

# St. Joseph's Grammar School

## Scoil Iósaef



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024-2025

*Designated Teacher for Child Protection*  
Mrs A Mc Gleenan

*Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection*  
Mrs G Donnelly (Principal) Mrs O McCourt Ms C Taggart Mr P Corrigan  
Mr P Quinn Dr M McCoy Mr N Kelly

<b>Policy Author</b>	Mrs A McGleenan
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## **Introduction**

We in St. Joseph's Grammar School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge. We will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe. This is achieved through the Preventative Education Programme, Personal Safety, Internet Safety, RSE and Drugs Education aspects of the PD Programme.

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 harm to a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

## **Key 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 2023) and the SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

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

- the child's welfare must always be paramount; this overrides all other considerations;
- a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is a conflict, the child's interest must remain paramount;
- children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives and be provided with appropriate support to do so where that is required. Where feasible and appropriate, activity should be undertaken with the consent of the child or young person and, where possible, to achieve their preferred outcome;
- parents/carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters which concern their family;
- actions taken to protect a child (including investigation) should not in themselves be abusive by causing the child unnecessary distress or adding to any damage already suffered;
- intervention should not deal with the child in isolation; the child must be seen in a family setting. The criminal dimension of any action cannot be ignored;
- children with disabilities are children first and have equal rights to protection. They have particular needs which require specialist attention.

- where it is necessary to protect the child from further abuse, alternatives which do not involve moving the child and which minimise disruption of the family should be explored;
- actions taken by agencies must be considered and well informed so that they are sensitive to and take account of the needs of the child's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race;
- all agencies concerned with the protection of children must work together on an interagency basis in the best interests of children and their families;
- each agency must have an understanding of each other's professional values and accept each other's role, powers and responsibilities.

From the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 6, "Co-operating to Protect Children".

### **Adult Safeguarding - This is applicable to students who are 18years and older**

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.

### **Other Related 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 Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Educational Visits
- Student Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile phone Policy
- Managing Critical Incidents
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety

- Intimate Care
- Records Management
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Whistleblowing
- Visitors Policy

**These policies are available to parents and any parent wishing to have a copy should contact the School office or visit the school website at <https://www.stjosephsdonaghmore.com/>**

## **Procedures**

St. Joseph's Grammar School recognise their five main responsibilities in the areas of Child Protection. These are in the areas of Prevention, Recognition, Response, Referral and Confidentiality/Record Keeping with the welfare of the child considered as being of paramount importance. Parents will be made aware of the school's responsibilities and procedures and we hope they will support us in our practice.

## **Prevention**

We offer a supportive environment to children and young people who are being abused, have been abused and may in the future be abused. All children and young people are valued and will receive our support.

The school has developed and provides a 'child protection ethos' and a preventative education curriculum. We offer children an alternative model to violent or abusive behaviour and alternative methods of responding. We aim to involve the whole school in creating a 'listening educational establishment'.

The school offers protection on two levels:

- **Immediate protection** - creating a listening environment that makes it easier for pupils to share their concerns.
- **Long term protection** - enhancing self- esteem and encouraging partnership with parents/carers and other agencies.

The Board of Governors ensures that the curriculum and "preventative education curriculum" includes a programme for pupils on personal protection. Where it is appropriate to deliver relationship and sexuality education, (RSE), leadership ensure the programme is consistent with the Department of Education's circular on this topic.

Where the curricular programme in RSE forms part of several subjects, there is careful co-ordination and planning of what is provided.

The Board of Governors ensures that the school has and follows the Code of Practice for the conduct of all members of staff, towards the pupils attending the school. (See Appendix 7). The Code of Practice covers all activities organised in and by the school, whether on school premises or elsewhere.

We ensure that persons beyond the educational establishment staff who are invited to be involved as helpers/leaders on educational visits, residential visits, or other out of school educational activities are subject to vetting procedures in keeping with current arrangements for the care and protection of children and young people.

We will ensure that we will provide effective management for our staff through adequate training and supervision.

## **Recruitment and Vetting Procedures**

All staff (permanent, teaching, non-teaching, casual, volunteers, sports coaches etc.) are vetted through the Access N.I. system and following guidelines clearly set out in the DE Circular 2013/01 (up-dated September 2015) and 2012/19. Substitute Teachers have Access N.I. compliance verified through the NISTR Register.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching will following a period of absence of 195 consecutive contact days be subject to an Access NI review.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC.

## **Collaboration**

If a student from the home school makes a disclosure in the provider school to a member of staff the member of staff should refer the matter immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection in the **provider school**. The Designated Teacher will then refer the matter to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection in the home school.

## **Work Experience**

Work experience placements provide insights into the world of work and are an invaluable educational opportunity. During the work placement the Health and Safety of the young person and those working with them is paramount. In preparing students for work experience personal safety issues will be addressed. Students will be advised on the procedures to be followed in the event of a student having concerns or feeling unsafe, uneasy or uncomfortable through the use of inappropriate language or behaviour or if anything untoward occurs to them during work experience placements.

In the event of a student having concerns they should contact Mrs McGleenan the Designated Teacher for Child Protection who will follow the school Child Protection Policy and Procedures. A written record should be made.

Health and Social Care Programmes will require an EDC for pupils on long term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/shadowing placements. If required school will apply through their Access NI Registered Body in advance (See DE Circular 2013/01).

Pupils coming into the school on work experience do not require Access NI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal child protection induction processes should apply.

## **Internet and E-Mail Policy**

St. Joseph's Grammar School encourages use by pupils of a wide variety of Information and Communication Technologies. Pupils are given access to the Internet provided they act in a considerate and responsible manner. This privilege can be withdrawn if they fail to maintain acceptable standards of use as outlined in the Computer Access, Internet, E-Mail and Printing Policy and BYOD Policy and Student Acceptable Use Policy which is included in the student planner and is available as a download on policy page of St. Joseph's website/App.

In St. Joseph's Grammar School it is felt that the benefits to pupils from access to information resources and increased opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. Through the introduction of C2K, all internet filtering is controlled by Surf Control who deem whether internet material is suitable or unsuitable. All internet access for pupils and staff in St. Joseph's is **via C2K** and therefore all access is subject to this filtering.

All E-Mails are automatically filtered for unsuitable size and content. Mail which is blocked may be viewed by the Principal, who will then decide whether to allow the mail through the system.

In order to ensure appropriate use of internet access and e-mail, school can and does track and record the sites visited, the searches made on the internet and e-mail sent and received by individual users. Unacceptable use of these facilities will result in sanctions being imposed (see policy). This policy is updated in light of evolving technology.

## **Mobile Phone Policy**

Pupils are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school. Those who do so must keep all phones switched off during the school day and observe the school's policy on the use of mobile phones.

There is an outright ban on the use of all media messaging (picture/video) phones in school at any time.

## **Overall Objectives**

- To establish, maintain and review child abuse procedures.
- To establish and review role of designated teachers.
- To identify and promote the development of a staff training strategy

To ensure that parents/carers are aware of our:

- Child Protection Policy
- Structures and Procedures

Through consultation and communication of policy, to establish and develop child protection issues in the school curriculum.

## **The School Safeguarding Team**

Members of the School Safeguarding Team include

- Mr Ciaran McKenna Temporary Chair of the Board of Governors,
- Ms Lorraine Lavery Designated Governor for Child Protection,
- Mrs Annette McGleenan Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Deputy Designated Teachers include the Principal, Mrs G. Donnelly, Mrs O. McCourt, Ms C. Taggart, Mr P. Corrigan, Mr P. Quinn, Dr M. McCoy (Head of School K.S.3), Mr N Kelly (Head of School K.S.4) and Ms D. Dolan E-Safety Co-ordinator.

### **The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team include:**

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Provide Support for the Designated Teacher in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Assume responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Ensure attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.
- Review child protection/ safeguarding practices annually using the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) pro-forma entitled 'Guidance for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding'.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **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 3 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.

## **Chair of 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.

## **Designated Governor for Child Protection**

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

- The role of the designated teachers;
- The content of child protection policies;
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school;
- The content of the termly updates and full Annual Designated Teachers Report;
- Recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

## **Designated Teacher for Child Protection**

Mrs A McGleenan Vice-Principal is the Designated Teacher with responsibility for child protection. The role involves:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff.
- Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff.
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns.
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services eg Family Support Hubs.
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate.
- Liaison with the EA Designated Officer for Child Protection.
- Keeping the school Principal informed of all safeguarding/child protection matters.
- Lead responsibility for the development of the school's safeguarding/child protection policy.
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.
- Compiling written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.



## **Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection**

Deputy Designated Teachers include the Principal, Mrs G. Donnelly, Vice-Principal Mrs O. McCourt, Ms C. Taggart, Mr P. Corrigan, Mr P. Quinn, Dr M. McCoy (Head of School K.S.3) and Mr N Kelly (Head of School K.S.4).

### **The role of the Deputy Designated Teacher is to:**

- Work co-operatively with the Designated Teacher Mrs A. McGleenan in fulfilling her responsibilities.
- Undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher when required.
- Attend relevant specialist training provided by CPSS.
- Assist in the review and development of the school's safeguarding/child protection policy.
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.

