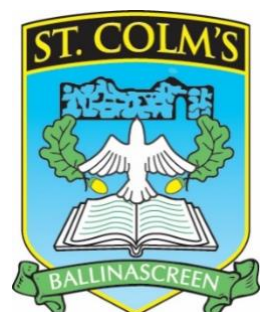


ST. COLM'S HIGH SCHOOL

**Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy**



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING ETHOS

In St. Colm's we have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This Policy sets out guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. It includes issues such as:

- Pupil's health and safety
- Bullying
- Racist abuse
- Harassment and discrimination
- Use of physical intervention
- Meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions
- Providing first aid
- Drug and substance misuse
- Educational visits
- Intimate care
- Internet safety
- School security
- School / local specific issues
- Pupils' sexuality

CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm.

In all matters in relation to safeguarding and child protection procedures and policies, the best interest of the child must be the paramount consideration. (CDE 2017/04)

PRINCIPLES OF SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

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, “Co-operating 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, updated June 2022) and the SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy:

- The child or young person’s welfare is paramount;
- The voice of the child or young person should be heard;
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped stay together;
- Partnership;
- Prevention;
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances;
- Protection; and
- Evidence based and informed decision making.

THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

This Safeguarding Team is a vehicle for ensuring effective co-ordination and co-operation between the key individuals responsible for safeguarding throughout the school.

Our team is:

Chair of Governors: P. McShane

Designated Governor for Child Protection: P. Cassidy

Deputy Designated Governor: P. McShane

Principal: S. McAllister

Designated teacher for Child Protection: Ca. Devlin

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: S. McAllister, J Conway

This has been ratified by the Board of Governors: 2023

The responsibilities of the team should include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.

- Support for the Designated Teacher in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training – including refresher training – in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.

The Safeguarding Team meet annually.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors must ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities in keeping with current legislation and DE guidance including

- having a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually
- having a staff code of conduct for all adults working in the school
- attendance at relevant training by governors and that up-to-date training records are maintained
- the vetting of all staff and volunteers.

Under Articles 17 and 18 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003, the Board of Governors is committed to the safeguarding and promotion of all pupils under school provision and to decide on preventative measures to protect pupils from abuse. These measures are detailed in this policy and in the Anti bullying policy.

Board of Governors must ensure that:

- 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.
- Relevant safeguarding information and guidance is disseminated to all staff and governors with the opportunity to discuss requirements and impact on roles and responsibilities.
- The school has a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually, and parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- 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.

- The school ensures that other safeguarding policies are reviewed at least every 2 years or as specified in relevant guidance.
- 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 2012/19 and DE Circular 2013/01.
- 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: Safeguarding and child protection concerns; disclosures of abuse; allegations against staff and actions taken to investigate and deal with outcomes; staff induction and training.

The Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chairperson of the BoG plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment.

In the event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint being made against the Principal, it is the Chairperson who must assume lead responsibility for managing the complaint/allegation in keeping with guidance issued by the Department (and relevant guidance from other Departments when it comes to other early years settings), employing authorities, and the school's own policies and procedures.

The Chairperson 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.

The Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Designated Governor should avail of child protection awareness training delivered by CPSSS and will take the lead in 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 Reports
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role
- Provide training to all school staff including support staff
- Be able to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents

- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection Unit where appropriate
- Be responsible for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- Make referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- Liaise with EA/CCMS Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keep the school Principal informed
- Lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Ensure parents receive Child Protection information every two years which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made to social services and the role of the school regarding this
- Attend Case Conferences (including online)
- Promote a Child Protection ethos in the school
- Provide written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Maintain all records pertaining to Child Protection in a secure location (accessed only by the Designated Teacher and the School Principal as appropriate)
- Support and undertake the duties of the designate teacher for Child Protection as required

Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need-to-know basis.

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The role of the DDT is to work co-operatively with the DT in fulfilling his/her responsibilities.

It is important that the DDT works in partnership with the DT so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when required. DDTs are also provided with the same specialist training by CPSS to help them in their role.

Schools may have more than one DDT depending on their size, location, (e.g. split site schools) and the presence of an additional provision such as a nursery, learning support centre, speech and language unit, or boarding department.

The Principal

The Principal, as the Secretary to the BoG, will assist the BoG to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring any circulars and guidance from DE are shared promptly, and timely inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. In addition, the Principal takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

The Principal has delegated responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school. This includes the appointment and management of suitable staff to the key roles of DT and DDT Designated Teacher posts and ensuring that new staff and volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions as part of an induction programme.

It is essential that there is protected time and support to allow the DTs to carry out this important role effectively and that DTs are selected based on knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role.

The Principal must ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy, or summary, of the Child Protection Policy at intake and, at a minimum, every two years.

Members of School Staff

The member of staff must:

- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal on the Note of Concern
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- act promptly
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child
- avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children
- **Not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- **Not** investigate
- **Not** ask leading questions

In addition, the Class Teacher should:

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about 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, concerns about home circumstances including disclosures of domestic abuse.

Staff in school see children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse.

They should remember the 5 Rs: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer

Support Staff

- If any member of the support staff has concerns about a child or staff member, they should report these concerns to the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher if he/she is not available. A detailed written record of the concerns will be made, and any further necessary action will be taken.

Parents

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child.

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation;
- informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school;
- letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home;

- familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet and Child Protection Policies;
- reporting to the office when they visit the school informing the school if the child has a medical condition or special need
- raising concerns, they have in relation to their child with the 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

Vetting of Volunteers

Parents and other volunteers may from time to time be involved in supervising pupils. This will always be in the company of a teacher. Where it is likely that a parent or volunteer will be left alone with pupils, a Criminal Record check will be sought by the school through the Education Authority's Access NI.

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals' access to children and vulnerable adults through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate if they are engaged in regulated activity. All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in St. Colm's are vetted/supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust. They will provide a written report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis. Children whose names are on the Child Protection register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the child protection plan.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

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. Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

Should a child transfer to another school whilst there are current child protection concerns we will share these concerns with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Record Keeping

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked drawer. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by the DT and DDT. In accordance with DE policy on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored until the child is 30 years old. Files are not removed from the school premises, except when required at a case planning order or by demand of a court order. A record will be kept of when information is removed by whom, for what purpose, and when it is returned. Full details are available in the Records Management and Disposal policy.

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. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a ‘need to know’ basis.

Where there have been, or are current, child protection concerns about a pupil who transfers to another school we will consider what 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)

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 our school are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher 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 PC, a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.

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.

Code of Conduct for all Staff

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach. All members of staff are expected to comply with the school’s Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers which has been approved by the Board of Governors. This is signed by staff on a bi-annual basis.

Children with Increased Vulnerabilities

Some children have increased risk of abuse due to specific vulnerabilities such as disability, lack of fluency in English or sexual orientation. We have included information about children with increased vulnerabilities in our policy. ([Appendix 4](#))

Adult Safeguarding

Adult safeguarding is based on fundamental human rights and on respecting the rights of adults as individuals, treating all adults with dignity and respecting their right to choose. It involves empowering and enabling all adults, including those at risk of harm, to manage their own health

and well-being and to keep themselves safe. It extends to intervening to protect where harm has occurred or is likely to occur and promoting access to justice. All adults at risk should be central to any actions and decisions affecting their lives.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring that the welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount at all times.
- Maximising the student's choice, control and inclusion, and protecting their human rights.
- Working in partnership with others in order to safeguard vulnerable adults.

We will follow the procedures outlined in this policy when responding to concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to our students who are 18 years or over.

For further information see:

[Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership key documents \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

There is a difficult balance between gaining consent for a referral into Adult Protection Gateway and also ensuring a vulnerable adult is protected from harm. Consent will always be sought from the person for a referral to statutory agencies.

If consent is withheld then a referral will not be made into the Adult Protection Gateway unless there is reasonable doubt regarding the capacity of the adult to give/withhold consent. In this case contact will be made with the local Adult Protection Gateway to seek further advice.

In situations where there is reasonable doubt regarding an individual's capacity, they will be informed of the referral, unless to do so would put them at any further risk.

