

BALLYCLARE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING



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SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. OVERVIEW, RATIONALE AND AIMS OF SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

It is the policy of Ballyclare Primary School to safeguard the welfare of all children by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm, whilst in our care. “Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with preventative education and activities which enable children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is promoted. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection, which refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer harm.” (Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools –A Guide for School, Circular 2017/04 DENI Updated 2020).

The ‘ethos’ of the school will promote the physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. The arrangements for Care and Welfare should reflect the promotion of these aspects and cover procedures for child protection.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, ‘Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland’ (DHSSPSNI, 2017), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance ‘Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools’ Circular 2017/04 (amended September 2019; updated June 2020) and the SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

Policy Principles – the following principles form the basis of our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- The voice of the child should be heard
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility
- Partnership
- Responses should be appropriate to the circumstances
- Protection
- Evidence based decision making

Policy Aims

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school’s commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and others

Other Related Policies

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. The Safeguarding & Child Protection policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies and protocols including:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promoting Good Practice
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Educational Visits
- E-Safety Policy
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care
- Privacy Notice
- Records Management Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling

These policies are available to parents and any parent wishing to have a copy should contact the school office or visit the school website at www.ballyclareps.co.uk

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DT refers to the Designated Teacher for child protection.

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

DDT refers to the Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection

Parent refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child.

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is the principal statute governing the care, upbringing and protection of children in Northern Ireland. It applies to all those who work

with and care for children, whether parents, paid carers or volunteers. It clearly identifies five key principles which are Paramountcy, Prevention, Protection, Partnership and Parental Responsibility with the welfare of the child considered as being of paramount importance.

As part of our care and welfare in Ballyclare Primary School, we seek to support the child's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence. Safer children make more successful learners. Our approach to Safeguarding aims to:

- encourage all children towards a positive self-image.
- help children view themselves as part of a community and, by example, to nurture children's abilities to establish and sustain relationships with families, peer, adults and the world outside.
- provide time, space and opportunities for children to explore, discuss and develop the key concepts of child protection openly with peers and adults, in a secure environment.
- equip children with appropriate tools to make reasoned, informed choices, judgements and decisions.
- provide a model for open and effective communication between children, teachers, parents and other adults working with children.

Our Safeguarding Programme is regarded as central to the wellbeing of the individual and is seen as an intrinsic part of all aspects of the curriculum. We seek to achieve this by:

- providing adequate and appropriate staffing and resources to fulfil the children's needs.
- creating an environment within the classroom/school in which every child is valued as a member of the community; all members of the community should be sensitive and responsive to the needs of others.
- allowing a variety of opportunities, appropriate to the age of the children, for class and group discussion of thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance.
- integrating the key concepts of child protection within the existing curriculum, allowing for continuity and progression through the various Key Stages.
- providing resources and materials for safeguarding issues e.g. road safety, staying safe from harm etc.
- supporting and working in partnership with parents and families to ensure a child's needs are being met.
- introduction of timely support measures and teaching to work to prevent problems occurring or becoming worse.
- making safeguarding/child protection arrangements accessible in the school and understood by children so they know what to do and who to go to.

An important part of this will be the gathering, storage and access to information as appropriate, as evidenced by:

1. Regular meetings to discuss children of concern involving relevant staff members at Pastoral Care Team meetings.
2. School records, personal details and health information being kept up-to-date and passed on at the end of the year in a set format.
3. Child protection records will be managed as per Department of Education guidance.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES OF SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

(ref – Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for School, DENI, Updated June 2020)

- *The child's welfare is paramount* – The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration for the courts and in childcare practice. An appropriate balance should be struck between the child's rights and parent's rights. All efforts should be made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.
- *The voice of the child should be heard* – Children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and taken seriously, taking account of their age and understanding. They should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives and be provided with appropriate support to do so where that is required. Where feasible and appropriate, activity should be undertaken with the consent of the child, where possible, to achieve their preferred outcome.
- *Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together* – Parents have responsibility for their children rather than rights over them. In some circumstances, parents will share parental responsibility with others such as other carers or the statutory authorities. Actions taken by organisations should, where it is in the best interests of the child, provide appropriate support to help families stay together as it is often the best way to improve the life chances of children and provide them with the best outcomes for their future.
- *Partnership* – Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is through working in partnership. Sound decision making depends on the fullest possible understanding of the child's circumstances and their needs. This involves effective information sharing, strong organisational governance and leadership, collaboration and understanding between families, agencies, individuals and professionals.
- *Prevention* – The importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.
- *Responses should be appropriate to the circumstances* – Where a child's needs can be met through the provision of support services, these should be provided. Both organisations and individual practitioners must respond proportionately to the needs of the child in accordance with their duties and the powers available to them.
- *Protection* – Children should be safe from harm and in circumstances where a parent or carer is not meeting their needs, they should be protected by the State. The school recognises the negative impact on children of an abusive family setting and cases that come to light of the school will be reported to the appropriate statutory agency.
- *Evidence based and informed decision making* – Decisions and actions taken must be considered, well informed and based on outcomes that are sensitive to, and take

account of, the child's specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their individual needs.

3. KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

School Safeguarding Team

Consists of the Chair of the Board of Governors (Dr T. Kirkland), the Designated Governors (Dr N. Ayre, Mr N. Blair), the Principal and Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs K. Mulligan), Designated Teacher (Mr M. Joyce) and the school SENCO (Mrs K. McCollum). The school members of this team will meet regularly as a Pastoral Care Team to discuss pastoral issues including children of concern.

Principal

- as secretary to the Board of Governors, assists in fulfilling its safeguarding and child protection duties
- ensures the Board of Governors are kept fully informed of all developments relating to safeguarding including changes to legislation, policy, procedures, DE circulars, inclusion of child protection on the termly meeting agenda
- manages allegations / complaints against school staff
- establishes and manage the operational systems for safeguarding and child protection
- appoints and manages Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teachers who are enabled to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities
- ensures safe and effective recruitment and selection including awareness of safeguarding and child protection for new staff and volunteers
- ensures that parents and pupils receive a copy or summary of the Safeguarding & Child Protection policy at intake and at a minimum every 2 years
- maintains the schools Record of Child Abuse Complaints

The Designated Teacher (DT): (Mr Joyce)

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with regular updates
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has a working knowledge of SBNI procedures
- makes staff aware of SBNI latest policies on safeguarding and child protection
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns as per DENI guidelines 2020/07, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their Child Protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained
- attends and/or contributes to Child Protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans

- develops effective links and liaises with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually and liaises with the nominated governor/s
- makes the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- ensures the induction and training of all school staff including support staff
- is available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
- maintains a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs
- liaises with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- promotes of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
- compiles written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection

The Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT): (Mrs Mulligan)

The role of the DDT is to work co-operatively with the DT in fulfilling his responsibilities. The DDT will develop sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when required. The DDT is trained to the same level as the DT and, in the absence of the DT, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DT, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The Designated Teachers will ensure that proper procedures are followed. The Designated Teachers will attend training on safeguarding and child protection and keep up to date with current legislation.

EA Officers – personnel in the EA fulfil an important role in safeguarding and child protection issues.

The Board of Governors – plays an important role and holds responsibilities in all aspects of our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. The Board of Governors must ensure that:

- the school has a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually and to which all parents have ongoing access. Parents/carers will be made aware that full paper copies of our Policy are available on pupil entry to school or on request at any other time.
- it is kept fully informed of issues in relation to the implementation of our Policy and any incidents that may arise as appropriate.
- a Child Protection report is given at every BOG Meeting.
- it is kept fully informed in relation to any staff disciplinary action that is necessary in relation in response to a child protection incident.
- a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- a Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed in their schools.
- they have a full understanding of the roles of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection.
- safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training.
- the school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying. See the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016.
- there is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school.

- all school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circular 2013/01 – updated 2015.
- they receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff.
- the school maintains the following child protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools:

Chair of Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors:

- has a pivotal role in creating and maintaining a safeguarding ethos
- receives training from CPSS
- assumes lead responsibility in the event of a CP complaint or concern about the principal
- ensures compliance with legislation, child protection record keeping and policies
- is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries.

Designated Governor for Child Protection

The BoG delegates a specific member of the governing body to take the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues in order to advise the governors on;

- the role of the Designated Teachers
- the content of child protection policies
- the content of a code of conduct for adults within the school
- the content of the termly updates and full Annual Designated Teacher's Report; recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

School Staff

All school staff have important roles and responsibilities in relation to the effective implementation of our Safeguarding and CP Policy. The teacher's role is in early detection and effective teaching.

