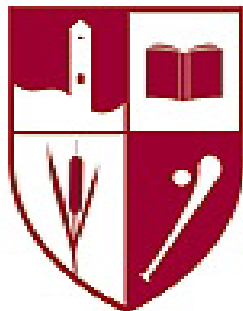


St Kevin's  
Primary School



**ST. KEVIN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**Whole School Child Protection Policy**

**Designated Teacher for Child Protection:** Mr J McComb  
**Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection:** Mrs E O'Doherty  
**Principal:** Miss F Keegan  
**Designated Governor for Child Protection:** Mrs C Hawkins

**MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the Governors and staff of St. Kevin's Primary School, believe the school to be a vital part of St. John's Parish community. We are firmly committed to:

- the aims of Catholic Education;
- providing appropriate and effective learning opportunities for all our children;
- developing positive pastoral care systems in our school
- establishing close links with the home, parish and wider community; and
- developing all members of the school community to enable them to fulfil their role within the school.

## **INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The governors and staff of St Kevin's Primary School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm.

As a Catholic school community, all governors and staff believe that we should endeavour to promote a positive approach to child protection by creating an environment in which children and parents feel confident about sharing their concerns with staff in the knowledge that they will be listened to.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999)' and the 'Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

The central thrust of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is that, '*the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration*' in all decisions concerning the child. This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; '*the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration*'. The model of The Children Order underpins our Child Protection Policy and procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in our school. The purpose of procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult 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 issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- ensuring that we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- supporting children who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan
- providing a curriculum that nurtures the children in our care and teaches them how to stay safe

## **SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ST KEVIN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Chair of Board of Governors:** Mr J Stott

**Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance:** Mrs C Hawkins

**Principal:** Miss F Keegan

**Designated Teacher for Child Protection:** Mr J McComb

**Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection:** Mrs E O'Doherty

## **AIMS OF OUR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

- to ensure that arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote children's Welfare
- to provide guidance and support for decision making and action with regard to Child Protection
- to provide a framework in which children learn to keep themselves safe
- to ensure an agreed consistent approach in all matters relating to Child Protection
- to inform teaching, non teaching staff, parents and the wider community of our Child Protection arrangements
- to ensure effective communication and appropriate action between the school and outside agencies
- to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all members of staff
- to ensure appropriate records are kept

## **DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE / SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE**

(A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined by the Children Order)

Child abuse occurs when a *'child is neglected, harmed or not provided for with proper care. Children may be abused in different settings, in a family, in an institution, or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely a stranger.'* ACPC (2005)

*'PHYSICAL ABUSE is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.'* ACPC (2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- untreated injuries
- self destructive tendencies
- chronic runaway
- fear of going home

***‘EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.’ ACPC (2005)***

Possible signs of emotional abuse include:

- change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
- difficulty in forming/maintaining relationships with others
- depression
- signs of mutilation
- attention seeking
- chronic runaway
- wetting and soiling
- sudden speech disorders
- low self esteem
- bullying of others

***‘SEXUAL ABUSE involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact.... They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at or in the production of pornographic material.’ ACPC (2005)***

Possible signs of sexual abuse include:

- bruised or sore genitals
- genital infection
- difficulty in walking or sitting
- inappropriate or sexualised language or behaviour
- low self esteem
- chronic depression
- substance abuse
- personality changes
- fear of going home

***‘NEGLECT is the persistent failure to meet a child’s physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm.’ ACAP (2005)***

Possible signs of neglect include:

- poor hygiene
- constant hunger
- inadequate / inappropriate clothing
- constant tiredness
- exposed to danger / lack of adequate supervision
- untreated illness
- lack of peer relationships
- compulsive stealing / begging

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

## **BULLYING**

*For further guidance please refer to the school 'Anti Bullying Policy'*

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated by St Kevin's Primary School. Our measure against bullying are set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

## **ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER (DT) AND THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER (DDT)**

The role of the Designated Teacher is:

