

**Model Primary School
&
Nursery Unit**



**CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY**



**Reviewed June 2018
Operation Encompass added Feb 2023**

INTRODUCTION

A key role of Model PS and Nursery Unit is to ensure that all children feel safe and protected within the premises and community of school. The governors and staff, including volunteers, fully recognise the contribution they must make to safeguard children in their care. Having responsibility for children during a large part of every day, we are well placed to notice changes in appearance, behaviour and achievement, to confirm their welfare or to raise concerns.

The following statements of principle, policy and procedure aim to set the conceptual framework, which underpins the practices within the Model PS and Nursery Unit. This ethos is reflected in all actions and decisions taken by staff as they follow the detailed guidance set out in Western Education and Library Board Child Protection Procedures, DENI Circular 1999/10, Children (NI) Order 1995 Guidance and the Western Area Child Protection Committee Procedures.

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.

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 safeguarding school. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide direct or indirect support to this child and family.

This information will be treated like any other child protection information as per DE Circular 2020/07. It 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 the online Operation Encompass training, so they able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency.

General principles

The principles and philosophy which underpin our work are those set out in the "UN Convention on the Rights of the Child" (UK Agreement in 1991), the Children (NI) Order 1995, The Sexual Offences Act 2003, Education and

Libraries Order 2003 – Welfare and Protection of Pupils, Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 and DE Circulars 2006.

In particular, the principle we support is that every child or young person has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and with proper care given to their physical, emotional and spiritual well being, by those looking after them.

The following principles form the basis for effective child protection activity and underpin the guidance we follow:

- The child or young person's welfare must always be paramount; this overrides all other considerations. Where a child or young person is disabled or has special needs these must be taken into consideration.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict, the child or young person's interests must come first.
- 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. Where a child or young person has a disability, specialist assistance should be sought to achieve this.
- Parents/carers have a right and should be consulted and involved in matters which affect their family.
- Actions taken to protect the child or young person (including investigation) should not in themselves be abusive by causing the child or young person unnecessary distress or further harm.
- Intervention should not deal with the child or young person in isolation; the child or young person's needs should be considered in the context of the family. Agencies' actions must be considered and well informed so that they are sensitive to and take account of the child or young person's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race and any special needs.
- Where it is necessary to protect the child or young person from further abuse, alternatives which do not involve moving the child or young person and which minimise disruption of the family should be explored.

Other Relevant 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:

- Behaviour Management & Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling

- Special Educational Needs
- Educational Visits
- Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Intimate Care
- E-Safety Policy (including use of mobile phones)
- Attendance Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the school's Safeguarding Team

- Chair of the Board of Governors (Dr Kate Dooher)
- Designated Governor for Child Protection (Ms Daisy Mules)
- Principal (Mrs Michelle Ramsey)
- Designated Teacher (Mrs Michelle Ramsey)
- Deputy Designated Teacher(s) (Mrs Meghan Coyle)

The main role of the team is to:

- Monitor and periodically audit the safeguarding and child protection arrangements in the school
- Identify any actions required to address audit findings or ETI inspection of its safeguarding/child protection arrangements
- Provide support for the Designated and Deputy Designated teachers in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities.

The roles and responsibilities of individual members of the Safeguarding team are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

CONTEXT

Health and Safety Issues

The location of the school, close to a busy main road, means that the Model has specific safety and security issues, which may not necessarily be present to the same extent in other schools. Parents and children are asked to collect their children at the Academy Road entrance where there is less risk from traffic. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that pupils remaining in school after school activities return home safely. Because of their particular vulnerability, children from the nursery and infant classes are always accompanied by an appropriate adult to and from school.

Children who return home by bus are accompanied to the main entrance by the two duty teachers, who remain with the children to ensure they board safely and are wearing seat belts when appropriate. All pupils travelling by bus discuss, agree and sign the Bus Code of Conduct with their parents or guardians.

Parents are advised that they should accompany their children or make arrangements to have them accompanied by a trusted adult. If, on occasions an unaccompanied pupil is coming to school by taxi, the parents are requested to inform the school's secretary by telephone. If it is necessary to send them or have them collected from school by taxi without an accompanying adult, then the school **MUST** be informed by letter.

