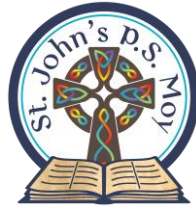


Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy - Summary

A Guide for Parents



The full policy document is available on request from the school office or the school's website

Aims

St. John's Primary School aims to establish a caring environment within which the academic, personal, social and spiritual potential of each child will be developed. The pastoral care dimension permeates all school activities.

We have 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 which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment.

Principles

Our Child Protection Policy is based on the following principles:

- The child's welfare must always be paramount.
- Children must always have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect but a proper balance must be struck between ensuring this and protecting children.
- Every child has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and have proper care given to their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

School Safeguarding Team

- The Chair of the Board of Governors: **Dean Kevin Donaghy**
- The Designated Governor for Child Protection: **Mrs M Donaghy**
- The School Principal: **Mrs L McKnight**
- The Designated Teacher for Child Protection: **Mrs L McKnight**
- The Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: **Mrs B Hughes**

Members of the team have clear roles and responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding of pupils within the school and these are detailed in our full Child Protection Policy.

In order to protect our pupils at St. John's we will adhere to the following procedures:

- All staff teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers will have clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect is suspected.
- All staff and volunteers will undergo vetting procedures in order to maintain the highest standard of professional care towards our children.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff will attend a Child Protection training programme organised by the Designated Teacher.
- Children will be supervised at all times while in the school grounds.
- All visitors to the school must report to the secretary's office.

Conduct of Staff

The conduct of staff towards the children must be above approach at all times. In safeguarding the welfare of the children, the staff must never abuse their position of trust. Staff should be alert to any suspicion of physical or sexual abuse. They should also be aware of the negative aspect of emotional abuse in the form of persistent sarcasm or verbal bullying. Members of staff should ensure that their conduct with the children could never be perceived or alleged as abusive.

Staff Training

Both teaching and ancillary staff have been trained by the Designated Teacher (Mrs McKnight) and this training will be updated biannually. The subject will also be addressed in the induction of newly appointed staff, both teaching and non-teaching.

Child Abuse

Child Abuse may take a number of forms, including:

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

Physical 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.

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.

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.

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, and engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

All the above definitions are from 'DE's Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools' (June 2022)

Operation Encompass

Our school is part of Operation Encompass which is a national scheme that operates jointly between schools and police forces. Operation Encompass is the reporting to schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has experienced domestic abuse. This allows schools to use the information that has been shared, in confidence, to support the child/ren in our care.

Mrs McKnight and Mrs Hughes have been trained in the Operation Encompass procedures. They Key adult for Saint John's is Mrs McKnight.



**OPERATION
ENCOMPASS**
In every force. In every school. For every child.

Summary of Procedures

All staff at St. John's P.S. will ensure that all children are aware of who they can talk to if they are sad, worried, being bullied or have any other concerns. Any member of staff who knows or suspects about any form of abuse has a duty to convey his/her concern to the Designated Teacher or Principal. Where non-teaching staff are alerted to the possibility of abuse, they should inform the class teacher immediately.

The Designated Teacher, **Mrs McKnight**, shall be the person with special responsibility for dealing with cases of suspected child abuse and in her absence the, Deputy Designated Teacher, **Mrs Hughes**.

The following diagram shows the procedures we are required to follow and is based upon the procedure described in **DE's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools.'** June 2022.