- to provide training to all school staff including support staff
- to be available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff or parent
- to be responsible for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- to make referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- to liaise with BELB / CCMS Designated Officers for Child Protection
- to keep the principal informed
- to lead the development and updating of the school's Child Protection Policy
- to ensure that all parents can access copy of the Child Protection Policy and to send out an update leaflet every two years which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school in this
- to promote a child protection ethos throughout the school
- to furnish the Board of Governors with reports regarding child protection
- to maintain all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the Safeguarding Team as appropriate)

The role of the Deputy Designated Teacher is:

- to support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required

## **ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

- The Principal will decide whether in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that a child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a Referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.
- The Principal may seek clarification or advice and consult with B.E.L.B. and CCMS's Designated Officer or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice.
- The Principal/designated Child Protection Officer will use the UNOCINI Initial Assessment Referral Form to make referrals to Social Services.

All written correspondence will be marked 'Private and Confidential'.

- The Principal/designated teacher for Child Protection will attend any Case Conferences organised by Social Services and will supply any relevant documentation or reports that are requested. All discussions of Case Conferences will be communicated to the Principal and appropriate staff, on a strictly “need to know” basis.
- The Principal/designated teacher for Child Protection will be involved in the training and in-service work necessary for the effective implementation of Child Protection Procedures by all staff.

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CONCERNS OF POSSIBLE CHILD ABUSE**

When a child makes an allegation of abuse or a teacher suspects possible abuse, action should be taken immediately to inform the designated teacher.

In the event of a disclosure by a child, action must be taken immediately. If such a disclosure should be made during a teaching session, teachers should reassure the child and revisit at the end of the lesson. The discussion should not be pursued during the lesson.

Teachers should:

- Receive
- Reassure
- Record
- Report

### **Teachers should avoid investigating**

No promise of confidentiality should be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse. However, reassurance should be given that information will **only** be shared with appropriate professionals.

The designated teacher should be informed (*Appendix 1*) and, in consultation with the Principal, should decide whether a referral is necessary. In all instances the designated teacher should make a written report. If there are any concerns that a child may be at risk, a referral to the appropriate outside agency will be instigated immediately and the parent will be informed, unless they are the possible abuser. If the Principal deems a referral unnecessary, a written record will be kept, and the complainant and parent informed as soon as possible.

*Appendix 2 outlines the procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse by someone other than a member of staff.*

## **COMPLAINTS ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF**

The Principal (or the designated teacher if the principal is not available) must be informed immediately. The Principal will then inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated teacher who will initiate the record of the complaint.

*Appendix 3 outlines the procedures adopted when a complaint is made against a member of the school's staff.*

If a referral is deemed necessary advice will be sought from CCMS or Social Services and the appropriate agency informed. Precautionary suspension or removal from direct contact may be considered. If suspension is necessary the Principal or Chairperson of the Board of Governors will carry it out and the complainant will be informed.

If a referral is deemed unnecessary but disciplinary action recommended, proceedings will be instigated by the Principal or the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the complainant will be informed.

If a referral is deemed unnecessary, and no further action will be taken, the teacher and complainant will both be informed.

### **COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL**

The designated teacher must be informed. The designated teacher, in turn will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, and together they will ensure that the above procedures are followed.

### **COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

The Principal must be informed. The Principal, in turn will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they ensure that the above procedures are followed.

### **RECORD KEEPING**

A secure system for recording information about possible child abuse, disclosure of abuse and complaints about staff will operate within the school. The designated teacher, deputy designated teacher or Principal will ensure that proper records, signed and dated are kept of all complaints or information received, and all concerns about possible abuse noted by staff.