Visitors gain access to the school either through the main entrance at the front of the school or the one at Academy Road. All visitors must report to the office, sign in and are given a visitor's pass. In the mornings and afternoons these doors are open to permit pupils and parents entry to and exit from the school. For the remainder of the school day, they remain closed and access is only possible via the school's security system which incorporates CCTV and is activated from the general office or the Principal's office. The door at the end of the staffroom corridor is also part of the security system and is part of the same pattern of morning and afternoon opening as the main entrance doors. The staffroom corridor door is also timed to open at break and lunchtimes to facilitate pupils accessing the school canteen or the playground. Each of the three entrance doors has a release lock located close by which can also be used to grant access. Pupils are reminded regularly not to grant access to anyone other than school staff.

The school has put in place arrangements to ensure the health and safety of the pupils during the mid-morning break. Supervision is provided by three teachers, all the Learning Support Assistants and any students who are carrying out work experience in the school. On wet days the Learning Support Assistants remain in their classrooms with the children in their class. See (Arrangements for wet play) which is displayed in each classroom & in the staffroom.

The school secretary maintains a database of information which can be used to contact the relevant adults in the event of a child becoming ill. The database also gives parents the opportunity to pass on to the school any information relating to specific care needs.

Where children require assistance in the area of toilet care, staff undertake this responsibility in a safe, private and respectful way. Two adults are always present and a record of the incident is maintained. If a second adult is not available in the Nursery, then the nursery teacher requests assistance from an assistant in the Primary School. A separate Intimate Care policy exists and staff follow the procedures as outlined in it.

Parents of younger children, particularly those in the Nursery and Early Foundation Stage are asked to send in a change of clothing for emergencies.

At the induction meetings for Nursery and Primary 1, parents are informed of the school's responsibilities in relation to the safety and welfare of its pupils and are informed of the school's procedures in relation to child protection. They are also made aware of the procedures that are in place should anyone have a concern in that area. Parents are now sign posted to the school website where copies of all Pastoral care policies are available.

2.2. Curriculum

The N Ireland Curriculum offers many opportunities for the pupils to learn about and explore issues concerning their personal safety and well-being. This is particularly evident in the area of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU.) Lessons are delivered covering the areas of:

- Self-awareness
- Feelings and Emotions
- Health & Safety
- Relationships with Families
- Relationships in School and the Community
-

In the classroom, regular Circle Time sessions are used as a means of encouraging children to raise social and emotional concerns in a safe environment and to build self confidence, respect and sensitivity among classmates.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there is a permanent Child Protection noticeboard in the main corridor, which provides advice and displays child helpline numbers. In addition, posters bearing the names and photographs of the designated teacher and the deputy designated teacher are displayed throughout the school.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- The NSPCC visits the school and provides information on a range of Child Protection issues through Assemblies, talks, role-plays, puppet shows and resources.
- During Anti Bullying week in November a whole school focus takes place covering many issues around keeping safe.
- PSNI talk to P6 & P7 children re: Internet Safety.
- The 'Helping Hands' programme which deals with Domestic abuse is delivered to the pupils in a KS2 class. Teachers will consult and decide which class is most suitable on a yearly basis. The programme is delivered by the PDMU coordinator and Designated Teacher for Child Protection who have received the appropriate training to deliver the lessons.

- An application for 'Roots of Empathy' programme has been submitted and we are awaiting approval. This will be targeted at a P3 class.
- Classes may participate in a variety of safety programmes run by various outside agencies, including Derry City Council, PSNI and other groups from the community and voluntary sector.
- Primary 5 pupils take part in the Fire Service Safety Team Scheme.
- Each year (depending on funding) Primary 7 pupils participate in the "Bee Safe" Activity Day which is run jointly by Health Promotion Agency and the Western Health and Social Services Trust and involves all the emergency services.
- P6 pupils take part in YES project (Youth Educated in Safety).
- Primary 7 playground monitors spend their lunchtimes in the Key Stage 1 playground getting to know the younger children and teaching them games to play.

