



Child Protection Policy

Designated Teacher:

Mrs Grace Breen

Deputy Designated Teacher:

Mr Sean Denvir

Designated Governor for Child Protection:

Mrs Mary Merron

Chair of the Board of Governors:

Mr Peter Merron

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Addendum to St. Mary's Portaferry, Child Protection Policy
Covid 19 Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

1.MISSION STATEMENT

Mission Statement

“Let your light shine”

We aim to create a calm and caring school family within a climate of joy, freedom, respect, challenge, co-operation and celebration. We strive to provide opportunities for the development of the whole person, so that as well as succeeding intellectually, each child will also be supported in developing their imagination, creativity, spirituality, emotional, physical and social skills. This is reinforced by maintaining home-school-parish links with the child at its centre.

Crucial to the creation of this environment is a commitment to the Christian values of love, faith, justice and peace. This is within a culture of tolerance, where each member of the school family, be they child, staff member or parent, is recognised, welcomed, respected and cherished.

We aim to establish a community which promotes a spirit of charity, social justice, global awareness and concern for others leading to practical outreach and partnerships. In doing so, we will enable the children to lead fulfilling and purposeful lives which will contribute to the wider world. Our school aims to be person-centred, promoting the dignity, self-esteem and full development of everyone in the school community, as we are each made in God's image and uniquely loved by God.

SCHOOL ROLE

This policy is based on the ‘Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools 2017’, ‘Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016’, DENI circular (2015/13), and the ‘Area Child Protection Committee’s Regional Policy and Procedures 2005’. The systems in place for safeguarding children involve joint working and shared decision making by the professionals and agencies involved.

Children’s needs must always come first.

At St Mary’s Primary School, we have a pastoral responsibility towards young people in our care, and by law must take all reasonable steps to ensure that children’s welfare is protected. We will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment where each child is valued for his/her unique talents and abilities and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. We also aim to empower pupils to help them deal with any situation in which their own welfare or safety, or the safety/welfare of any other child may be compromised.

The purpose of the policy and procedures on Safeguarding and Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

We recognise that 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.

Principles

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

- In any incident the child’s or young person’s welfare is paramount; this overrides all other considerations;
- It is a child’s right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously; (Articles 12 and 19: United Nation Conventions on the Rights of a Child);
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved;
- An appropriate balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child’s interest must always come first. All efforts should be made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the child’s safety;

- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met. Sound decision-making depends on the fullest possible understanding of the child or young person's circumstances and their needs. This involves effective information sharing, strong organisational governance and leadership, collaboration and understanding between families, agencies, individuals and professionals;
- Decisions and action taken must be considered, well informed and based on outcomes that are sensitive to, and take into account of, the child's specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed needs.

2. RELATED POLICIES

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

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Management and Discipline policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Educational Visits
- E-Safety Policy
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care
- Privacy Notice
- Records Management Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Use of Mobile Phone/Cameras
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Whistleblowing Policy

These policies are available to parents and any parent requiring a copy should contact the school office or visit the school website on www.stmaryspsportaferry.com

3. KEY PRINCIPLES OF SAFEGUARDING

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

(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016)

Physical Safety

The school aims to provide a safe environment for the children. It has a secured perimeter fence, a secured access/entry system to all areas (including mobile buildings). Children are supervised during break and lunch times and good behaviour and care for others is encouraged in order to reduce the frequency of minor accidents/incidents.

The school maintains a record of visitors in its Approved Visitor Registration Book which is kept in the main school office. Visitors must sign in upon arrival and will be issued with a visitor's pass. This pass must be returned when the person signs out upon departure.

Online Safety

Parental permission is sought for use of the internet in school. The school provides filtered internet access to pupils and staff on the C2k network. Children are taught how to stay safe online through class lessons e.g. CEOP activities, talks during Internet Safety Day and activities on the dangers of cyber bullying, during Anti-Bullying week in November.

Children do not have access to mobile phones during the school day (see Mobile Phone Policy).

Health and Safety

E.A. Central Contracts ensure that the site is secure and its contents are fit for purpose. Fire alarms are tested regularly. Fire equipment, PE equipment, drinking water, electrical appliances etc. are checked annually and the findings reported and logged. Fire drills are carried out termly. The Building Supervisor monitors cold and hot water temperatures in order to comply with E.A. recommendations with regard to Legionella. The School Kitchen is regularly inspected and graded by Food Hygiene (Environmental Health Service).

Risk Assessments

The school has a risk assessment policy containing individual risk assessments as recommended by the Education Authority. Risk assessments are carried out regularly to ensure the on-going safety of the children all around the school premises, both indoor and outdoor. Risk assessments are also carried out for any occasion that the children are off school premises in the care of a teacher. This includes educational trips, sporting events, swimming lessons and residential trips.

Child Protection

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on what constitutes child abuse and the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected or reported.

The Principal, Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher, Designated Governor and Chairperson of the Board of Governors undergo initial and subsequent refresher training (every two years) in Safeguarding and Child Protection. This is delivered by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

All other staff, teaching and non-teaching, receive induction training and then refresher training at least every two years within school from the Designated Teacher. This is normally held each August with a record of attendance kept and catch-up training given.

