

**Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EqHRIA)
Summary of Results**

Policy / Practice	CHILD PROTECTION – UNDERAGE SEXUAL ACTIVITY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE
Owning Department	PUBLIC PROTECTION
Date EqHRIA Completed	21/11/17
Purpose of Policy / Practice	Guidance to all Police Officers and staff on child protection concerns, ensuring these are handled in a professional manner in consultation with partner agencies, where appropriate.

A. Summary of Analysis / Decisions - What the assessment found and actions already taken.

The overarching aim of the Child Protection Underage Sexual Activity Standard Operating Procedure is to provide guidance and direction to officers and staff of Police Scotland on the protection of older children and their rights in circumstances involving underage sexual activity. It seeks to establish a proportionate, tiered and consistent approach when responding to reports of underage sexual activity nationally, with the overall intention being to ensure the safety and well-being of older children without the unnecessary inclusion of them in the criminal justice system. The needs and welfare of the child are paramount and any decision making process will consider the views of the child, unless doing so places them at further risk.

The SOP will take into account all requirements of relevant legislation detailed within the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014) and strives to protect all children and young people regardless of their age, status, abilities, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or beliefs.

The SOP outlines the requirement for a multi-agency response from the outset of any child protection enquiry and to recognise the importance of holding an Inter-Agency Referral Discussion to share relevant information and determine an investigative strategy or safety plan to protect the child.

In addition, Human Rights Articles relating to this SOP were assessed accordingly. Where infringements were identified, these were carefully analysed and appropriately mitigated, where possible.

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The SOP will be reviewed on a regular basis and any future impacts will be addressed accordingly.

The procedures aim to:

Provide Police Scotland’s response to legislation, Scottish Government guidance and the Lord Advocates Guidelines

Highlight circumstances when Police officers and staff identify circumstances involving underage sexual activity that requires them to automatically refer to local child protection procedures and when to undertake full criminal investigation.

Provide instruction to police officers and staff as to what action should be taken when apparent consensual under age sexual activity, involving an older child is reported by the child, partner agency / support service, third party or parent / carer.

B. Summary of Mitigation Actions - What else we plan to do and how we are going to check that it has been done.

The owing department will monitor changes in legislation / circumstances which may affect the SOP and assess how these changes may impact on protected groups.

In addition, they will be responsible for the cyclical review of both SOP and EqHRIA.

Management Log – Policy Support Dept. Use Only

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