- Members of staff must refer concerns or disclosures initially to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mr Joyce) or to the Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs Mulligan) if he is not available.
- Class teachers and Year Heads should complete the Note of Concern if there are safeguarding concerns such as: poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying and concerns about home circumstances including disclosures of domestic abuse.
- Staff should not give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures, should not investigate nor should they ask leading questions.
- All school staff will be given copies of the Policy document.
- All school staff will be given clear guidance re the procedures for responding to child protection incidents. Where a staff member is concerned that abuse may have occurred, they must report this immediately to the Designated/Deputy Designated

teacher. Learning Support Assistants and non-teaching staff can bring their concerns to either the class teacher or the Designated Teachers.

- All school staff will be made aware of who are the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers.
- If a member of staff is not satisfied that a concern they have reported has been actioned, they can report the matter to the Chair of the Board of Governors or to the Child Protection Support Service of the EA or to the local Gateway team, phone numbers of which are on display in the staffroom.
- New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's Policy and staff Code of Conduct, reporting and recording arrangements. All staff will also receive child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.
- Additional INSET opportunities may be available for specific and or key staff within school.
- All staff groupings will discuss the Policy on an annual basis.
- All staff groupings will be consulted as part of a planned review of our Policy within our School Improvement Plan.
- A trained member of staff (Mrs Martin as Pastoral Support Teacher) will work with identified pupils to provide support in emotional, behavioural and other pastoral areas. All staff are involved in providing support to children and families as part of their regular links to parents. Extra intervention is also provided by the Heads of Year, the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care Coordinator), the Principal and also the school Parent Liaison Teachers. This work forms part of the school's preventative curriculum to help identify issues and work to prevent them worsening.
- Through constant monitoring, teaching staff identify pupils with particular needs (academic, social, emotional, behavioural). These issues are referred to the SENCO, Pastoral Care Coordinator, Heads of Year, Parent Liaison Teachers, Pastoral Support Teacher, Principal.

The teachers and other staff in Ballyclare Primary School have specific training, knowledge and expertise in all aspects of child development. They should be able to detect changes in a child's behaviour over time or to observe a child's failure to thrive. School staff are frequently chosen by children to discuss all sorts of issues and may be the person a child will talk to about abuse.

Parents/Carers

- The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with the parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child or any other child.
- Parents/carers play a vital role and share real responsibilities in ensuring the effectiveness of our Safeguarding programme.
- Parents/carers will be made aware of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Statement through the Board of Governors, the School Prospectus and Weekly Bulletin.
- Parents/carers will be made aware that full paper copies of our Policy are available on pupil entry to school and a digital copy annually thereafter.
- Additional information will be circulated to parents through a range of home/school communications as appropriate.
- Parents/carers will be informed and involved, as soon as possible, in the event of a child protection related incident involving their child.
- Parents/carers will be made aware that child protection arrangements may require cases to be referred to the investigating agencies in the interests of the child.

Parents/carers can play their part in safeguarding by informing the school:

- **if the child has a medical condition or educational need.**
- **if there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.**
- **if there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.**
- **if there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school.**
- **if their child is absent and should send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence. More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at:**
www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection

It is essential that the school has up to date contact details for the parent/carer.

Children

Children play an active role in our approach to our Safeguarding programme. All children are provided with a planned programme of learning opportunities to enable them to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to take responsibility for the decisions they make and to develop awareness of child protection issues. We consider the care and welfare provided by Ballycare Primary as appropriate to ensure our children adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle in society. Periodic surveys of pupils' feelings and attitudes will be taken to help inform our policy provisions in school.

4. CATEGORIES OF ABUSE AND DEFINITIONS

Definition of Harm

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse. Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm.

Harm can be caused by:

- **Sexual abuse**
- **Emotional abuse**
- **Physical abuse**
- **Neglect**
- **Exploitation**

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside (*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in N.Ireland – DHSSPS version 2.0 August 2017*). It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, and engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Although 'exploitation' is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register, professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of these forms of abuse.

Specific Forms of Abuse

In addition to the types of abuse described above there are also some specific types of abuse that we in Ballyclare Primary School are aware of and have therefore included them in our policy. Please see these in Appendix 5.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse.

- **An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.**
- **Assemblies are used to provide a moral framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.**
- **RE and PDMU are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities.**
- **Staff will always endeavour to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school.**
- **We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas and at times where and when children might be vulnerable.**

5. CHILDREN WHO MAY BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children whom we are aware of, such as:

- **disabled or have additional educational needs**
- **young carers**
- **affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs**
- **asylum seekers**
- **living away from home**
- **vulnerable to bullying behaviours, or engaging in bullying type behaviours**
- **living in temporary accommodation**
- **live transient lifestyles**
- **living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations**
- **vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality**
- **at risk of sexual exploitation**
- **do not have English as a first language**

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DT/DDT will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. School will liaise closely with the Education and Welfare Officer.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the Trust looking after the child where the school has been informed. The DT/DDT has details of the child's social worker and gives updated information for meeting.