Disclosures/Concerns Regarding Abuse or Neglect

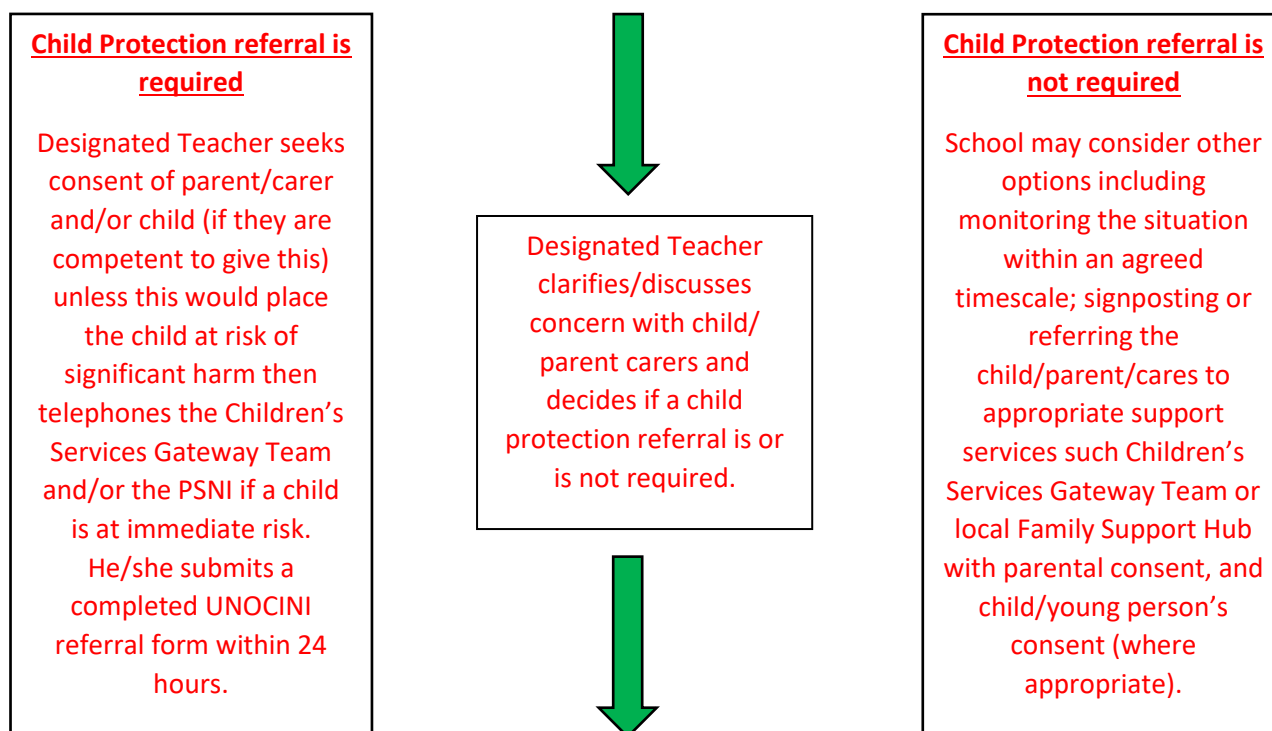
Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY.



St. John's Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher



Principal informed and consulted or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required advice may be sought from a CPSS officer.



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

It should be noted that information given to a member of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held in confidence. In the interest of the child, staff will need to share this information with other professions. However, only those who need to know will be told.

Allegations against Staff

Any complaints made that a member of staff has abused a pupil will be thoroughly investigated using the appropriate Child Protection Procedures. Advice will immediately be sought from the Education Authority Southern Region Designated Child Protection Officer, and Social Services. Preliminary enquiries will be carried out. These enquiries will have regard to the welfare of the child concerned and of the other children in the school, to the efficient functioning of the school and to the right of the individual against whom the complaint was made.

How a Parent can Share/Raise a Safeguarding Concern

If you have any concerns about your child's safety you should use the following procedures to make a complaint:

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



I can talk to the class teacher.



If I am still concerned I can talk to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection or the Principal



If I am still concerned I can talk/write to the Chair Person of the Board of Governors.



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



**At any time I can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at
(028 9025 9299)**

St. John's Primary School is committed to the provision of a high quality education for all pupils and high standards to all whom it serves. We believe that the fostering of trust and good relationships with the parents/carers of our pupils is important. A close partnership between home and school should help ensure that all our children learn and develop to their full potential in a caring, supportive and safe environment. Good communication is essential if we are to achieve this.

It is important that parents/carers understand that they are required to inform the school if:

- their child has a medical condition or educational need.
- there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or well-being of a parent or child.
- there is any change in a child's circumstances for e.g. change of address, contact details, name, parental responsibility.
- there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school.
- their child is absent from school and send in a note on the child's return to school.
- All visitors to the school must report to the main entrance/secretary's office.