

I have a concern about a child I should follow the procedure outlined below:

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

I can talk to the child's teacher.

If I am still concerned, I can talk to a member of the safeguarding team - Mrs. Mrs. Fearon (DT), Mr. Cullen (DTT) or Mr. Galvin (Principal).

If I am still concerned in relation to a Child Protection issue, I can write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors – letters must be addressed to Mr. Lee and sent into school office.

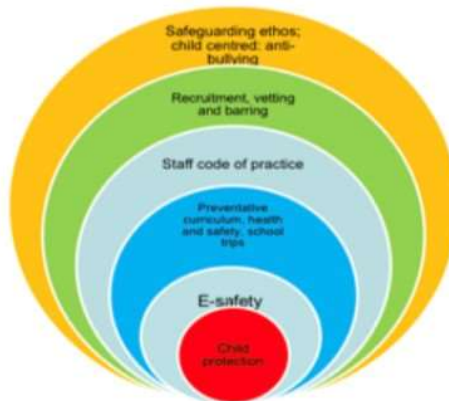
At any time I can talk to the duty social worker at the local Gateway Team on:

028 37 567100

or by the PSNI Central Referral Unit on 028 90 259299.

If you feel that your concern has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may view the school's complaints policy. This will explain how/when to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

St. Oliver Plunkett's P.S is a Safeguarding school. This model shows how child protection is at the heart of our ethos.



St. Oliver Plunkett's P.S receives support and advice regarding all child protection and safeguarding issues from:



#### Relevant Documents

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI (2017)  
Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools (Updated August 2020)  
The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland's (SBNI) Policies and Procedures [www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/](http://www.proceduresonline.com/sbni/)



## St. Oliver Plunkett's PS Ballyhegan

### Child Protection & Safeguarding

A GUIDE FOR  
PARENTS/GUARDIANS

**Updated June 2024**

**Issued Sept. 2024**

*Full copy of our Child Protection Policy is available on request by contacting the school office on 028 38 891495 or by accessing the school website.*

---

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### Policy Statement

It is our policy at St. Oliver Plunkett's PS to safeguard the welfare of all the children in our care by endeavouring to protect them from all types of abuse.

### Principles

The following principles underpin our Child Protection Policy:

- Children are listened to and taken seriously. - In any incident, the child's welfare will always be paramount; this overrides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families. Where there is conflict however, the child's interest will always come first.

**There are 5 main kinds of abuse - the following are details and possible symptoms:**

**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.

**Physical Abuse:** is deliberately hurting a child. It might take a variety of forms including but not limited to, biting, hitting, punching, throwing, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. Obvious or repeated marks, bruises or other signs of abuse may be visible. There may be a refusal or inability to explain these and/or fear of physical contact.

**Emotional Abuse:** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child and can sometimes be referred to as psychological abuse. It can have severe or persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve telling children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate and/or involve 'making fun' of them.

**Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activity may involve physical contact. It may also include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Exploitation:** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child for personal gain. It may involve coercion of the child into, theft, child labour, slavery, servitude, begging and engagement in other illegal activities. It also extends to the recruitment, transportation and transfer of the child for the purpose of exploitation.

*It is always possible the above symptoms could be attributed to other family situations and certain other causes. However, the fact that they may be attributed to child abuse must not be ignored.*

### Implementation of Procedure

Members of the Safeguarding Team shall be the people with special responsibility for dealing with cases of suspected Child Abuse.

At St. Oliver Plunkett's PS these members are Mrs Fearon (DT), Mr Cullen (DTT) and Mr. Galvin (Principal)

### The role of the Safeguarding Team is to:

- Listen to, reassure and support the child;
- Record all information received;
- Where necessary, refer the case to Duty Social Worker and/or PSNI and to seek advice from Social Services and the Child Protection Support Services for Schools
- Promote and lead a Safeguarding Ethos within the school community;

Where non-teaching staff are alerted to the possibility of abuse, they will inform a member of the Safeguarding team immediately.

### Conduct of Staff

The conduct of staff towards children must be above reproach at all times. In safeguarding the welfare of the children, staff must never abuse their position of trust. The school has a staff code of conduct and all members of the teaching and non-teaching staff adhere to this policy.

### Training

Annual and ongoing training is sourced and provided to BOGs and all staff by the Safeguarding Team. Induction of newly appointed staff and/or volunteers will also address Safeguarding procedures.

### 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.