## **The School 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.

## **Other Members of School Staff**

- Members of staff **must** refer concerns or disclosures initially to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or to a Deputy Designated Teacher if she is not available.
- Class teachers and Year Heads should complete the Note of Concern (**See Appendix 1**) if there are safeguarding concerns such as: poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents/carers about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying and concerns about home circumstances including disclosures of domestic abuse.
- **Staff should not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures, should not investigate nor should they ask leading questions.

## **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 a Deputy Designated Teacher if she is not available. A detailed written record of the concerns will be made and any further necessary action will be taken.

## **Parents/Carers**

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents/carers who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child. As part of the ongoing work of fostering trust and good relationships with parents/ carers, school will provide all parents/carers at intake with all policies, including child protection, pastoral care, anti-bullying, positive behaviour, online safety, and complaints.

- It is important that parents/carers inform the school:
- If the child has a medical condition or educational need;
- If there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- If there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- If there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school.
- Parents should contact the school if their child is absent and follow SJS Attendance Policy and Procedures More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at: [www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection](http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection)

## **Child Protection Definitions**

### **Definition of Harm**

*(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.**

Harm can be caused by:

**Sexual abuse**

**Emotional abuse**

**Physical abuse**

**Neglect**

**Exploitation**

### **Types of Abuse**

Child abuse may take a number of forms – see definitions below.

The detection of Child Abuse - Signs and Symptoms is often very difficult and seldom clear cut. It is important therefore to share concerns with the designated teacher - Mrs McGleenan immediately or in her absence one of the deputy designated teachers, who will then follow the school child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

School staff especially teachers but also non-teaching staff, are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. It is important to be able to recognise these signs and symptoms. None of the indications either singly, or in any combination prove conclusively that a child has been abused.

**Neglect** 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.

#### ***Physical Indicators***

Looks very thin, poorly and sad; constant hunger; lack of energy; untreated medical problems; special needs of child not being met; constant tiredness; inappropriate dress, poor hygiene; repeatedly unwashed; smelly; repeated accidents especially burns.

### ***Behavioural Indicators***

Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); steals food; compulsive stealing; begging from class friends; withdrawn; lacks concentration; misses school medicals; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at school; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.

### **Physical Abuse**

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.

### ***Physical indicators***

Unexplained bruises - in various stages of healing - grip marks on arms; slap marks; human bite marks; welts bald spots; unexplained, untreated burns; especially cigarette burns or immersion burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear - symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday.

### ***Behavioural Indicators***

Self destructive tendencies; aggressive to other children; behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive); appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults; improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway; uncomfortable with physical contact; comes to school early or stays late as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather - to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories.

### **Sexual Abuse**

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**

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 opportunities 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 Indicators*** Well below average height and weight; "failure to thrive"; poor hair and skin; alopecia; swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders; signs of self mutilation; signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).

### ***Behavioural Indicators***

Apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional response to painful situations; rocking/head banging; inability to play; indifference to separation from family indiscriminate attachment; reluctance for parental

liaison; fear of new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships.

### **Exploitation**

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, 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.

\*All the above definitions are from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)

### **Specific Types of Abuse**

#### **Self-Harm**

Levels of self-harm are one indicator of the mental health and mental well-being of young people in our society in general.

Self-harm describes a wide range of things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way. Self-harm is a symptom rather than the core problem. It masks underlying emotional and psychological trauma. In the vast majority of cases self-harm remains a secretive behaviour that can go on for a long time without being discovered. Self-harm can involve:

- cutting
- burning
- scalding
- banging or scratching one's own body
- breaking bones
- hair pulling
- ingesting toxic substances or objects

Young people who self-harm mainly do so because they have no other way of coping with problems and emotional distress in their lives. This can be to do with factors ranging from bullying to family breakdown. But self-harm is not a good way of dealing with such problems. It provides only temporary relief and does not deal with the underlying issues.

#### **Grooming**

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 eg 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.

### ***Grooming: signs and symptoms***

The signs of grooming aren't always obvious. Groomers will also go to great lengths not to be identified.

Children may:

- be very secretive, including about what they are doing online
- have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- go to unusual places to meet friends
- have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain □ have access to drugs and alcohol.

In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. CSE does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Any child under the age of 18 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. Young males can also be victims of CSE.

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.**

### ***Identifying CSE***

CSE can be very difficult to identify and a young person may not see themselves as a victim. However, it is our statutory responsibility to protect all children and young people from abuse, irrespective of whether or not they view themselves as a victim of abuse. Professionals need to be able to identify vulnerability in the midst of challenging behaviour and frequent resistance to, or even apparent disregard for, professional support.

Research repeatedly shows that young people rarely report abuse through CSE. Most concerns are identified by professionals, friends or family or by proactive investigation by authorities. In recognition of this, good practice guidelines state that all areas should assume that CSE is occurring within their area unless they have evidence to indicate otherwise. As such, schools should be alert to the likelihood of CSE and plan to protect children and young people accordingly.

### ***Potential indicators of CSE:***

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation.
- Truanting/leaving school without permission.
- Persistently going missing or returning late.
- Receiving lots of texts/ phone calls prior to leaving.
- Change in mood - agitated/stressed.
- Appearing distraught/dishevelled or under the influence of substances.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age.
- Physical symptoms eg bruising; bite marks.
- Collected from school by unknown adults or taxis.
- New peer groups.
- Significantly older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours.
- Low self-esteem.
- Change in personal hygiene (greater attention or less).
- Self harm and other expressions of despair.
- Evidence or suspicion of substance abuse.

While these indicators can be useful in identifying potential risk, their presence does not necessarily mean CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence mean it is not.

### ***What to Do***

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

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. More details on the process can be found in DoH Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016).

## **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse 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.’

### ***Signs of Domestic Violence***

**Destructive criticism and verbal abuse:** shouting/mocking/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening.

**Pressure tactics:** sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away, commit suicide, take the children away, report person to welfare agencies unless they comply with his demands regarding bringing up the children, lying to the person’s friends and family about them, telling the person that they have no choice in any decisions.

**Disrespect:** Persistently putting the person down in front of other people, not listening or responding when they talk, interrupting their telephone calls, taking money from their purse without asking refusing to help with childcare or housework.

**Breaking trust:** lying, withholding information from the other person, being jealous, having other relationships, breaking promises and shared agreements.

**Isolation:** monitoring or blocking telephone calls, telling the person where they can and cannot go, preventing them from seeing friends and relatives.

**Harassment:** following and checking up on the other person, opening mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned, embarrassing the person in public.

**Threats:** making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting the person down, destroying their possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a knife or a gun, threatening to kill or harm the other person and the children.

**Sexual violence:** using force, threats or intimidation to make the person perform sexual acts, having sex with the person when they don’t want to have sex, any degrading treatment based on the other person’s sexual orientation.

**Physical violence:** punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling.

**Denial:** saying the abuse doesn’t happen, saying the other person caused the abusive behaviour, being publicly gentle and patient, crying and begging for forgiveness, saying it will never happen again.

**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.

### ***Physical Indicators:***

Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs; bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas; torn, stained or bloody underclothes; chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches; difficulty in walking or sitting; frequent urinary infections; avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers; unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating.

### ***Behavioural Indicators***

What the child tells you; withdrawn; chronic depression; excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness; children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal; overly concerned for siblings; poor self esteem; self devaluation; lack of confidence; peer problems; lack of involvement; massive weight change; suicide attempts (especially adolescents); hysterical/angry outbursts; lack of emotional control; sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour; inappropriate sex play; repeated attempts to run away from home; unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories; vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity; exposure to pornographic material.

### ***Operation Encompass***

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

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

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

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

Further information about The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022 can be found by following the link to: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk>

## **Female Genital Mutilation**

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 and established school procedures. In the UK, FGM has been a specific criminal offence since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 replaced the 1985 Act in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Serious Crime Act 2015 further strengthened the law on FGM. FGM is a complex issue with many men and women from practising communities considering it to be normal to protect their cultural identity. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight, putting children in this age bracket at highest risk.

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 direct 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. All staff should be aware of warning signs, appropriate response and signposting to further information and sources of help.

## **Forced Marriage**

A Forced Marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced Marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and where an agency, organisation or practitioner has knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person, they should contact the PSNI immediately.

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. In forced marriages, one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with support needs, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

## ***Statutory Responsibilities***

### **Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007**

A Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO) issued under the 2007 Act offers protection to a victim from being forced into marriage. A FMPO may contain prohibitions, restrictions or requirements and any other such terms as the Court considers appropriate. An application for a FMPO can be made by a victim, a person obtaining the court's permission to apply for an order on behalf of the victim, a relevant third party, or by the Court itself. Breach of a FMPO is a criminal offence. All agencies with responsibility towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children must comply with *The Right to Choose: Statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage* published by the Department of Finance and Personnel in April 2012 to protect persons from being forced into marriage against their will. This guidance is designed to assist with the operation of the 2007 Act and to ensure that the protections which the Act offers are widely promoted in Northern Ireland.

***Warning signs within the school environment:***

- Absence and persistent absence.
- Request for extended leave of absence/failure to return from visits to country of origin.
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins.
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality.
- Poor exam results.
- Being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility and not being provided with suitable education at home.
- Not allowed to attend extracurricular activities.
- Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger.
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education.

