

**01 Background and Purpose** Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding and responding to young people's experiences of harm beyond their homes and families: including their peer relationships, schools, neighbourhoods and online spaces. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools, and online can feature violence and abuse. It has been developed by Prof. Carlene Firmin, University of Durham.

**02 Why take this approach?** Research shows that safeguarding young people involves addressing the wider contexts in which harm occurs.

The implementation of Contextual Safeguarding has demonstrated, through a body of research, that it can lead to reductions in peer-on-peer abuse, increased safety in public spaces, and strengthened partnerships between agencies and families.

There are a range of resources on the [Global Centre for Contextual Safeguarding](#).

## 07 Conclusion and Additional Resources

### The principles of Contextual Safeguarding

There are systems and cultural changes needed to fully adopt the contextual safeguarding approach & are all on a journey, the Edinburgh Child Protection Committee and the Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding O/S Group are keen for your feedback.



## 03 Legislation and Governance

Contextual Safeguarding was included in the [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland \(2021-updated 2023\)](#) which highlighted that harm could happen in a range of contexts for all children, pre-birth to 18-years.

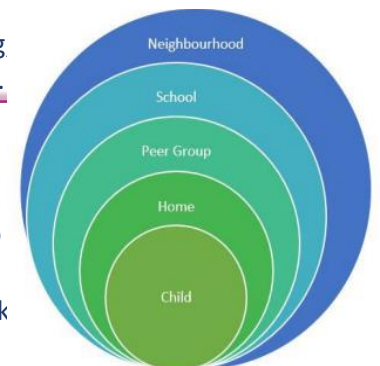
The National Guidance also recommended that plans for children should...*seek to create the conditions in which they can make safer choices rather than simply focusing on changing young people's behaviour in persistently harmful contexts.*

While a range of community partners and guardians may be involved in contextual safeguarding, the principles are aligned to child wellbeing and protection. The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee has a specific Oversight Group to progress the implementation of the approach.

## 04 4 Domains and a range of Values

- 01** Target on context and changing the social conditions of abuse
- 02** Incorporates extra-familial harm into child protection structures
- 03** Enables Partnership
- 04** Taking an outcome focus

The approach also includes a range of right's respecting strength-based, ecological and linked with the Promise.



## 06 Tools

We are trialling a [ROTH Screening Tool](#) and many of the Contextual Safeguarding Toolkit to help us work with young people in this way: [“What’s happening?” tool](#); [Context weighting tool](#); [Safety mapping tool](#); [School assessment tool](#); [All around me tool](#); [Peer Group Assessment tool](#).

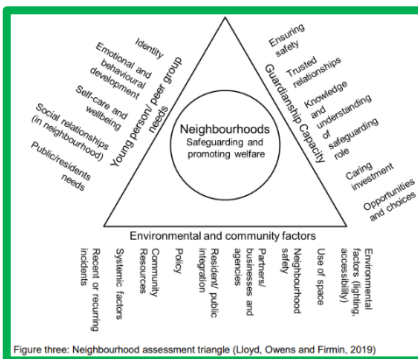


Figure three: Neighbourhood assessment triangle (Lloyd, Owens and Firmin, 2019)

## 05 Risks Outside the Home (ROTH) Guidance

The Edinburgh Child Protection Committee have recently implemented the [Risks Outside the Home Guidance](#) as a framework for information and planning using contextual safeguarding approaches. This will involve an IRD being raised, which will allow information to be shared between Police, Health, Social Work and Education, where required. It can then be agreed what types of intervention would work next: Child's Planning Meeting; IRD Strategic Planning Meetings (ISPM); Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM); or Care and Risk Management (CARM).