should be aware of candidates' own life experiences and be sensitive to their need for possible support in exploring this sensitive area. Candidates may have personal experience of abuse and exploitation and may require support and/or referral to an appropriate agency.

Throughout this Unit it is important to stress that issues relating to child protection intervention can arise in all types of families and are not restricted to families living in poverty or where there are substance abuse issues. It is important to note that this outcome does not require the candidate to understand the motives of the abuser or why particular types of abuse occur.

PC(a): The categories of abuse and their definitions are in Appendix 1 of the Statement of Standards. Lecturers should refer in the first instance to Local Child Protection Guidelines to ensure that these are current, as definitions can change over time. Children may experience a combination of several types of abuse. Emotional abuse always underpins the other categories and is also a category in its own right. Candidates should be discouraged from using the categories to label children and that it should be emphasised that the abuse a child suffers should never be simplified.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

PC(b) and (c): Each child is an individual and their experience of abuse and their reaction to it will be individual. An holistic approach to the identification of possible signs and indicators of abuse should be taken. The expected and actual development of the child, the attitude of the parents, the explanation of the injury and cultural and family contexts should be taken into account. Particular attention should be made to the vulnerability of children with additional support needs.

The signs and indicators of abuse are widely documented within standard Early Education and Childcare text books or within local Child Protection Guidelines. Where possible, candidates should be presented with physical signs and behavioural indicators for each of the categories. In the identification of signs and indicators of abuse, sensationalism should be avoided and signs and indicators should be presented to the candidate that they are likely to observe in their role, e.g. they are likely to identify a child who has low self esteem or displays inappropriate sexualised behaviour. Candidates should consider parental attitude to the child and also to possible abuse.

Caution should be exercised when exploring signs and indicators of abuse as they may also have alternative explanations and do not always mean that abuse has occurred. These might include:

- ◆ Normal developmental behaviour
- ◆ Normal developmental interest in bodily functions and parts (including normal expected sexual experimentation)
- ◆ Possible illness
- ◆ Chronic medical disorders
- ◆ Accidental injury
- ◆ Allergy
- ◆ Mongolian Spotting.

It should be stressed to candidates that it is not within their role to decide whether intervention is required or not and any concerns should be sensitively and appropriately handled according to local and national policy and procedure.

PC(d): The discovery of possible abuse is something that candidates will feel very anxious about and the purpose of this PC is to equip candidates to deal with this situation. Candidates should be aware that incidents of suspected abuse can be disclosed in a variety of ways, including:

- ◆ Through staff observation of the child
- ◆ Directly from the child
- ◆ Through a third party (another child/person/or agency)
- ◆ By letter or telephone call, with or without the name of the informant.

In each of these circumstances, candidates should be aware that the development of listening skills, the importance of asking open ended questions and good observation skills are vital to the process of supporting the child. Candidates must be aware of the importance of following procedures for recording and reporting possible abuse, seeking and accepting appropriate support, acting within their role, maintaining the child's rights. Candidates should be aware of the need for confidentiality and also the importance of an open mind.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

In discussing the possible disclosure of abuse by a child, the candidate should bear in mind that:

- ◆ A guarantee of confidentiality regarding the disclosure must not be given to the child
- ◆ They must not show disbelief
- ◆ Allegations should be taken seriously
- ◆ Any initial questioning must be limited to establishing the basic facts
- ◆ The adult questioning the child must not introduce personal experience of abuse or those of other children
- ◆ The child must be informed that others have to be informed.

#### Outcome 3

Candidates must be aware of the need for children to be equipped to protect themselves from possible abuse and exploitation. They should relate to relate this to the principles of children's rights and also to the development stage of the child.

There are many individuals, agencies and programmes that encourage children to protect themselves locally, nationally and internationally. Candidates should be encouraged to investigate and evaluate a range of these, particularly local initiatives. Some of these are:

- ◆ UNICEF
- ◆ Scottish Children's Commissioner
- ◆ Scottish Children's Law Centre
- ◆ 'Feeling Yes, Feeling No' programme
- ◆ City of Edinburgh's 'Keeping Myself Safe' programme
- ◆ Kidscape
- ◆ 'Stranger danger' programmes run by police forces
- ◆ Programmes designed to encourage the safe use of the internet and other ICT.

#### GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

**Outcome 1 pc(a):** This pc is designed to introduce candidates to the broader concepts of rights. Lecturers should not spend too much time in this area and should move candidates towards ideas relating to children's rights. Candidates should be encouraged to obtain a copy of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. It may help candidates understand the concept of rights if they consider, in the first instance, examples of people who have been denied rights and what these rights have been. Lecturer input may be required to cover policy and legislation but there is no need for these to be covered in depth, but for candidates to understand principles and to have an overview.

Candidates could use ICT to investigate issues relating to Human Rights and there are several web-sites relating to this. Caution should be exercised when searching the internet for child protection related web-sites, and candidates should be made aware of the need for safe use of the internet.