Due to the nature of forced marriage the involvement of the child's or young person's family may increase the risk of significant harm to the child or young person. The family may deny that the child or young person is being forced to marry and they may expedite any travel arrangements and bring forward the marriage. It is, therefore, advised that in all cases where there is a suspicion that a child or young person is being, or has been forced into a marriage, schools should contact CPSS for advice and assistance.

**Children who Display Harmful Sexualised 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. Schools 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 'healthy', 'problematic' or 'sexually harmful'. More details on each type of behaviour can be found in DE Circular 2016/05 'Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour'.

Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention, however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting. 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. 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 additional advice from PSNI or Social Services is required.

***What is Harmful Sexualised Behaviour?***

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when:

- There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or
- the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim

***Harmful sexualised behaviour can include:***

- Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.

- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children 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.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and following school child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

### **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.

**The school's online safety arrangements are reflected clearly in its safeguarding arrangements, through the Preventative Education Programme, Internet Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Positive Behaviour Policy.**

### **Sexting**

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

#### **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 you should contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance.

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 sexual images. Advice should be sought from CPSS.

## 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 you do not forward it to anyone else. Please remember that schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015

([www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted)) to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent - see Articles 33-35 of the Act for more detail. By contacting the police you could help prevent further such incidents. 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 should be followed.

The UK Safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk/](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/)) may be able to assist in having the image blocked or removed to prevent further distribution. It is also vital to ensure that the victim of abuse gets the correct support. They are likely to be ashamed and embarrassed and worried about parental reaction - some may wish to speak to the school independent Counsellor. A list of organisations offering advice and support is included below.

- Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) 'thinkuknow' website contains advice and resources for teachers exploring the risks which children and young people are exposed to when online. CEOP have produced targeted advice and guidance for 11-13 year olds, 14+ years, parents or carers, and teachers. [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- Go to [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org) for lots of useful advice and information on how to stay safe online. [Safeguardingni.org](http://Safeguardingni.org) will also provide information for parents and carers on online safety.
- The UKCCIS (UK Council for Child Internet Safety) has published guidance for England and Wales 'Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People'. [www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis)
- The UK Safer Internet Centre ([www.saferinternet.org.uk/](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/)) offers online safety tips, advice and resources to help professionals, children and young people to stay safe on the internet.
- PSNI/SBNI leaflet 'Sexting and the Law' - a basic guide to help professionals and the public deal with incidents of sexting. [www.psni.police.uk/contentassets/fae34aff4af6409e9ad393130043ec55/sexting\\_\\_the\\_law\\_leaflet\\_trifold.pdf](http://www.psni.police.uk/contentassets/fae34aff4af6409e9ad393130043ec55/sexting__the_law_leaflet_trifold.pdf)

## Adult Safeguarding

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:

- Personal characteristics and/or
- Life circumstances and
- Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; and

- Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

## **Responding to Safeguarding and Child Protection Concerns**

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. Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

### **1. If a parent has a potential child protection concern within the school**

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

If a parent has a concern they can talk to the **Form Teacher/Head of Year, the Designated Teacher or any of the Deputy Designated Teachers for child protection or the Principal.**

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 Central Referral Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 4.**

### **2. Where School Has Concerns or Has Been Given Information about Possible Abuse by Someone Other Than a Member of Staff**

#### **Procedures for staff to follow in reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse**

The Designated Teacher for child protection is Mrs Annette McGleenan, Vice Principal. In her absence the Principal, Mrs G. Donnelly or, Mrs O. McCourt, Ms C. Taggart, Mr P. Corrigan, Mr P. Quinn, Dr M. McCoy and Mr N Kelly will assume responsibility for child protection matters.

1. Where a member of staff **is concerned** that abuse **may** have occurred, he/she **must report** this **immediately** to the Designated Teacher or in her absence a Deputy Designated Teacher who have specific responsibility for child protection (see guidance on talking to pupils where there are concerns about possible abuse).
2. If a child **makes a disclosure** to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, **or** if a member of staff **has concerns** about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly (contact the office immediately on extension 219 and ask to speak to a member of the Safeguarding Team if there is no phone in your classroom send 2 students to reception to ask for a Senior Teacher to come to the classroom).**

**He/she should not investigate** - this is a matter for the Social Services (see guidance on talking to pupils where there are concerns about possible abuse) but should **report these concerns immediately** to the

Designated Teacher, discuss the matter with her and complete a **Note of Concern** (see Appendix1). (In the absence of the Designated Teacher Mrs McGleenan or the Principal Mrs Donnelly **any member** of the Safeguarding Team should be informed directly).

### **Note of Concern**

Notes must be made as soon as possible after the incident to ensure an expedient response, and certainly within 24 hours, to maintain the accuracy and content of the report. *For some children a one-off serious incident or concern may occur and staff will have no doubt that this must be immediately recorded and reported. More often, however, it is the accumulation of a number of small incidents, events or observations that can provide the evidence of harm being caused to a child.*

The staff member should report the concern to **the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT)** at an early stage, immediately if the concern is of a serious nature, as the DT may be aware of other circumstances which would influence steps to be taken. The Note of Concern and any further details discussed or action taken should be placed on the pupil's **Child Protection File** and should be signed and dated by both parties to confirm the information is accurate.

3. The Designated Teacher will immediately notify the Principal to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record is made.

The Principal in consultation with the Designated Teacher, will decide whether, in the best interests of the pupil the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If there are concerns that the pupil may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

The Principal may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Designated Officers from the Education Authority Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) or the Duty Social Worker of the Gateway Team, before a referral is made.

If a child protection referral is not required the school may consider other options including monitoring, signposting or referring to other support agencies e.g. Family Support Hub with parental consent and, where appropriate, with the child/young person's consent. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice.

### **The safety of the pupil is our first priority.**

4. Where a referral is to be made the Designated Teacher will immediately contact the Duty Social Worker at the Gateway Team. The referral will be confirmed in writing using the UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours and a copy sent to one of the Designated Officers for Child Protection at the Education Authority Southern Region.
5. The parent/carer of the child will be informed by the school that a referral is to be made to Social Services unless the parent/carer is the subject of the allegation.
  - 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.

### **In relation to consent from students aged 18 or over**

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
- 
- Non-urgent referrals ie child in need/family support referrals must have the consent of the parent/carers and/or the young person (if they are competent to give this) and should be made in writing using the UNOCINI referral form.
  - The welfare of the child is paramount and, if unable to contact the parent/ carers, do not delay but progress the referral with Social Services.
  - **Issues of consent** (including when consent is not forthcoming) must always be clearly recorded.

6.If the concern relates to a student over the age of 18 the Designated Teacher will discuss the concerns with the Trust Adult Safeguarding Team or the Team with responsibility for Vulnerable Adults **School to amend according to the Trust's local arrangements**. This team will assess the level of risk.

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed of the action taken (See Appendix 5).

7.The Designated Teacher will make a record of all the discussions held and actions taken within **24 hours** of a referral and complete **Safeguarding Action Checklist** Proforma (see Appendix 2).

8. If an acknowledgement of the referral is not received from Social Services within 5 working days, the Designated Teacher will follow this up.



9. The Principal will inform the Temporary Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

### **3. Where a Complaint Has Been Made about Possible Abuse by a Member of the School's Staff or a Volunteer**

#### **Procedures where a complaint has been made against a member of staff**

Where a complaint is made about possible abuse by a member of staff of the school, the procedures set out in DE Circular 2015/13 will be followed. In all decisions the child's welfare is the paramount consideration and the child should be listened to and his/her concerns taken seriously. The possible risk of harm to children posed by a member of staff must be evaluated and managed and in some cases this will require consideration of suspension as a precautionary measure.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff the Principal or the designated teacher, if she is not available must be **informed immediately** and a written record should be made using Note of Concern proforma (see appendix 1).

If the complaint is against the Principal then the Designated Teacher should be informed and he/she will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will consider what action is required in consultation with the employing authority. The procedure as outlined in **Appendix 6** will be followed.

Designated Teacher will be informed (if she is not the subject of the complaint) and she will record details.

Principal will consult with and seek advice from the Education Authority CPSS to assess the situation.

If no further action is indicated the subject of the complaint will be advised accordingly.

If there is a decision to refer Social Services and the Police will begin their investigations of the complaint.

Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services.

All allegations of a child abuse nature will be recorded as set out in **Deni Circular 2015/13** in the hard backed and bound **Record of Child Abuse Complaints book**, which is retained securely by the Principal Mrs G Donnelly. A record of this should be placed on the relevant pupil's Child Protection File (See DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools).

It is important that ALL allegations are recorded to ensure a school can monitor allegations made and identify causes or patterns of concern at an early stage. It is also important that Boards of Governors are fully informed of all complaints to ensure they are complying with their statutory responsibilities under the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003.

These records should be signed and dated by the Principal. If the Principal is the subject of the concern, the allegation should be reported immediately to the Temporary Chair of the Board of Governors, Deputy

Chairperson, Designated Governor for Child Protection and the person appointed to be the Lead Individual, and the record retained in the school, on both the child's Child Protection File and the file of the member of staff concerned.

If, on foot of a subsequent investigation by one of the investigating agencies, the member of staff concerned is totally exonerated:

- the record on the staff member's file must be expunged
- the entry in the Record of Child Abuse Complaints struck through with an explanation entered
- the record on the child's file should be noted with the outcome of the investigation, and should stand until the child's D.O.B +30 years.