2.3. PASTORAL CARE

The designated teacher and/or the deputy designated teacher carry out a monthly audit of specific issues or concerns that teachers have. Teachers use a proforma ([Appendix 2](#)) to provide details of particular incidents or concerns together with information about any action that may have been taken. The purpose of this preventative measure is to act as an early alert, and to highlight incidents or patterns of behaviour. The proforma also assists the designated teacher to monitor all concerns and decide on an appropriate response. To ensure confidentiality only their initials and date of birth identify the children.

If a pupil is absent for any reason the parent/guardian should contact the school by phone to explain the absence. The child should then provide a note explaining the reason for the absence.

The vice principal and the school's Education and Welfare Officer meet each month to discuss concerns, share relevant information and consider whether interventions are necessary.

The "grey post box" on the Child Protection noticeboard offers a child the option of raising a concern or issue in confidence. Children who place their name in it are contacted discreetly by the designated teacher or deputy. Child helpline numbers are also posted on the notice board in the main corridor.

In addition, the designated teachers are always available for pupils who have any concerns should they wish to discuss them.

The school employs a counsellor who attends on a weekly basis. She collaborates with teachers in identifying pupils who may benefit from her

services. Consultation initially takes place with the parents/ guardians and at the end of the series of sessions a further meeting takes place.

2.4. Recruitment and Vetting 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 the School are vetted / supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

3. PROCEDURES

The Model staff recognises their five main responsibilities in the areas of Child Protection. These are in the areas of prevention, recognition, response, referral, and confidentiality/record keeping. Parents will be made aware of the school's responsibilities and procedures and we hope they will support us in our practice.

The parents receive a leaflet outlining our child protection procedures on an annual basis. This is also available on the school's website.

3.1. Prevention

We offer a supportive environment to children and young people who have experienced abuse. All children and young people are vulnerable.

The Model has developed and provides a "child protection ethos" and a preventative curriculum. We offer children an alternative model to violent or abusive behaviour and alternative methods of responding, e.g., 'Helping Hands' programme. 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 children and young people to share their concerns.
- Long-term protection, enhancing self-esteem and encouraging social skills, breaking the cycle of abusive behaviour.

The Board of Governors ensures that the curriculum includes a programme for pupils on personal protection. Examples of programmes currently in use are:

LLT Resources for the new curriculum

Anti-bullying and Keeping Safe week (November)

Health -Developing Awareness of Health and Personal Development (Prim-Ed)

Relationships and Sexual Education Programme (P1 to P7)

The school seeks parental consent for photographs, videos and use of the internet.

Teachers also provide children with knowledge and skills in relation to safe use of the Internet (chat rooms, inappropriate sites etc.). The school's computers are linked to the internet through the C2k network. This system provides a firewall and filtering system to ensure that inappropriate content is blocked from view.

Internet safety awareness training takes place offering advice and warning parents of the dangers inherent in unsupervised internet access.

Pupils are forbidden to bring mobile phones to school.

We ensure that persons beyond the school 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 or risk assessment in keeping with current arrangements for the care and protection of children and young people.

The monthly audit is an example of a preventative measure as it acts as an early "alert".

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

3.2 Recognition

Definition of Harm

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals

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

Harm can be caused by:

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

The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards a child. The main types of abuse as well as their physical and behavioural indicators are included in **appendix 3**.

3.3. Response

In the event of an allegation of child abuse the member of staff will

Receive – listen to what the child says, without displaying shock or disbelief. Accept what is said, making brief cursory notes. These notes should be retained.

Reassure- ensure the child is reassured that he/she will be safe and his/her interests will come first. **No promise of confidentiality can or should be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.**

Respond- respond to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter. Use open questions e.g., anything else to tell me? Do not interrogate or ask leading questions- this may invalidate your evidence and the children in any later court proceedings. Do not criticise the perpetrator- the child may love this person and reconciliation may be possible. Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.

Record- make notes at the time and write these up as soon as possible afterwards. Note the time, date, place, people present as well as what *is seen and* said. Record key phrases/words used, noticeable non-verbal behaviour and any physical injuries. Under no circumstances should a child be photographed or a child's clothing removed. Do not destroy original notes.

Report- refer the matter to the Designated Teacher. Respect confidentiality i.e., the matter should only be discussed on a need-to-know basis

3.4. Referral - co-operating to support and protect the children

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

The designated member of staff for child protection is Mrs Ramsey (Principal). In her absence Mrs M Coyle, (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection), will assume responsibility for child protection matters.