6.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF ABUSE: -

<p>Neglect</p>	<p>Unkempt appearance, smell, dirty, poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparent deficient nutrition. Lack of knowledge of basic personal hygiene. 'Home alone' children. Little or no parental involvement in child's education.</p>
<p>Physical</p>	<p>Bruises (which may indicate strap marks or hand marks), lacerations, bite marks, burns, etc. Persistent/ongoing marking. Unexplained bruising, hiding bruising, etc. Violence towards peers. Allowing themselves to be bullied or bullying others.</p>
<p>Sexual</p>	<p>Substantial behavioural change including precocity, withdrawal or inappropriate sexual behaviour, etc. Self-harm. Low self-esteem. Eating disorders. Panic attacks. Depression. Inappropriate use of language (sexually explicit). Inappropriate touching.</p>

Emotional	Excessive dependence or attention seeking, etc. Emotional disturbance e.g. reflex vomiting, fears of change, inability to face new situations. Nervousness. Temper displays. Inability to control bodily functions e.g. wetting or soiling. Mechanical reactions - fear of showing emotion.
Exploitation/Other	Restlessness and inability to concentrate. Stealing, bizarre behaviour. Learning difficulties and unfulfilled potential. Strikingly unhappy, cut off from others, in a dream world, cannot relate to peers, no friends. Low self-esteem. Abnormal patterns of relationships - defiant, aggressive, disruptive behaviour, withdrawn or over anxious. Temper tantrums - biting, kicking, scratching, spitting, anti-authoritarian, destructive behaviour. Rocking, retreating to a 'safe' place, e.g. under tables. Complaints of genital pain. Reverting to thumb sucking, etc. Secret keeping. Holding tight to security objects. Complaining of stomach pains, etc. Acquisition of money, clothes etc without plausible explanation. Unknown adult associations. New peer groups. Secretiveness around behaviours.

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive and any list can include indicators of other forms of abuse and/or medical, psychological or social explanations.

Pupils who are victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties. They may be unwilling to remove clothing in front of other pupils at the swimming pool or changing for Physical Education.

Signs should not be considered proof of abuse

7. PROCEDURES for DEALING with CONCERNS of a CHILD PROTECTION NATURE

There is a range of circumstances that would invoke Child Protection procedures;

- A child makes a disclosure to a member of staff.
- A member of staff has concerns about a child either as a result of one observation or many observations over a period of time.
- A parent expresses concern about the safety of a child.
- Other sources of concern e.g. Social Services etc.

'The first step in recognising abuse is the ability to entertain the possibility of abuse taking place.' (S.Sgroi 1982)

Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff will always maintain an attitude of, "It could happen here".

How a Parent Can Raise a Concern (see Appendices)

In Ballyclare Primary School we aim to work closely with parents/carers in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner.

If a parent has a concern about their child or another child they can talk to the class teacher, the Head of Year, the Designated Teacher (Mr Joyce) or the Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs Mulligan). If they are still concerned, they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors (Dr Kirkland). At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or the PSNI. Details of who to talk to are shown in the flowchart in Appendix 3.

Where School Has Concerns or Has Been Given Information about Possible Concerns by Someone Other Than a Member of Staff (see Appendices)

All school staff are well placed to observe the outward symptoms of abuse through their daily contact with the children. Young children can be observed discretely in the play corner e.g. how they react with peers, dolls, etc. Play may be about facing and working through anxieties in a symbolic way and can therefore indicate a great deal about children. This includes the outward symptoms of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. The symptoms may be signs of bereavement or other disruption of family circumstances, drugs, alcohol or solvent misuse. However, they may be due to child abuse. There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be concerning, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the Note of Concern form (see Appendices) to record these early concerns. If the pupil makes a disclosure to a member of staff, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DT/DDT. Parental/Carer involvement may be necessary at this stage. Consultation with the EA CP&S Team may also be necessary. The completed Note of Concern should be forwarded to the Designated Teacher (Mr Joyce) or in his absence the Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs Mulligan) without delay.