The overriding concern of all these adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child. The welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

4. SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING TEAM

School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of our school Safeguarding Team

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|--|------------------------|
| ✓ Designated Teacher: | <u>Mrs Grace Breen</u> |
| ✓ Deputy Designated Teacher: | <u>Mr Sean Denvir</u> |
| ✓ Designated Governors for Child Protection: | <u>Mrs Mary Merron</u> |
| ✓ Chair of the Board of Governors: | <u>Mr Peter Merron</u> |

The responsibilities of the team will include:

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

Board of Governors

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

- They receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff.
- The school maintains the following child protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools: Safeguarding and child protection concerns; disclosures of abuse; allegations against staff and actions taken to investigate and deal with outcomes; staff induction and training.

The Chair of the Board of Governors

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

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

The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries.

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding/Child Protection

The Designated Governor should avail of Safeguarding/Child Protection awareness training delivered by CPSS and will take the lead in Child Protection issues in order to advise the Governors on:

- The role of the Designated Teachers
- The content of Safeguarding and Child Protection policies
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff

The Designated Teacher (DT)

Every school is required to have a DT and DDT with responsibility for child protection. These are highly skilled roles developed and supported through a structured training programme, requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues. 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.
- Having 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 Officers for Child Protection.
- Keeping the school Principal informed.

- Taking the lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy.
- The promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.
- Compiling written reports to the BoG regarding child protection

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

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

The Principal

The Principal, as the Secretary to the Board of Governors, will assist the Board of Governors 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 the Department of Education is shared promptly, and termly inclusion of child protection activities on the Board of Governors' meeting agenda.

In addition, the Principal takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

The Principal must ensure that:

- He attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- A Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed
- All staff receive Safeguarding/Child Protection training
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed
- Child Protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates and annual report are provided.
- The school's Safeguarding/Child Protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this policy at least once every 2 years
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis
- All unsupervised volunteers, coaches and tutors are vetted prior to beginning their work with the children and are made aware of safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements.

All Members of School Staff and Volunteers

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations (Annex A of DENI Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Schools Guide 2017), including reporting

of offences - Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children.

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

They should remember the 5 Rs:

Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record, Refer.

The member of staff and volunteers must:

- refer concerns to the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher (and the Principal)
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- act promptly
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (**Note of Concern Appendix 3**)
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding Safeguarding children
- **Not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- **Not** investigate
- **Not** ask leading questions.

The class teacher should keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

If any member of the Support Staff has concerns about a child or staff member, they should report these concerns to the DT/DDT. A detailed written record of the concerns will be made available and any further necessary action will be taken.

We will take seriously any concerns which are raised about a pupil in our school who has self-harmed and/or has expressed suicidal thoughts.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will immediately follow the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures.

At no time will school be involved in investigating abuse. The role of the school is to inform the relevant outside agencies of its suspicions.

The purpose of these procedures is to protect vulnerable children by ensuring that all members of staff have guidance on the action to be taken and the inter-agency management of situations where abuse or neglect is evident or suspected.

These guidelines define child abuse and outline the action to be taken when it is known or suspected that a child is at risk, or has been subjected to abuse. Often teachers or other members of staff may feel that reporting alleged abuse may be disloyal to the child. They may also be concerned that it may damage their relationship with the child's parents. There is

also concern that should the referral turn out to be unfounded, this may lead to the child's parents or others seeking legal redress.

In spite of this, it must be remembered that a staff member's first and foremost obligation is to the child. Reporting facts in accordance with agreed procedures will not put any member of staff at risk.

REMEMBER: IF IN DOUBT - REPORT

Guidance for Visitors

Visitors to St Mary's, such as parents (members of the PSG), suppliers of goods and services to carry out maintenance etc. do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors will be managed by the staff of St Mary's and their access to areas and movement within school will be restricted as needs required.

- Visitors will be met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- 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.

Parents/Carers

References to 'parent' have the same meaning as anyone with 'Parental Responsibility' as defined in the Article 6 of the Children Order ie 'all rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property'. In practical terms, it means the responsibility to care for, and the right to make important decisions about, the child.

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, the school will help parents/carers to understand its responsibility for the welfare of all the children and young people in its charge.

It should be clear that the school will always protect the best interests of the child and, in cases of suspected abuse, may refer cases direct to the investigative agencies. It is important that parents take time to read these policies and know they are required to 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;
- Parents/carers of primary school children should tell the teacher if there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school;

- Parents/carers should contact the school if their child is absent and send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence.

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so that the school is kept well informed as to the child's situation
- informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school
- letting the school know in advance if there are changes to children's living arrangements
- being aware of other relevant school policies
- reporting to the office when they visit school
- raising any concerns, they may have in relation to their child or any other child within the school

More information on Parental Responsibility can be found on the website:

www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection

Record Keeping

All Safeguarding/Child Protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked cabinet. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by the Designated Teacher, the Deputy Designated Teacher and the Principal.

Transfer of Records

All procedures regarding transfer of records are from Circular 2016/20 (section 6). Under the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) (Transitional) Regulations (NI) 2007, Boards of Governors make arrangements to transfer a formal record of a pupil's academic achievements, other skills and abilities and progress within 15 school days of a pupil transferring schools. The requirement does not include the transfer of child protection records. However, where there have been, or are, current concerns about a pupil we will consider what information should be shared with the new school. Past and current safeguarding concerns and the response to these will be shared if deemed relevant by the safeguarding team.