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 designated member of staff, discuss the matter with her and make full notes.

The designated member of staff will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action and ensure that a written record is made.

The Principal, in consultation with the designated member of staff, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the Principal 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 Officer from the Education Authority or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. 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 first priority.**

What to do if you have a concern about the safety of a child at the Model

I have a concern about my/a child's safety



I can talk to the class teacher.



**I can talk to Mrs M Coyle,
Deputy Designated teacher for Child Protection.**



**If I am still concerned I can talk to
Mrs Ramsey, the Principal & Designated teacher
for Child Protection.**



**If I am still concerned I can talk/write to the Chairman of the
Board of Governors, Dr Kate Dooher**

**If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services
Ombudsman Tel: 0800 343 424**



**At any time a parent can talk to a social worker at the Gateway Team
(Western Trust) Tel: 028 71314 090
or the
PSNI at the Public Protection Unit
Tel: 999 (Emergency) or 101 (Non-Urgent)**

How a Parent can make a Complaint

We aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the **Class Teacher/Head of Key Stage**, the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher 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 Public Protection Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **appendix 5**.

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

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 Social Services- but should report these concerns immediately to the Designated Teacher, discuss the matter with her, and make full notes.

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

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. He/she will discuss the matter with the Principal and may also seek advice or clarification from the Education Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection or from Social Services (Gateway Team). Where it is evident that a young person has been or is at risk of being abused and/or a criminal offence may have been committed then the school must make a referral.

Referrals to Social Services will be made by telephone in the first instance and within 24 hours will be followed by the completion of a UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form. A copy of the UNOCINI form will be placed in the school's child protection file.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **appendix 6**.

Consent from Pupils and Parents

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.

Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff or a Volunteer

When a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff the Principal (or the Designated Teacher if the Principal is not available) must be informed immediately. 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 7** will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance (DE Circular 2015/13).

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

3.5. Confidentiality and record keeping

The sharing of information on child protection issues will be on a "need to know" basis, observing strictest confidentiality. The school principal, the designated teacher and the deputy designated teacher will determine what information is to be shared and with whom.

All records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked drawer. These only identify the child or young person by their initials

and date of birth. These records are kept separate from any other file, which is held on the child or young person.

In accordance with DE policy on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child's date of birth plus 30 years as per (DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools)

3.6. Code of conduct

The Board of Governors ensures that the Model has and follows the Code of Practice for the conduct of all members of staff, towards the children and young people attending the school. The Code of Conduct (Appendix 3) covers all activities organised in and by the Model, whether on school premises or elsewhere. The Code offers guidance to staff in 4 main situations:

1. Private meetings with pupils – the desirability of having another adult present or at least avoiding interviews behind closed doors.
2. Physical contact with pupils – avoiding contact, which is open to misinterpretation, without hindering necessary contact e.g. administering first-aid.
3. Choice and use of teaching materials – guidance and advice on selecting appropriate materials, particularly with regard to sensitive subject matter such as sex education.
4. Relationships and attitudes – ensuring that relationships are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils.

4. STAFF TRAINING

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. All staff will receive basic child protection awareness training and annual/regular refresher training. The Principal, Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will also attend child protection training courses specific to their roles which is provided by the Education Authority's Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Other Social Services Meetings

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences, core group or family support planning 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 their child protection plan.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and approved every 2 years by the Board of Governors for dissemination to parents, pupils and staff. It will be implemented through the school's staff induction and training programme and as part of day-to-day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and periodically by the Schools Safeguarding Team.

Signed: _____
(Chair of Board of Governors)

Date: _____

Date of Next Review: _____

Appendix 1.

The School Safeguarding Team

Roles & Responsibilities

1. Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors is responsible for:

- Ensuring that a Child Protection policy is in place and that a safeguarding ethos is maintained in the school
- Ensuring that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed
- Ensuring that Governors receive relevant training in Child Protection and Recruitment and Selection
- Assuming lead responsibility in the management of a complaint/allegation against the School Principal.
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive regular updates in relation to child protection activity including a full written annual report

2. Designated Governor for Child Protection.

The Designated Governor is responsible for advising the Governors on matters related to child protection including the child protection policy, reports to Governors, the recruitment, selection and vetting of staff and the role of the Designated teacher.

3. Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all relevant DENI guidance in relation to child protection and safeguarding in particular "*Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection*" (1999) is implemented within the school
- Enabling the Board of Governors fulfil their Child Protection duties by keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to child protection and ensuring the inclusion of child protection activities on their agenda
- Maintaining and securely storing the *School Record of Child Abuse Complaints* and to make it available at least annually to the Board of Governors.
- The appointment of suitable staff to posts (teaching and non-teaching) within the school and the appointment of suitable teaching staff to the roles of Designated and Deputy Teacher for Child Protection

- Ensuring that parents and pupils receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy and Complaints Procedures every 2 years.
- Managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

4. Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Every school is required to appoint a Designated Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection. They must also appoint a Deputy Designated Teacher who as a member of the Safeguarding team will actively support the Designated Teacher in carrying out the following duties:

- Providing child protection training for all teaching and non-teaching staff (whole school training) to be delivered a minimum of once every two years
- Taking lead responsibility for the development and annual review of the school's child protection policy
- Promoting a child protection ethos in the school
- Acting as a point of contact for staff (and parents) in relation to child abuse concerns
- Liaison with the Principal and Education Authority's Designated Officers for Child Protection in cases of suspected Child Abuse
- Making referrals to other agencies, with the Principal's knowledge
- Maintaining and securely storing appropriate child protection records
- Attending child protection case conferences and other relevant case planning meetings where appropriate and practicable
- Providing an annual report to the Governors on child protection activity

The Deputy Designated Teacher will deputise for them in their absence.

Appendix 2

CONCERNS RECORD

Child's initials _____
Date of birth _____

Date	Concern	Action	Signed

Appendix 3

Types of Abuse and Physical/Behavioural Indicators

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. **(Co- operating To Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2015)**

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

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. **(Co-operating To Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016)**

Physical Indicators	Behavioural 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 (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated	Self destructive tendencies; aggression 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; coming to school early or staying last as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories

with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday	
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Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child’s peers. **(Co- operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016)**

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Well below average in height and weight; “failing 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).	Apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional responses 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.

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. **(Co-operating To Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016)**

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs; bruises or bleeding in genital or anal	What the child tells you; Withdrawn; chronic depression; excessive sexual precociousness;

<p>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.</p>	<p>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</p>
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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 (**Co- operating To Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016**)

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

Child Abuse in Other Specific Circumstances

Bullying

Bullying is not defined as a category of abuse within the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). The policy does however state that the damage inflicted by bullying behaviour can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and at the extreme cause them significant harm (including self harm).

The procedure for referral and investigation of abuse may therefore be implemented in certain circumstances such as when anti-bullying procedures have failed to be effective; the bullying behaviour is persistent and severe resulting in the target of the bullying suffering/likely to suffer significant harm; there are concerns that the bullying behaviour is indicative of the child exhibiting this behaviour suffering/likely to suffer significant harm or where concerns exist in relation to the parents/carer's capacity to meet the needs of the child (either the target or the child exhibiting this behaviour).

Children Who Sexually Abuse Others or Display Sexually Harmful Behaviour

When abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the procedures outlined in **section 7** of this policy will be followed. It is important in such situations to distinguish between behaviours which are experimental in nature and those that are exploitative and harmful. Advice and support will be sought in such circumstances from the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection and where appropriate a referral made to the statutory agencies. In all such cases a risk assessment will be undertaken and an individual support and safety plan identified. Appropriate services will also be provided for the children involved. The above guidance follows DE Circular 2016/05 subject Children Who Display Harmful Sexualized Behaviour.

Child Sexual Exploitation

The Department of Health wrote to the SBNI to confirm that it has now amended section 7.2.7 of *Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland* to take account of a revised definition of Child Sexual Exploitation.

The revised definition, now adopted for use in Northern Ireland, is in line with that consulted on and agreed by the Department for Education in England and is as follows;

Child sexual exploitation 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.