If a Pupil Makes a Disclosure of Possible Abuse

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a child wishes to make a disclosure the class teacher or the Designated Teachers should seek clarification from the child, in the presence of another adult (if possible). Staff will

therefore be careful about the way in which they talk to the child and be aware that this can have an effect on the evidence, which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings:

During their conversations with the pupils, staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences
- under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil’s mother think about it
- understand it is not the responsibility of the teachers and other education staff to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse, or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child’s family or other carers – that is for the statutory agencies.
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not make any promise of confidentiality where abuse is alleged
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong

The chief task at this stage is to listen to the child, and not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events, and to make note of the discussion on the Note of Concern and to pass on to the designated teacher/deputy designated teacher without delay. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury should be described in detail, or sketched out, but under no circumstances should a child’s clothing be removed. The child’s actual words should be recorded as accurately as possible.

Any comment by the child, or subsequently written down by a parent or carer or other adult, about how the injury occurred should be written down as soon as possible afterwards,
preferably quoting the words actually used.

- tell the pupil what will happen next
- report verbally to the DT/DDT
- complete the Note of Concern form and hand it to the DT/DDT without delay
- seek support if they feel distressed.

Notifying Parents

Prior to making a referral to Social Services the consent of the parent/carer will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek such consent would put that child or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or it would undermine

the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

In circumstances where the consent of the parent/carer has been sought and is withheld we will consider and where possible respect their wishes. However, our primary consideration must be the safety and welfare of the child and we will make a referral in cases where consent is withheld if we believe, on the basis of the information available, that it is the best interests of the child to do so.

Confidentiality and Sharing Information

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held ‘in confidence’. In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality and staff will only discuss concerns with the DT/DDT or Chair of Governors (if the concern is relating to the Designated Teacher). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

Child Protection information will be stored and shared with other statutory agencies when necessary in accordance with the requirements of this Policy and Dept of Education guidance.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- **necessary and proportionate**
- **relevant**
- **adequate**
- **accurate**
- **timely**
- **secure**

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil’s school file and the school file will be ‘tagged’ to indicate that separate information is held confidentially by the DT.

Where there have been, or are current, child protection concerns about a pupil who transfers to another school we will consider where information should be shared with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Where it is necessary to safeguard children, information will be shared with other statutory agencies in accordance with the requirements of this policy, the school data protection policy and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Referral to Children’s Social Services

The DT/DDT will make a referral to the Gateway Team if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. If required advice may be sought from the Education Authority’s Child Protection Support Service. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Reporting Directly to Child Protection Agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with the Gateway Team or the police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the Designated Teacher, their Deputy and the Chair of Governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Operation Encompass

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children's exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, when the police have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school safeguarding team. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the designated teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns.

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

Further information see [The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2022.](#)

8. REPORTS FOR CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCES

Reports should focus on the child's educational progress and achievements, attendance, appearance, behaviour, participation, relationships with other children and adults within the school, and where appropriate any other concerns. It may include what is known about the child's relations with his or her family and the family structure.

- Reports should be objective and based on evidence.
- They should therefore contain only fact, observations and reasons for concerns.

All reports should be checked and signed by the DT/DDT.

The school will be informed by Social Services if any child has or is placed on the Safeguarding Register and will monitor the child accordingly. The DT/DDT attend all Case Conferences where possible.

The DT/DDT will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DT/DDT may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

School staff are not prevented from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

9. ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF (see Appendices)

The school must safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils. The conduct of all staff must be above reproach. Any abuse of a position of trust will be regarded with the utmost gravity.

The Board of Governors will ensure that all staff are clear about the standards of behaviour expected of them by providing a code of conduct. Staff should be clear that there are acceptable boundaries of physical contact with pupils. In extreme cases where a child has to be physically restrained a minimum of force will be used and the EA guidance will be adhered to.

When an allegation against a member of staff is made regarding child abuse the complaint will be investigated thoroughly.

- The Principal will be informed immediately unless the allegation is against them.
If so, the DT will be informed who will contact the Chair of the Board of Governors.
- The alleged abuser will be informed of the allegations in due course.
- In the case of the allegation being made against the Principal, the Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.
- A thorough investigation will be carried out.
- Appropriate action will be taken following any investigation.

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues must be reported to the DT/DDT/Principal.

10.

BULLYING

Bullying constitutes a form of child abuse although it does not normally trigger the Child Protection procedures. The school will act promptly and firmly in all cases to combat bullying whenever and wherever it occurs, in line with the Positive Behaviour, Anti-bullying and other Pastoral Care Policies. All incidents of alleged bullying will be dealt with in accordance to 'Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 – Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors'. All incidents of alleged bullying/reported bullying will be communicated without delay to the Principal or Vice Principal who will take an active role in investigations, any resulting actions and reporting back to parents. All alleged bullying incidents will be recorded in a central file maintained by the Vice Principal. All pastoral concerns will be reviewed by the Principal and the Vice Principal on a regular basis or when required.

