

## Fife Child Protection Committee 7-minute briefing

### Voice Of The Child

#### Core Elements of Child Wellbeing, Welfare and Protection



1

#### **Concept**

The child's voice includes verbal and non-verbal communication, behaviour, and preferences. Practitioners must create safe environments where children feel confident to share their views.

2

#### **Statutory and Professional Obligations**

Professionals are legally and ethically required to seek, record, and act upon children's views in all assessments, planning, and decision-making processes.

3

#### **Barriers and Misconceptions**

Common obstacles include environmental noise, mistrust, communication difficulties, meetings designed for adults, unconscious bias, and disguised compliance.

4

#### **Professional Values and Mindset**

Practice should be child-centred, relationship-based, and trauma-informed, with curiosity and constructive challenge to ensure the child remains the focus.

5

#### **Practical Strategies**

Use blended approaches (play, observation, creative tools), challenge barriers to seeing the child alone, empower children, check biases, and accurately record their voice.

6

#### **Advocacy and Support**

Advocacy options (e.g., Fife Advocacy Forum, Barnardo's) and specialist resources help ensure children's voices are heard, especially for non-verbal or atypical development.

7

#### **Information Sharing and Data Protection**

Share information lawfully to safeguard children, following data protection principles and local pathways (GIRFEC, escalation protocols).