Given the number of recent historical allegations, unless the member of staff concerned is totally exonerated, the record should be retained indefinitely. If a closure or an amalgamation of an educational establishment(s) occurs or when a member of staff retires, leaves or changes post, advice should be sought from the relevant Employing Authority and/or the Information Commissioner's Office.

## **Confidentiality and Record Keeping**

For reasons of confidentiality the number of people advised of any concern/incident or who have access to this recorded information will be strictly limited on a need to know basis.

## **Child Protection File**

The DT should store each Note of Concern and copy UNOCINI documents in the child's **Child Protection File** and supplement it with all other records created and acquired as the management of the concern progresses. **A Child Protection File is separate to the School Pupil/ Educational Record and must be stored securely.**

**A red coloured sticker will be placed on the front of a Pupil's folder to indicate that a separate Child Protection File exists.**

### **The Child Protection File should contain:**

- Chronology of events/ action taken
- All records of concern
- Any notes initially recorded, including in the form of notebooks/diaries which should be kept securely with the child protection file
- Records of discussions and telephone calls (with colleagues, parents and children/young people and other agencies or services)
- Correspondence with other organisations - sent and received
- Referral forms – both for support services and specialist services (irrespective of outcome) □ Formal plans linked to the child e.g. child protection plan, child in need plan □ Risk assessments
- Risk Management Plans/ Individual Safety and Support Plans
- School reports to interagency meetings and conferences
- Minutes of interagency meetings e.g. child in need, strategy, child protection conference

- Any other relevant notes/ papers

Relevant and accurate records are essential to inform effective decision making and assist in the sharing of appropriate information. **They should contain factual information or be clearly specified as unsubstantiated** and should include all relevant information even if it appears contradictory.

Any significant event or change which has an impact on the child's welfare must be included in the Child Protection File, and noted on the chronology of events/ action taken, even if it seems to be contradictory. As a guideline, although not exhaustive, the following may be relevant:

- **Change of circumstances:** changes of carer, address, legal status, school, family circumstances and household composition.
- **Issues for the child:** physical or mental health issues, incidents of abuse, losses, developmental issues, incidents of running away/going missing, incidents re bullying, offending or police involvement.
- **Family issues:** changes in family composition, loss and separation, domestic violence, financial or housing problems, physical or mental health, substance misuse, homelessness, imprisonment, victimisation.
- **Professional involvement:** referrals made, involvement of other agencies, assessments, significant decisions, interventions, social services involvement.

Any decisions made must be recorded together with reasons for the agreed action, this will be vital to any future processes, such as retrospective or historical allegations and Case Management Reviews. It is vitally important to record all relevant details, regardless of whether or not the concerns are shared with either the police or social services.

When Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been placed on the Trusts' **Child Protection Register (CPR)**, the school must maintain a record of this fact and associated documentation from Social Services on the child's Child Protection file.

## **What to do if a child tells you of abuse**

- Where **teachers see signs** which cause them concern, they should, **as a first step**, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding.
- Where a **learning support assistant** or another member of the school's **non-teaching staff** sees such signs, he/ she should **immediately** bring them to the attention of either the **class teacher** or the **Designated Teacher**, and it may be appropriate for the necessary clarification to be carried out by the teacher.

Such clarification may reassure teachers that abuse has not occurred; but signs and symptoms which cause concern, while perhaps not a result of abuse, may nevertheless indicate that the child or his/her family is in need of intervention by statutory, voluntary or community based services through a 'child in need' referral (with parental consent).

Care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to, questions about indications of abuse. The same considerations apply when a child makes an allegation of abuse, or volunteers information which amounts to that. In some circumstances, talking to the child will quickly clarify initial concerns into a suspicion that abuse has occurred, and point to the need for an immediate referral. Staff should be aware

that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings, and the extent of questioning should, therefore, be kept to a minimum:

- Listen carefully to what the child says.
- Accept what is said.
- Take notes.
- React calmly without displaying shock or disbelief. Over reactions can frighten the child and compound feeling of guilt.
- Reassure the child and tell he/she they are not to blame. Children can often feel guilty. Remember they are the victims - never the cause!
- Don't give false reassurance e.g. "Don't worry, everything will be alright now".
- Use the words the child uses. If the child is aware that you are reluctant to use particular words she may be reluctant to use the words or may not speak at all.
- Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of **confidentiality**, although they can and should, of course, reassure that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.
- Do not ask leading questions e.g. "Did she hit you there?" or "Did he touch your private parts?" This approach may invalidate evidence, in court, at a later date and be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.
- Remember it is not your responsibility to investigate the child abuse. That is for Social Services to manage.
- It may be necessary though, to ask questions. You can prompt the child in a neutral way, with openended questions such as, "Can you say anything more about that?" Staff should not ask questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events in any way, or which impose the adult's own assumptions. For example, staff should say, "Tell me what has happened", rather than, "Did they do X to you?"
- Control your feelings towards the perpetrator, and do not criticise him/her. The child may love the perpetrator and reconciliation may be possible.
- Check out your understanding of what has happened with the child if you are not clear what is being disclosed to you.
- Explain what you have to do next and that you have to refer to the Designated Teacher.
- **Write up your notes as soon as possible afterwards to make a record of the discussion to pass on to the Designated Teacher, using the template 'Note of Concern'** (see appendix 1 proforma available in Safeguarding folder in RM Staff). **This must be completed within 24 hours.** Make sure you record time, date, location, people who were present and exactly what the child said, non-verbal behaviour.

Note, too, any injuries, bruises etc. should be described in detail but under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed or a photograph taken. Note, as well, when you referred your suspicions.

- Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred, should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used.
- Staff should also be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings. It should be emphasised that lack of proper records will not, of itself, exempt the school from any subsequent requirement to give evidence in court. It is therefore essential that accurate contemporaneous records are maintained.
- Staff should not ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record.
- It takes courage and determination for a child to tell an adult that they are being, or have been abused. Children may be frightened by the threat of violence to themselves, or other members of the family, or of being taken away from, or breaking up the family. Some children never disclose abuse and, as a result suffer throughout their childhood, and sometimes, for the rest of their lives.
- Consequently, when children confide in someone, it is usually a person they trust and with whom they feel safe.
- Seek support for yourself at **Inspire Workplaces**. Listening to children talk about their experience of being abused can be very upsetting. That in turn can affect the help you give. It is important to understand these feelings so that they do not cloud professional judgement. In these circumstances, you should have easy access to support structures. Within this context it is likely you will be encouraged not to talk about the facts of the case but, rather how you feel about the facts.

## **Record Keeping**

**All records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked filing cabinet. Only the designated teacher Mrs McGleenan and Principal Mrs G Donnelly have access to the filing cabinet. These records are kept separate from any other file which is held on the pupil.**

Child Protection Records must not be removed from the school premises, except when taken to a case planning meeting in respect of the child, or on foot of a court order. If information needs to be taken out of the school, it **must be transported securely** and a record kept of when it was removed, by whom, for what purpose, and when it was returned (See Appendix 3)

There are inherent dangers in keeping sensitive information electronically and extra care must be taken. Such information should never be held on computers to which staff or pupils could have free access, including SIMS.net. If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop or on a portable memory device, **all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.**

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff and is pursued either as a formal referral or under the school's disciplinary procedures, a summary is entered on a Record of Child Abuse Complaints book. This entry which will contain details of the complaint will be made available to the Board of Governors annually.

## **Sharing Information within the School**

Child Protection information is confidential and often highly sensitive and decisions to share, or not to share, must always be made in the interest of protecting the child if at risk of significant harm. There is also a duty to protect individuals therefore information will only be shared with staff who require access to it, in order to work in a safe and informed way with the child and family. The DT will record who information is shared with, when, and the reasons for this. All staff should understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality and the consequences of any breach.

Staff must always consider the safety and welfare of the child when making decisions about whether to share confidential information. Subject to the provisions of data protection legislation, the disclosure of confidential information is allowed when necessary to protect or safeguard a child. Conducting a Data Protection Impact Assessment DPIA may assist in assessing the risks before any sharing takes place.

## **Sharing Information with Others**

Access to child protection records should be strictly on a need-to-know basis, and a record should be kept to identify who has requested access, when and for what purpose. A DPIA should be carried out to assess and minimise risks around the sharing of personal data, particularly where the processing that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals.

Information must always be shared with other agencies where there is a legal duty to do so e.g. PSNI and Social Services. It should, however, be noted that the **PSNI have no automatic right** to access data and must complete **Form 81**, stating the data they require and the specific case to which it relates.

Consent to share information should be sought where possible, however, sharing, even without consent, will normally be justified, if there is evidence of reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering harm. Only information will be shared which is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, and is shared securely.

## **Transfer of Child Protection Records**

Past safeguarding concerns and the response to these can be significant, should concerns arise for the child at a later time. If the information, current or historical, is deemed to be relevant then it should be shared.

The Designated Teacher Mrs McGleenan is responsible for ensuring that copies of relevant child protection records are transferred to the DT of the receiving school in the most secure and appropriate manner to minimise the risk of any data breach.

When a child on whom the school holds safeguarding or child protection information leaves the school and the school are unaware of the new school they must notify the Education Welfare Service at the Education Authority who will then attempt to locate the child. Social Services must be informed immediately if the child has a Child Protection Plan or is a Looked After Child. The school must retain the child's child protection records and forward the relevant information to the receiving school when the child has been traced.