11.

E-SAFETY

The school has a comprehensive UICT policy that addresses issues of Safeguarding & Child Protection with proactive strategies that form part of our Preventative Curriculum. The school recognises the associated risks around online safety under four categories;

Content risks– the child is exposed to harmful behaviour.

Contact risks – the child participates in adult initiated online activity.

Conduct risks – the child is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.

Commercial risks – the child is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

The school has in place a vision for the use of ICT and associated UICT policies and procedures.

Staying Safe Online education forms an important part of the preventative curriculum provided for the

children and procedures are in place for the children to report unhealthy or concerning messages or images they may receive. A Safer Internet Day in school also helps highlight safe use of the internet and teaches the children about the dangers of sharing personal images or details. An Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies document for pupils and staff is in place as is an agreement for responsible use for pupils and parents to sign. This agreement highlights rules and responsibilities for all users. Parents/carers are provided with extensive advice and information/messages to help keep their child safe online. The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to BOG disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

12.

PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

The school views as essential the provision of a preventative curriculum to help ensure our pupils are well informed and placed to make positive decisions to enable them to lead safe, healthy lives. This curriculum manifests itself in many of the school's policies including Pastoral Care, Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour, UICT, PDMU, Healthy Schools and PE. The

curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive issues with children in an age appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours. The personal development curriculum and wellbeing of pupils has a high priority in the School Improvement Plan and Keeping Safe messages are embedded throughout the working of the school. Work includes teaching of the NSPCC's PANTS programme, Childline assemblies and workshops, PDMU curriculum, transition programme for P7 pupils, Nurture programme for children in need, School Nurse visits, Anti-Bullying and Road Safety curriculum work and special focus weeks.

13. EXTENDED SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The provisions and procedures laid down in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy will extend to the Extended School Environment. This includes all trips outside school, including residential, as well as the school's extensive after school activities programme. All risk assessments for trips are carried out in advance in accordance with the Education Authority's guidance. Staff: pupil ratios will again be in line with, and may exceed, EA guidance. Extra or special measures will be put in place for pupils with additional needs and in some cases, this may extend to the presence or participation of parents/carers in trips/activities. Arrangements for homeward travel after participation by pupils in after school activities will be established in advance with parents/carers and a roll will be taken at activities to establish presence of pupils. It is, however, parent responsibility to ensure their child follows the arrangement made at home to attend activities. If a child is not attending/absent the teacher should be informed.

14. VETTING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers will be subject to the appropriate personal background checks in line with DE circulars which means obtaining Enhanced Disclosure Certificates from Access NI where appropriate. Volunteers will be made aware of the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures and supervised, where required, in line with DE directives.

15. STAFF TRAINING

Staff will receive annual update safeguarding and pastoral care training. A signed register for attendance is maintained by the Pastoral Care Coordinator. Part of this training includes Promoting Good Practice and Good Relationships which is a school Code of Conduct for staff detailing appropriate professional expectations of staff in areas such as meetings and contact with pupils, choice and use of teaching materials, relationships and attitudes, use of social media by staff and staff mobile phone policy. Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them where appropriate
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being a good listener

- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, staff Promoting Good Practice and Good Relationships policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DT/DDT or, if necessary, directly to the Gateway Team or the police

All staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

16. VISITORS TO SCHOOL

All visitors to school will be required to access entry into the school building at the school office where they are required to sign in. A Visitor badge will be issued containing important information concerning child protection and school protocols. Visitors will be escorted by school staff, where appropriate, and access to pupils will be restricted to the purpose of their visit. Visitors will sign out at the office when leaving school after their visit. Where work is being carried out on the premises by contractors/workmen, appropriate safety measures will be put in place including cordoning off areas from pupils. All visitors are expected to observe the school's Safeguarding and Health and Safety regulations.

17. RECORD KEEPING

In accordance with DE guidance we must consider and develop clear guidelines for the recording, storage, retention and destruction of both manual and electronic records where they relate to child protection concerns.

In order to meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in Ballyclare Primary School are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teachers and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child's date of birth plus 30 years. If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop, portable memory device, or on a cloud-based storage system, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.

In Ballyclare Primary School we use the 'Child Protection Online Management System' (CPOMS) software as a means of record keeping for Child Protection and Safeguarding information and incidents. This software uses intelligent role-based access with 2-step authentication for all users. Access to this system is restricted to relevant staff only, as set out below:

- Child Protection information, including updates, correspondence and disclosures:
Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers.