Where the school receives information or a complaint about possible child abuse or has concerns about possible child abuse, the designated teacher or deputy designated teacher will open a confidential file on the child. This file should record;

- the nature and, if appropriate, a description of the concern
- the name of the person who gave the information
- the time, date and circumstances
- details of advice sought, from whom and when
- decision reached as to whether to refer the case to outside agencies or not
- if the case is referred, how, when and by whom this was done
- if the case is not referred, the reasons for not doing so

Records should be maintained within the school until the child's twenty first birthday. In the event of the child transferring to another school the designated teacher should forward a confidential copy to the school to which the child transfers. When a child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register this should be noted on the child's file together with all associated documentation from Social Services. When a child whose name is on the Child Protection Register changes school, the designated teacher should inform the new school immediately that the child's name is on the register, provide the name of the Social Worker and in turn contact the Social Worker to inform of the child's change in circumstances. Where a child transfers from the school or when their name is removed from the Child Protection Register all documentation from Social Services should be destroyed.

When the school is asked to prepare a report for a Child Protection Conference, teachers will be provided with a pro forma asking for details of the child's academic progress, attendance, behaviour, relationships with children, staff and home and where appropriate the child's appearance. Teachers should be aware that these reports will be made available to the child's parents at the Child Protection Conference and may be used in court. Reports should:

- Be objective and based on evidence
- Contain only fact, observation and reasons for concern
- Be checked and signed by designated teacher

## **RECORD OF CHILD ABUSE COMPLAINTS**

*Where a complaint of child abuse about a member of the teaching or non-teaching staff* results in either official referral to social services or the initiation of the school's disciplinary procedures, a short summary of the record should be entered on a Record of Child Abuse Complaints by the Principal. In the event of a complaint being made against the Principal – the Chairperson of the Board of Governors should make the necessary entry in the Record of Child Abuse Complaints.

The summary should include:

- the date and brief details of the nature of the complaint;
- by whom and against whom it was made;
- the date and to whom the official referral was made or in the event of the school's disciplinary procedures being initiated – a brief note of the outcome.

In the event of the allegation being unfounded, or there being no further action, the entry will be deleted from the Record of Child Abuse Complaints.

The school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints should be made available to the Board of Governors at least annually. This Record of Child Abuse Complaints should be kept in a secure place at all times.



The school will monitor the children on the Child Protection Register in line with what has been agreed in each child's protection plan. If a child is absent for more than two consecutive days or on a regular basis, or if there are any signs which suggest a deterioration in the child's home circumstances, class teachers should alert the designated teacher who in turn should alert the Social Worker and / or the Education Welfare officer.

## **REASONABLE FORCE**

Teaching and non teaching staff have responsibility for ensuring the safety and well being of children in their care.

Where necessary and appropriate, and in accordance with DE Circular 1999/10 and the school's *Safe Handling Policy*, they may use reasonable force to restrain or control a child.

## **SECURITY**

In order to create a safe environment, security measures have been put in place to safeguard and protect the children, teachers and non teaching staff including electronically controlled access to the school; procedures for the reception of visitors; signing in book and the issuing of badges to visitors where appropriate and protocols for the collection of children during school hours.

## **SAFETY**

In St. Kevin's we strive to provide a safe environment for both work and play where children are supervised by adults at all times.

Teachers should help children develop an awareness of personal safety issues both within and outside the school and provide them with strategies for coping with challenges and for seeking appropriate help.

## **FIRST AID**

Where it is necessary to administer first aid, staff should try to ensure the presence of another adult / child and where possible the trained First Aid adult: Mrs O'Doherty / Mrs Mc Caffrey. However, in cases of emergency, first aid should be administered without hesitation.

## **INTERNET SAFETY**

The Board of Governors and the staff of St. Kevin's recognise that, *'the Internet and other technology based tools are very powerful resources that can enhance and potentially transform teaching and learning when used effectively and appropriately.'* **DENI circular 2007/1**

In accordance with this document technical safeguards are in place as detailed in the school policy for *'Acceptable Use of the Internet'*. Each member of staff and each child enter into a signed contract whilst parents are asked to sign an agreement which

allows their child to access the Internet in school. It is hoped that these measures will ensure the safety of all members of the school community.

## **CURRICULUM**

Children will be encouraged to be responsible by promoting positive attitudes and values including respect and care for others, honesty, fairness, justice and consideration.