When a child **whose name is on the Child Protection Register changes school**, the Designated Teacher Mrs McGleenan will inform the receiving school immediately that his/her name is on the **Register** and pass on contact details for the social worker. School should then destroy all child protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of case conferences, and should inform the child's Case Coordinator in Social Services. The remaining child protection record should be copied, as relevant, to the new school. When considering what information is relevant advice can be sought from the CPSSS. The school to which the child is transferring should contact the child's social worker for relevant information. The leaving school can retain original copies of their own documents.

Mrs McGleenan the DT will discuss concerns directly with the DT from the receiving school in advance of sending the child protection record.

## **Closure, Retention and Disposal of Child Protection Record**

### **Closure**

When a pupil leaves the school or child protection concerns cease to be current or ongoing, and records cease to be of active use other than for reference purposes, the child's individual Child Protection File should be closed. The DT should consult the School's Disposal of Records Schedule, review the file and mark the front cover of the file indicating the date on which the file can be destroyed, for example, 30 years from the pupil's date of birth. Closing a file simply means that no further papers can be added. If new concerns arise a new file can be opened and cross-referenced with the previous record.

### **Retention of Child Protection Records**

In order to determine how long child protection records should be kept there are a number of guiding principles. The GDPR principles require that personal information should be:

- collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purpose.
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary.
- accurate and kept up to date.

School will ensure that the data protection legislation is complied with.

The potential for historical allegations to be made should also be considered in determining retention periods for child protection records.

## Retention Periods for Child Protection Records

It is recommended that, in general, child protection records should be retained by the school for the following periods:

<b>Record</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Pupil Child Protection Case Files	DOB + 30 years
The school's confidential Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely*
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register	Maintain a record of this fact and associated documentation from Social Services on the child's file while he/she continues to attend. On transfer, the school should inform the new school and destroy all social services records. The record on the Child Protection File will remain until DOB + 30 years.
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register	On transfer to a new school, the school should destroy any child protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of case conferences. The record on the Child Protection File will remain until DOB + 30 years.
<b>Complaint against a member of staff</b> Staff members file* Child's Child Protection File Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely* until totally exonerated DOB + 30 years Indefinitely*
<b>Complaint to be pursued under the school's disciplinary procedure</b> Staff members file 5 years Child's Child Protection File DOB + 30 years Record of Child Abuse Complaints Indefinitely*	

\* as a general guide 'indefinitely' should be a minimum of 40 years

The Department of Education Disposal Schedule recommends that a staff file is retained for 7 years after leaving employment. In the case of child protection concerns the file should be retained for the time periods specified in the school Child Protection Records Retention and Destruction Policy.

## Disposal

At the end of the agreed retention period records should be securely disposed of, for example, incinerated or shredded in the presence of a member of the school or entrusted to a firm specialising in the destruction of confidential material. Information held electronically within private folders on the C2k system should also be deleted within the timescales set. Following deletion the electronic records will be held securely on the centralised backup for a period of time but in due course will be overwritten and the documents removed. No evidence will remain on the C2k system.



The National Archives has issued guidance based on the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse stressing that any information which may be required by the Inquiry should not be destroyed. This principle should be applied in all cases and careful review before destruction of documents.

<https://www.csa-inquiry.independent.gov.uk/news/chair-of-the-inquiry-issues-guidance-on-destructionof-documents>

**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 2016/20 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.

## **Conduct of Staff**

Staff are aware of and adhere to the Code of Conduct which has been drawn up and agreed by the Board of Governors.

The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in their charge rests with all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, and implicit in it is the assumption that the conduct of educational establishment staff towards the children must be above reproach. This assumption holds true whatever the age, sex or maturity of the children and young people. Clearly the younger the child or young person, or the greater the degree of learning difficulties he/she has, the less likely it will be that he/she will be able to recognise and respond appropriately to an abuse by any member of staff of the trust that his/her position confers. Any abuse of that position of trust by any member of staff is unacceptable.

## **Boarding Departments/Residential Trips**

Employers, governors, management committees and senior staff have a responsibility to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children and young people; that all staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries; and that those boundaries are maintained with the sensitive support and supervision required. This is important in all educational establishments, but schools with boarding departments, and staff on residential trips, need to be particularly mindful of this responsibility, as do individuals in circumstances where there is one-to-one contact with children and young people, for example in extra-curricular activities or in counselling.

When organising residential trips it is imperative all young people must be provided with a separate bed.

## **Procedures for staff to follow in reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse during Extra Curricular Activities or Outside of School Hours**

In the eventuality of a disclosure being made to a member of staff **outside normal school hours (5.00 pm - 9.00 am.)** and in the absence of the Designated Teacher for child protection Mrs A. McGleenan, or any of the Deputy Designated Teachers - Ms O. McCourt, Ms C. Taggart, Mr P. Corrigan, Mr D. Tennyson, Mr P. Quinn, Dr M. McCoy Mr P McMaster and the Principal Mrs G. Donnelly the following procedures should be followed.

1. If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly.**

**He/she should not investigate** - this is a matter for the Social Services - but should **report these concerns immediately** to the **Regional Emergency Social work Service (028 95049999)**. A switchboard operator will take details such as the referrers contact details and nature of the call. The Telephonist will pass details to a Social Worker.

2. The **Social Worker** will ring back to the member of staff to obtain more information and advise further.
3. The member of staff must ensure that a written record is made and referred to the Designated Teacher as soon as possible.

### **Code of conduct**

The protection and promotion of the welfare of children and young people is a responsibility for all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching. In meeting this, staff should work towards a culture of mutual trust and respect in school through which the best interests of the children and young people entrusted to their care is paramount.

Naturally, implicit in this is the assumption that the conduct of school staff towards their pupil group must be above reproach. This holds true whatever the age, gender, or developmental maturity of the pupils, but clearly the younger the child, or the greater the degree of learning difficulties he/she has, the less likely it will be that he/she will be able to recognise and respond appropriately to an abuse by any member of staff or the trust that his/her position confers.

A Code of Conduct for staff in schools, teaching and non-teaching, in their contact with pupils has been drawn up and agreed by the Board of Governors and is attached at Appendix 7. Adherence to the Code will reduce the risk of allegations being made.

Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect. Members of staff should be alert to the risk of emotional abuse, such as persistent and vindictive sarcasm, verbal bullying, or severe and persistent negative comment or actions, particularly when directed consistently at a single child or young person or a small number of children or young people in a class. Such bullying behaviour is unacceptable. Members of staff should be encouraged to reflect on every aspect of their contact with children and young people which may give rise to perceptions or allegations of this form of abuse.

If a parent accuses a teacher of emotional abuse it will be investigated by the principal who will follow up on the complaint, keep a record and get back to the parent. It does not need a referral to social services

provided the issue can be resolved in school. Teacher shouting, intimidating child, child afraid to come to school etc. all constitute this.

## **Physical contact with pupils**

Integral to a clear understanding of standards of behaviour expected of staff is an understanding of the acceptable boundaries of physical contact with children and young people. The Code of Conduct makes it clear that it is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that teachers should touch pupils only in emergencies. Particularly with younger children, touching them is inevitable and can give welcome reassurance. However, teachers must bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. Children may find being touched uncomfortable or distressing for a variety of reasons. It is important for teachers to be sensitive to a child or young person's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately. It is also essential not to touch pupils in ways, or on parts of the body or in circumstances that might be considered inappropriate. It is also possible that physical contact may result in a child or young person's responding inappropriately: this may in itself be indicative of abuse in another setting, and the teacher should bring any concerns to the attention of the designated member of staff.

## **The Preventative Curriculum**

The statutory personal development curriculum requires schools to give specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships, and the development of a moral thinking and value system. 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. (DE guidance "Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools" Circular 2017/04)

1. Our school seeks to promote pupils' awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues, including those related to child protection through its curriculum. The safeguarding of children is an important focus in the school's personal development programme and is also addressed where it arises within the context of subjects. Through the preventative curriculum we aim to build the confidence, self-esteem and personal resiliencies of children so that they can develop coping strategies and can make more positive choices in a range of situations.
2. Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through whole school and year group assemblies and there is a permanent child protection notice board in the main corridor and relevant information in the student diaries, which provides advice and child helpline numbers. Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues are implemented as and when required.

## **Staff - in - service**

The school is committed to in-service training for all staff. Each member of staff annually will receive general training on Safeguarding and Child Protection and will be issued with the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers will attend specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All new members of staff will be inducted on the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures. A record of attendance will be recorded.

## **Safeguarding Meetings**

The Safeguarding Committee in school – Mrs G. Donnelly, Mrs A. McGleenan, Mrs O. McCourt, Ms C. Taggart, Mr P. Corrigan, Mr P. Quinn, Dr M. McCoy and Mr N Kelly meet monthly or more frequently if required where an up-date is provided on any student about whom there are concerns of a child protection nature, discussion takes place about further intervention or support needed and the outcome of Child Protection conferences and up-dates in relation to policy and procedures are tabled. Minutes are retained by Mrs McGleenan.

## **Reporting to Board of Governors**

Child Protection is a standing agenda item for every Board of Governor meetings and the Designated Teacher Mrs McGleenan prepares a report for the meeting of all child protection activities and a full annual report for the Board of Governors on all Child Protection matters.