The principle of consent may be overridden if there is an overriding public interest, for example in the following circumstances:

- the person causing the harm is a member of staff, a volunteer or someone who only has contact with the adult at risk because they both use the service; or
- consent has been provided under undue influence, coercion or duress;
- other people are at risk from the person causing harm;
- or a crime is alleged or suspected

An '**Adult at risk of harm**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics and/or
- b) Life circumstances

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An '**Adult in need of protection**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics and/or
- b) Life circumstances and
- c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights, or other interests: and
- d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

Concerns may be reported to Adult Gateway, Northern Trust, 02894413659

Staff Training

St. Colm's is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. All staff will receive child protection awareness training and biannual refresher training. The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will also attend relevant child protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools. Depending on roles of responsibility specific staff may receive further training.

When new staff or volunteers start at the school, they are briefed on the school's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, receive copies of these policies and sign the Code of Conduct

Operation Encompass

- Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and 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.

Monitoring and Reviewing

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team and approved by the Board of Governors for dissemination to parents, pupils, and staff. It will be implemented through the school's staff induction and training programme and as part of day-to-day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and periodically by the Schools Safeguarding Team. The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order.

Child Abuse occurs when ‘a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or more rarely by a stranger’.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm. Harm means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development and the question of whether harm is significant is determined in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Children’s Order. (Safeguarding and Child Protection 2017/04.)

(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young People in Northern Ireland August 2017)

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 or significant harm.

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Exploitation

(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. Version 2.0 2017)

The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards a child.

(ACPC2005)

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 clothing. 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.

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. Signs and symptoms of abuse are detailed in Appendix 5.

Associated Issues

In training, staff are alerted to the following issues:

- Safety / internet Abuse
- Sexting
- Self-Harm
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutation
- Gender Identity / Sexual Orientation
- Harmful Sexualised Behaviour (Appendix 8)

Further detail on specific types of abuse can be found in Appendix 3.

How a Parent can make a Complaint

We aim to work closely with parents/guardians 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, they can talk to the class teacher or any member of the school's safeguarding team: the Principal, the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection. If they are still concerned, they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit.

(Gateway Team Tel: 0800 7837745, PSNI Public Protection Unit Tel: 101, Ask for PPU in the E District) or the PSNI Central Referral Unit 028 902 59299

Should a parent feel that after the above steps have been completed and there is no resolution, they can contact the Police Ombudsman. Tel: 0800 343 424 (Appendix 2)

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) is Ca Devlin. In her absence the deputy designated teacher for Child Protection (DDT)

S. McAllister will assume responsibility for Child Protection. On the rare occasion that neither DT nor DDT is in the school a nominated senior leader will assume responsibility for Child Protection.

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate as this is the responsibility of Social Services and/or PSNI. After speaking with the child, the staff member must report these concerns immediately to the Designated/Deputy Teacher and full notes (signed and dated) should be made on the Note of Concern (Appendix 1). 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.

The DT will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the DT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the designated teacher or the Principal).

Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately. Child protection procedures as outlined in Appendix 6 will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has any concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/she should talk with the DT.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made about the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. He/She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.
This procedure is shown in Appendix 7.

CONSENT

Prior to making a referral to Social Services the consent of the parent/carers and/or the young person (if they are competent to give this) will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek such consent would put that child, young person 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 and/or the young person 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 in the best interests of the child/young person to do so.

DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES

The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.

| DO: | DO NOT: |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay calm • Listen to what the child says • Receive and accept the opportunity • Reassure the child that they have done the right thing • Assure the child they are not at fault • Respond with what you are going to do • Remember not to promise the child confidentiality, you have to report this • Record exactly what the child says using his/her exact words, no opinions • Report to the DT/DDT • Seek support for yourself | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay • Panic • Start to investigate • Ask leading questions • Promise to keep secrets • Make the child repeat the story • Ignore the child's behaviour • Remove any clothing e.g. to check bruises • Search a device • DO NOTHING |

REMEMBER

- By reporting a concern about a child or a member of staff you are **NOT** making a judgement.
- Be reassured, it is **NOT** your job to investigate your concerns. In the best interests of our pupils it **IS** your **responsibility** to report your concerns.

SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS OF STAFF / SCHOOL MAKING REFERRALS TO SOCIAL SERVICES / POLICE

Any teacher or other member of staff who follows the procedures in this guidance, and those of the Education and Library Board, C.C.M.S. or the Area Child Protection Committee, in making a report of suspected child abuse by any person (whether or not connected with the school), is acting within the course of his/her employment, and in such circumstances, where he/she has acted in good faith, will receive the full support of his/her employing authorities and will not be legally or financially liable should any consequential action be brought against him/her.

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING ETHOS: The Preventative Curriculum

We in St. Colm's aim to create a positive ethos within the school which inhibits the misuse of power, but rather promotes individual empowerment and values, such as openness, honesty, tolerance, respect and caring for oneself and others. We aim to create an ethos where each pupil feels safe both within and outside the classroom. We aim to provide pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection where children are encouraged to talk and are listened to. The plasma foyer screen permanently displays photos of DT and DDT. Head of Year display boards contain sources of support. A flow diagram of what to do if a pupil has concerns is displayed in all classrooms.

- Pupils are aware that Ca. Devlin and the Principal are designated teachers. This is recorded in Student Planner and displayed on H.O.Y. notice boards. Parents and pupils are advised regularly of our Child Protection Policy and Procedures, our designated teachers and the procedures for making complaints about suspected child abuse on an annual basis.
- Designated teachers' names are contained in School prospectus.
- Two members of the Board of Governors have specific responsibility for child protection.
- Staff have been advised of their responsibilities regarding Child Protection:
 - a) being vigilant
 - b) being aware of the DENI Code of Conduct for staff (2017/04)
- Pupils are aware of our school counsellor and how to make contact with her.
- Substitute teachers are provided with an outline of child protection procedures and are vetted through Access NI.
- Physical incidents are recorded in the school incident book in the school office.
- All staff – teaching, auxiliary and ancillary receive regular Child Protection training on a bi-annual basis, with interim training for new staff where appropriate.
- Our positive behaviour policy is aimed at supporting vulnerable children within our school.
- SLT where necessary liaise with support agencies, such as Social Services, EWO, Educational Psychologist and the PSNI.
- Where appropriate, CPSS resources are included.

The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (NI) 2007 specifies the minimum content for each area of learning of the curriculum at each key stage. Teachers have considerable flexibility to select from within those areas of learning the aspects they consider appropriate to the ability and interests of their pupils.

Through our Pastoral Care Policy, we try to create a culture in which children feel confident and secure talking to staff about issues which concern them and where staff will listen to them. Our Cara system for Year 8 contributes to this.

The Key Concepts of Personal Safety, Healthy Relationships, CSE are incorporated into the Pastoral Programme and into the Personal Development and Citizenship strands of LLW. Where appropriate, this awareness is reinforced by carefully selected external providers who are then evaluated by pupils and staff, as listed in the Learning Outside the Classroom document The Relationships and Sexuality policy and audit identifies where areas of leaning that reinforce positive relationships.

Our Pastoral Programme Personal Development and Citizenship Programmes give specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health & safety, healthy relationships the development of a moral thinking and value system and the global exploitation of children. The curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive issues with children and young people in an age-appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours. We aim to develop the confidence and resiliencies and coping skills of pupils.

We seek to protect our pupils by helping them to learn about risks of possible abuse, to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe. This also extends to e-safety education delivered through our pastoral system and ICT classes.

Parents opinions are sought and our open-door policy of home – school contact is promoted.

PUPIL SAFETY / CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES

The internal arrangements and procedures operating on a day-to-day basis for the safety and welfare of our pupils are

Supervision

Morning

- 8.15 – 8.50 Principal and Vice Principal
- 8.50 – 9.00 Additional staff on rota supervision

Morning Break

- 10.00 – 10.15 SLT and staff on duty supervise designated areas and accompany pupils into assemblies.

Lunchtime

- Key Stage 3 pupils may go home only if they have written permission. These pupils carry 'Home for Lunch Card'.
- Access to Technology, Languages and Science areas is closed until 12.35
- SLT on duty assists with supervision in canteen.

- All other supervisors are in designated areas. (See Supervision Policy)

After-school

- Pupils who normally go home on buses may not go down town after school unless they have written permission from parent which is given to HoY.
- SLT and staff on duty will supervise until the last bus has gone.
- Only those under supervision may remain behind in the school after 3.10 and must remain in the school until 4.15.
- Should a pupil miss their bus, they must return into school and report this to the school office.

