



# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

<b>Date of next policy review</b>	<b>September 2020</b>
<b>Name of person responsible for this policy</b>	<b>Governors, Mr Chris Fulton</b>
<b>Other related policies</b>	<b>Behaviour and Citizenship, Special Educational Needs (SEN), Intimate Care, Toileting, Teaching &amp; Learning (T&amp;L), Pastoral Care, Personal Development &amp; Mutual Understanding (PDMU)</b>
<b>Date of issue</b>	<b>September 2019</b>

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Within the Child Protection Policy of Victoria PS are 3 underlying principles: -

- a. in all matters relating to child protection procedures and policies, the best interests of the child are of paramount consideration (UN Convention, Article 3, Children (NI) Order 1995).
- b. as a school we have a pastoral responsibility towards the pupils in our care and are taking all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved (UN Convention Article 19)
- c. each child has the right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously and to be consulted depending on his/her age and understanding about the proposed action (UN Convention Article 12)

In Victoria Primary School we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge and we will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy, anti-bullying policy, positive behaviour policy and teaching and learning policy which aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

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 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.

### CHILD ABUSE

The following is an extract from "Co-operating to Protect Children" (Children (NI) Order 1995 Volume 6) and clearly defines the categories of abuse:

*"Children may be abused by a parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer, an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both."*

Abuse can take many forms:

**Neglect:** The following definition is taken from "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" DHSSPS 2106

"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."

**Possible signs of neglect:**

- constant hunger
- poor personal hygiene
- constant tiredness
- poor state of clothing
- emaciation
- frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- untreated medical problems
- destructive tendencies
- low self-esteem
- neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- no social relationships
- chronic running away
- compulsive stealing
- scavenging for food or clothes

**Physical abuse:** The following definition is taken from "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" DHSSPS 2106

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

**Possible signs of physical abuse:**

- unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- refusal to discuss injuries
- untreated injuries
- admission of punishment which appears excessive
- fear of parents being contacted
- withdrawal from physical contact
- flinching at sudden movements/fearful watchfulness
- arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- fear of returning home
- fear of medical help
- self-destructive tendencies
- aggressive towards others
- chronic running away

**Sexual Abuse:** The following definition is taken from "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" DHSSPS 2106

"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."

### **Index of Suspicion of Sexual Abuse:**

Key: Red - high probability of sexual abuse occurring  
Green - sexual abuse possibly occurring  
Blue - one hypothesis amongst many

#### **Under 5**

##### **RED**

Disclosure  
Genital injuries  
VD  
Vivid details of sexual activity (such as penetration, oral sex, ejaculation)  
compulsive masturbation (contextually abnormal)  
sexual drawings  
sexualised play, with explicit acts

##### **GREEN**

Person specific fear  
Nightmares  
Chronic genito-urinary  
Soreness of genitals/bottom  
Fears of specific situations:  
fear of being bathed  
fear of being changed  
fear of being put to bed

#### **5-12 years**

##### **RED**

Pregnancy/abortion  
Disclosure  
Genital injuries  
VD  
Explicit sexual stories / poems  
Exposing themselves  
Masturbation in contextually, inappropriate fashion  
"Promiscuity"  
Suicide attempts  
Running away  
Alcohol and drug abuse  
Offending / abusing  
Gender identify difficulties

##### **GREEN**

Arson  
Soreness of genitals/bottom  
Chronic genital / urinary infections  
Obsessive washing  
Depression  
Bedwetting / enuresis  
Anal incontinence / encopresis  
Anorexia  
Glue sniffing  
Nightmares  
Truancy  
Unexplained large sums of money / gifts

**BLUE**

Developmental regression  
 Hostile / aggressive  
 behaviour  
 Psychosomatic condition  
 HIV

**BLUE**

Abdominal pains  
 Developmental regression  
 Peer problems  
 HIV  
 School problems  
 Psychosomatic conditions

**Emotional Abuse:** The following definition is taken from "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" DHSSPS 2106

"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."