**Outcome 2:** It should be recognised that candidates may have differing views on issues that relate to Child Protection, e.g. smacking, and the lecturer should allow time for reasoned debate but not allow debate to stray from the Unit content.



## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

Reference should be made to local Child Protection Guidelines for definitions of Child Abuse and the categories of abuse. These will play a crucial part in the delivery of this Unit and tutors should be familiar with the principles and content as they relate to this outcome. Please contact your local Child Protection Committee for copies of your local guidelines. Child Protection text books are available and Childcare texts book may have a Child Protection section, however the lecturer should exercise some care when using these as the descriptions of the categories of abuse may not be accurate in Scotland, but they may describe fully the expected signs and indicators of abuse.

A range of case studies, reflecting the age range should be used to support this outcome and candidates encouraged to examine them in small groups. When using case studies care should be taken that a stereotypical view of families who may need child protection intervention is not taken. Candidates should also be presented with case studies where there could be alternative explanations to possible signs and indicators of abuse.

**Outcome 2 pc(a):** This requires lecturer input to allow candidates to discuss the wider issues. Candidates should be allowed to express their feelings about the possible discovery of abuse. Candidates should be given input on the correct procedures to follow when discovering abuse. If candidates have a work placement or are employed in the early education and childcare sector, they should be encouraged to find out what the procedures are within their setting. Case studies should also be used to support this pc.

**Outcome 3 pc(b & c):** Following initial lecturer input on the scope of individual, agencies and programmes, candidates should be encouraged to carry out their own research into a particular area. Workshop sessions could be arranged to look at material from various programmes and agencies or outside speakers arranged. Visits could be arranged to local projects. Candidates who have a work placement or work within the sector may be able to share experiences of relevant individuals, agencies or programmes. Some candidates may remember programmes from their own childhood. A revision of children's rights could lead candidates into the evaluation.

In delivering this Unit there should be a balance between teacher/lecturer presentation and candidate centred learning. This can be taught using a variety of methods:

- small group exercises
- group discussion
- case studies
- worksheets
- individual research
- videos
- lectures
- Use of ICT such as searching appropriate and relevant websites

## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **UNIT**      Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

#### **GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT**

The assessment for this Unit is laid out clearly in the Evidence Requirements section of the Statement of Standards of this specification. The standard to be applied is exemplified in the National Assessment Bank item for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard and SQA procedures should be followed. Assessment time allocated for any question paper based assessment with this unit should not exceed 1 hour. Integration of assessments across outcomes and other Units from the *National Certificate Group Award: Early Education and Childcare* should be used where this is considered appropriate.

#### **CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

## National Unit Specification: Appendix to the Statement of Standards

### UNIT Supporting Children's Rights and Entitlements (Higher)

Three of the following five categories of abuse, must be covered in this Unit. The categories and their definitions are listed below.

At present Scotland recognises five categories of abuse which are:

- ◆ Physical abuse
  - ◆ Neglect
  - ◆ Emotional abuse
  - ◆ Sexual abuse
  - ◆ Non-organic failure to thrive \*
- \*this category only applies in Scottish legislation

#### Physical abuse

Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting or by tolerating or giving children drugs, alcohol or poison. Abuse can also occur where the intensity of training is beyond the child's capacity. Major signs might include:

- Injuries which are unusual in terms of location, pattern, type of injury, e.g. bruises, burns, bite marks.
- Persistent illness with no clear medical explanation (Fictitious Illnesses Syndrome by proxy)
- Changed behaviour - self harm; reluctance to go home; becoming withdrawn; aggression.

#### Neglect

Where a child's basic needs are not met by the adult in charge, neglect occurs. Basic needs include warmth, clothing, food, appropriate medicines. Also exposing children to unnecessary risk of injury or lack of supervision. Major signs might include:

- Underweight, overeating when food is available
- Inappropriate clothing for weather e.g. not providing adequate warm clothing in winter
- Dirty appearance, soiled clothing
- Irregular habits of parent/carer, e.g. turning up late, showing signs of drug or alcohol abuse
- Untreated wounds or medical conditions
- Children left unsupervised.

#### Emotional abuse

Constant shouting, use of sarcasm, unrealistic pressure are ways in which adults can emotionally abuse children. Major signs might include:

- Delay in emotional development
- Poor self-perception, e.g. seeing self as 'ugly' or 'stupid'
- Poor self-esteem
- Unduly distressed by criticism
- Self hatred.
- Self harm
- Clinginess.

## **Sexual abuse**

This occurs when male and female adults use children to meet their own sexual needs. This includes forcing a child to take part in sexual activity, suggesting that it will benefit their career to do so or showing them pornographic material. Major signs might include:

- Abnormal interest in/knowledge of sexual matters
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour towards other children or adults
- Abnormal sexual behaviour in play
- Excessive masturbation
- Physical signs, e.g. soreness, itching, bruising, abrasion or discharge in genital area.

**Non-organic failure to thrive:** relates to children whose growth and development is significantly behind the normal milestones and where the reasons for their failure to thrive cannot be attributed to physical or genetic causes. The signs of non-organic failure to thrive go beyond the signs of neglect.