The Designated Teacher 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 St Mary's Primary School holds safeguarding or child protection information leaves the school and the school are unaware of the new school we will notify the Education Welfare Service at the Education Authority who will then attempt to locate the child. Social Services will be informed immediately if the child has a Child Protection Plan or is a Looked After Child. School will 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 leaves our school, the DT will inform the receiving school immediately that his/her name is on the Register and pass on contact details for the key social worker. All child protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of case conferences will be destroyed and the child's Case

Co-ordinator in Social Services is informed of this being completed. The remaining child protection record will be copied, as relevant, to the new school. When the DT & DDT consider what information is relevant advice will be sought from the CPSS. The school to which the child is transferring should contact the child's social worker for relevant information. We will retain original copies of our own documents in line with circular 2016/20 guidance.

DT will discuss concerns directly with the DT from the receiving school in advance of sending the child protection record securely. This will be done preferably by hand or recorded delivery.

Appointment of Staff

All staff (paid or unpaid) appointed to St Mary's Primary School, are vetted in accordance with relevant legislation and to DENI guidance. Substitute Teachers are employed through NISTR. All adults working on a regular basis with our pupils will be vetted through Access NI. Volunteers brought in on irregular basis will be supervised by a member of staff.

Confidentiality

Child Protection arrangements will seek to maintain the necessary balance between protecting children and respecting the rights of parents, families/carers and members of staff.

5. Child Protection Definitions

Definition of Harm

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

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 on-going information sharing is key between professionals.

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

Harm can be caused by:

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

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.

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

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child 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.

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

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

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

Signs & Symptoms of Abuse – Possible indicators

Physical Abuse

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
Unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing – grip marks on arms; slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns	Self-destructive tendencies; aggressive to other children; behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive);

<p>especially cigarette burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions;</p> <p>untreated injuries;</p> <p>bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</p>	<p>appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults;</p> <p>improbable excuses to explain injuries;</p> <p>chronic runaway;</p> <p>uncomfortable with physical contact;</p> <p>come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home;</p> <p>clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories</p>
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Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Well below average in height and weight; “failing to thrive”;</p> <p>poor hair and skin; alopecia;</p> <p>swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet;</p> <p>recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling;</p> <p>sudden speech disorders;</p> <p>signs of self-mutilation;</p> <p>signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness);</p> <p>extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).</p>	<p>Apathy and dejection;</p> <p>inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;</p> <p>rocking/head banging;</p> <p>inability to play;</p> <p>indifference to separation from family</p> <p>indiscriminate attachment;</p> <p>reluctance for parental liaison;</p> <p>fear of new situation;</p> <p>chronic runaway;</p> <p>attention seeking/needing behaviour;</p> <p>poor peer relationships.</p>

Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Looks very thin, poorly and sad;</p> <p>constant hunger; lack of energy;</p> <p>untreated medical problems;</p> <p>special needs of child not being met;</p> <p>constant tiredness; inappropriate dress;</p> <p>poor hygiene;</p> <p>repeatedly unwashed; smelly;</p> <p>repeated accidents, especially burns.</p>	<p>Tired or listless (falls asleep in class);</p> <p>steals food; compulsive eating;</p> <p>begging from class friends;</p> <p>withdrawn; lacks concentration;</p> <p>misses school medicals;</p> <p>reports that no carer is at home;</p> <p>low self-esteem;</p> <p>persistent non-attendance at school;</p> <p>exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.</p>

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
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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.	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; over 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.
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In addition to the types of abuse described above, there are also some specific types of abuse that we in St. Mary's are aware of and have therefore included them in our policy. Please see these in [Appendix 1](#)

Children with Increased Vulnerabilities

Some children have increased risk of abuse due to specific vulnerabilities such as disability, lack of fluency in English and sexual orientation. We have included information about children with increased vulnerabilities in our policy. Please see these in [Appendix 2](#)

Guidelines for use by Staff, should a child disclose concerns of a Child Protection nature

Do:	Do not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Listen to what the child says ✓ Assure the child they are not at fault ✓ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret ✓ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words ✓ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality ✓ Stay calm ✓ Listen ✓ Accept ✓ Reassure ✓ Explain what you are going to do ✓ Record accurately ✓ Seek support for yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Ask leading questions. ✗ Put words into the child's mouth. ✗ Ignore the child's behaviour. ✗ Remove any clothing. ✗ Panic ✗ Promise to keep secrets ✗ Ask leading questions ✗ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily ✗ Delay ✗ Start to investigate ✗ Do Nothing

6. Responding to a Safeguarding concern

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.

Disclosure of Abuse

What should teachers and support staff do if a case of abuse is disclosed or alleged?

A child may quite innocently disclose details of abuse that occurs within the family or a child may confide in a member of staff as the one adult he/she can trust.

It is important that the teacher is sympathetic and supportive. He/she should always believe what the child is saying – research has shown that children rarely fabricate allegations of sexual abuse.