The annual report includes information such as what child protection training has been provided for staff/volunteers, statistics in relation to child protection concerns e.g. the number of referrals to Social Services and number of children on the child protection register, the number of complaints against staff, any safeguarding/child protection initiatives delivered as part of the schools preventative curriculum, policy reviews undertaken. All reports **are anonymised** in keeping with the principle of confidentiality.

The school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints is made available to the Board of Governors at least annually. If an allegation is recorded anonymised information will be shared with Governors including what action was taken and the outcome of the complaint. The Temporary Chair signs and dates the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries. The Education Training Inspectorate will ask to see the Record and Chair's signature during inspections, but not the content or detail of complaints.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school will update this Policy and Procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary, and review and renew it annually. Participation and consultation with, staff, children and parents will be undertaken.

A monitoring instrument has been drawn up to be used to ensure that the agreed Policy and Procedures have been implemented. On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

**Appendix 1**

**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: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
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: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/> If 'No' state reason:
---

Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2**

**Safeguarding Action Checklist**

<b>Name of Pupil:</b>	
<b>Form Teacher:</b>	

<b>Class:</b>	
<b>Year Head:</b>	

If there is a disclosure or strong suspicion of self-harm or of suicidal intent, ensure that:

- The pupil is listened to and supported in the immediate term (e.g. is with a trusted member of staff)
- Designated Teacher /Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection informed
- Referral obtained in writing – Note of Concern completed
- Parents/guardians/carers are informed:  
  
By Telephone   
  
Meeting   
  
Other: (Please state) \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent/carer comes to school for the pupil and he/she leaves in their care (parents/carers/carers are advised to monitor the child closely)

Teachers' Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Time:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

- Parents are advised to take their child to the GP and ask for a mental state assessment and appropriate action. (Concerns around negligence regarding a child's mental health needs should be followed up through the normal safeguarding procedures)

- The designated teacher or deputy designated teacher follow up with Parent/guardian/carer within a short time frame if they have not contacted DT or DDT to inform of outcome of appointment. (This should be as soon as possible but **must be on the same day** the incident has occurred).

- Longer-term support is sought for the young person as appropriate

- Referral to school counsellor

- Referral to CAMHS

- Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

- Teachers' support needs are identified and action taken if appropriate

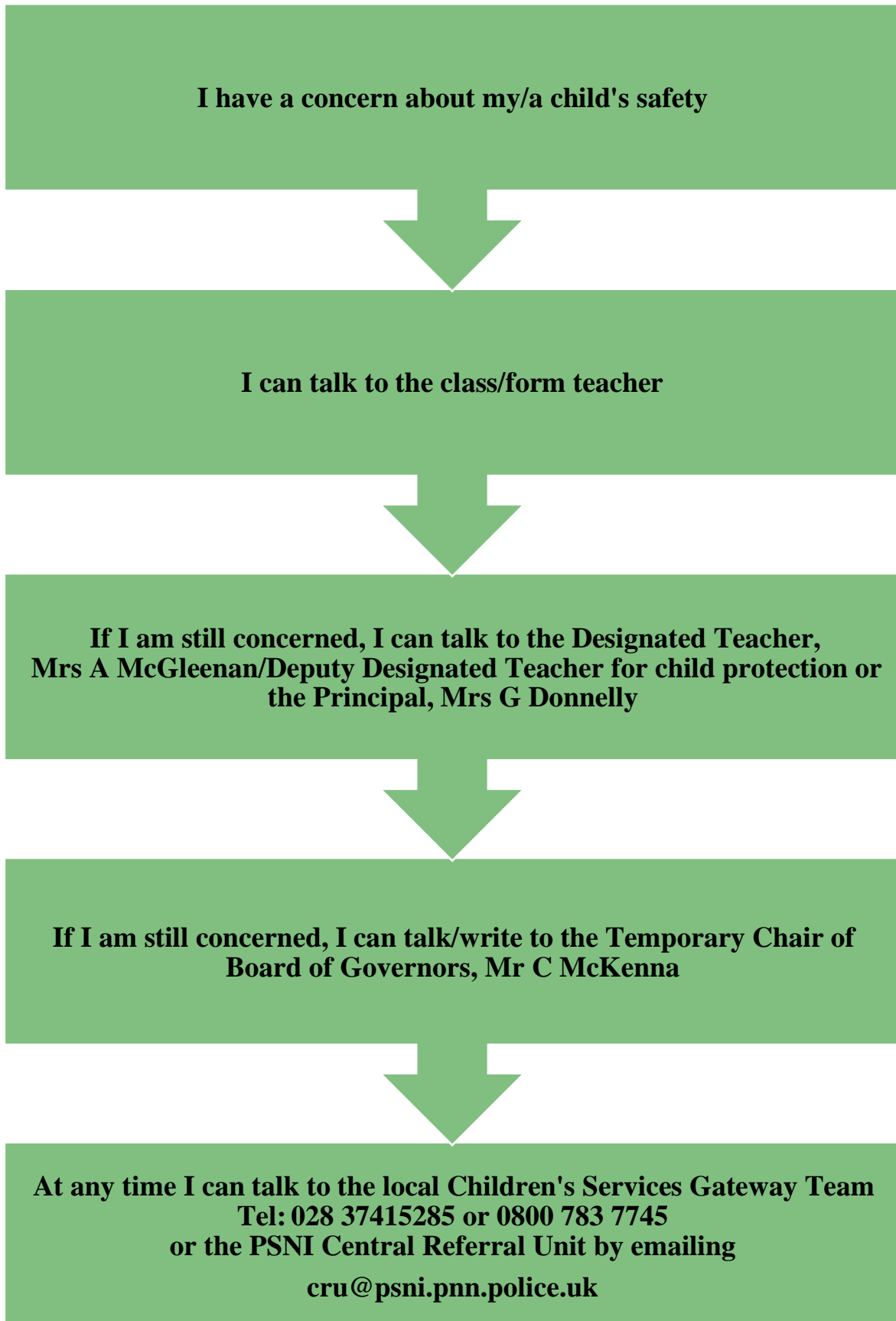
**Copy to SG Team**





## Appendix 4

### How can a parent make a complaint



## Appendix 5

### Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff

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

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

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

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

**Child Protection referral is required**  
Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

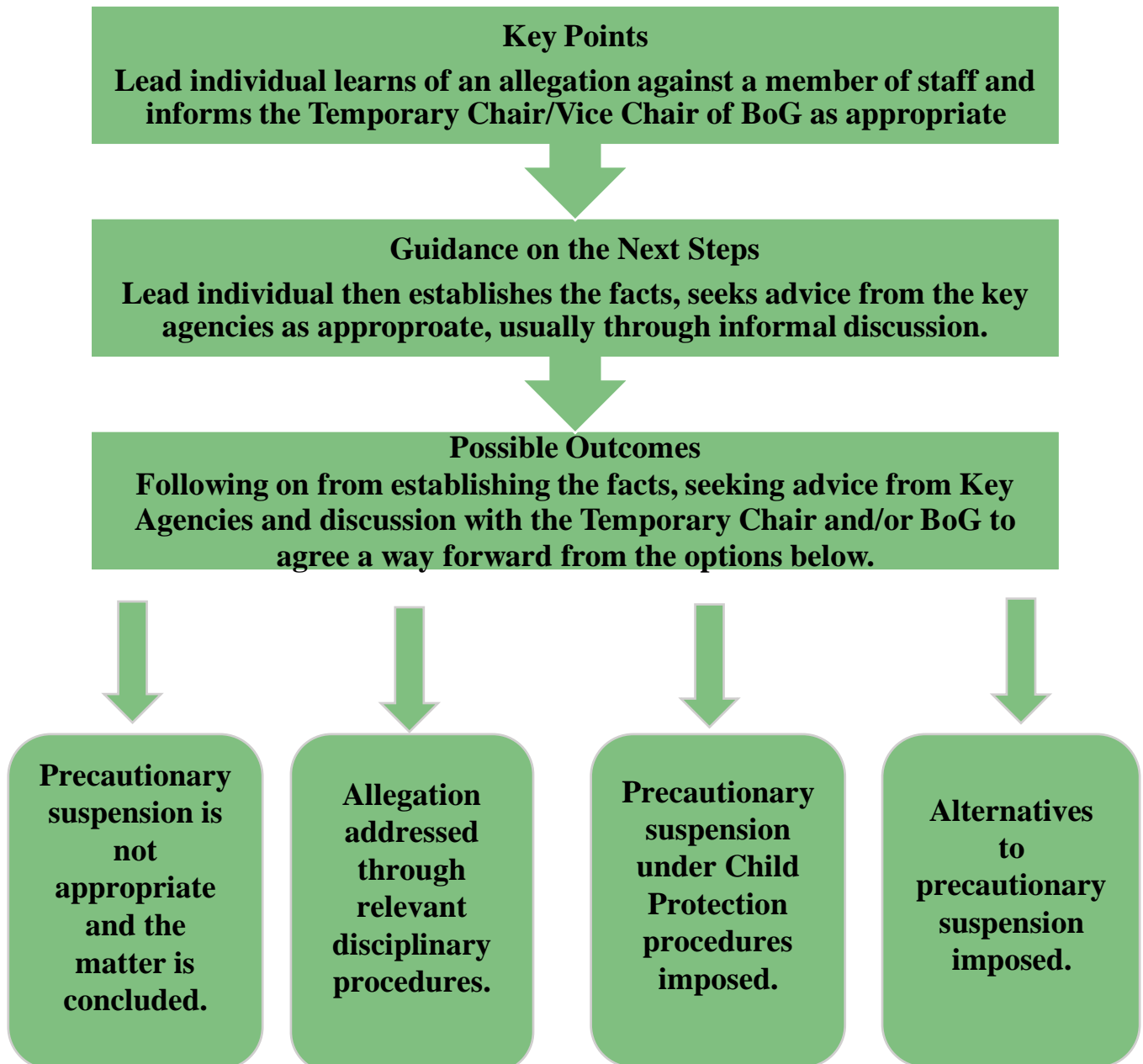
**Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.**

**Child Protection referral is not required**  
Schools may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

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

## Appendix 6

### Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff



## Appendix 7

### A Code of Conduct for Staff in SJS Regarding Contact with Children/Young People

#### Introduction

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 children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within SJS. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child protection, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on student conduct. Proven breaches of the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action.