Attendance

(Parents are made aware of our procedures in the Attendance policy and in Attendance section of the Student Planner)

- Parents should contact the school if child is not coming to school before 10.00 a.m.
- All un-notified absences may be queried by phone by the Principal or HoY.
- Pupils wishing to leave early report to HoY. who gives permission only if there is written parental consent. Phone calls will be approved by the HoY.
- Latecomers sign in at office. This is tracked by Head of Year
- Secretary confirms attendance from printed class list. Names of absentees are available to staff after class 1.
- Class teachers may compare attendance with email and advise/query and any discrepancy with the office who will advise the Principal / Vice Principal who will investigate.

Safety

- Safety advice is included in the Student's Handbook.
- Fire drill will be held once per term.
- The Principal and the relevant HoY. monitor all aspects of plant and practice.
- Parent or Guardian will be contacted to make arrangements for a pupil who is sick to be collected at school and taken home.
- Pupils conducting out of school activities are provided with reflective vests.
- All new pupils are provided with reflective arm bands for winter.

Security

- All security cameras are operational 24 hours.
- All visitors must report to the office and sign in and wear a Lanyon.

Photography and Images of Children

At the beginning of each year Parents sign a consent form for school procedures regarding:

1. Photographs / recording
2. Mobile phone use
3. Internet access

Remote / Blended Learning

Parents and pupil sign a Home Learning contract in the case of remote / blended learning. Staff sign a Live Streaming contract. Staff are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection responsibilities and procedures contained in the Staff Code of conduct and the Addendum to the Child Protection Policy.

Associated Policies

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. The child protection policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Drugs Education
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Educational Visits
- Online Safety
- Managing Critical Incidents
- Health and Safety Policy including First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Intimate Care
- Records Management
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Use of Mobile Digital Devices
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Whistleblowing
- Staff and pupil wellbeing

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

APPENDICIES FOR ALL STAFF

Appendix 1

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTE OF CONCERN

Child Protection Record - Reports 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: Yes: No: |
| If 'No' state reason: |
| Date And Time of Report to The Designated Teacher: |
| Written Note from Staff Member Placed on Pupil's Child Protection File |
| Yes No |
| If 'No' state reason: |

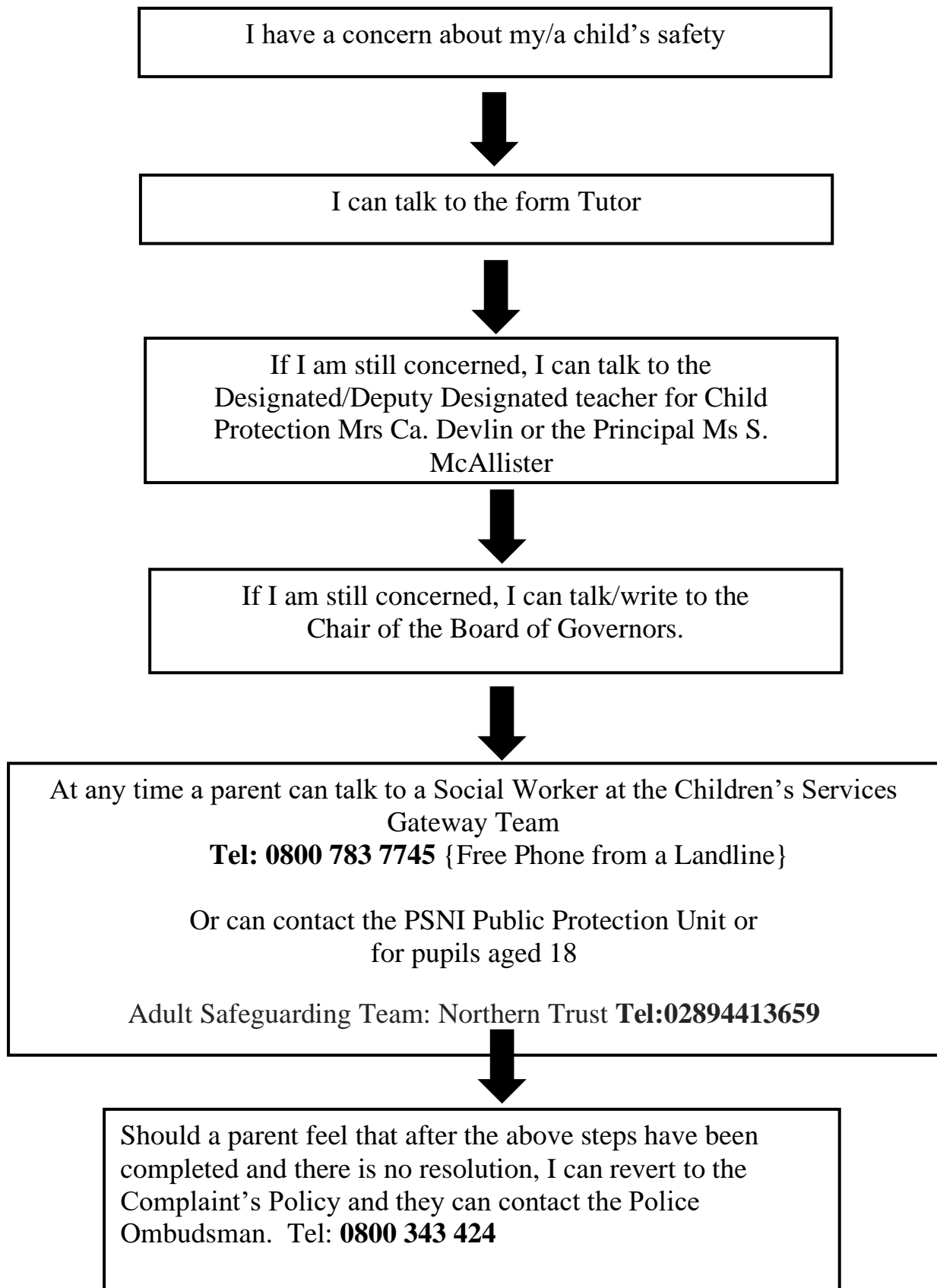
Name of Staff Member Making the Report: _____

Signature of Staff Member: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 2

How a Parent can make a Complaint



Appendix 3

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.

Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared. Those working or volunteering with children or young people should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming, and take early action in line with their child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs. Practitioners should be aware that those involved in grooming may themselves be children or young people, and be acting under the coercion or influence of adults. Such young people must be considered victims of those holding power over them. Careful consideration should always be given to any punitive approach or 'criminalising' young people who may, themselves, still be victims and/or acting under duress, control, threat, the fear of, or actual violence. In consultation with the PSNI and where necessary the PPS, HSC professionals must consider whether children used to groom others should be considered a child in need or requiring protection from significant harm

If the staff in St. Colm's become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the school's child protection policies and procedures. The HSCT and PSNI should be involved as early as possible to ensure any evidence that may assist prosecution is not lost and to enable a disruption plan to reduce the victim's contact with the perpetrator(s) and reduce the perpetrator(s) control over the victim to be put in place without delay.

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. Although younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Sixteen and seventeen year olds, although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited.

CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people's peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males. While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, **the majority of CSE victims are living at home.**

Statutory Responsibilities

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

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland: A Seven Year Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse as follows:-

Domestic Violence and Abuse:

'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.'

Sexual Violence and Abuse

'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).' Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent.

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. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. 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. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. Contact can be made directly to the Sexual Referral Unit (based within the Public Protection Unit) at 028 9025 9299. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Team.

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 St. Colm's we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

Appendix 4: Children with Increased Vulnerabilities

- **Children with a Disability Appendix**

Children and young people with disabilities (i.e. any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse and those working with children with disabilities should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues.

Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult. Staff and volunteers working with children with disabilities will receive training to enable them to identify and refer concerns early in order to allow preventative action to be taken.

- **Children with Limited Fluency in English**

Children whose first language is not English/Newcomer pupils should be given the opportunity to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred. DTs and other relevant school staff should seek advice and support from the EA's Intercultural Education Service if necessary. All schools should create an atmosphere in which pupils with special educational needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.