- The staff member should remain calm and reassuring-children who have been abused often have low self-esteem and may withdraw if they detect signs of doubt etc.

DO NOT DISPLAY SIGNS OF SHOCK OR DISBELIEF

- The staff member should listen carefully. He/she should never ask leading questions, attempt to cross-examine the child, impose the adult's own assumption or press for evidence. e.g. Do not say "What did he do next?" This can later be interpreted as putting ideas into a child's mind. Instead say, "Tell me what happened."

It is not the responsibility of teachers or any member of staff to carry out investigations into suspected or reported abuse. They simply seek discreet clarification or listen to disclosures by the child and pass on any concerns.

Steps to be taken by the Teacher

1. Do not promise to keep secret what the child has said.
2. Do not discuss concerns with the parent(s) or with anyone who is not involved in the care of the child. **Confidentiality** is important - if the allegations prove to be untrue, reporting them to someone who is not concerned with the care of the child may be deemed defamatory.

Use the Note of Concern proforma ([Appendix 3](#)). Copies of this will be kept in each teacher's classroom, to record the disclosure. Do not keep notes in a notebook, diary or on sticky notes. All notes relating to the disclosure must also be submitted, with the detailed note of concern

Record the date, time, place, words used by the child (Do not translate these into "proper words"), any injuries or bruises noticed (diagram if appropriate), any unusual non-verbal behaviour.

DO NOT RECORD ASSUMPTIONS OR INTERPRETATIONS

Pass immediately to the DT.

How a Parent can raise a concern

In St. Mary's we aim to work closely with the parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of the child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or the Principal/Designated teacher for child protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. At any time a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in [Appendix 4](#).

Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers:

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate – this is a matter for Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the designated teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the designated teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The designated teacher will decide whether, in the best interest of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that the child 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 parent will be informed immediately.

The designated teacher may consult with the Education Authority South Eastern Region's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the designated teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. He/she will also notify the EASER Designated Officer for Child Protection. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team with a copy sent to the EASER Designated Officer for Child Protection.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in [Appendix 5](#).

Where a concern has been raised about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff or a volunteer:

If a concern about possible child abuse is raised against a member of staff or volunteer, the Principal (or Designated teacher if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the concern is about the Principal/Designated teacher)

If a concern is raised against the Principal the Designated Teacher will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils (and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the appropriate authorities). The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Child protection procedures as outlined in Appendix 6 will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings

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

7. CONSENT, CONFIDENTIALITY, INFORMATION SHARING AND RECORD KEEPING

Consent

Prior to making a referral to Social Services the consent of the parent/carers and/or the young person (if they are competent to give this) will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek such consent would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

In circumstances where the consent of the parent/carer and/or the young person has been sought and is withheld we will consider and where possible respect their wishes. However our primary consideration must be the safety and welfare of the child and we will make a referral in cases

where consent is withheld if we believe on the basis of the information available that it is in the best interests of the child/young person to do so.

Confidentiality & Information Sharing

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held “in confidence”. In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a ‘need to know’ basis.

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

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

Record Keeping

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

In order to meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in St. Mary’s are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child’s date of birth plus 30 years.

If information is held electronically, whether on a PC, a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.

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

8. Safe Recruitment Procedures

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

9. Code of Conduct for all Staff – Paid and Unpaid

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

The school's Code of Conduct is available on request.

Staff Training

St Mary's Primary School is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on policies and procedures where some members of staff will receive more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic Safeguarding/Child Protection awareness training and refresher training annually. The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governors for Child Protection will also attend relevant Child Protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

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

10. The Preventative Curriculum

Saint Mary's Primary School provides a personal safety programme for all children through:

- PDMU and Emotional Well- being lessons geared towards the needs of the individual class.
- Curricular areas e.g. WAU, RSE, RE, Road Safety etc.
- Specific programmes e.g. Police Education Programmes, Drug Awareness Programmes, NSPCC, visits from invited guests e.g. Farm Safety, Fire & Rescue Services, Road Safety Officer, Children's Charities etc.
- Anti- Bullying Policy – we at Saint Mary's Primary School do not tolerate bullying in any form. The school has an anti- bullying policy in place and all members of staff are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem.
- The children are informed of who they can talk to in school if they are worried and who the Designated teacher and Deputy Designated teacher are. This is done through classroom discussion and in whole school assemblies. A poster with names and photographs of the DT and DDT are also displayed in each classroom.

Informing and advising parents through providing access to relevant leaflets and Child Protection Policy.

11. Monitoring & Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in St Mary's will update this Policy and Procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually.

The Board of Governors will also monitor Child Protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher & Principal.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Date Policy Reviewed: November 2021

Mrs Grace Breen (signed)

(Designated Teacher - Primary)

Mr Sean Denvir (signed)

(Deputy Designated Teacher)

Mrs Mary Merron (signed)

(Designated Governor for Child Protection)

Mr Peter Merron (signed)

(Chair of Board of Governors)

Date: 2nd November 2021

APPENDIX 1

SPECIFIC TYPES OF ABUSE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statutory Responsibilities

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

Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

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

Domestic Violence and Abuse:

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

Sexual Violence and Abuse

'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).' Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent.

