

# SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

2021-2022



Ashgrove Primary School

*Learning, Caring, Growing Stronger Together*



## Article 1

Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights of the Convention

## Article 3

The best interests of the child must be a top priority

AGREE DATE	REVIEW DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
2021	2022	Mrs V Luney & R Smith

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## UNCRC (RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS)

All children have Rights. We are a Rights Respecting School and place the UNCRC at the core of our ethos. The language of rights and ensuring all pupils access their rights is woven into this policy. This policy has particular links to the following rights in the UNCRC:

- Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority
- Article 6: Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure children survive and develop to their full potential.
- Article 7: Every child has the right to a legal name and nationality, as well as the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents.
- Article 19: Children should be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
- Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical, social and emotional needs

## POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

(The governors and staff of Ashgrove Primary School fully recognise the contribution they make to the safeguarding of individual children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm. Parents are asked to work with us by updating school information regularly, disclosing relevant advice on court orders, etc. and by informing the school about anything which could cause distress and change to a child, such as bereavement, family disruption or social problem.

This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio.

This policy is available on the school website, app and is included in the staff handbook and volunteers' handbook.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- the school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance
- safer children make more successful learners
- representatives of the whole-school community of pupils, parents, staff and governors will be involved in policy development and review
- policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review
- the voice of the child or young person should be heard
- parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped stay together
- partnership
- prevention
- responses should be proportionate to the circumstances
- protection; and
- evidence based and informed decision making

## CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective

support, protection and justice. The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors (and are consistent with those of the Safeguarding Board for NI (SBNI)).

### POLICY PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

### POLICY AIMS

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents and other partners

### TERMINOLOGY

SAFEGUARDING and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and TAKING ACTION TO ENABLE ALL CHILDREN TO HAVE THE BEST OUTCOMES.

CHILD PROTECTION refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

STAFF refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

DT refers to the designated teacher for child protection

CHILD includes everyone under the age of 18.

PARENT refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

### SAFEGUARDING LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- ❖ DENI Circulars and guidance as contained in Safeguarding Proforma with Prompts 2019.
- ❖ DE Letters of information as contained in Safeguarding Proforma with Prompts 2019.
- ❖ Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools, A Guide for Schools (Updated September 2019).

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Designated Governor	Mr William Edwards
Chairperson	Mrs Karen Thompson
Principal	Mr Robert Smith
Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs Valerie Luney (P5)
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs Kirsten Coulter (P1) Mrs Jill Carberry (P5)

### THE DESIGNATED TEACHER (DT), MRS LUNEY:

- has the status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the post, including committing resources and supporting and directing other staff
- is appropriately trained, with regular updates
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the school community
- has a working knowledge of SBNI procedures
- makes staff aware of SBNI latest policies on safeguarding
- keeps detailed written records of all concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and flagged on, but kept separate from, the pupil's general file
- refers cases of suspected abuse to children's social care or police as appropriate
- ensures that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained
- attends and/or contributes to child protection conferences
- coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans
- develops effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensures that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually liaises with the nominated governor and principal (where the role is not carried out by the principal) as appropriate
- makes the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means.



Mrs Luney  
Primary 5 Teacher

### DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHERS, MRS COULTER P1 & MRS CARBERRY P5

The Deputy Designated Teachers are trained to the same level as the DT and, in the absence of the DT, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the DT, the deputy will assume all of the functions above. Best practice sees the DT and DDT acting as a team.

Mrs Coulter  
Primary 1 Teacher

Mrs Coulter's most recent DDT training April 2017



Mrs Carberry  
Primary 5 Teacher

Mrs Carberry's most recent DDT training April 2021



## PRINCIPAL, MR SMITH



Mr Smith is kept fully informed of all safeguarding issues in school. He works with the Safeguarding Team to review policies and implement guidance from the Department of Education.

The Principal ensures that Safeguarding is given a constant high priority at Board of Governor Meetings. The Principal also liaises with external agencies where required.

Mr Smith works with the Safeguarding Team to review all Safeguarding Policies and assists with the Annual Safeguarding Report to Governors.

## GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Good practice includes:

- treating all pupils with respect
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- being a good listener
- being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the DT, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care

(For full details, please refer to our Staff Code of Conduct – refer to appendix 3).

## ABUSE OF POSITION OF TRUST

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence.

Our Staff Code of Conduct (including Do's and Don'ts of Social Media) sets out our expectations and is signed by all members of staff.

## CHILDREN WHO MAY BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers

- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- living in temporary accommodation
- live transient lifestyles
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- at risk of sexual exploitation
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- at risk of forced marriage
- at risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information and resources in community languages and accessible formats for children with communication needs.

### CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The Pastoral Care Leader (Mrs Jill Carberry) will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the Education Welfare Service, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. **Refer to Attendance Policy.**

### PARENTS AND CHILD PROTECTION

This Child Protection Policy will remain available to all parents via the school's website. A summary will be distributed annually in print. Advice will be given on procedures for reporting child abuse and a synopsis of the policy will be included in the school prospectus. See appendix 2.