- **Pre-School Provision**

Many of the issues in the preceding paragraphs will be relevant to our young children who may have limited communication skills. In addition to the above, staff will follow our Intimate Care policy and procedures in consultation with the child's parent[s]/carer[s]. Teachers, nursery assistants and other adults will come into contact with children while helping them with toileting, washing and changing their clothing. Staff in pre-school settings should consider whether the Code of Conduct meets the needs of their particular responsibilities and should make clear the boundaries of appropriate physical contact, and their Code to staff and parents.

- **Gender Identity Issues and Sexual Orientation**

Schools should strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation. DE requires all grant-aided schools to develop their own policy on how they will address Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) within the curriculum. It is via this policy that schools are expected to cover issues relating to relationships and sexuality, including those affecting LGB&T children and young people.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/policies-and-guidance/supporting-transgender-young-people>

As a staff working with young people from the LGBTQ+ community we will support them to appropriately access information and support on healthy relationships and to report any concerns or risks of abuse or exploitation.

- **Work Experience, School Trips and Educational Visits**

Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people also includes periods when they are in our care outside of the school setting. We will follow DE and EA guidance on educational visits, school trips and work experience to ensure our current safeguarding policies are adhered to and that appropriate staffing levels are in place.

Appendix 5 Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

This section contains information for all professionals working with children and families and is not an exhaustive list. The following pages provide guidance only and should not be used as a checklist.

2.1 The first indication that a child is being abused may not necessarily be the presence of a severe injury. Concerns may become apparent in a number of ways e.g.

- by bruises or marks on a child's body
- by remarks made by a child, his parents or friends
- by overhearing conversation by the child, or his parents
- by observing that the child is either being made a scapegoat by or has a poor relationship/bond with his parents.
- by a child having sexual knowledge or exhibiting sexualised behaviour which is unusual given his age and/or level of understanding.
- by a child not thriving or developing at a rate which one would expect for his age and stage of development.
- by the observation of a child's behaviour and changes in his behaviour
- by indications that the family is under stress and needs support in caring for their children.
- by repeat visits to a general practitioner or hospital.

2.2 There may be a series of events which in themselves do not necessarily cause concern but are significant, if viewed together. Initially the incident may not seem serious but it should be remembered that prompt help to a family under stress may prevent minor abuse escalating into something more serious.

2.3 It is important to remember that abused children do not necessarily show fear or anxiety and may appear to have established a sound relationship with their abuser(s). Staff should familiarise themselves on 'attachment theory' and its implications for assessing the bond between parents and their children.

2.4 Suspicions should be raised by e.g.

- discrepancy between an injury and the explanation
- conflicting explanation, or no explanation, for an injury
- delay in seeking treatment for any health problem
- injuries of different ages
- history of previous concerns or injuries
- faltering growth (failure to thrive)
- parents show little, or no, concern about the child's condition or show little warmth or empathy with the child
- evidence of domestic violence
- parents with mental health difficulties, particularly of a psychotic nature
- evidence of parental substance abuse

- 2.5 Signs and symptoms are indicators and simply highlight the need for further investigation and assessment.

Parental Response to Allegations of Child Abuse Which Raise Concern

- 2.6 **Parents' responses to allegations of abuse of their child are very varied. The following types of response are of concern:**

- there may be an unequivocal denial of abuse and possible non-compliance with enquiries.
- parents may over-react, either aggressively or defensively, to a suggestion that they may be responsible for harm to their child.
- there may be reluctance to give information, or the explanation given may be incompatible with the harm caused to the child, or explanations may change over time.
- parents may display a lack of awareness that the child has suffered harm, or that their actions, or the actions of others, may have caused harm.
- parents may seek to minimise the severity of the abuse, or not accept that their actions constitute abuse.
- parents may fail to engage with professionals.
- blame or responsibility for the harm may be inappropriately placed on the child or an unnamed third party.
- parents may seek help on matters unrelated to the abuse or its causes (this may be to deflect attention away from the child and his injuries).
- the parents and/or child may go missing.

Physical Abuse

- 2.7 Children receive bumps and bruises as a result of the rough and tumble of normal play. Most children will have bruises or other injuries, therefore, from time to time. These will be accidental and can be easily explained.
- 2.8 It is not necessary to establish intent to cause harm to the child to conclude that the child has been subject to abuse. Physical abuse can occur through acts of both commission and/or omission.
- 2.9 Insignificant but repeated injuries, however minor, may be symptomatic of a family in crisis and, if no action is taken, the child may be further injured. All injuries should be noted and collated in the child's records and analysed to assess if the child requires to be safeguarded.
- 2.10 If on initial examination the injury is not felt to be compatible with the explanation given or suggest abuse it should be discussed with a senior paediatrician.
- 2.11 A small number of children suffer from rare conditions, e.g. haemophilia or brittle bone disease, which makes them susceptible to bruising and fractures. It is important to remain aware, however, that in such children some injuries may have a non-accidental cause. A "clotting screen" only excludes the common conditions which may cause spontaneous bleeding. If the history suggests a bleeding disorder, referral to a haematologist will be required.

Recognition of Physical Abuse

a) Bruises + Soft Tissue Injuries

2.12 Common sites for accidental bruising depend on the developmental stage of the child. They include:

- forehead
- crown of head
- bony spinal protuberances
- elbows and below
- hips
- hands
- shins

2.13 Less common sites for accidental bruising include:

- Eyes
- Ears
- Cheeks
- Mouth
- Neck
- Shoulders
- Chest
- Upper and Inner Arms
- Stomach
- Genitals
- Upper and Inner Thighs
- Lower Back and Buttocks
- Upper Lip and Frenulum
- Back of the Hands.

2.14 **Non-accidental bruises may be:**

- frequent
- patterned, e.g. finger and thumb marks
- in unusual positions, (note developmental level and activity of the child).

Research on aging of bruises (from photographs) has shown that it is impossible to accurately age bruises although it can be concluded that a bruise with a yellow colour is more than 18 hours old. Tender or swollen bruises are more likely to be fresh. It is not possible to conclude definitely that bruises of different colours were sustained at different times.

The following should give rise to concern e.g.

- bruising in a non-mobile child, in the absence of an adequate explanation,
- bruises other than at the common sites of accidental injury for a child of that developmental stage,

- facial bruising, particularly around the eyes, cheeks, mouth or ears, especially in very young children.
- soft tissue bruising, on e.g. cheeks, arms and inner surface of thighs, with no adequate explanation.
- a torn upper lip frenulum (skin which joins the lip and gum).
- patterned bruising e.g. linear or outline bruising, hand marks (due to grab, slap or pinch may be petechial), strap marks particularly on the buttocks or back.
- ligature marks caused by tying up or strangulation.

2.15 Most falls or accidents produce one bruise on a single surface, usually a bony protuberance. A child who falls downstairs would generally only have one or two bruises. Children usually fall forwards and therefore bruising is most usually found on the front of the body. In addition, there may be marks on their hands if they have tried to break their fall.

2.16 Bruising may be difficult to see on a dark skinned child. Mongolian blue spots are natural pigmentation to the skin, which may be mistaken for bruising. These purplish-blue skin markings are most commonly found on the backs of children whose parents are darker skinned.

b) Eye Injuries

2.17 **Injuries which should give cause for concern:**

- black eyes can occur from any direct injury, both accidental and non-accidental. Determining how the injury occurred is vital, therefore; bilateral "black eyes" can occur accidentally as a result of blood tracking from a very hard blow to the central forehead (Injury should be evident on mid-forehead, bridge of nose). It is rare for both eyes to be bruised separately, accidentally however and at the same time.
- sub conjunctival haemorrhage
- retinal haemorrhage.

c) Burns and Scalds

2.18 **Accidental scalds often:**

- are on the upper part of the body
- are on a convex (curved) surface
- are irregular
- are superficial
- leave a recognisable pattern.

2.19 **It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns. Any burn or scald with a clear outline should be regarded with suspicion e.g.**

- circular burns
- linear burns
- burns of uniform depth over a large area
- friction burns
- scalds that have a line which could indicate immersion or poured liquid
- splash marks
- old scars indicating previous burns or scalds.