- **Pastoral information, including behaviour and medical information: Class Teachers and Heads of Year**

Training on the appropriate use of CPOMS is led by the Designated Teacher as part of the annual Child Protection Training sessions.

All archived Child Protection folders for current pupils have been uploaded to this system and paper copies of all child protection folders have been retained (in line with Circular 2020/07).

These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

Recording, sharing, and storage of Safeguarding/Child Protection issues in school will be kept in line with DE Circular 2020/07 ‘Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools’.

All staff are aware of the correct procedures in recording and reporting any issues of concern in child protection. Staff are also aware of the great importance in maintaining confidentiality in areas of child protection. Child protection files are kept in a separate, lockable filing cabinet. This cabinet is only accessible by the Designated and the Deputy Designated Teachers.

Incidents books are maintained by the DT/DDT. The information is confidential and for pastoral care and child protection issues only.

18. MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF OUR SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The responsibility to monitor, review and evaluate the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy rests with the Board of Governors, Principal, Designated Teachers and the Pastoral Care/Safeguarding Team.

The Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and practices will be reviewed annually using the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) proforma entitled ‘Guidance for the Evaluation of Child Protection/Safeguarding’. Monitoring will include reviewing year group short term planning, classroom observation and teacher consultation. Monitoring will take place on an on-going basis.

Review and Evaluation of our policy will seek to include the views of teaching staff, children, parents/carers and governors. Review and evaluation will take place as part of our School Improvement Plan, in response to future initiatives and in light of any Safeguarding/Child Protection related incidents.

19.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- **PSNI → 101 (request Child Abuse Investigation Unit)**
- **Social Services 0300 1234 333 (office Hours) 028 95049999 (after hours)**
- **Gateway Referral Team (Social Service) 028 94424377/028 94424459**
- **Child Protection Support Service (EA) 95985590 (9am – 4.30pm)**
- **Women's Aid 90249041**
- **Men's Advisory Project 90241929**
- **Parents' Helpline 0808 8010 722**

- **Childline 0800 11 11**
- **NSPCC 0808 800 5000**
- **24 hr Domestic and Sexual Violence Help Line 0808 8021 414**

Useful numbers will be displayed around the school, such as Childline, Social Services and the PSNI.

20.

5Ps of CHILD PROTECTION

<p><u>5 Ps of Child Protection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paramountcy • Prevention • Protection • Partnership • Parental Responsibility 	<p>These are self-explanatory - 'Paramountcy' refers to the 'needs of the child' to always come first above all other considerations.</p>
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**BALLYCLARE PRIMARY SCHOOL
NOTE OF CONCERN (CONFIDENTIAL)**

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD – REPORT TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:	
Year Group:	
Date, time of incident/disclosure:	
Circumstances of incident/disclosure:	

Nature and description of concern:

Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher: NO If 'No' state reason: <input type="checkbox"/>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>
--	--

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file NO If 'No' state reason:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--	--------------------------

Name of staff member making the report

Signature of staff member _____ **Date**

Signature of Designated Teacher _____

Appendix 2 Processes for Referral are set out in the Flowcharts below:

Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff.

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY. Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.



Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.



Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required, advice should be sought from a CPSS officer.



Child Protection referral is required

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.

Child Protection referral is not required

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local

immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/ young person's consent (where appropriate).