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

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed established procedures set out in our school policy. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. Contact can be made directly to the Sexual Referral Unit (based within the Public Protection Unit) at 028 9025 9299. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Team.

Forced Marriage A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological,

financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in St.Mary's we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. As a school we support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

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

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as 'healthy', 'problematic' or 'sexually harmful'. 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. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2016/05 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

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.

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.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and we will follow the procedures in the child protection policy and, seek support from the EA CPSS.

E Safety/Internet Abuse

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

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

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

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

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

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

1/Sexting between Individuals in a Relationship

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

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the

circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

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

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted) to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individuals consent.

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

APPENDIX 2

CHILDREN WITH INCREASED VULNERABILITIES

- **Children with a Disability**

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

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

- **Children With Limited Fluency in English**

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

- **Pre-School Provision**

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

- **Gender Identity Issues and Sexual Orientation**

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

APPENDIX 3

PROFORMA

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTE OF CONCERN

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature and description of concern:
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher:

Yes:

☐

No:

☐

If 'No' state reason:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file

☐

If 'No' state reason:

Name of staff member making the report: _____

Role of staff member making the report: _____

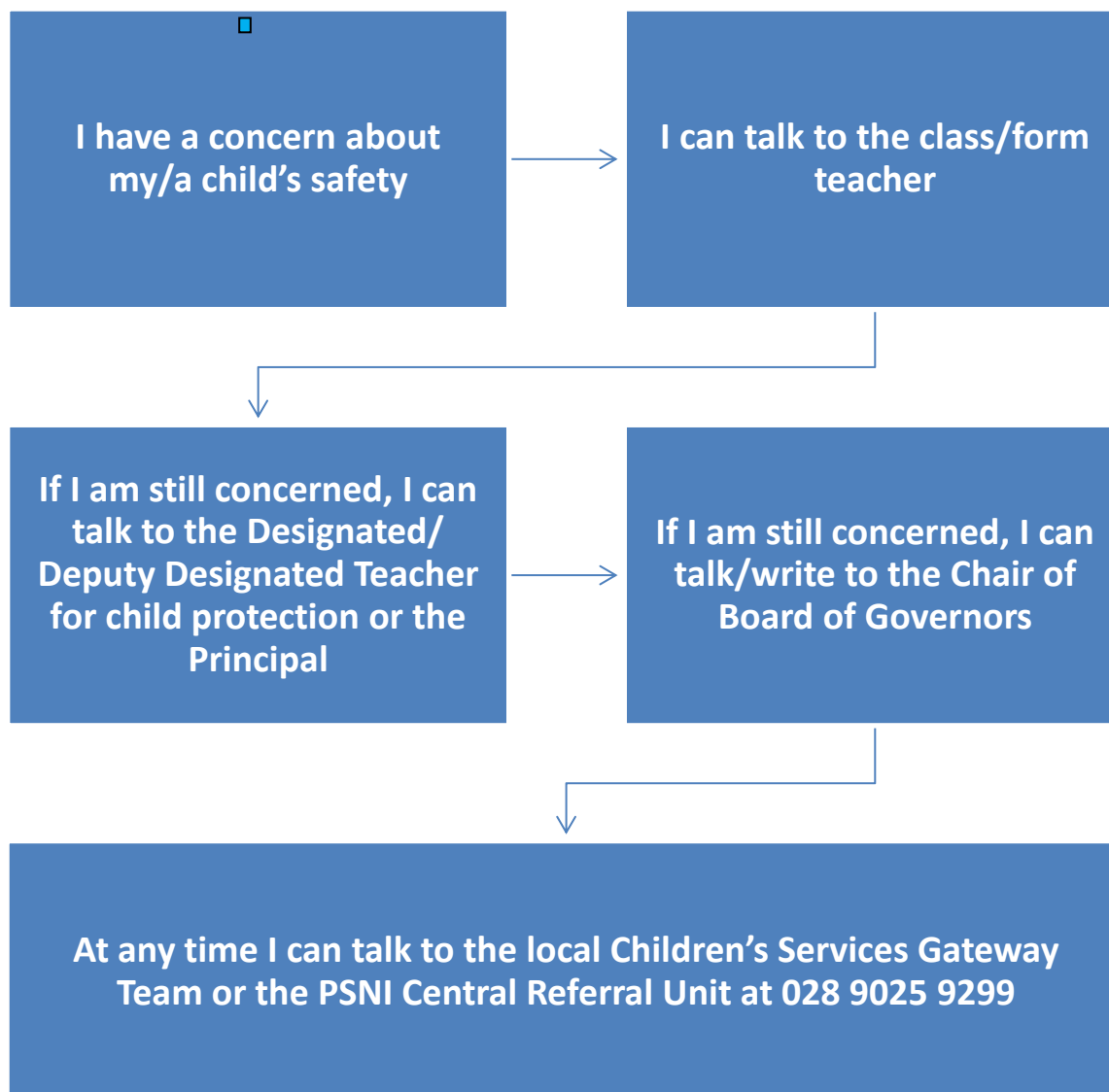
Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

How a parent can raise a concern

If a Parent Has a Potential Child Protection Concern:

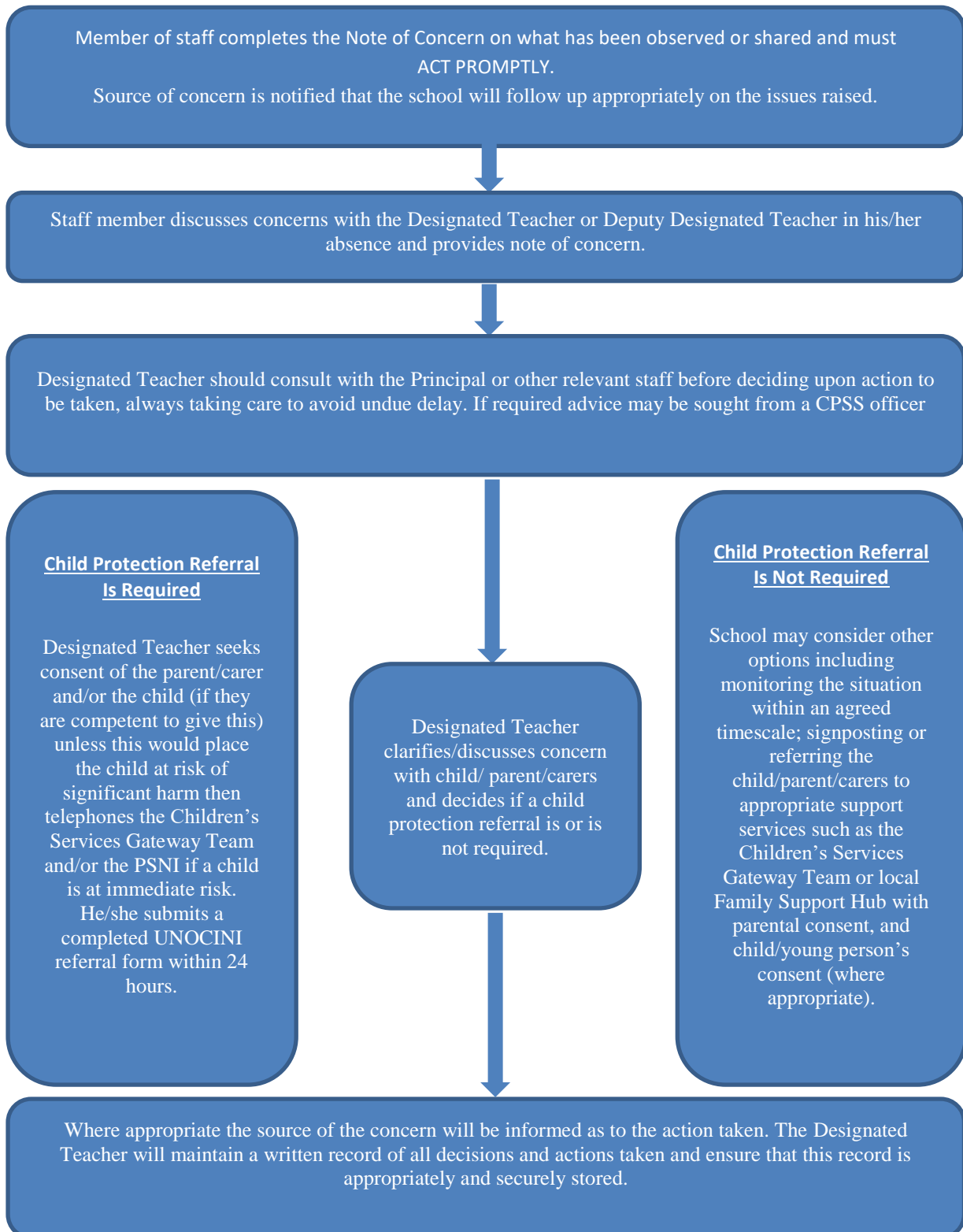


If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy should culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the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