2.20 **When a child presents with a burn or scald it is important to remember:**

- a responsible adult checks the temperature of the bath before a child gets in to it.
- a child is unlikely to sit down voluntarily in too hot water and cannot accidentally scald his bottom without also scalding his feet.
- "doughnut" shaped burns to the buttocks often indicate that a child has been held down in hot water, with the buttocks held against the water container e.g. bath, sink etc.
- a child getting into too hot water of its own accord will struggle to get out and there are likely to be splash marks.
- small round burns may be cigarette burns, but can often be confused with skin conditions. Where there is doubt, a medical/dermatology opinion should be sought.

d) Fractures

2.21 The potential for a fracture should be considered if there is pain, swelling and discoloration over a bone or joint or a child is not using a limb, especially in younger children. The majority of fractures normally cause pain and it is very difficult for a parent to be unaware that a child has been hurt. In infants, rib and metaphysical limb fractures may produce no detectable ongoing pain however.

2.22 It is very rare for a child aged under one year to sustain a fracture accidentally, but there may be some underlying medical condition, e.g. brittle bone disease, which can cause fractures in babies.

2.23 The most common non-accidental fractures are to the long bones in the arms and legs and to the ribs. The following should give cause for concern and further investigation may be necessary:

- any fracture in a child under one year of age
- any skull fracture in children under three years of age
- a history of previous skeletal injuries which may suggest abuse
- skeletal injuries at different stages of healing
- evidence of previous fractures which were left untreated.

e) Scars

2.24 Children may have scars from previous injuries. Particular note should be taken if there is a large number of scars of different ages, or of unusual shapes or large scars from burns or lacerations that have not received medical treatment.

f) Bites

2.25 Bites are always non-accidental in origin; they can be caused by animals or human beings (adult/child); a dental surgeon with forensic experience may be needed to secure detailed evidence in such cases.

g) Other Types of Physical Injuries

2.26

- poisoning, either through acts of omission or commission
- ingestion of other damaging substances, e.g. bleach
- administration of drugs to children where they are not medically indicated or prescribed
- female genital mutilation, which is an offence, regardless of cultural reasons
- unexplained neurological signs and symptoms, e.g. subdural haematoma

h) Fabricated or Induced Illness

2.27 Fabricated or induced illness, previously known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, is a condition where a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of the main carer, in most cases the mother, but which is attributed to another medical cause.

2.28 It is important not to confuse this deliberate activity with the behaviour and actions of over-anxious parents who constantly seek advice from doctors, health visitors and other health professionals about their child's wellbeing.

2.29 There is a need to exercise caution about attributing a child's illness, in the absence of a medical diagnosis, to deliberate activity on the part of a parent or carer to a fabricated or induced illness, as stated in the Court of Appeal judgement in the case of Angela Cannings.

(R v Cannings (2004) EWCA Criml (19 January 2004)).

2.30 **The following behaviours exhibited by parents can be associated with fabricated or induced illness:**

- deliberately inducing symptoms in children by administering medication or other substances, or by means of intentional suffocation.
- interfering with treatments by over-dosing, not administering them or interfering with medical equipment such as infusion lines or not complying with professional advice, resulting in significant harm.
- claiming the child has symptoms which may be unverifiable unless observed directly, such as pain, frequency of passing urine, vomiting or fits.
- exaggerating symptoms, causing professionals to undertake investigations and treatments which may be invasive, unnecessary and, therefore, are harmful and possibly dangerous.
- obtaining specialist treatments or equipment for children who do not require them.

- alleging psychological illness in a child.

2.31

There are a number of presentations in which fabricated or induced illness may be a possibility. These are:

- failure to thrive/growth faltering (sometimes through deliberate withholding of food.)
- fabrication of medical symptoms especially where there is no independent witness
- convulsions.
- pyrexia (high temperature).
- cyanotic episode (reported blue tinge to the skin due to lack of oxygen).
- apnoea (stops breathing).
- allergies
- asthmatic attacks
- unexplained bleeding (especially anal or genital or bleeding from the ears)
- frequent unsubstantiated allegations of sexual abuse, especially when accompanied by demands for medical examinations
- frequent 'accidental' overdoses (especially in very young children).

2.32

Concerns may arise when:

- reported symptoms and signs found on examinations are not (3 explained by any medical condition from which the child may be suffering.
- physical examination and results of medical investigations do not explain reported symptoms and signs.
- there is an inexplicably poor response to prescribed medication and other treatment.
- new symptoms are reported on resolution of previous ones.
- reported symptoms and/or clinical signs do not occur when the carers are absent
- over time the child is repeatedly presented to health professionals with a range of signs and symptoms.
- the child's normal, daily life activities are being curtailed beyond that which might be expected for any medical disorder or disability from which the child is known to suffer.

2.33

It is important to note that the child may also have an illness that has been diagnosed and needs regular treatment. This may make the diagnosis of fabricated or induced illness difficult, as the presenting symptoms may be similar to those of the diagnosed illness.

Sexual Abuse

- 2.34 Most child victims are sexually abused by someone they know, either a family member or someone well known to them or their family. In recent years there has been an increasing recognition that both male and female children and older children are sexually abused to a greater extent than had previously been realised.
- 2.35 There are no 'typical' sexually abusing families. Children who have been sexually abused are likely to have been put under considerable pressure not to reveal what has been happening to them. Sexual abuse is damaging to children, both in the short and long term.
- 2.36 Both boys and girls of all ages are abused, and the abuse may continue for many years before it is disclosed. Abusers may be both male and female.
- 2.37 It is important to note that children and young people may also abuse other children sexually.
- 2.38 Children disclosing sexual abuse have the right to be listened to and to have their allegations taken seriously. Research shows it is rare for children to invent allegations of sexual abuse and that in fact they are more likely to claim they are not being abused when they are.
- 2.39 It is important that the indicators listed below are assessed in terms of significance and in the context of the child's life, before concluding that the child is, or has been, sexually abused.

Some indicators take on a greater, or lesser, importance depending upon the child's age.

Recognition of Sexual Abuse

- 2.40 Sexual abuse often presents in an obscure way. Whilst some child victims have obvious genital injuries, a sexually transmitted infection or are pregnant, relatively few children are so easily diagnosed. The majority of children subjected to sexual abuse, even when penetration has occurred, have on medical examination no evidence of the abuse having occurred.
- 2.41 The following indicators of sexual abuse may be observed in a child. There may be occasions when no symptoms are present, but it is still thought that a child may be, or has been, sexually abused. Suspicions increase where several features are present together.

The Adolescent

- 2.45 **In addition to the physical indicators previously outlined in the preschool and pre-adolescent child, the following indicators relate specifically to the adolescent:**

- recurrent urinary tract infections.

- pregnancy, especially where the information about or the identity of the father is vague or secret or where there is complete denial of the pregnancy by the girl and her family.
- sexually transmitted infections.

2.46 **Possible behavioural indicators include:**

- repeated running away from home
- sleep problems - insomnia, recurrent nightmares, fear of going to bed or overdressing for bed
- dependence on alcohol or drug
- suicide attempts and self-mutilation
- hysterical behaviour, depression, withdrawal, mood swings;
- vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation, fear of intimate relationships, promiscuity
- eating disorders — e.g. anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- low self-esteem and low expectation of others
- persistent stealing and /or lying
- sudden school problems - taunting, lack of concentration, falling standard or work etc.
- fear or abhorrence of one particular individual.

Emotional Abuse

- 2.47 Emotional abuse is as damaging as other, visible, forms of abuse in terms of its impact on the child. There is increasing evidence of the adverse long-term consequences for children’s development where they have been subject to emotional abuse. Emotional abuse has an impact on a child’s physical health, mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be particularly damaging for children aged 0 to 3 years.
- 2.48 Emotional abuse may take the form of under-protection, and/or over-protection, of the child, which has a significant negative impact on a child’s development.
- 2.49 The parents’ physical care of the child, and his environment, may appear to meet the child’s needs, but it is important to remain aware of the interactions and relationship which occur between the child and his parents to determine if they are nurturing and appropriate.
- 2.50 An emotionally abused child may be subject to constant criticism and being made a scapegoat, the continuous withholding of approval and affection, severe discipline or a total lack of appropriate boundaries and control. A child may be used to fulfil a parent's emotional needs.
- 2.51 The potential of emotional abuse should always be considered in referrals where instances of domestic violence have been reported.

Recognition of Emotional Abuse

2.52 Whilst emotional abuse can occur in the absence of other types of abuse, it is important to recognise that it does often co-exist with them, to a greater or lesser extent.

Child Behaviours associated with Emotional Abuse

2.53 Some of the symptoms and signs seen in children who are emotionally abused are presented below. It is the degree and persistence of such symptoms that should result in the consideration of emotional abuse as a possibility. Importantly, it should be remembered that whilst these symptoms may suggest emotional abuse, they are not necessarily pathognomy of this since they often can be seen in other conditions.