**Possible signs of emotional abuse:**

- physical, mental and emotional development delay or disturbances.
- admission of punishment which appears excessive
- over-reaction to mistakes
- sudden speech disorders
- fear of new situations
- inappropriate emotional responses to stressful situations
- neurotic behaviour (eg rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- self-mutilation
- fear of parents being contacted
- extremes of passivity or aggression
- drug/solvent abuse
- chronic running away
- compulsive stealing
- scavenging for food or clothes
- enuresis/encopresis (bedwetting/soiling)

**No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. Also it must be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms described above.**

**BULLYING**

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully.

Any complaint by parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the staff. The anti-bullying policy will contain further information.

**Exploitation:** The following definition is taken from "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" DHSSPS 2106

"Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power or 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."

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

If Exploitation is suspected, it should be reported immediately to the Designated teacher who will inform PSNI and Social Services.

**Domestic Violence:** Can often be present in homes alongside other forms of child abuse. It is essential that staff inform the Designated Teacher if they suspect a disclosure of Domestic Violence has been made. Domestic violence has a huge impact on a child's emotional and physical well-being.

## **CURRICULUM**

The school will include within its curriculum, elements which will support pupils in their physical and emotional well-being and which supports pupils in learning to manage their general interests and personal relationships. These will often occur in the general course of lessons but we also have a PDMU policy that will allow each year to address issues of health and well-being appropriate to them in line with curricular documentation.

With regard to helping prevent child abuse, the school will contribute by –

- ensuring pupils have sufficient knowledge about themselves to be able to understand what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact,
- enabling children to become aware of strategies which they may use to protect themselves from possibly abusive situations;
- delivering a programme of Personal Development & Mutual Understanding.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Relationships within our school are built on trust and often on confidentiality which forms the basis for creating a secure and caring environment which fosters learning and personal development.

As a staff, where abuse or neglect is suspected, it is our professional responsibility to share relevant information with other professional agencies. We therefore recognise that, in order to protect a pupil from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality may be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action by informing and consulting others. It is important to remember that no promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.

**In an incident, the child's welfare must be always be paramount; this overrides all other considerations.**

## **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

According to recent DE guidance the designated teacher will have responsibility for:

The induction and training of all school staff including support staff.

Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff.

Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns.

Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs4.

Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate.

Liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection.

Keeping the school Principal informed.

Lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy.

Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.