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

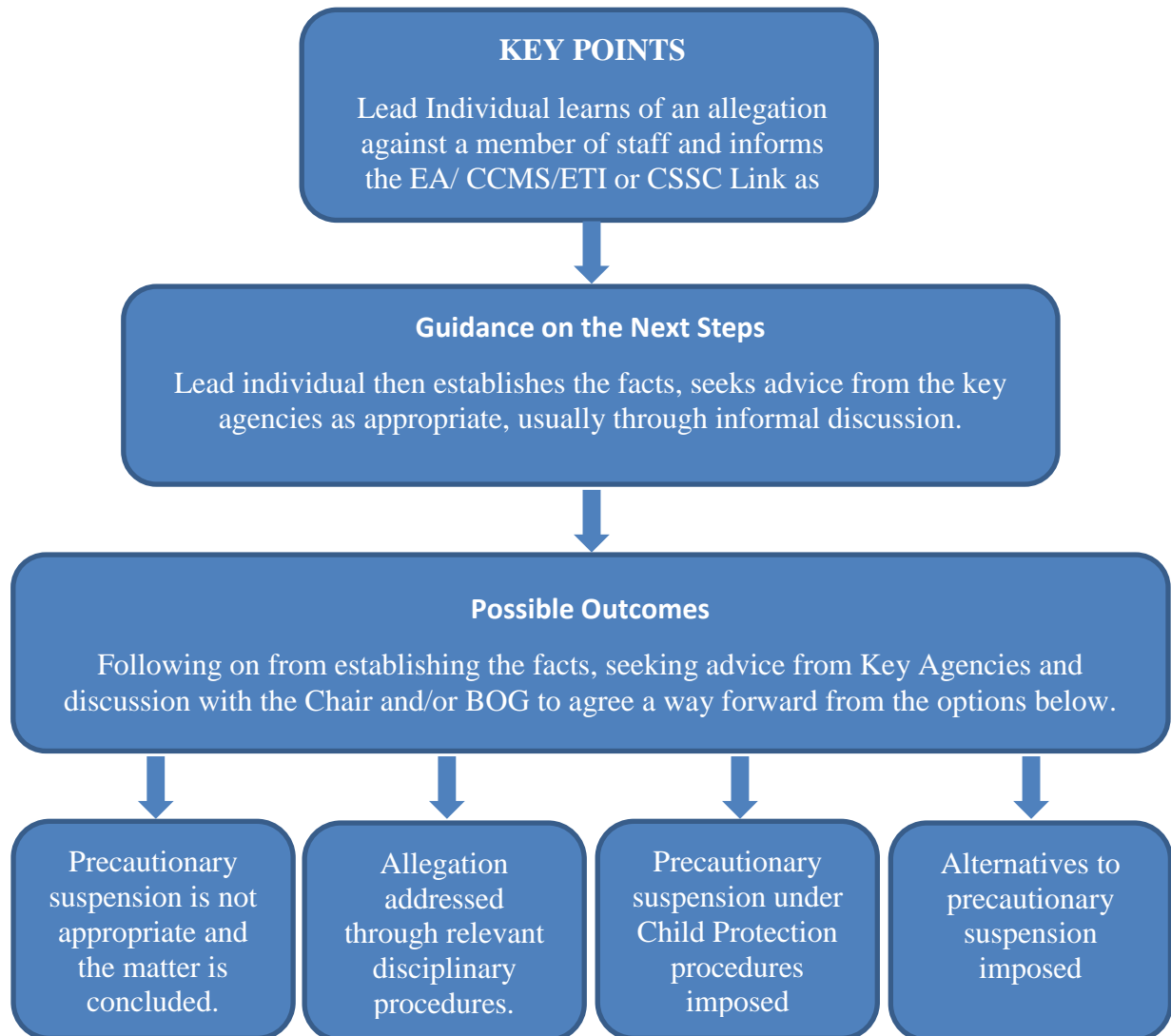
APPENDIX 5

Procedure Where the School Has Concerns, or Has Been Given Information, about Possible Abuse by Someone Other Than a Member of Staff



APPENDIX 6

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff



APPENDIX 7
Important Numbers

Child Protection Contacts	EA Offices Contact Number
Belfast	028 9056 4289
Antrim	028 9448 2223
Dundonald	028 9056 6216
Armagh	028 3834 1975
Omagh	028 8241 146

Duty Social Worker Gateway Team (Health & Social Care Trusts) Gateway Teams	Contact Number
Belfast	028 9050 7000
Northern	0300 1234 333
South Eastern	0300 1000 300
Southern	028 3741 5285
Western	028 8283 5156
Out of Hours for All Areas	028 9504 9999

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 9am to 5pm.

Telephone: 028 9025 9299

APPENDIX 8

DENI Circulars

- DE Circular 2003/13: Child Protection Statutory
- DE Circular 2004/09: Drugs Statutory
- DE Circular 2006/06: Child Protection: Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings
- DE Circular 2006/07: Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2006/08: Child Protection: Training Requirements for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels
- DE Circular 2006/09: Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of staff in Schools- programme to extend coverage
- DE Circular 2006/25: Child Protection Vetting of School Governors
- DE Circular 2007/01: Acceptable use of the internet and digital technologies in school
- DE Circular 2008/03: Pre- Employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools- New Arrangements
- DE Circular 2008/10: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2010/01: RSE guidance
- DE Circular 2010/07: Learner Attendance: Absence Recording by Schools 42
- DE Circular 2010/18: The governor's role set out in DE Governor's Handbook
- DE Circular 2011/22: Internet use
- DE Circular 2012/19: Pre-employment checks
- DE Circular 2013/01: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements
- DE Circular 2013/16: RSE policy
- DE Circular 2013/25: E-safety guidance
- DE Circular 2014/14: Learner participation
- DE Circular 2014/24: Education Other Than at School pupils
- DE Circular 2014/27: Managing persons who pose a risk
- DE Circular 2015/13: Allegations of abuse
- DE Circular 2015/22: RSE guidance
- DE Circular 2015/23: Drugs Statutory
- DE Circular 2016/05: Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- DE Circular 2016/20: Record Keeping in schools
- DE Circular 2016/26: Effective educational uses of mobile digital devices 43
- DE Circular 2016/27: Online Safety
- DE Circular 2017/04: Child protection/pastoral care

Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website. Click on 'Circulars'

www.deni.gov.uk

Addendum to St. Mary's Portaferry, Child Protection Policy Covid-19 Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

1. CONTEXT

From 20 March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of key workers and children who are vulnerable.