2.54 **Possible behaviours that may indicate emotional abuse include:**

- serious emotional reactions, characterised by withdrawal, anxiety, social and home fears etc.
- marked behavioural and conduct difficulties, e.g. opposition and aggression, stealing, running away, promiscuity, lying.
- persistent relationship difficulties, e.g. extreme clinginess, intense separation reaction.
- physical problems such as repeated illnesses, severe eating problems, severe toileting problem.
- extremes of self-stimulatory behaviours, e.g. head banging, comfort seeking, masturbation etc.
- very low self-esteem, often unable to accept praise or to trust and lack of self-pride.
- lack of any sense of pleasure in achievement, over-serious or apathetic.
- over anxiety, e.g. constantly checking or over anxious to please.
- developmental delay in young children, and failure to reach potential in learning.

Parental Behaviour Associated with Emotional Abuse

2.55 **Behaviour shown by parents which, if persistent, may indicate emotionally abusive behaviour includes:**

- extreme emotions and behaviours towards their child including criticism, negativity, rejecting attitudes, hostility etc.
- fostering extreme dependency in the child
- harsh disciplining, inconsistent disciplining and the use of emotional sanctions such as withdrawal of love
- expectations and demands which are not appropriate for the developmental stage of the child, e.g. too high or too low
- exposure of the child to family violence and abuse
- inconsistent and unpredictable responses to the child
- contradictory, confusing or misleading messages in communicating with the child

- serious physical or psychiatric illness of a parent where the emotional needs of the child are not capable of being considered and/or appropriately met
- induction of the child into bizarre parental belief systems
- break-down in parental relationship with chronic, bitter conflict over contact or residence arrangements for the child
- major and repeated familial change, e.g. separations and reconstitution of families and/or changes of address
- making a child a scapegoat within the family

Neglect

2.56 Neglect and failure to thrive/growth faltering for non-organic reasons requires medical diagnosis. Non-organic failure to thrive is where there is a poor growth for which no medical cause is found, especially when there is a dramatic improvement in growth on a nutritional diet away from the parent's care. Failure to thrive tends to be associated with young children but neglect can also cause difficulties for older children.

2.57 There is a tendency to associate neglect with poverty and social disadvantage. Persistent neglect over long periods of time is likely to have causes other than poverty, however. There has to be a distinction made between financial poverty and emotional poverty.

2.58 **There are a number of types of neglect that can occur separately or together, for example:**

- medical neglect
- educational neglect
- simulative neglect environmental neglect
- environmental neglect
- failure to provide adequate supervision and a safe environment.

Recognition of Neglect

2.59 Neglect is a chronic, persistent problem. The concerns about the parents not providing "good enough" care for their child will develop over time. It is the accumulation of such concerns which will trigger the need to invoke the Child Protection Process. In cases of neglect it is important that details about the standard of care of the child are recorded and there is regular inter-agency sharing of this information.

2.60 It is important to remember that the degree of neglect can fluctuate, sometimes rapidly, therefore ongoing inter-agency assessment and monitoring is essential.

2.61 The assessment of neglect should take account of the child's age and stage of development, whether the neglect is severe in nature and whether it is resulting in, or likely to result in, significant impairment to the child's health and development.

2.62 The following areas should be considered when assessing whether the quality of care a child receives constitutes neglect.

Child

2.63 Health presentation indicators include:

- non-organic failure to thrive (growth faltering)
- poor weight gain (improvement when away from the care of the parents)
- poor height gain
- unmet medical needs
- untreated head lice/other infestations
- frequent attendance at 'accident and emergency' and/or frequent hospital admissions
- tired or depressed child, including a child who is anaemic or has rickets
- poor hygiene
- poor or inappropriate clothing for the time of year
- abnormal eating behaviour (bingeing or hoarding).

2.64 Emotional and behavioural development indicators include:

- developmental delay/special needs
- presents as being under-stimulated
- abnormal reaction to separation/ or attachment, disorder
- over-active and/or aggressive
- soiling and/or wetting
- repeated running away from home
- substance misuse
- offending behaviour, including stealing food
- teenage pregnancy.

2.65 Family and social relationship indicators include

- high criticism/low warmth
- excluded by family
- sibling violence
- isolated child
- attachment disorders and /or seeking comfort from strangers
- left unattended/or to care for other children
- left to wander alone day or night
- constantly late to school/late being collected
- not wanting to go home from school or refusing to go to school
- poor attendance at school/nursery
- frequent name changes and/or change of address or parental figures within the home.
- management of a child with a disability who is not attaining the level of functioning which is commensurate with the disability.

Consideration should be given as to whether a child and adolescent mental health assessment is required. Have all children in the family been seen and their views explored and documented?

Parents

- 2.66 **Lack of emotional warmth indicators include:**
- unrealistic expectations of child
 - inability to consider or put child's needs first
 - name calling/degrading remarks
 - lack of appropriate affection for the child
 - violence within the home from which the child is not shielded
 - partner resenting non-biological child and hostile in attitude towards him
 - failure to provide basic care for the child.
- 2.67 **Lack of stability indicators include:**
- frequent changes of partners
 - poor family support/inappropriate support
 - lack of consistent relationships
 - frequent moves of home
 - enforced unemployment
 - drug, alcohol or substance dependency
 - financial pressures/debt
 - absence of local support networks, neighbours etc.
- 2.68 **Issues relating to providing guidance and setting boundaries indicators include:**
- poor boundary setting
 - inconsistent attitudes and reactions, especially to child's behaviour
 - continuously failing appointments
 - refusing offers of help and services
 - failure to seek or use advice and/or help offered appropriately
 - seeks to mislead professionals by providing inaccurate or confusing information
 - failure to provide safe environment.
- 2.69 **Social Presentation**
- aggressive/threatening behaviour towards professionals and volunteers
 - disguised compliance
 - IOW self-esteem
 - lack of self-care.
- 2.70 **Health**
- mental ill health
 - substance misuse
 - learning difficulties
 - (post-natal) depression
 - history of parental child abuse or poor parenting
 - physical health.
- Home and Environmental Conditions**

2.71 The following home and environmental conditions should be considered:

- poor housing conditions
- overcrowding
- lack of water, heating, sanitation
- no access to washing machine
- piles of dirty washing
- little or no adequate clean bedding/furniture
- little or no food in cupboards
- human and/or animal excrement
- uncared for animals
- referrals to environmental health
- unsafe environment
- rural isolation.

2.72 **Impediments to ongoing assessment and appropriate multidisciplinary support**

- failure to see the child
- no ease of access to whole house
- fear of violence and aggression
- failure to seek support and advice or consultation, as appropriate, from line manager
- failure to record concern and initial impact
- inability to retain objectivity
- unwitting collusion with family
- failure to see beyond conditions in the home
- child's view is lost
- geographical stereotyping
- minimising concern
- poor networking amongst professionals
- inability to see what is/is not acceptable;
- familiarity breeding contempt; and
- failure to make connections with information available from other services.

(Hammersmith & Fulham Inter-Agency Procedures 2002)

When staff become aware of any of the above features they should review the case with their line manager.

Children with Disability

2.73 In recognising child abuse, all professionals should be aware that children with a disability can be particularly vulnerable to abuse. They may need a high degree of physical care, they may have less access to protection and there may be a reluctance on the part of professionals to consider the possibility of abuse.

Recognition of Abuse of Children with Disability

2.74 Recognition of abuse can be difficult in that:

- symptoms and signs may be confused
- the child may not recognise the behaviour as abusive
- the child may have communication difficulties and be unable to disclose abuse
- there may be a dependency on several adults for intimate care
- there is a reluctance to accept that children with disabilities may be abused.

2.75 Children with disability will usually display the same symptoms and signs of abuse as other children. These may be incorrectly attributed, however, to the child's disability.

Risk Factors Associated with Child Abuse

2.76 A number of factors may increase the likelihood of abuse to a child. The following list is not exhaustive and does not preclude the possibility of abuse in families where none of these factors are evident.

Child

- poor bonding due to neo-natal problems
- attachment interfered with by multiple caring arrangements
- a 'difficult' child, a 'demanding' baby
- a child under five years is considered to be most vulnerable
- a child's name or sibling's names previously on the Child Protection Register
- a baby/child with feeding/sleeping difficulties
- birth defects/chronic illness/developmental delay.