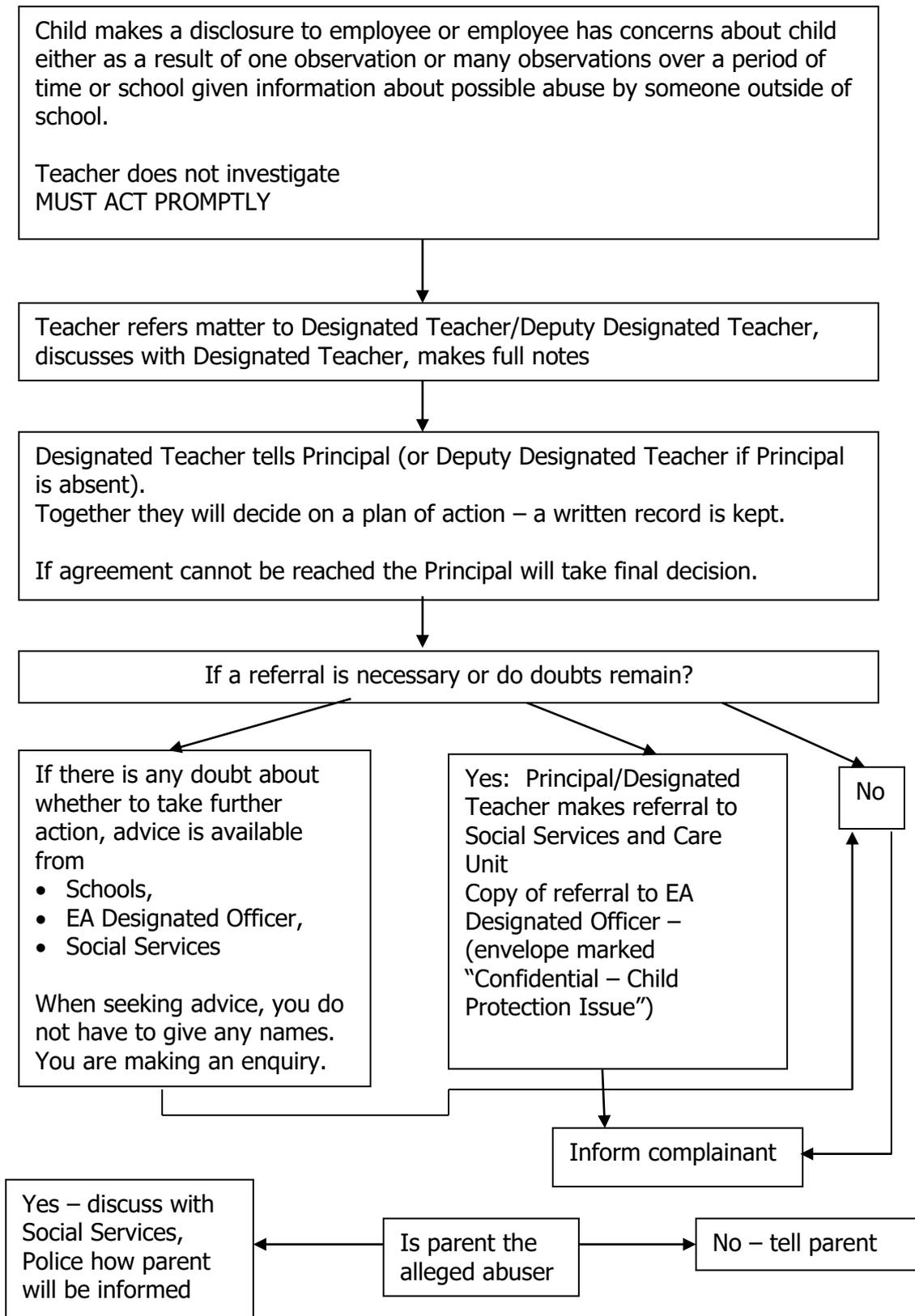
Compiling written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

## **INFORMAL CONSULTATION**

The Designated Teacher may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Board's Designated Officer or appropriate senior social worker before a formal referral is made. Provided that no child is identified by name, the case and its circumstances may be discussed with complete confidentiality and with the full understanding that Social Services cannot be further involved until a formal referral is made.