Children will be provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the risks of different types of abuse and helped to acquire the necessary skills to keep themselves safe.

Children will be helped to recognise unwelcome behaviours in others and to have the confidence to react to them. They will be helped to predict possible dangers and to work out strategies for avoiding them.

Children should know the procedures in place and the people they can approach should they have a concern of any kind.

We seek to protect our children by:

- A structured PSE programme
- Circle Time / PDMU
- Education for Love / Alive O programmes
- Weekly themed Assembly on Values Education
- Heartmath / Safe Place

## **DRUGS EDUCATION**

In line with Department circular 2004/9, Mr McComb has been designated as the person who is responsible for dealing with matters relating to drug or substance abuse. As detailed in the school's '*Drugs Education Policy*' teachers who become aware of any incident of drug abuse including smoking, alcohol or any other substance should report the matter to her.

## **EDUCATIONAL TRIPS / AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND PHOTOGRAPH / VIDEO CONSENT**

Parents / guardians of all children are required to complete permission slips for educational trips and for any after school activities. Signed parent / guardian consent forms regarding the taking of and displaying of children's photographs and recording of performances etc are held on file in the school office.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Staff should always be mindful that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards children in their care must be above reproach. The following points are not intended to discourage positive interaction between staff and pupil but to assist staff by offering guidance on appropriate conduct.

### **Private meetings with children**

- conduct interviews in a room with visual access or with the door open
- have another child or member of staff present or nearby during the interview

### **Guidance principles for staff**

- staff should dress and act appropriately at all times
- teachers should NEVER invite pupils to their homes
- staff are advised not to make any unnecessary physical contact with children
- where possible avoid one to one contact with children in the following areas: toilets, cars, minibus, after school
- there may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance. Staff are advised to use their discretion regarding physical 'comforting'
- following an incident where you feel that your actions may be misunderstood by a child or any other member of the school community, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the designated teacher. In particular this would apply in a case when you had to restrain a child physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to self or others or from damaging property.
- if in an emergency you have to administer first aid you should ensure whenever possible that other children or another adult are present . However, members of staff **should not hesitate** to provide first aid in an emergency situation, simply because another person is not present. It is advisable to provide a written report of the incident and pass it onto the designated teacher

### **Guidance regarding choice of teaching materials**

- be aware of using teaching material of a sensitive nature
- if in doubt consult with either the Principal or Vice Principal
- be careful regarding videos shown in school (certificate 12 and PG **are not** indicators of suitability)

### **Guidance regarding relationships and attitudes**

- all staff should ensure that their relationships with children and other members of staff are appropriate at all times
- attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought

### **Guidance regarding physical contact with younger children**

If a child has an accident, for example at the water tray or at the toilet

- all staff should tell another member of staff that they are changing the child

- change the child in a reasonably open space, if possible where another member of staff can see them
- respect the child's dignity at all times
- intimate cleaning after an accident should be carried out by a parent / guardian. Parents / guardians should be phoned and requested to collect the child from school

*Please refer to the school 'Intimate Care Policy' for further clarification*

#### **STAFF RECRUITMENT / STAFF TRAINING**

All personnel working in the school are required to be ACCESSNI checked. All teaching and non teaching staff should be made aware of this policy, understanding, in particular, the Procedures for Disclosure and the Staff Code of Conduct. They will receive Child Protection refresher training on a bi annual basis.

#### **VETTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The school will vet all staff, volunteers, agency personnel and visitors. Everyone will be required to complete a police check form, which will be passed onto ACCESSNI, the vetting service of the PSNI. This is to ensure that those people who work in, or become part of the school community at any time, do not represent a threat to the health and well being of our pupils.

#### **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

As part of the school's monitoring and evaluation process, we continually keep abreast of new and effective initiatives and adapt our practice accordingly. Therefore this policy will be reviewed by the Vice Principal, Pastoral Care Team and the Senior Leadership Team in 2015.