Parents

- both young and immature (i.e. aged 20 years and under) at birth of the child
- parental history of deprivation and/or abuse
- slow jealousy and rivalry with the child
- expect the child to meet their needs
- unrealistic expectations/rigid ideas about child development
- history of mental illness in one or both parents
- history of domestic violence
- drug and alcohol misuse in one or both parents of the child
- frequent changes of carers
- history of aggressive behaviour by either parent
- unplanned pregnancy
- unrealistic expectations of themselves as parents.

Home and Environmental Conditions

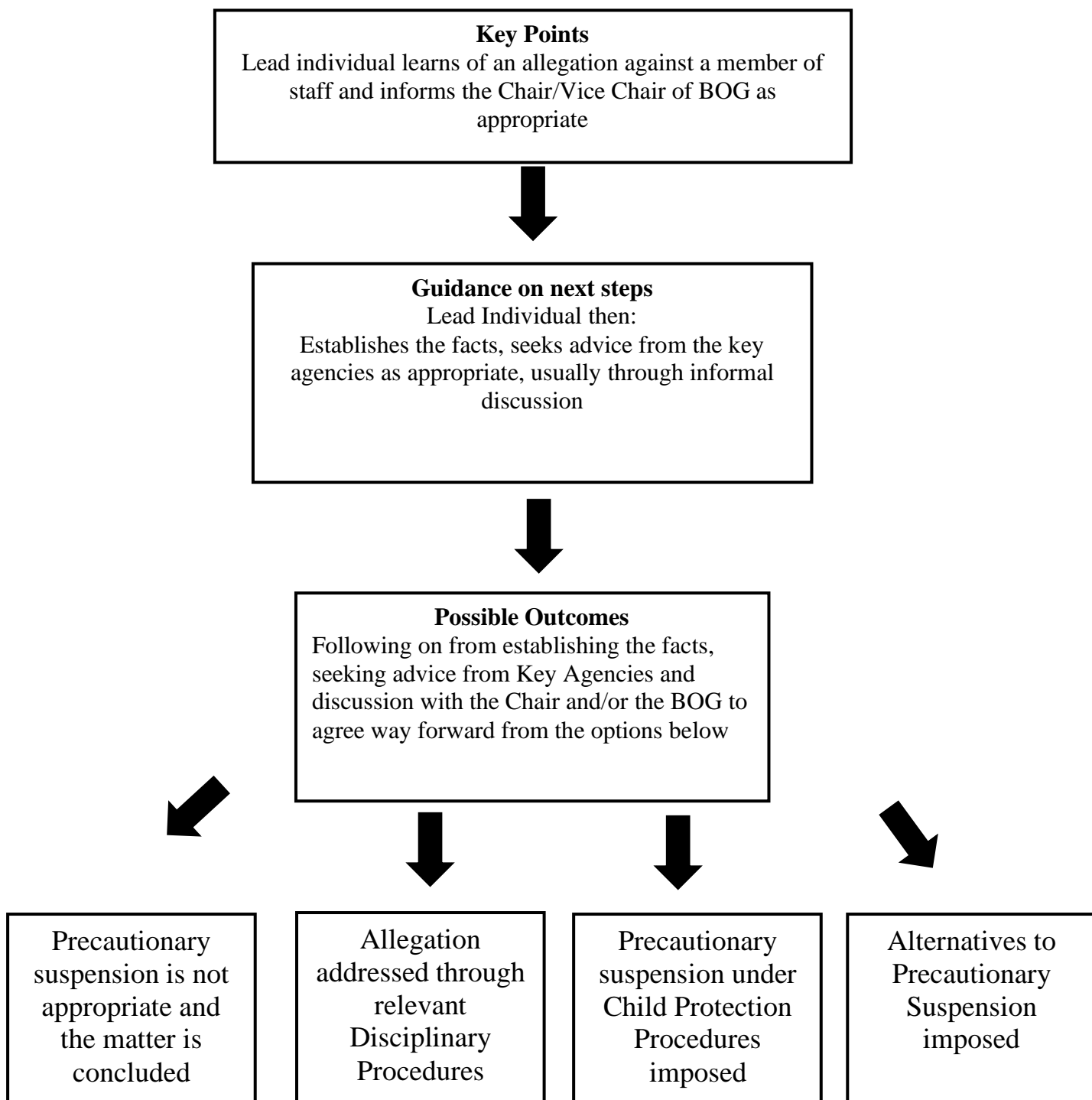
- unemployment
- no income/poverty
- poor housing or overcrowded housing

- social isolation and no supportive family
- the family moves frequently
- debt
- large family

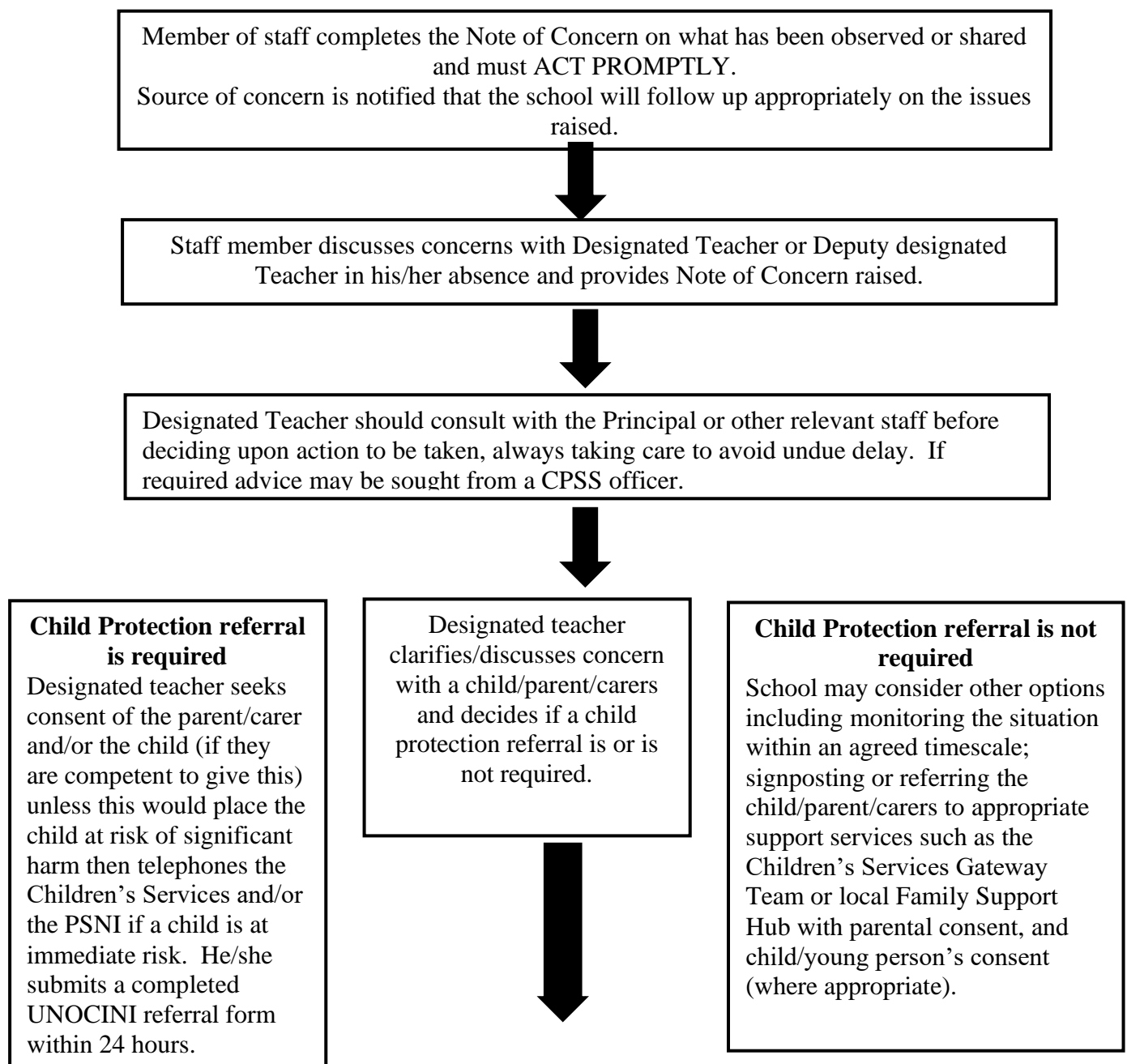
Appendix 6

**PASTORAL CARE IN SCHOOLS
SAFEGUARDING**

Dealing With Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff
(Circular 2015/13)



Appendix 7 Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff



- It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicated a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home. Contact details for PSNI Central Referral Unit and Duty Social Workers can be found in the Contacts Section
- DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools.

