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## Background

The Bairsns' Hoose (Scotland's version of the Icelandic *Barnahus*) is a:

**multi-agency, child-centred model** that brings **child protection, health, justice, and recovery services under one roof** for children who have experienced, witnessed abuse or serious harm.

It aims to provide a **safe, trauma-informed environment** where interviews, medical assessments, therapeutic support and justice processes happen in one place, reducing re-traumatisation.

Due to Aberdeenshire's geography, a hub and spoke model has been created and will be tested as part of the pathfinder phase.

The hub is Kemnay, which is our main Bairsns' Hoose. Peterhead also has a fixed camera site. The spokes above provide **choice** to children, which children have asked for, as stated throughout the Bairsns' Hoose Standards document and throughout 'A Roadmap for Creating Trauma-Informed and Responsive Change'.

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## Questions to consider

What might the child or young person be feeling, fearing or trying to communicate?

Are we responding in a way that is trauma-informed and rights-based?

Have we ensured the child's voice and pace are driving decisions?

Are all relevant partners aligned and communicating effectively?

What immediate recovery or therapeutic support can we put in place?

Are we offering children a genuine choice of hub or spoke location?

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## Why it matters

Traditional systems often require children to retell their experiences multiple times to different agencies, increasing trauma.

The Bairsns' Hoose model **reduces the number of interviews, ensures coordinated responses, and provides recovery support from the moment harm is disclosed**. Its trauma-informed environment helps children feel safer and more understood. Evaluations highlight the importance of a **child-centred, therapeutic space** where children are listened to and supported holistically.

Scotland has committed to embedding the **UNCRC** and ensuring all children who have been victims or witnesses of abuse or violence can access a Bairsns' Hoose.

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## Information

Children who may benefit from the Bairsns' Hoose include those who have:

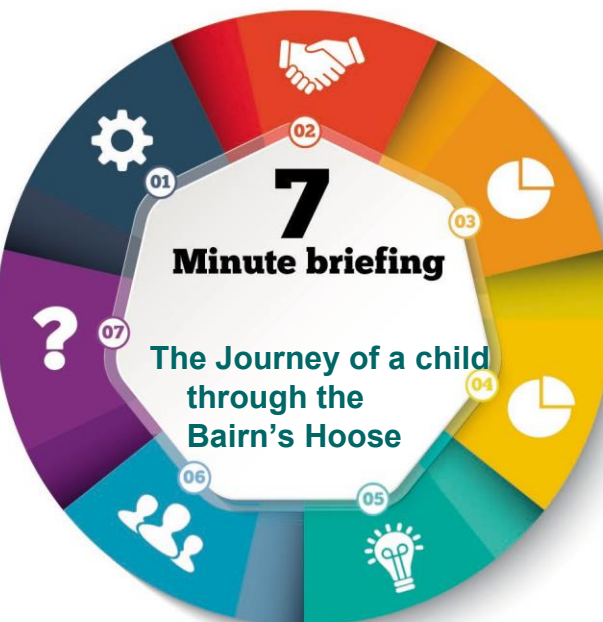
Disclosed or shown indicators of **physical, emotional, or sexual abuse**, or have witnessed domestic abuse.

Experienced behavioural changes such as withdrawal, distress, fearfulness, aggression, or difficulty sleeping (commonly seen after exposure to harm).

Anxiety or heightened distress around professionals or certain environments, indicating previous negative experiences of systems or interviews (supported by findings that traditional processes can increase distress).

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Signs of trauma after involvement in complex justice processes, such as being required to repeat their story to multiple agencies (a problem the Bairsns' Hoose specifically address).



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## What to do

Respond quickly to concerns and follow local child protection procedures.

Refer into the Bairsns' Hoose pathway where criteria are met, ensuring early access to joint investigative interviews, health assessments and therapeutic support. Work collaboratively with health, police, education, social work and third sector colleagues to ensure a coordinated response aligned with the Bairsns Standards.

Ensure that the child's rights, voice and pace guide all decisions and actions throughout the process.

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## Aberdeenshire Approach

[Bairsns Hoose | Children First | Children First](#)

[bairnschoolscotland.com](http://bairnschoolscotland.com) | [Providing children and young people across Scotland with access to trauma-informed recovery, support and justice](#)

[Bairsns Hoose](#)