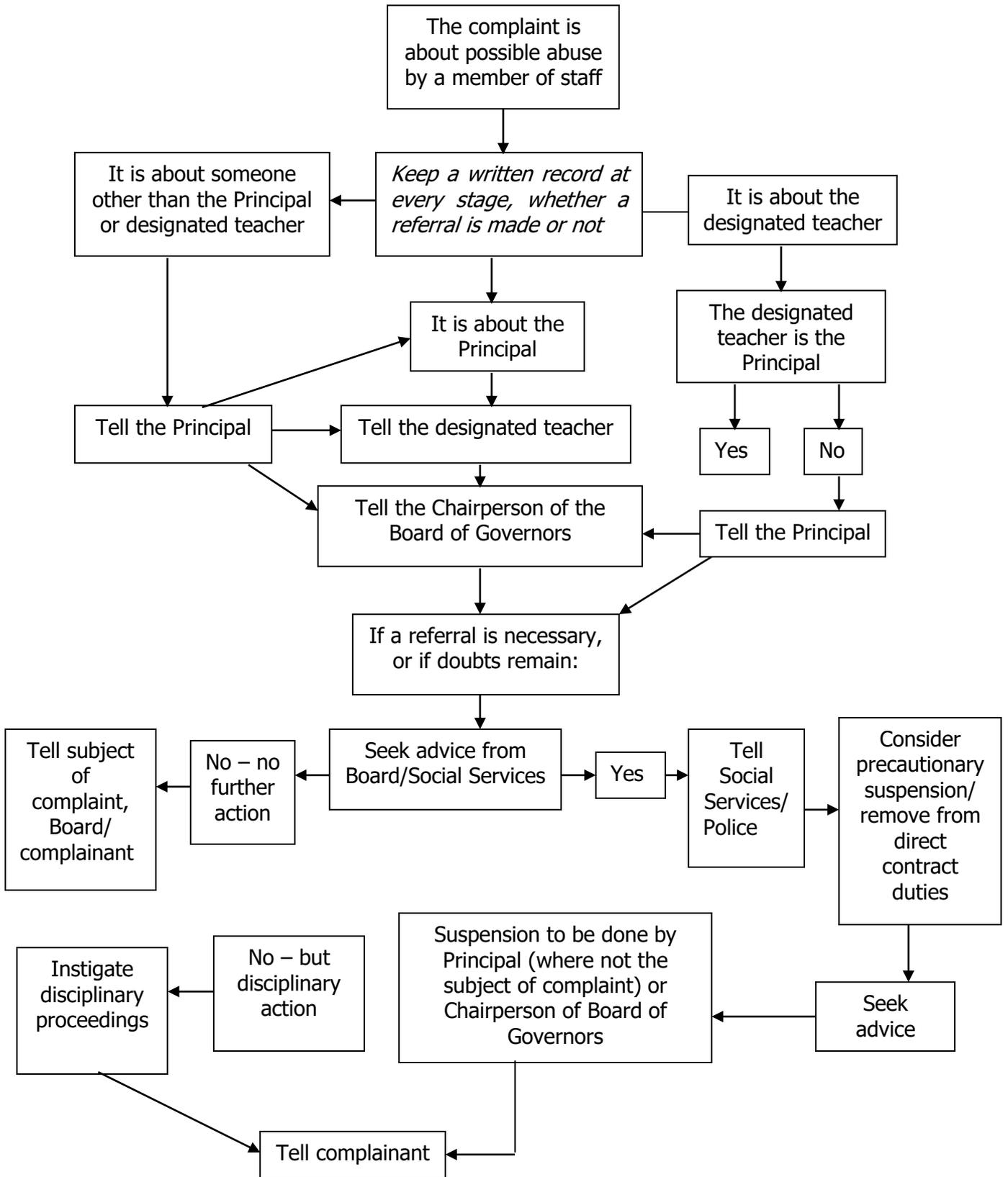
# PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOL

Figure 1



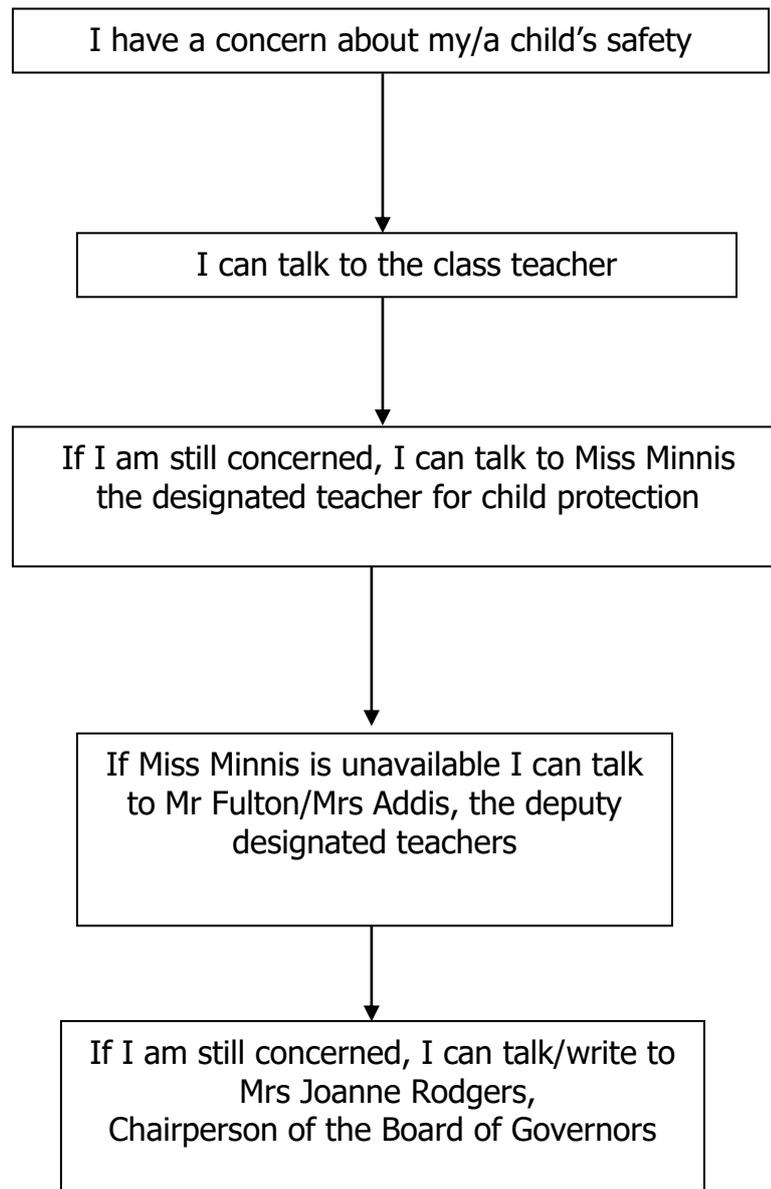
## COMPLAINTS AGAINST SCHOOL STAFF

**Figure 2**



## HOW A PARENT CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Figure 3



## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABUSE**

### **Complaint against a member of Board of Governors**

- The school will follow the procedure as outlined in Figure 1. The Principal will inform the Chairperson. If he/she is the subject of the complaint the Principal will inform the Vice Chairperson.

### **Complaint against a volunteer working in the school**

- The school will follow the procedure as outlined in Figure 1

### **Complaints against School Staff**

- The school will follow the procedure as outlined in Figure 2

Behaviour being pursued as a disciplinary matter - all details and correspondence must be kept on staff file and on child's file.

A short summary of the record will be kept by the Principal on a "Record of Child Abuse Complaints"

These "Records of Child Abuse Complaints" are available annually for the Board of Governors.

"Record of Child Abuse Complaints" will contain -

1. date and brief details of nature of complaint
2. by whom and against whom it was made
3. if referred - to whom and date
4. if dealt with under School's disciplinary procedures - a brief note of the outcome.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

The Principal will ensure that proper records, dated and signed are kept of all complaints or information received and all concerns about possible abuse noted by staff. The written record will be received from the member of staff who received the information/or has concerns.

### What should the records contain?

1. Time, date, circumstances
2. Who gave the information
3. Nature of the information
4. If appropriate a description of signs or symptoms of possible abuse.

The Principal or delegated teacher will supplement this record with:

1. Details of advice sought - from whom and when
2. Decision reached
3. If referred to Social Services - how, when and by whom
4. If not referred - reasons why
5. When, by whom and how the person who made the complaint or gave the information is told of the decision

All records will be signed and dated by the Principal and countersigned by the designated teacher.