The key factor that distinguishes cases of CSE from other forms of child sexual abuse is the concept of exchange – the fact that someone coerces or manipulates a child into engaging in sexual activity **in return for something** they need or desire and/or for the gain of those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. The ‘something’ received by the child or young person can include both tangible items and/or more intangible ‘rewards’ OR ‘benefits’ such as perceived affection, protection or a sense of value or belonging.

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

The potential indicators of CSE can include, but are not limited to:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phone etc. without plausible explanation;
- Leaving home/care without permission;
- Persistently going missing or returning late;
- Receiving lots of texts/phone calls prior to leaving;
- Agitated/stressed prior to leaving home/care;
- Returning distraught/ dishevelled or under the influence of substances;
- Requesting the morning after pill upon return;
- Truancy from school;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age;
- Physical symptoms or infections e.g. bruising, bite marks, sexually transmitted infections;
- Concerning use of the internet;
- Entering or leaving cars driven by unknown adults or by 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 misuse.

Whilst these indicators can be usefully used to identify potential risk, it is important to note that their presence does not necessarily mean that CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence, mean that it is not.

When we become aware of young people below the age of consent engaging in sexual activity (Post-primary only) or, where we have concerns about a 16/17 year old in a sexual relationship the Designated Teacher has a duty to follow appropriate procedures and where necessary make a referral to Social Services.

Indecent Photographs

The offence of taking indecent pictures of children under 18 years can apply in a situation where a pupil has taken an indecent picture using a mobile phone of others under 18 years of age. It is also an offence to distribute, possess with intent to distribute or show such photographs to others. In such circumstances the PSNI and Social Services will be contacted. The school also has an e-safety/ mobile phone and electronic devices (or similarly named policies) which has/have been circulated to parents and pupils and which is available from the school.

Young Person whose Behaviour places him/her at Risk of Significant Harm

A child whose own behaviours e.g. self-harming behaviour, leaving school without permission etc. places him/her at risk of significant harm, may not necessarily constitute abuse as defined in Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). The decision to initiate child protection procedures is a matter for professional judgement and each case will be considered individually with advice sought from the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection. The criminal aspects of such cases will be dealt with by the PSNI.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

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

Sexual Violence and Abuse

This defines as 'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual /online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).'

Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent. **(Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016)**

A child may live in a family where there is domestic abuse or a young person may be in a relationship where they become the subject of domestic abuse. In high risk cases involving domestic abuse Social Services and/or the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection will contact the school in order to help assess the child/young person's needs and to ensure that he/she is receives appropriate support.

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.

Appendix 4

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTE OF CONCERN

**CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED
TEACHER**

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

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher: Yes: No:
If 'No' state reason:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

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

Yes No

If 'No' state reason:

Name of staff member making the report: _____

Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 5

Model Primary School

Code of Conduct

1. Private meetings with pupils

Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door ajar.

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 to indicate that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.

Where possible another pupil or (preferably) an adult should be present or nearby during the interview, and the school should take active measures to ensure this.

2. Physical contact with pupils

As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils.

However, it is unrealistic to suggest that staff only touch pupils 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.

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.

Reasonable force should be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have been exhausted and where;

- Action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk of injury to another pupil or person
- There is a developing risk of injury to another pupil or person, or significant damage to property.
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint.

Staff who have to administer first-aid to a pupil 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 treatment in an emergency simply because another person is not present.

Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.

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 the principal.

Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils 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 pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

3. Choice of Teaching Materials

Teachers should avoid using teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted. When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might after the event be criticised. The school recognises the value of consulting parents and Governors when proposing to use materials in connection with sex education programmes.

If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal before using it.

4. Relationships and Attitudes

Staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to their age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Staff will give careful consideration to their attitudes, demeanour and language when dealing with pupils.

All staff must adhere to social media procedures

(See e-safety policy)

Conclusion

It is not possible or appropriate to lay down rules to cover all circumstances in which staff interrelate with children, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances staff should exercise their professional judgement and this Code of Conduct will only confirm what has always been their practice. However, if staff have any doubts about how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the principal or a representative of their professional union.

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

Relationships with Students Outside of Work Declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby staff and volunteers of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students.

Employee Name	Student Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring.

I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school.

No monies come through the school at any point, informally (eg via the child) or formally.

No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed _____ Date _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal.

Appendix 6

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

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

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

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

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local 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 7

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