Parents are asked to supply the school with the names of all persons who have permission to collect their child from school (or to confirm that their child may leave the grounds unaccompanied). They are asked to inform the school of any change in this routine.

Parents are asked to brief school about arrangements following any separation or divorce. Members of staff need to be aware of legal responsibilities, agreed access or exclusion and any involvement of Social Services. Such information will be requested formally each September, but parents are encouraged to keep the school informed as necessary.

Parents will be made aware that on occasions staff may have to change pupil's clothes when administering first aid, after toilet accidents, for PE and on other such occasions. The school's **Intimate Care Policy** applies.

In the event of a parent making a complaint about a member of staff, volunteer or student, the school's complaints procedure will be followed and the complaint addressed directly to the principal. If the complaint is against the principal, it will be addressed to the chairperson of the governors. If a complaint includes a disclosure relating to another child, the accused child's parents will be informed. Discipline must remain solely in the hands of the staff.



THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN RESTS WITH PARENTS WHO SHOULD FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT RAISING ANY CONCERNS THEY HAVE IN RELATION TO THEIR CHILD.

PARENTS CAN PLAY THEIR PART IN SAFEGUARDING BY INFORMING THE SCHOOL:

- if the child has a medical condition or educational need;
- if there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child;
- if there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility;
- if there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school;
- if their child is absent and should send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence. More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at: [www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection](http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection)

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SCHOOL HAS UP TO DATE CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE PARENT/CARER.

WHISTLE BLOWING IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A COLLEAGUE

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. Our **Whistleblowing Policy** enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Principal. Complaints about the headteacher/principal should be reported to the chair of governors, chair of the management committee or proprietor.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to children's social care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in *DE Circular 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a member of Staff*.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal). Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

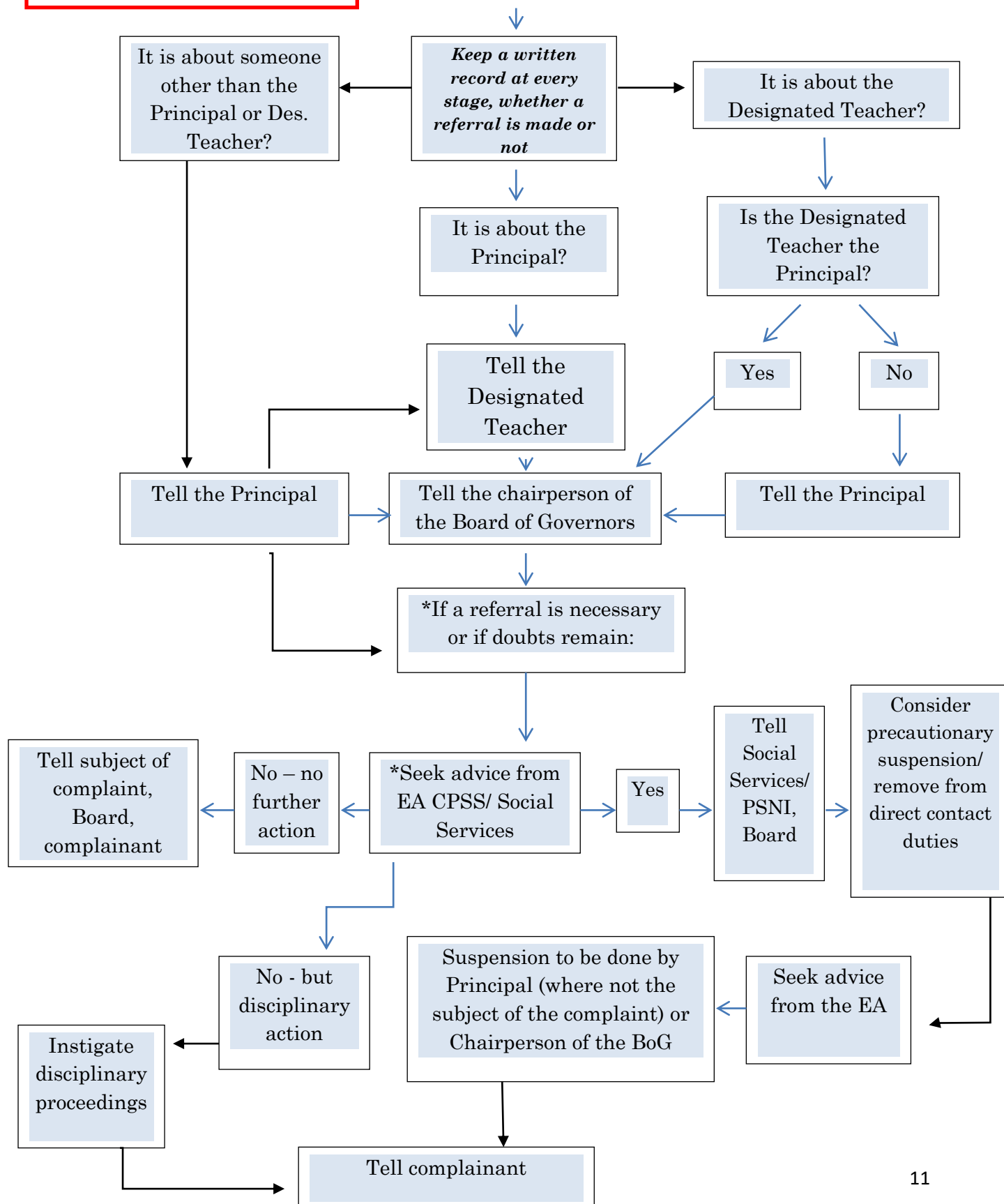
If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. They will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