*RECORD OF CONCERN / INCIDENT PRO FORMA*

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CLASS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PERSON GIVING INFORMATION:

NATURE AND DESCRIPTION OF CONCERN:

TIME, DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCES:

ADVICE SOUGHT, FROM WHOM AND WHEN:

CASE REFERRED TO:

BY WHOM:

DATE:

COMPLAINANT INFORMED: YES / NO    DATE:

PARENT INFORMED: YES / NO            DATE:

CASE NOT REFERRED:

REASON:

COMPLAINANT INFORMED: YES / NO    DATE:

PARENT INFORMED: YES / NO            DATE:

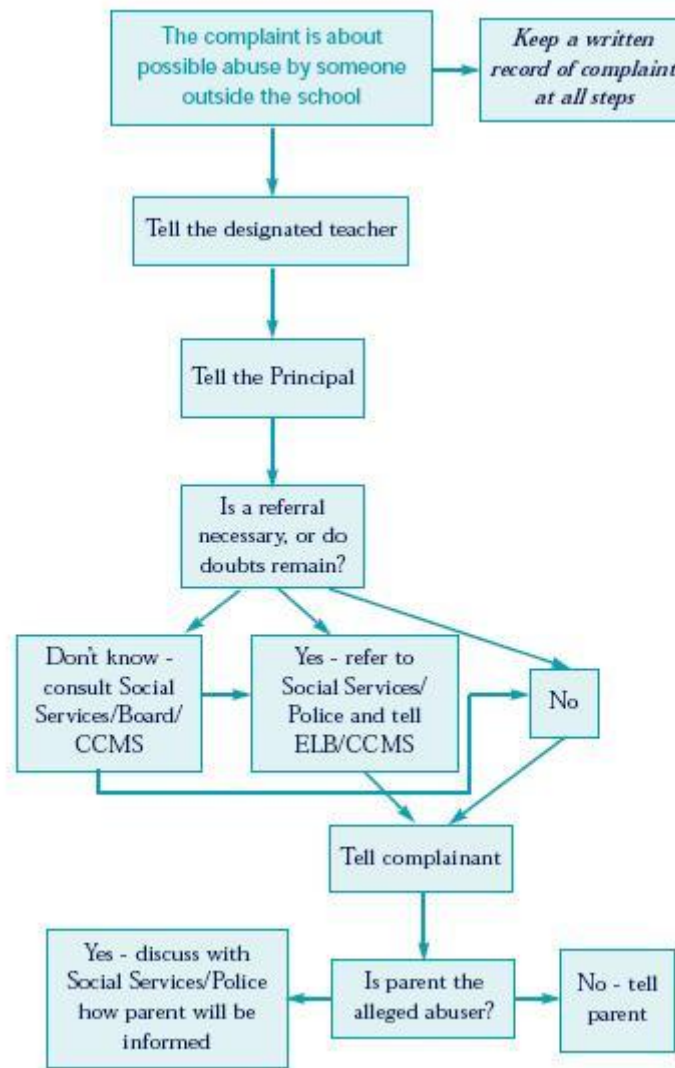
OUTCOME / FOLLOW UP:

**RECEIVED BY DESIGNATED TEACHER**

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

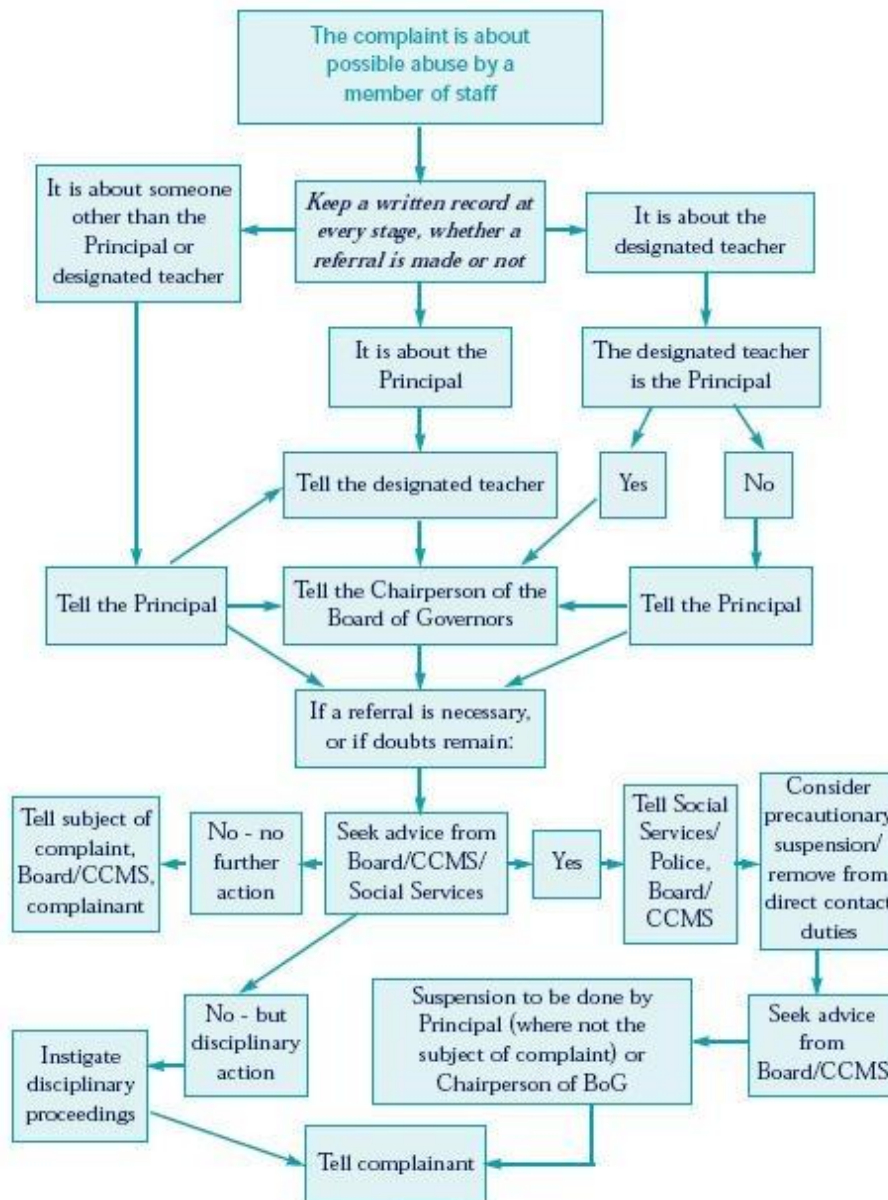
APPENDIX 2

PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS, OR HAS BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION, ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL'S STAFF



Taken from 'Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection DENI 1999

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



Taken from 'Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection'  
DENI 1999



**APPENDIX 4**

**PROCEDURE IF A PARENT HAS A CONCERN ABOUT THE SAFETY OF  
THEIR CHILD OR ANOTHER CHILD**

Make an appointment to see the class teacher.  
Child protection matters should be referred directly to the designated teacher for  
Child Protection Mr McComb, or in his absence the deputy designated teacher  
Mrs O' Doherty, or to the Principal Miss Keegan.

The school will...

Respond and decide on an appropriate course of action. At all times information  
will be held in the strictest of confidence and shared on a need to know basis

The matter will be dealt with and, if possible resolved immediately.

If deemed necessary, the school may refer to the relevant Child Protection  
Officers at  
Social Services  
CCMS

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have a concern or complaint. We **ALL** have a  
**DUTY OF CARE** to protect children and their welfare must always be our priority.

You may refer your concerns directly to CCMS or to Social Services or to the PSNI.  
Contact details are as follows:

ORGANISATION	TELEPHONE	ASK FOR
CCMS	028 90 327875	Designated Child Protection Officer
PSNI	02890 700604	The Child Protection Team Tennent Street
Gateway Social Services	028 90 507000	The Duty Social Worker