#### Code of Conduct

##### 1. Setting an Example

- (a) All staff and volunteers who work in SJS are expected to set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by students. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- (b) All staff and volunteers should demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our students to do likewise.
- (c) All staff and volunteers must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct by following SJS school policies and procedures.
- (d) All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all SJS school policies and procedures.
- (e) All staff and personnel contracted to do work in the school are expected to carry out their work professionally with regards to staff and students. School business **should not** be discussed outside of school.

##### 2. Conduct at staff functions

All staff are expected to demonstrate high standards of behaviour mindful of their professional status. Failure to adhere to these standards risk bringing the school into disrepute.

##### 3. Safeguarding Pupils/Students

- (a) All staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- (b) The duty to safeguard students includes the duty to report concerns about a student or colleague to a member of the school's Safeguarding team (Designated Teacher (DT) Mrs A McGleenan/Deputy Designated Teachers (DDT) for Child Protection Mrs O. McCourt, Ms C. Taggart, Mr D. Tennyson, Mr P. Corrigan, Mr P. Quinn, Dr M. McCoy, Mr P Mc Master or the Principal Mrs G Donnelly).

- (c) All staff and volunteers are provided with electronic copies of the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and must be familiar with this document and other relevant school policies.
- (d) All staff and volunteers should treat children with respect and dignity. They must not demean or undermine students, their parents, carers or colleagues.
- (e) All staff and volunteers should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.
- (f) All staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff should also complete risk assessments where appropriate in accordance with school policies e.g. school trips.

#### **4. Relationships with Students**

- (a) Relationships with students must be professional at all times, sexual relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to an abuse of trust and criminal conviction. This includes online communication via any social platform.
- (b) If staff are tutoring a student outside of school, it is strongly recommended that staff do not tutor SJS students.  
The following must be adhered to:
  - They do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of their daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring.
  - They emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school.
  - No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally.
  - No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises.
  - Staff should note they should not take any alternative employment during their contracted hours for work i.e. as per their contracted employment in adherence with the Attendance Policy. Staff **MUST NOT** undertake work during sick leave or maternity without prior consultation with the principal – see Attendance Policy

#### **5. Private Meetings with Students**

- (a) Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual students. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews, preferably with another member of staff present, in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- (b) Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- (c) Where possible another student or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview, and the school should take active measures to facilitate this.

## **6. Pupil/Student Development**

- (a) All staff and volunteers must comply with SJS school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of students.
- (b) All staff and volunteers must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of students.

## **7. Honesty and Integrity**

- (a) All staff and volunteers must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- (b) As a rule, a member of staff should never accept gifts other than those of a trivial nature, nor allow extravagance in any entertainment received or given. In particular, any member of staff involved in contracts with suppliers, or in the placing of contracts with prospective suppliers, should not accept a gift or offer of hospitality. Extreme caution should be exercised where an offer of gift, favour or hospitality is made and the following guidance should be adhered to when any such offer is received.

The following would be acceptable:

- Isolated gifts of a trivial nature eg diaries, bottle of wine, box of chocolates (to a maximum value of £30)
- Conventional hospitality, provided it is normal and reasonable in the circumstances.

With the exception of the above, staff must consult with and gain approval from the relevant Line Manager or the Principal before accepting any hospitality, favour or gift. Details of all offers of gifts irrespective of value whether accepted or not, must be recorded in the School Gift and Hospitality Log maintained by the school bursar Ann McCall.

Where approval is not granted for the acceptance of gifts, they must be returned to the sender.

- (c) Staff must not accept cash payments from any contractor/supplier/outside user and any approach of such nature should be reported to the bursar.

## **8. Conduct Outside of Work**

- (a) All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/ volunteers own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- (b) In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are to be regarded as unacceptable.
- (c) Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. It should not contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Staff should seek advice from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

## **9. Out of School and After-School Activities**

Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. The more relaxed relationships that may promote successful activities can be misinterpreted by young people. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of Staff should be no different to that which applies within school. Staff should be aware of the particular care, which should be taken with older, more mature students in these circumstances.

## **10. Physical Contact with Students**

- (a) As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their students.
- (b) It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch students only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- (c) Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.(DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (Power of member of staff to restrain students).
- (d) Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- (e) Staff who have to administer first-aid to a student should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
- (f) Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the student, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- (g) Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to his/her HoD or SLT.
- (h) Staff should be particularly careful when supervising students in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to students in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

## **11. Choice and Use of Teaching Materials**

- (a) Staff should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice - PD materials.
- (b) When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by students or by the teacher, might after the event be criticised.

- (c) If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.

## **12. Relationships and Attitudes**

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of SJS staff should ensure that their relationships with students are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the students, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

All staff are expected to set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

## **13. Visitors to SJS**

In the interests of safety and child protection all visitors to school should immediately on arrival report to reception where they will be issued with a visitor pass which must be returned upon leaving the school. All visitors must comply with the School Visitors Policy and Procedures – Appendix 9. Failure to do so may result in the visitor's escorted departure from the school.

## **14. Personal letters**

It will rarely be appropriate for staff to write personal notes, letters, phone texts, or to send e-mail, to individual students. If a teacher believes it to be necessary to write a personal note to a student, s/he should discuss the purpose and context with a senior colleague, who should refer to the Principal or Designated Teacher if they require further advice.

## **15. E-Safety and Internet Use**

- (a) Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the schools' **Acceptable Use** and **Social Media Policy for Staff and Twitter Social Media Acceptable Use Policy for Staff, Remote Teaching Policy** at all times both inside and outside of work. This advice is not intended to curtail the use of email or texting where SJS has agreed the use of this medium for submission of work, advice over aspects of subjects being covered or other professional matters and have ensured that parents and carers are aware of the school's policy. However, all staff and other adults using e-mail or texting in this context need to be aware of the less formal style that can characterise this form of communication and should ensure that responses do not convey an inappropriate tone. In particular, a friendly and chatty style committed to e-mail or text can easily be misconstrued by the recipient as the 'conversation' is effectively private to just two individuals, with all that this implies.
- (b) Staff and volunteers must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff and volunteers should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.
- (c) Staff should exercise caution in their personal use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.



- (d) Staff should keep passwords secure and ensure that no other person can gain access to their e-mail account and maliciously send messages which appear to have been written by them. Any email communication between staff and pupils should be restricted to school related business. All such emails must be conducted using the C2K email accounts, even if they are sending messages while working at home as these services can be monitored, they provide a measure of protection for both parties as detailed in the Computer Access, Internet, Email and Printing Policy. If staff or students receive inappropriate e-mail or text messages from any source they should inform the Principal or a member of SLT immediately.
- (e) Staff should not use their personal/home phones to contact students. Staff can use the school mobile phone, school App or the text2parents facility which enables sending text messages to mobile phones or landlines. This system offers protection as it can be monitored as a delivery report is available which records what messages were sent and to whom. As the system is web-based it can be used from anywhere and is protected by a SSL 128 bit certificate.
- (f) The increased availability of internet 'chat rooms' and similar on-line forums also poses risks for children and staff. While they are popular among young people and offer many positive experiences, there is widespread concern about their potential abuse by paedophiles attempting to groom new victims. The Education Authorities advice is that staff should not use unregulated chat rooms for children and should be aware that it is impossible to determine the age of any participant in these environments. Managed services are available in which on-line discussions for educational purposes can be organized in a secure environment for bona fide participants. C2K can provide advice on these and other related facilities.
- (g) Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given.

Photographs/stills or video footage of students should preferably be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and where possible a member of staff should see parental consent. Any member of staff attending an event where they wish to take pictures and post at that time using their own device should inform Mrs McGleenan in writing that they will be attending an event and that they will be taking such pictures/recordings. The member of staff should then delete the resultant files/recordings from the device when uploaded, posted or saved.

## **16. Use of school lap-top/digital/electronic equipment**

The computer equipment, software and services provided are the property of St. Joseph's Grammar School. They are provided to staff for the duration of their period as a teacher at this school and should not be used for personal use. Use of school lap-top/digital/electronic equipment should be used in line with the Computer Access, Internet, E-Mail and Printing Policy. Staff should be aware that the security of private information and data is their responsibility. Staff are advised that simply deleting files does not permanently remove them.

## **17. Confidentiality**

- (a) Members of staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional

highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.