The current national health concerns relating to Covid-19 creates uncertainty in the lives of children and young people. Daily routines, family life, friendship groups and the safe space that schools provide have been disrupted. For many children, the need to spend most of their day at home will bring an additional challenge, and for some this will be an additional safeguarding risk factor. It is important that the adults responsible for safeguarding children are sensitive to their physical, social and emotional needs in these most unusual circumstances. It is critically important that children who are or may be at risk are identified so that that a proportionate, compassionate and sensitive response can be taken.

2. PROCEDURES

Staff will continue to follow the procedures outlined in our school's Child Protection Policy which is available on our school website.

In addition the following arrangements have been put in place to support families and monitor pupil safety:

- The school email address, Principal's email address, teachers' email addresses, main school phone number and an emergency mobile number have been made available to all parents.
- Teachers provide online learning via the school website/ C2k platform with strict procedures in place to minimise risk.
- The website provides parents with a range of resources and links to additional online learning, support and guidance.
- We would remind everyone to stay safe when using online resources and to report any concerns to a member of the safeguarding team.
- In line with the information previously provided to schools by the EA CPSS, teachers may make phone calls to parents. These will be pastoral in nature and a record will be kept of any issues reported by

parents. Any concerns around pupil well-being will be shared without delay with a member of the Safeguarding team.

- If a member of staff is using their personal telephone their number will be withheld to ensure the protection of private information of staff

3. ONLINE SAFETY

In order to ensure the safety of all involved the following guidance should be followed if staff and pupils are engaging in online teaching/communication using video conferencing or platforms recommended by and available via C2K.

- Teachers and pupils need to be fully dressed and should not wear pyjamas/sleep wear during the session.
- Students cannot participate from a bedroom.
- The teacher arranges the session and password and shares this only with pupils.
- Pupils must agree not to share the password with anyone else.
- Parental consent will be sought before their child attends online sessions.
- A disclosure or concern over any online forum will be followed up as it would be in school.
- Online sessions should be time limited for the benefit of both children and teachers.

If there is a breach to any of these procedures e.g. pupil gives the password to someone else who joins the group the teacher should immediately terminate the session and advise the Principal.

4. HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE AN ISSUE OR EXPRESS A CONCERN

We would welcome parents asking for advice and help if they have concerns about their child's well-being or safety. Asking for help is a protective factor and parental concerns and requests for help will always be taken seriously.

Any member of staff will listen carefully to parental concerns and ensure that the request for help, if necessary, is brought to the attention of a member of the safeguarding team. In this case a decision can be made as to how best to provide help.

5. IF SCHOOL IS OPEN DURING COVID-19 CLOSURES

If school is open for vulnerable pupils and key workers children the school should adhere to the EA guidance (link to guidance for school clusters to be added).

If our school is part of a cluster of schools which are open we will share relevant safeguarding information with the Designated Teacher and/or Principal. In accordance with our Child Protection procedures this information will be shared on a need to know basis.

In any event, we will follow current Department of Education and Department of Health guidelines regarding social distancing, hygiene and personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff.

6. HOW A CHILD CAN RAISE A CONCERN

We know that while many children will be enjoying their time at home and remain almost unaffected by this unusual situation, there will be others who feel scared, lonely and even those who miss school. Our safeguarding responsibility to all our children continues and we will seek to maintain contact with our children and young people as well as signpost them to other agencies.

We will use the following means to connect with our children and young people:

- Respond to emails via the c2k email addresses only.
- Respond to any concerning comments our young people post on social media.
- When contacting parents via phone we will always ask to speak to their child or young person.
- All our children will be given an email address as one way to connect with school.
- Other Agencies
- NSPCC Childline
- CEOP
- Safer Schools App

7. SOME USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS: –

Designated Teacher: Mrs Grace Breen ggreen352@c2kni.net

Deputy Designated Teacher: Mr Sean Denvir sdenvir386@c2kni.net

Principal: Mr Paul Gilchrist pgilchrist570@c2kni.net

GATEWAY

South Eastern Trust	0300 1000 300
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Regional Emergency Social Work Service

5:00 pm to 9:00 am Monday to Thursday and 5:00 pm Friday to 9:00 am Monday. 24 hour cover over public holidays and 365 days per year.

Telephone: 02895 049999

Adult Protection Gateway services

South Eastern	028 9250 1227	adultprotectiongatewayteam@setrust.hscni.net
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PSNI Central Referral Unit

Telephone: 02890 259299 or 101 x 30299.
Mon-Fri 8:00 – 21:00. Weekends and Public Holidays 9:00 – 5:00

- This is the single point of contact for all agencies and partners making referrals for suspected **Child Abuse** cases.
- It also provides a specific service in respect of the quality assurance of Domestic Violence investigations across NI.

Family Hub

For contact details for services in your area go to <http://www.cypsp.hscni.net/family-support-hubs/> and initiate a search for family support hubs in your area. You can also find a referral form and service information leaflet at this web address.

- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/coronavirus>
- <https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>
- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/report-harmful-content>
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Safeguarding team will review and amend these arrangements regularly during the period of Covid-19 school closure in line with Departmental guidance and advice.

SIGNED:	Designated Teacher
SIGNED:	Principal
SIGNED:	Chair of Board of Governors
DATE:	