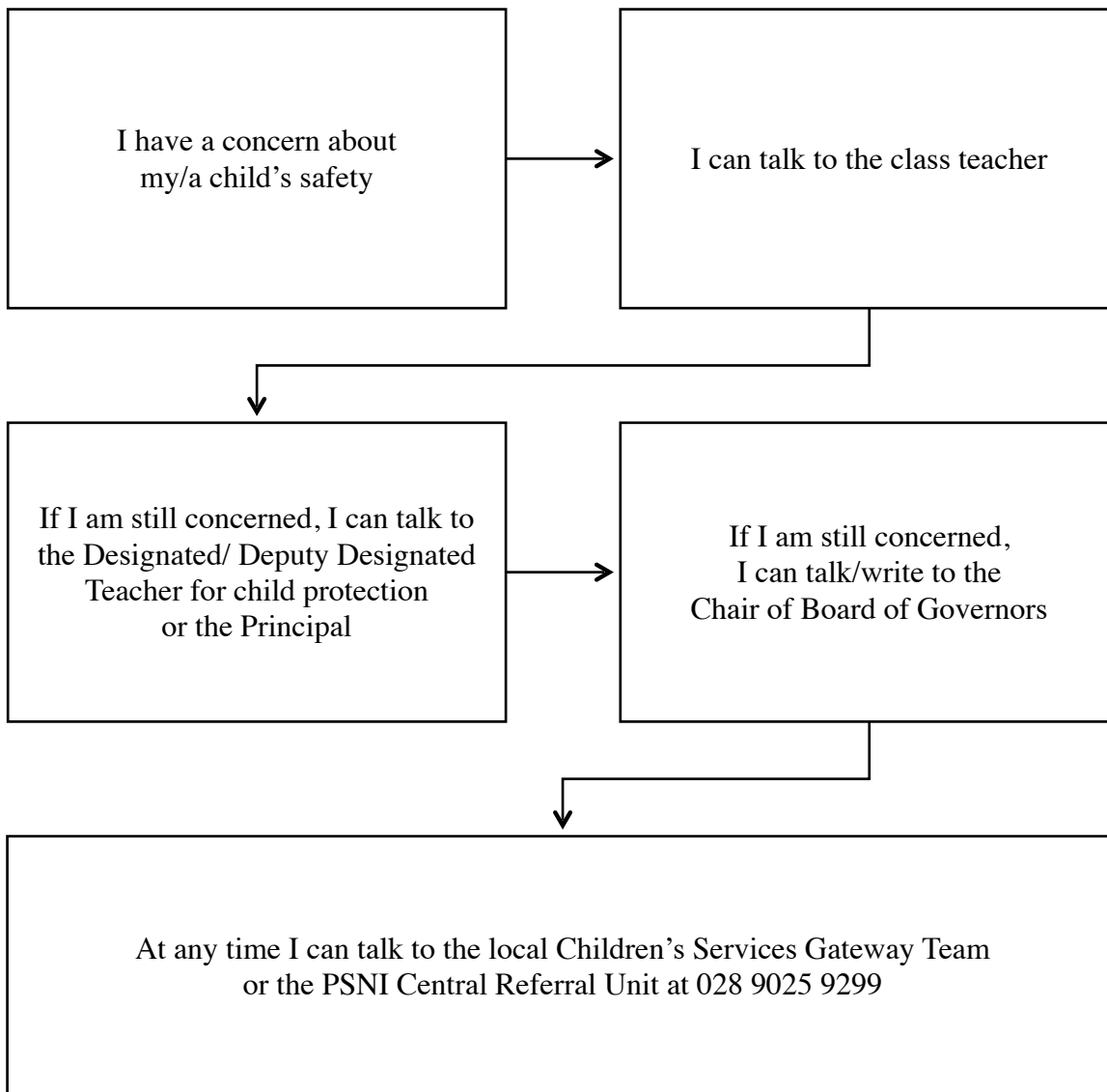


Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored.

Appendix 3

How a Parent Can Make a Complaint?

If a Parent Has a Potential Child Protection Concern:



If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy should culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

If a parent has a concern about a child's safety or suspect child abuse within the local community, it should be brought directly to the attention of the Children's Services Gateway Team.

Appendix 4 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff

KEY POINTS

Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate.



GUIDANCE ON THE NEXT STEPS

Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.



POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.



Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.



Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.



Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures imposed.



Alternative to precautionary suspension imposed.

Appendix 5

Specific Types of Abuse

Grooming of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

If the staff in Ballyclare Primary become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the school's child protection policies and procedures.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/ or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. DHSSPS version 2.0 2017)

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE, including those who can legally consent to have sex. The abuse most frequently impacts upon those of a post-primary age and can be perpetrated by adults or peers, on an individual or group basis.

CSE is a form of child abuse and, as such, any member of staff suspecting that CSE is occurring will follow the school's child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

Domestic and Sexual violence and abuse can have a profoundly negative effect on a child's emotional, psychological and social well-being. A child does not have to witness domestic violence to be adversely affected by it. Living in a violent or abusive domestic environment is harmful to children.

Domestic violence and abuse is defined as 'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.' Sexual Violence and Abuse is defined as 'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual / online perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).' (Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016).

If it comes to the attention of school staff that Domestic Abuse, is or may be, affecting a child this will be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. The procedure is also referred to as ‘cutting’, ‘female circumcision’ and ‘initiation’. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed established procedures set out in our school policy.

Forced Marriage - A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in Ballyclare Primary we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour - As a school we support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality in an age appropriate way. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

If the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, we will take advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2016/05 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