## **Maintaining Records**

1. Complaint not referred or referred complaint to Social Services (child not put on Register)
  - school will maintain record on child's file indefinitely
  - confidential file will be sent to transferring school.
2. Child on Child Protection Register
  - school will maintain file with documentation from Social Services.
  - school will notify transferring school - destroy all social services information on file.
  - School will notify child's Case Co-ordinator in Social Services.

## **APPOINTMENTS, INDUCTION OF NEW STAFF & STAFF TRAINING**

**Board of Governors** – at least one school governor serving on an interview panel or committee established for the purpose of recruiting or selecting staff for appointment to Victoria Primary school is trained in "Child Protection & Recruitment and Selection."

On appointment, all staff should be made aware of Child Protection Procedures.

**Staff Vetting** – All staff, paid or unpaid in our school will have been subject to a criminal background check to ensure suitability to have access to our children.

**Substitute Teachers** – Victoria PS will only employ as substitute teachers, those who are on the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register.

**Volunteers** – all volunteers, including parents, working in any capacity in our school or supervising on school trips will be required to complete our Volunteer Application Form giving the names of two referees. In addition to this they will also have been subject to a criminal background check to ensure suitability to have access to our children.

The EA will offer appropriate In-service Training on child abuse issues for the Designated & Deputy Designated Teachers.

Through CCEA, the Board will assist the school in developing appropriate programmes of personal and social development which will contribute to the prevention of child abuse.

## **LIABILITY FOR TEACHERS AND NON TEACHING STAFF**

Any teacher or other member of staff who complies with the procedures as set out by the EA and embodied in this policy in relation to making a report of suspected child abuse is acting within the course of his/her employment and in such circumstances where he/she has acted in good faith, will receive the full support of the EA, the Board of Governors and the Principal and will not be legally or financially liable.

**VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Designated Teacher	Miss Minnis
Deputy Designated Teachers	Mr Fulton/Mrs Addis
BoG Designated Child Protection	Mrs J Rodgers ☎: 028 93351781 (school)
EA Designated Child Protection Support Service	☎: 028 94482223
EA Educational Welfare Link Officer	☎: 028 90854826
Social Services Referral Gateway-	☎: 0300 1234 333
<b>Helplines:</b>	
NSPCC helpline	☎: 0808 8005000
NSPCC Childline	☎: 0800 1111
PSNI Public Protection Central Referral Unit	☎: 02890 259259 or 101

### DISCLOSURE

If a child discloses that he/she has been abused there are 6 points to remember:

1. **Receive** - stay calm, listen, accept without judgement, never ask leading questions, take notes if possible and appropriate. Need to be consistent that taking notes may hamper a child talking so there needs to be discernment if this is the right thing to do in the circumstance.
2. **Reassure the child** - not child's fault, but do not make promises.
3. **Respond/React** - no leading questions, do not criticise perpetrator, do not ask child to repeat unnecessarily to another person or member of staff.
4. **Record** - brief at time and write up later. Facts only, no opinions. Record date, time, place, behaviour of child and words of child. Draw a diagram to indicate marks/bruising.
5. **Report-** as soon as possible to the designated teacher
6. **Relax** – get support for yourself

Five things you might say

- I believe you
- I am glad that you have told me this
- I am sorry that this has happened to you
- It is not, nor ever was your fault
- We are going to do something together about this

## APPENDIX 3

### ROLE OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND OTHER AGENCIES

Social Services have a statutory duty to investigate any case where they receive information suggesting that a child or young person may be in need of care, protection or control unless satisfied that such enquiries are unnecessary. Their objective is to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. They have a lead role in co-ordinating the work of all the agencies and professionals concerned with the child's family. A joint protocol has been established between the Social Services and the Police for investigative purposes. This will involve the police in investigating situations where a crime may have been committed.

When there is suspicion that a child has been abused, Social Services may convene a multi-disciplinary Case Conference which may involve principals or their nominees depending upon who is best placed to contribute effectively to the discussion of the child's welfare.