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

# PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL'S STAFF

**\* WE WILL CONSULT WITH EA  
CHILD PROTECTION SCHOOLS  
SUPPORT BEFORE MAKING A  
REFERRAL.**

The complaint is  
about possible abuse  
by a member of staff



## DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

### KEY POINTS

\*Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of Board of Governors as appropriate

### GUIDANCE ON THE NEXT STEPS...

Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate\*, usually through informal discussion.

### POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.

Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.

Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures imposed.

Alternatives to precautionary suspension imposed.

\* The Lead Individual should be identified at the outset, normally the Principal or designated senior member of staff.

**\*WE WILL CONSULT WITH EA CHILD PROTECTION SCHOOLS SUPPORT BEFORE BEGINNING THIS PROCESS.**

## STAFF TRAINING

It is important that all staff receive training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to know what to do if they have a concern.

New staff and governors will receive a briefing during their induction, which includes the school's child protection policy and staff behaviour policy, reporting and recording arrangements, and details for the DT. All staff, including the DT, Principal (unless the principal is the DT) and governors will receive training that is regularly updated. All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

## THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. An awareness of "stranger danger"; an understanding of how to respond to perceived threats; care in regard to e-safety; and the development of standards of behaviour that are appropriate for primary school children are all reinforced through the school's work on PDMU within the Northern Ireland Curriculum. They are also the focus of assemblies, visits from outside professionals and on-going guidance opportunities as they arise, such as circle time.

Alongside the use of curricular resources we also use Women's Aid Helping Hands materials, the NSPCC PANTS campaign and Childline in Schools. Internet safety is addressed by using CEOP resources and materials and contact with PSNI.

The Designated Teacher has provided sample lessons and resources to all teachers to address Safeguarding with our pupils at an age appropriate level.

In October 2018 we gained the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Gold standard Award. This will further raise awareness for our children of the legal protections and rights they have to be safe and free from harm.

The school has appointed children as Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and trained them through the Diana Trust.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- Ensure that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty; and
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social Development which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises.

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

Our school complies with the requirements of *Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools (DE 2017)* and the SBNI by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

At least one member of each recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

All relevant staff (involved in early years settings and/or before or after school care for children under eight) are made aware of the disqualification legislation and their obligations to disclose relevant information to the school.

The school obtains written confirmation from third party organisations that agency staff or other individuals who may work in the school have been appropriately checked.

Trainee teachers will be checked either by the school or by the training provider, from whom written confirmation may be obtained.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

### GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTEERS

There are two types of volunteers working in schools: those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision. Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC).

A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, however, the school must determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard. The school must ensure that volunteers e.g. coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc, who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place.

### VISITORS TO SCHOOL

Visitors to school, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc do not need to be vetted before being allowed into school premises. However, the school staff should manage their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors should be:

- Met/directed by school staff
- Signed in and out by school staff
- When appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school
- Where possible be escorted by a member of staff
- Clearly identified with a visitor pass
- Access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit
- If delivering goods or carrying out maintenance tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

### PUPILS ON WORK EXPERIENCE

Health and Social Care Programmes will require an EDC for pupils on long-term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/ shadowing placements. Schools should apply through their AccessNI Registered Body in advance. **Pupils coming to the school on work experience do not require AccessNI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff.** The normal child protection induction process should apply.

### CONTRACTORS

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests AccessNI with barred list checks where required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised during the school's day.

### SITE SECURITY

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The

principal will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

### EXTENDED SCHOOL AND OFF-SITE ARRANGEMENTS

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

### EDUCATIONAL TRIPS / VISITS

Ashgrove Primary School has a separate policy on Fieldwork and Educational Trips, as in accordance with EA guidance <http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/educational-visits/>

### STAFF/PUPIL ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

(REFER TO DO'S & DON'TS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT, appendix 3). The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation.

### E-SAFETY/ SAFER INTERNET

Our policy on the internet and digital technologies is set out in a separate document and is informed by DE guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies. Specifically, it addresses safeguarding issues that may arise in the use of the internet and digital technologies. Refer to **Safer Internet Policy 2019**.

### PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES OF CHILDREN

All parents are asked at the start of the academic year to consent to their child's photographs being taken and displayed within the school, occasionally in newspapers or on the school website.

A list of any children who MAY NOT have photographs taken or displayed will be clearly sited for all staff to check.

### CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

#### RECOGNISING ABUSE

To ensure that our pupils are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone.

Abuse may be committed by adult men or women and by other children and young people.

*Safeguarding and Child protection in Schools (DE 2017)* refers to five types of abuse. These are set out at Appendix One along with indicators of abuse.

## BULLYING

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our tackling-bullying procedures which can be accessed online via our Anti Bullying Policy.

## TAKING ACTION

**Any child, in any family in any school could become a victim of abuse. Staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here".** Key points for staff to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child
- report your concern as soon as possible to the DT, definitely by the end of the day
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only - do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a **RECORD OF CONCERN** (appendix 5)
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

## IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A PUPIL'S WELFARE

There will be occasions when staff may suspect that a pupil may be at risk. The pupil's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be concerning, they may write stories or poetry that reveal confusion or distress, or physical signs may have been noticed. In these circumstances, staff will try to give the pupil the opportunity to talk and ask if they are OK or if they can help in any way.

Staff should use the **RECORD OF CONCERN FORM** to record these early concerns. If the pupil does reveal that they are being harmed, staff should follow the advice below. Following an initial conversation with the pupil, if the member of staff has concerns, they should discuss their concerns with the DT.

## IF A PUPIL DISCLOSES TO YOU

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

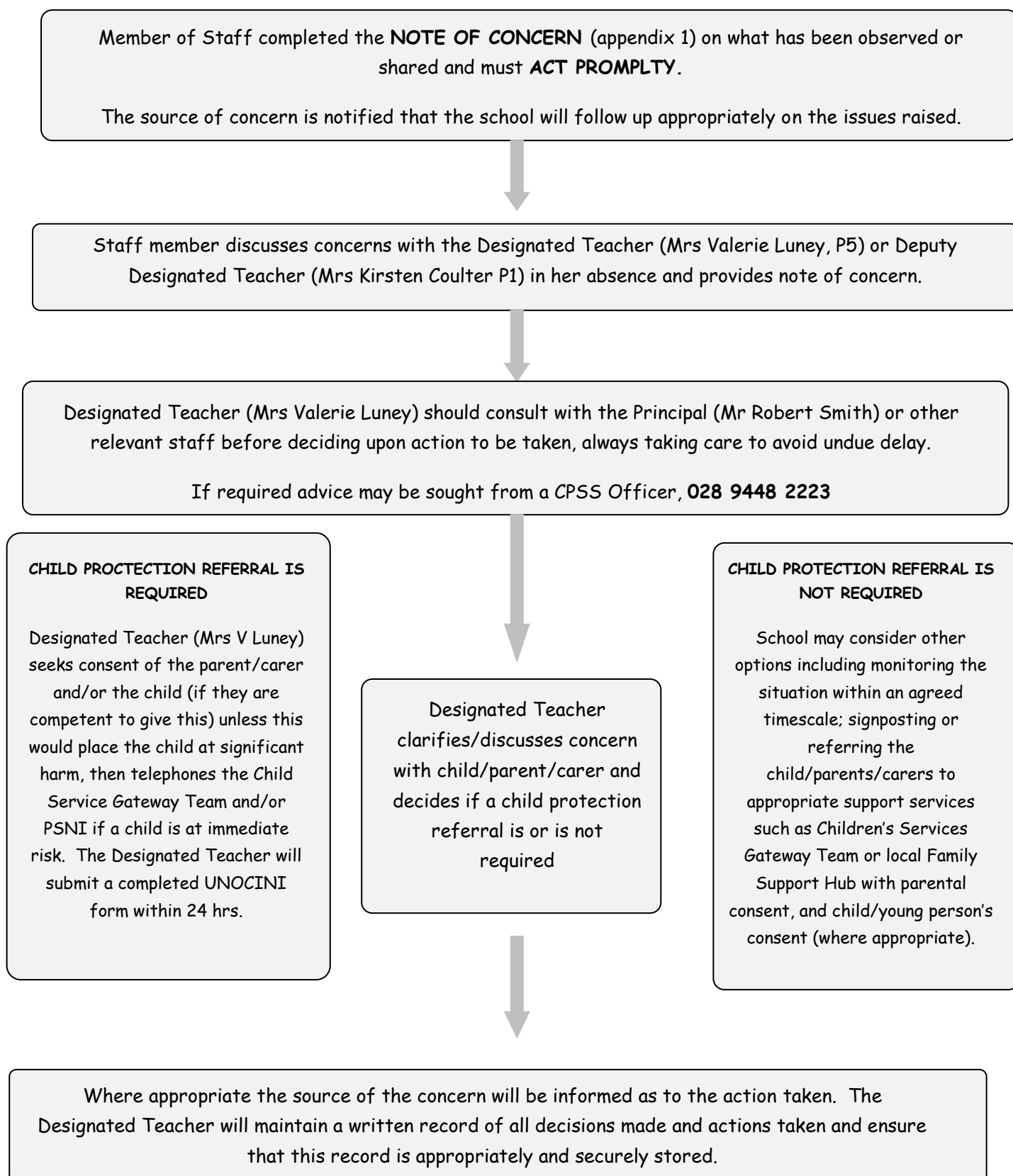
If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the safeguarding lead in the school - DT.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupil's staff will:

<i><b>DO</b></i>	<i><b>DO NOT</b></i>
Listen to what the child says	Ask leading questions
Assure the child they are not at fault	Put words into the child's mouth
Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret	Ignore the child's behaviour
Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words	Remove any clothing
Remember not to promise the child confidentiality	Panic
	Promise to keep secrets
	Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily



<i>DO</i>	<i>DO NOT</i>
<p>Stay calm</p> <p>Listen</p> <p>Accept</p> <p>Reassure</p> <p>Explain what you are going to do</p> <p>Record accurately</p> <p>Seek support for yourself</p>	<p>Delay</p> <p>Start to investigate</p> <p><b>Do nothing</b></p>

## PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS, OR HAS BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION, ABOUT POSSIBLE



## NOTIFYING PARENTS

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DT will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

## CHILD PROTECTION RECORDS

Refer to Circular Child Protection: Record keeping in Schools 2020/07

### RECORD OF CONCERN

Any member of staff who has a concern about the welfare or safety of a child or young person must complete a RECORD OF CONCERN (appendix 5). Notes must be made as soon as possible after an incident and passed immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. The Record of Concern should be signed and dated by both parties to confirm the information is accurate.

### UNOCINI

The UNOCINI referral form (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) will be completed when the Safeguarding Team wish to refer a child or young person to children's social services for support, safeguarding or a fuller assessment of needs. We will usually seek to gain the consent of parents/carers prior to a referral. An exception will be made if we consider that the child is in need of safeguarding and gaining consent may increase the risk to the child.

### CHILD PROTECTION FILE

The Designated Teacher will store each RECORD OF CONCERN (appendix 5) and copy UNOCINI documents in the child's Child Protection File and supplement it with all other records created and acquired as the management of the concern progresses.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

### INFORMATION KEEPING

Child protection information is **CONFIDENTIAL**. All records are stored in a confidential filing system for child protection concerns. This filing cabinet is accessible only to the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teachers and Principal. The cabinet is NOT accessible to anyone else including administrative staff, ETi and the Board of Governors.

## PARENTAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION

All requests for pupil information in relation to Safeguarding/Child Protection matters will be treated as a request under the Data Protection Act 1998. We will consult with CPSS (NE Region) if we receive a request for information.

"Child Protection records may be exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 in cases where disclosure may cause serious physical or emotional harm to the child or any other person. This means that neither pupils nor their parents have an automatic right to access them. However, the exemption only applies to the information that may cause harm and is not a blanket exemption for the file as a whole. In addition, the exemption can only be relied upon if it is endorsed by the opinion of an appropriate health professional. (Data Protection (Subject Access Modification) (Health Order) 2000)."

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DT, principal or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a 'need-to-know' basis.

However, **any** member of staff can contact children's social care if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

**RECORD OF CONCERN** (appendix 5) forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

The DT will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DT may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

## REFERRAL TO SOCIAL SERVICES

The DT will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child. Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

## REPORTING DIRECTLY TO CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with Social Services, police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated teacher, their deputy, the principal and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

## SEXTING

There is no accepted definition of 'sexting' but most professionals agree that it refers to the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs of a person under 18 years of

age, via mobiles or over the internet. The [UKCCIS advice document](#) refers to this as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

- The incident will be referred to the DT immediately and the DT will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff. If appropriate, there will be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.
- Parents will be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe that involving parents would put the young person at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern a young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm a referral will be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately in accordance with this policy.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Sexual exploitation involves an individual or group of adults taking advantage of the vulnerability of an individual or groups of children or young people, and victims can be boys or girls. Children and young people are often unwittingly drawn into sexual exploitation through the offer of friendship and care, gifts, drugs and alcohol, and sometimes accommodation. Sexual exploitation is a serious crime and can have a long-lasting adverse impact on a child's physical and emotional health. It may also be linked to child trafficking.

A common feature of sexual exploitation is that the child often doesn't recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and doesn't see themselves as a victim. The child may initially resent what they perceive as interference by staff, but staff must act on their concerns, as they would for any other type of abuse.

All staff are made aware of the indicators of sexual exploitation and all concerns are reported immediately to the DT.

## HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

FGM is the collective name given to a range of procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. The practice can cause intense pain and distress and long-term health consequences, including difficulties in childbirth.

FGM is carried out on girls of any age, from young babies to older teenagers and adult women, so school staff are trained to be aware of risk indicators. Many such procedures are carried out abroad and staff should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns expressed by female pupil about going on a long holiday during the summer vacation period.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which a female (and sometimes a male) does not consent to the marriage but is coerced into it. Coercion may include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It may also involve physical or sexual violence and abuse.

A forced marriage is not the same as an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, which is common in several cultures, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice of whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Children may be married at a very young age, and well below the age of consent. School staff receive training and should be particularly alert to suspicions or concerns raised by a pupil about being taken abroad and not be allowed to return to Northern Ireland.

### PRIVATE FOSTERING ARRANGEMENTS

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone OTHER THAN A PARENT OR A CLOSE RELATIVE cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify Social Services as soon as possible

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DT and the school should notify the local Trust of the circumstances.

### LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the Trust looking after the child. The DT has details of the child's social worker.

### COVID-19

- During periods of lockdown the Safeguarding Team will be available to carry out Safeguarding duties as required
- Members of the Safeguarding Team will attend Safeguarding meetings as required by phone or teleconferencing
- All members of staff have contact information for the DT, DDT's and Principal
- During periods of lockdown, the Principal or member of the SLT is on site every day and can be contacted

## **ADDENDUM CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **COVID-19 ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

#### **CONTEXT**

From 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### **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, teachers' email addresses, main school phone number have been made available to all parents. Parents have been informed that the DT/DDT is available.
- Teachers provide online learning via Googleclassroom or See-Saw with strict procedures in place to minimise risk - refer to Online & Blended Learning Policy
- The website provides parents with a range of resources and links to additional online learning, support and guidance and Safeguarding Guidance.
- We would remind everyone to stay safe when using online resources and to report any concerns to a member of the safeguarding team.

## 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. In Ashgrove Primary we use Collaborate Ultra which is safeguarded by the C2K filters.

- 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.

## HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE AN ISSUE OR EXPRESS A CONCERN

We 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.

## 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.

## 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 can contact school via the whisper box on our website.
- Other Agencies
- NSPCC Childline
- CEOP
- Safer Schools App

## USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

All members of staff have personal contact details for all members of the Safeguarding Team i.e. mobile phone numbers, email addresses etc

- <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/>

## 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.

## Appendix One

### FIVE TYPES OF ABUSE

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

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

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

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

## INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF TO REPORT THEIR CONCERNS. IT IS NOT THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO INVESTIGATE OR DECIDE WHETHER A CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED.

A child who is being abused, neglected or exploited may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- be concerned about changing for PE or swimming
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships

- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently miss school, arrive late or leave the school for part of the day
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DT to decide how to proceed.

## APPENDIX TWO

### RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

Other school policies that outline the school's approach to related areas of safeguarding children include:

- Anti-Bullying
- Administration of Medication
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safe-handling Policy
- Pastoral Care
- SEN Policy
- Intimate Care
- Reasonable Force and Safe Handling
- Attendance
- Staff Code of Conduct (appendix 3)
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Visitors Code of Conduct
- ICT and Related Technologies Policy
- Safer Internet Policy 2019
- E-Safety Policy
- Records Management Policy (Disposal and Retention of Records)
- Supervision of Volunteers and Visitors
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Managing Critical Incidents Guidance
- Drug Policy
- GDPR Privacy notice
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Equality & Inclusion Policy

## APPENDIX THREE

### STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

## PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school.

This Code of Conduct applies to all staff who are employed or volunteers in Ashgrove Primary School including the Principal.

In Ashgrove Primary School we want all of our pupils and staff to feel happy, safe and secure, so that they can benefit fully from their time in school and be enabled to contribute wholeheartedly to the educational experience which our school offers. We aim, at all times, to behave appropriately and warmly towards each other, and to support one another both personally and professionally.

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within the education sector. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1. PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH PUPILS

- a. 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 open.
- b. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- c. Where possible another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview, and the school should take active measures to facilitate this.

### 2. PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.
- b. It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- c. Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 **(Power of member of staff to restrain pupils)**).
- d. Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- e. Schools should, in particular circumstances, such as use of certain areas like the photographic darkroom, draw up their own guidelines for these circumstances.

f. 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 in an emergency simply because another person is not present.**

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

h. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to his/her line manager.

i. 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 AND USE OF TEACHING MATERIALS

a. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.

b. 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. Schools have already received advice on the value of consulting parents and Governors when proposing to use materials such as the AIDS education for schools and in connection with sex education programmes.

c. 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

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

## SETTING AN EXAMPLE

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students.

All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same. All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

## SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from;

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student to the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mrs Luney) or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mrs Carberry or Mrs Coulter).

Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents. Staff must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

#### PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of pupils/students.
- ✓ Follow the Child Protection Policies as agreed by the school including the Intimate Care Policy.
- ✓ Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.
- ✓ Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

#### HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

#### CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and social networking and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student. All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's/student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

However, staff have an obligation to share with school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must **never** promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

#### DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

## PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

### *With children:*

- We act respectfully towards children at all times, for example:
- We will never ignore instances of negative behaviours and will take positive steps to address the situation;
- Speaking in a calm and objective way, even in the face of challenging circumstances;
- Using a range of vocal volume that is appropriate to the learning activity (we may raise our voices in a controlled way to achieve a desired impact, but we never shout in anger)
- Showing good manners to children and thereby modelling what good manners are
- Taking seriously what *all* children tell us. **Our first response** is always to believe what we are told giving children time to express themselves considering how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves;
- Pursuing settlements to conflicts between children in a way that is demonstrably fair and listens to all points of view before making a considered judgement
- We judge children based on the current situation and not on past behaviour making clear to children why a course of action has been necessary;
- We uphold the school's policies and procedures on Behaviour and Child Protection in our dealings with children. We acknowledge that we are in 'loco parentis' and, as such, have a duty of care for all children in the school;
- We are consistent in the way that we apply rewards and sanctions to the children, so that each individual child knows that they will receive the same treatment from any member of staff;
- We understand that children have a right to be heard;
- We are friendly and supportive to all children, but maintain our professionalism at all times.
- We acknowledge that some interactions that seek to 'be friends' with children can create ambiguity in the relationship and are unhelpful.
- We protect ourselves and our pupils by making sure that we avoid being alone with individual children, but if it is unavoidable to do so, we ensure that we are in a place where others can see us
- We use physical contact with children in a careful, sensitive and respectful way. A hand on the shoulder or head is often a good way of engaging with an individual child. However, any physical contact should be avoided when staff members are alone with individual children, except in emergency. We adopt the principle that parents want their children to be given a certain level of physical reassurance if distressed, hurt or otherwise in need. This is the case for all children, but may be appropriate more frequently for younger children
- We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors;
- When speaking to children, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves;

- We teach and respond to children as unique individuals
- We have a professional responsibility to inform an appropriate person if we believe that a colleague is behaving in a way that compromises the safety or well-being of any child or group of children;

#### **With parents:**

- Parents have an entitlement to be informed about their child's learning and well-being. We always seek to involve and engage parents in this process;
- We recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or well-being;
- We always seek to work in partnership with parents, using their understanding of their own child to help us to provide the best learning opportunities that we can;
- We recognise that parents' worries and concerns can be extremely emotive and we acknowledge that, at times, we will need to speak to parents when they are upset;
- If we are concerned that a parent may be aggressive or otherwise inappropriate towards us, we can ask for a colleague (usually a senior leader) to be present;
- In extreme circumstances, the Principal may decide that it is safer for a teacher to communicate with a parent through different means;
- We are honest with parents, without undermining colleagues and respond fairly to their concerns irrespective of their race, religion, culture or social background;
- When speaking to parents, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves;
- We take responsibility for our actions and are willing to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors;
- We protect ourselves by ensuring that we meet with parents in areas of the school that are visible and easily accessible to other staff members, while remembering to be sensitive to the confidential nature of some discussions. We always make sure that colleagues know when and where we are meeting with parents;
- We recognise the right to confidentiality of all members of the school community.

#### ***With other members of staff:***

- We act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of our relative position or status within the school hierarchy, for example:
  - Speaking politely to one another;
  - Being flexible and understanding of necessary changes within the school day;
  - Assuming that the actions of others are carried out in good faith;
  - Communicating clearly and honestly with colleagues;
  - Addressing concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone;

- Being publicly supportive of colleagues, and dealing with concerns or disagreements, privately, with support if necessary;
- We share a responsibility to encourage and support our colleagues in their professional development;
- We consider all members of the staff team to have equal value, irrespective of their job, and treat them accordingly;
- When speaking to colleagues, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves;
- Concerns raised with managers are dealt with confidentially. If further action is required, the manager has responsibility to inform only the appropriate senior person within the school;
- We recognise that we are all accountable for our actions and performance and that from time-to time leaders and managers will need to deliver feedback that is challenging;
- All individual feedback is given sensitively, and constructively and should only be shared with those staff members that need to know (e.g. line manager or mentor);
- By approaching issues with colleagues in a way that always seeks to solve potential problems in a positive way;
- We never act in a way that publicly undermines a colleague or the school;
- We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors.