- (b) Members of staff should never share information with a third party about staff, students or incidents which have been recorded in school. All staff should understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality and the consequences of any breach.
- (c) Confidential information about students should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the student's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.
- (d) There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on **without delay**, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.
- (e) If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Teacher Mrs A McGleenan, Principal or Deputy Designated Teachers. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Principal Mrs G Donnelly.
- (f) Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support students, they must not promise confidentiality or request students to do the same under any circumstances.
- (g) Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Designated Teacher Mrs A McGleenan, or to the Principal Mrs G Donnelly **without delay**.

## **Conclusion**

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, staff' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of staff this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. If staff have any doubts about points in this policy, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult SLT or a representative of their professional association.

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children/young people and their manner and approach to individual children/young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children/young people or of their parents/guardians.

## Appendix 7



# SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION CUMHDACH/COSAINT LEANAÍ



In St. Joseph's Grammar we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge. In all their contact with pupils all staff in St. Joseph's follow the guidelines and procedures described in the DENI publication 'Pastoral Care in School – Child Protection' (1999) and St. Joseph's Child Protection Policy & Procedures.

**Safeguarding Team members include:**



**Mrs A. Mc Gleenan**  
(Vice-Principal)  
Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection



**Mrs G. Donnelly**  
(Principal)  
Deputy Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection



**Mrs O. McCourt**  
(Vice-Principal)  
Deputy Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection  
K.S. 5 Contact



**Mr P. Quinn**  
(Senior Teacher)  
Deputy Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection



**Mr P. Corrigan**  
(Senior Teacher)  
Deputy Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection



**Dr M. McCoy**  
(Senior Teacher)  
Deputy Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection



**Ms C. Taggart**  
(Senior Teacher)  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher for Child  
Protection



**Mr C. McKenna**  
Chair of Governors



**Ms L. Lavery**  
Designated Governor  
for Child Protection



**Mr N. Kelly**  
(Senior Teacher  
– LSC) Deputy  
Designated Teacher for  
Child Protection

In all cases of suspected child abuse the action that will be taken in St. Joseph's is that of informing Social Services and the EA.



Alternatively you can telephone:  
**Childline on 0800 1111**  
or  
**NSPCC on 0800 800 555**  
or  
**Lifeline 24hr on 0808 808 8000**  
or



**Regional Emergency Social Work Services on 028 9504 9999**

These calls are free and will not show up on your home landline phone bill.

**THEY WILL HELP YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO NEXT**

## **Appendix 8**

### **St Joseph's Grammar School Donaghmore School Visitors Policy and Procedures**

#### **Policy Statement**

The Governing Body assures all visitors a warm, friendly and professional welcome to St Joseph's Grammar School, whatever the purpose of their visit.

The School has a legal duty of care for the health, safety, security and wellbeing of all pupils and staff. This duty of care incorporates the duty to "safeguard" all pupils from subjection to any form of harm, abuse or nuisance. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body and senior staff to ensure that this duty is not compromised at any time.

In performing this duty, the Governing Body recognises that there can be no complacency where child protection and safeguarding procedures are concerned. The School therefore requires that **ALL VISITORS** (without exception) to comply with the following policy and procedures. Failure so to do may result in the visitor's escorted departure from the school site.

#### **Policy Responsibility**

Mrs A McGleenan, is the member of staff responsible for implementation, coordination and review of this policy. Mrs A McGleenan will also be responsible for liaising with the reception staff to ensure compliance. All breaches of this procedure must be reported to Mrs A. McGleenan Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

The Bursar Mrs A McCall is to ensure compliance by all contract and maintenance personnel and is to advise Mrs A McGleenan accordingly.

#### **Aim**

To safeguard all children under this school's responsibility both during school hours curriculum and out of school hours activities which are arranged by the school.

#### **Objectives**

To have in place a clear protocol and procedure for the admittance of external visitors to the school which is understood by all staff, governors, visitors and parents and conforms to child protection and safeguarding guidelines.

#### **Where and to whom the policy applies**

The school is deemed to have control and responsibility for its pupils anywhere on the school site (i.e. within the school boundary fence), during normal school hours, during after school activities and on school organised (and supervised) off-site activities. The policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the school
- All external visitors entering the school site during the school day or for after school activities (including music tutors, peripatetic tutors, sports coaches, and topic related visitors e.g. authors, journalists)
- All governors of the school
- All parents and volunteers

- All pupils
- Other Education related personnel (Advisors, Inspectors etc)
- Building & Maintenance and all other Independent contractors visiting the school premises
- Independent contractors who may transport students on minibuses or in taxis

## **Protocol and Procedures**

### **Visitors to the School**

- All pre-arranged visitors will receive a visitor's policy in advance of their visit. Casual visitors will be instructed on the procedures on arrival.
- All visitors to the school may be asked to bring formal identification with them at the time of their visit (unless they are named on the approved visitors/contractors list as set out below). They must follow the procedure below.
- Once on site, all visitors must **report to reception first**. **No visitor** is permitted to enter the school via any other entrance under any circumstances.
- At reception, all visitors must state the purpose of their visit and who has invited them. They should be ready to produce formal identification upon request.
- All visitors will be asked to sign the Visitors Record Book which is kept in reception at all times making note of their name, organisation, who they are visiting and car registration.
- All visitors will be required to wear an identification badge – the badge must remain visible throughout their visit.
- Visitors will then be escorted to their point of contact **OR** their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitor. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site. The visitor must not be allowed to move about the site unaccompanied unless they are registered on the Approved Visitor List
- Visitors should not have any unauthorised contact with pupils and access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.
- If delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic all visitors/contractors must adhere to Government legislation and guidance under COVID-19.

## **Approved Visitor List**

The School will hold an approved visitor list for visitors who frequently visit the school site to undertake work within the school (including contractors and supply staff).

To qualify for this list the visitor must have demonstrated, prior to the visit that:

a) They have a current clear Enhanced Access NI Check

Visitors on the Approved List **MUST** follow the same procedures on entry to the premises (i.e. come to reception and sign in the visitors book). A copy of the approved visitor list will be kept behind reception at all times.

## **Visitors' Departure from School**

On departing the school, visitors **MUST** leave via reception and:

- Enter their departure time in the Visitors Record Book alongside their arrival entry
- Return the identification badge to reception
- A member of staff should escort the visitor to the reception.

## **Unknown/Uninvited Visitors to the School**

Any visitor to the school site who is **not wearing** an identity badge should be challenged politely to enquire who they are and their business on the school site.

They should then be escorted to reception to sign the visitors book and be issued with an identity badge.

The procedures under “Visitors to the School” above will then apply. In the event that the visitor refuses to comply, they should be asked to leave the site immediately and a member of the SLT informed.

The SLT member will consider the situation and decide if it is necessary to inform the police. If an unknown/uninvited visitor becomes abusive or aggressive, they will be asked to leave the site immediately and warned that if they fail to leave the school grounds, police assistance will be called for.

## **Staff Development**

As part of their induction, new staff will be made conversant with this policy for External Visitors and asked to ensure compliance with its procedures at all times.

## **Linked policies**

This policy and procedures should be read in conjunction with other related school policies, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Fire Policy

**Policy Review**

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually or in light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Visitor/Contractor

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Addresses and Telephone Numbers

### Education Authority Child Protection Support Service

Tel: 028 95985590

### Designated Officers for Child Protection:

Jennifer Mc Cann	jennifer.mccann@eani.org
Cathy Mc Cann	cathy.mccann@eani.org
Kathryn Anderson	kathryn.anderson@eani.org
Paula McCreesh	paula.mccreesh@eani.org

Tel: 028 38341975

### Children and Young People

Refer to Gateway Team using UNOCINI form – within 24 hours

**Duty Social Worker Gateway Team (Health & Social Care Trusts) Gateway Teams Contact Number Northern Trust 028 94424459 Southern Trust 028 3741 5285 Western Trust 028 71314090 Out of Hours for All Areas 028 9504 9999**

### Vulnerable Adults: Adult protection Gateway Service

Refer to local Care and protection Team – within 24 hours

**Northern Trust 028 27661391 Southern Trust 028 37415285 Western Trust 028 71611366**

### PSNI

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

The office is open Monday to Friday 8am to 9pm and weekends and public holidays 9.00am to 5.00pm.

**The CRU can only be contacted by email [cru@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:cru@psni.pnn.police.uk)**

### Gateway Service – (Referrals)

Tel: 028 37415285

0800 783 7745

### Family Intervention Team - Dungannon

E Floor

South Tyrone Hospital

Dungannon

BT71 4AU

Tel: 028 3756 5352

### Family Support and Intervention Team - Cookstown & Magherafelt

2 Westland Road Cookstown

BT80 8BXTel:

Tel: 028 8672 3938



**Family Intervention Team – Armagh**

Lisanally House  
Lisanally Lane  
Armagh  
Co Armagh  
BT61 7HW

Tel: 028 37522262

**The Regional Emergency Social Work Service (Out of Hours)**

028 95049999 5.00pm - 9.00am

**NI Childline**

Tel: 0870 336 2945

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline**

24 hours Call Free  
Tel: 0800 800 555

**Inspire Workplaces**

Central Office  
Lombard House  
10-20 Lombard Street  
Belfast  
BT1 1RD

Tel: 028 9032 8474

**Helpline**

0800 389 5362 (UK)