- All schools are aware that they must safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils in their charge.
- This duty rests with all members of staff, teaching and non teaching, and implicit in it is the assumption that the conduct of school staff towards their pupils must be above reproach.
- The younger the pupil, the less likely it will be that he or she will be able to recognise and respond appropriately to an abuse by any member of staff of the trust his or her position confers.
- *Any abuse of that position of trust by any member of staff must be regarded with the utmost gravity.*
- As well as the more obvious physical or sexual abuse, members of staff should be alert to the risk of emotional abuse, such as persistent sarcasm, verbal bullying or severe and persistent negative comment or actions.
- Staff should reflect on every aspect of their contact with children which may give rise to perceptions or allegations of this form of abuse.
- Integral to a clear understanding of standards of behaviour expected of school staff is an understanding of the acceptable boundaries of physical contact with pupils. It is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that teachers should only touch pupils in emergencies. Particularly with younger children, touching them is inevitable and can give welcome reassurance. However, teachers must bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. Children may find being touched uncomfortable or distressing for a variety of

reasons. It is important for teachers to be sensitive to a child's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately.

*It is also important not to touch pupils, however casually, in ways, on parts of the body, (especially breasts and genitalia) or in circumstances that might be considered indecent.*

- In extreme cases, a teacher may have to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him or her causing injury to him-or herself, to others or to property. In such instances no more than the minimum necessary force should be used; the teacher should seek to avoid causing injury to the pupil.
- Governors, employers and senior staff have a responsibility to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and pupils; that all staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries and that those boundaries are maintained with the sensitive support and supervision required.
- Staff on residential trips need to be particularly mindful of their responsibility, as do individuals in circumstances where there is one- to - one contact with pupils, for example in the teaching of music, or in extra curricular activities.

## **Visitors to school**

Most visitors to school are pre-arranged although some are not. They will range from specialist music peripatetic teachers to tradesmen and even parents working in school in a voluntary capacity. All visitors in school sign in and out upon their visit and wear a visible visitor's badge. The pupils are repeatedly made aware of what the visitors badge looks like and what it means.



**Volunteer Helpers  
Child Protection Legislation**

Dear Parents

It has been our policy to encourage parents and friends to help with activities in school.

In accordance with our Child Protection Policy, all volunteer helpers are required to complete a Criminal Background Check and a School Application Form which gives consent to seek references from people who have known the volunteer. The form and all subsequent information will be held in total confidence by the school.

Should you feel you wish to assist with any activity / event during the year, it would be helpful if you could complete the forms and return them to school as soon as possible.

While this is an additional layer of administration, the Department of Education is very clear about the need to make certain our children are safe in school.

If you have any queries concerning the procedure, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continued support of the school.

**C Fulton**  
Principal



## Voluntary Help Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden/previous name (where applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship with School: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Do you have a current driving licence? **Yes / No** Use of a car? **Yes / No**

2 Have you previously been involved in voluntary work involving children and young people?  
If so, please give details.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3 Do you have any disability which would affect the type of voluntary work you could undertake? **Yes / No**  
If yes, please give details.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4 Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or bound over order? **Yes / No**  
If yes, please give details (Nature, Dates etc)

*You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974(exceptions)(Amendment) Oder 1986, you should declare any convictions, including "spent" convictions.*

\_\_\_\_\_

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5 Have you ever been investigated by Social services in relation to Child Protection or had a child removed from your care? **Yes / No**

If yes, please provide details and advise on outcome.

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6 Please indicate the area (or areas) where you would be willing to help

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### **REFEREES**

Please give the name and addresses of 2 referees who may be contacted to support your application. Referees should not be family members or members of the staff of the school.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Criminal Records Checks**

Voluntary activities in the school involve substantial contact with the children and it is necessary to arrange for a Criminal Records Check to be carried out. Please sign the declaration below.

### **DECLARATION**

The information I have given is correct.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