#### STAFF DRESS

- We dress in a manner that exhibits the importance of the job that we do;
- We wear smart, practical clothes
- We avoid wearing clothes that could cause offence or embarrassment to others casual jeans & leggings are not considered acceptable, unless participating in a trip or visit that requires harder wearing clothes (e.g. residential trips)
- When leading physical activities and/or PE lessons (including Sports Day), we may change into suitable clothing for that lesson (e.g. training shoes and track-suit)
- We do not wear excessive amounts of jewellery and understand our own Health and Safety responsibilities

#### THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF SOCIAL MEDIA!

##### DO THE FOLLOWING:

- ✓ If you're in a public forum, keep it light and positive. If you can't, keep quiet.
- ✓ Connect with colleagues with whom you feel safe. Don't connect with colleagues you're unsure about.
- ✓ Control your privacy settings. Keep up with the changes that Facebook etc makes to your privacy settings.
- ✓ Take care when posting pictures of yourself and others. If you tag a colleague, just think how you'd feel if they did the same to you.



- ✓ Disconnect from negativity. Unfriend or block those who continually blast you with negativity and trolling.
- ✓ Show what you're proud of. Done something great? Let people know.
- ✓ Use social media in your own time- outside working hours.
- ✓ Post with care.

#### **DON'T DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- ✗ Do not follow pupils or parents on Facebook or other forms of social media. There's little to gain and much to lose.
- ✗ Don't comment on status updates of pupils or parents. Even if it's positive, because you'll either be criticising or showing favouritism.
- ✗ Don't drink and tweet or post. Comments made after a bottle has been opened never look so wise or amusing in the morning.
- ✗ Do not post party pictures on social media. If you lost dignity and it was photographed this can be shared with others.
- ✗ Please don't share the beach photos or anything with a state of undress.
- ✗ Do not post during work hours. It just doesn't look good. Not even if it was scheduled.

#### **STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT: QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE**

- ✓ All adults must model the behaviours we expect from our pupils;
- ✓ The needs of our pupils come FIRST;
- ✓ We will never ignore instances of negative behaviours and take positive steps to restore the situation quickly;
- ✓ As a collective school we will work towards and encourage the highest possible level of achievement for all pupils;
- ✓ At all times we will value and respect pupils equally, treating them in a polite, positive, responsive and considerate manner;
- ✓ Apply the School's Positive Behaviour Policy as situations demand in order to encourage and develop appropriate behaviours;
- ✓ A calm, rational approach should be adopted by staff in all aspects of schooling. It is never acceptable to "shout" at a child in anger.
- ✓ All Adults must familiarise themselves with the School's Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy- this is updated annually;
- ✓ The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Luney (Primary 5) the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Coulter (Primary1);
- ✓ Ensure that you do not breach professional boundaries and do not act in a way that could be misinterpreted or otherwise leave you vulnerable to allegations of inappropriate behaviour;
- ✓ Staff Mobile Phones must not be used during teaching time or when in contact with pupils;
- ✓ Teachers must ensure all teaching materials are appropriate in terms of content and level of pupil attainment;

- ✓ Be positive in your thinking and approach (constructive not destructive, seeking solutions and having a go);
- ✓ Adhering to deadlines and keeping to time;
- ✓ De-personalising issues (professional cloak, focus on solving the issue);
- ✓ Communicating effectively, clearly, honestly and transparently with all stakeholders;
- ✓ Demonstrating fairness and consistency showing appreciation (taking time to thank and acknowledge the contributions of others);
- ✓ Respecting the environment and each other (taking shared ownership of our school).

## APPENDIX FOUR USEFUL CONTACTS

**Child Protection School Support (CPSS) 028 9598 5590**

**Duty Social Worker Gateway Team (Health & Social Care Trust)**

<b>Gateway Team</b>	<b>Contact Number: <u>0300 1234 333</u></b>
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Should any adult in the school find themselves in the rare position of being the only adult remaining in the school and in need of immediate safeguarding advice, they should use the contacts below (in the given order) to seek help:

1. CPSS (Child Protection School Support)
2. Social Services Gateway Team
3. Out of Hours Duty Social Worker

### **OTHER CONTACTS**

Childline:	0800 1111
Child Sexual Exploitation Helpline NSPCC:	0800 389 1701
PSNI:	0845 600 8000
24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline:	0808 802 1414
NSPCC Adult Helpline (For adults concerned about a child):	0808 800 5000 Text: 88858

*Useful websites:*

[www.familysupportni.gov.uk](http://www.familysupportni.gov.uk)

[www.nspcc.org](http://www.nspcc.org)

[www.addictionni.com](http://www.addictionni.com)



**CONFIDENTIAL**

APPENDIX 5

RECORD OF CONCERN

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD – REPORT TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of pupil:

Year Group:

Date, time of incident/disclosure:

Circumstances of incident/disclosure:

Nature & description of concern:

Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

<p>Action taken at the time:</p>
<p>Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:</p>
<p>Any further action taken:</p>
<p>Written Report passed to Designated Teacher:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 10px;"> <span>YES <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/></span> <span>NO <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/></span> </div> <p>If NO state the reason:</p>
<p>Date and time of the Report to the Designated Teacher:</p>
<p>Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If NO state the reason:</p>

Name of staff making the Report: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of DT: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_