Appendix 8

Guidance on Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour

Summary of DENI Circular Number 2016 / 05 April '16

Child Protection procedures require that issues of concern, including inappropriate sexual behaviour, should be notified to the designated teacher for Child Protection. The designated teacher in turn notifies the Principal and together they decide, taking advice as necessary, on the most appropriate course of action.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours – these can be defined as ‘healthy’, ‘problematic’ or ‘harmful’.

Problematic Sexual Behaviour may include some of the following characteristics:

- Not age appropriate
- One off incident of low key touching over clothes
- Result of peer pressure
- Spontaneous rather than planned
- Lacking in other balancing factors e.g. no intent to cause harm, level of understanding, acceptance of responsibility
- Targeting other children, to irritate and make feel uncomfortable. Often the children are not scared and can feel free to tell someone
- Concerning to parents / carers, supportive
- Sometimes involving substances which disinhibit behaviours

Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. However, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the Education Authority CPSSS may be required. The CPSSS will advise if additional advice from PSNI or Social Services is required.

Harmful Sexualised Behaviour may include some of the following characteristics:

- Lacks the consent of the victim
- When the perpetrator uses threats or violence (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce or intimidate the victim
- Uses age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases
- Involves inappropriate touching
- Involves sexual behaviour between children – it is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than two years’ difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- Involves a younger child abusing an older child, particularly if they have power over them – for example, if the older child is disabled.
- individual incidents, or a series of incidents, retrospectively and are a guide for decision making about level of concern/ intervention.

Harmful sexualised behaviour

- will always require intervention and schools should refer to their own child protection policy.
- seek the support that is available from the CPSSS

An Assessment Checklist can be used to evaluate individual incidents, or a series of incidents, retrospectively and are a guide for decision making about level of concern/ intervention. There are 8 factors, drawn from the AIM Project (Assessment, Intervention, Moving On) guidelines, which should be considered. Where only limited information is available, the checklist should provide a prompt for the information that needs to be gathered.

Assessment Factors:

- The type of sexual behaviour
- The context of the behaviour
- The young person’s response when challenged about their behaviour
- The reaction/response of others
- The relationship between the children / young people / targeted adult
- The persistence and frequency of the behaviour
- Any other behavioural problems; and
- Background information known

General Principles

Whether a child is responsible for harmful sexualised behaviour, is a victim of sexual abuse, or both, it is important to apply principles that remain child centred. Harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children must be recognised as damaging to both the victim and the child who engages in the abusive behaviour. A child who engages in abuse of this kind may be suffering, or be at risk of, significant harm and may also be in need of protection. Some children who engage in harmful sexualised behaviour are likely to have significant emotional and behavioural difficulties and may have experienced some form of abuse themselves in the past.

Nonetheless, in the balance of what is in the child's best interests, the needs of the victim must be given priority; and nothing should be done which causes the victim further harm. The needs of children and young people who engage in harmful sexualised behaviour towards others should be considered separately from the needs of their victims.

It can be difficult to distinguish between normal childhood sexual development and experimentation, and sexually inappropriate behaviours. Complicating factors can include the age of the child concerned or whether the child has special educational needs. Professional judgement is therefore likely to be required.

Children Who Display Harmful Sexual Behaviour

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. 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 and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It must also be borne in mind that sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed through the school's positive behaviour policy but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as normal, inappropriate, abusive or violent. Normal sexual behaviour will generally have no need for intervention, however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting. Inappropriate sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the EA CPSS may be required. The CPSS will advise if contact with PSNI or Social Services is

required. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2022/02 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

Abusive Sexual Behaviours are of significant concern and guidance on the management of the pupils and referrals to other agencies such as Social Services or the Police should be sought from CPSS.

Some examples of abusive sexual behaviours are victimising intent or outcome, the misuse of power, coercion and force to ensure victim compliance, they may be intrusive and may include elements of expressive violence, informed consent is lacking or is not given by the victim, for example because of their special needs or they may have been under the influence of alcohol or other substances

Violent Sexual Behaviours are also of significant concern. They may have features of threat, force, coercion or harm to others.

Some examples of violent sexual behaviour include physically violent sexual abuse which is highly intrusive, instrumental violence which is physiologically and or sexually arousing to the perpetrator and may involve sadism.

Advice from CPSS will be required if we are aware of a young person displaying violent sexual behaviour.

E Safety/Internet Abuse

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social environments and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in schools and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report ‘An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland’ which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content Risks:** the child or young person is exposed to harmful material.
- **Contact risks:** the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- **Conduct Risks:** the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.
- **Commercial Risks:** the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

We in St. Colm’s have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like.

The school’s actions and governance of online safety are reflected clearly in our safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and promoting pupils’ welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

Sexting is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile or over the internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

1/Sexting between Individuals in a Relationship

Pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share ‘indecent images’ of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship) and in these cases we will contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance. We may also seek advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

2/Sharing an Inappropriate Image with an Intent to Cause Distress

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individuals consent. For further information see:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted

If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared further whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures of the school will be followed.

Appendix 9

CONTACTS

(1st point of contact for advice – Open Monday to Friday 9 am to 4.30 pm)

Child Protection Support Service = 028 9598 5590

Referral Gateway Team SPOE (1st point of contact for referral)

All passed to NORTHERN (Antrim) Gateway = 0300 1234 333 /028 9442 4459

Gateway Emergency Out of hours = 0300 1234 333

Referral Gateway Team SPOE = spo.e.referrals@northerntrust.hscni.net

Central Gateway Toome (2nd point of contact/link social worker known) = 028 7965 1020

Magherafelt Family Centre (Hospital Road) = 028 7936 5097

Magherafelt Family Centre (Fairhill) = 028 7930 1771

CAMHS (Fairhill) = 028 7930 2626

Social Services (Sperrin House) = 028 7936 6840

Magherafelt Family Support and Intervention Team Assessment/long term work (Sperrin House)
= 028 7936 6840

UNOCINI - (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland)

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/unocini_forms.doc

PSNI

The Central Referral Unit (CRU) based in Antrim Road PSNI Station is part of the Public Protection Unit and is the central point for child sexual and physical abuse allegations.

Operation Encompass is an early intervention information sharing partnership between the PSNI and Schools, whereby schools are alerted if the police attend a domestic abuse incident where children are present. This allows schools' Safeguarding Teams to respond in a timely way to the emotional needs of children who may have been exposed to trauma.

The only way to contact the CRU is via email.

Please note the new address for future correspondence with the CRU: cru@psni.police.uk

Education Welfare Officer

Cullycapple Primary School 32 Mullaghinch Road Coleraine BT51 4APtEL: 028 70868588

Interpreting Service

Dial: 0333 344 9473

Contacts For Advice:

More information is available at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/domestic-violence.

Contact the 24 hour domestic and sexual violence helpline on:

Phone: 0808 802 1414 (Freephone)

Email: 24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org

Text: 'support' to 077 9780 5839

Children/young people seeking advice should contact the Childline Free Helpline at 0800 1111.

Organisations that can offer advice and support:

- Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland - www.womensaidni.org/ - 028 9024 9041
- Men's Advisory Project (MAP) - www.mapni.co.uk/ - 028 9024 1929
- Men to Men - 028 9024 7027
- Mens Aid NI - www.mensaid.co.uk/ni.html - 077 0385 8130
- Cara Friend - www.cara-friend.org.uk/ - 028 9032 2023
- Rainbow Project - www.rainbow-project.org/ - 028 9031 9030

Other useful numbers:

- Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centre - 028 9032 9002
- Nexus - 028 9032 6803
- Victim Support - 028 9024 3133
- Disability Action - 028 9029 7880
- Citizen's Advice Bureau - 0300 1233233
- Law Society (Legal and Local Solicitor Advice) - 028 9023 1614
- Parents Helpline - 0808 8010 722