

Parental Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy - Ballysillan P.S

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

All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate back-round checks. The staff of our school has also adopted a Code of Conduct for our behaviour towards pupils.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection and Safe Guarding is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school - teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

The Safe Guarding Team

Mrs Catherine Davidson (Vice Principal/Acting Principal Thursdays) is the Designated Teacher (DT)

Mrs Tory Kelly (Acting Principal) is the Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT)

Mrs Catherine Chambers is the Designated Teacher (DT) on Thursdays

Mrs Anite Cheadle is the Board of Governors representative for Child Protection.

Role of the Safe Guarding Team

The Belfast Education and Library Board consider that the ultimate responsibility lies with the Board of Governors and the Principal to ensure that all staff are aware of the Board's procedures.

The Safe Guarding Team are responsible for -

1. Ensuring that all teaching and ancillary staff whether full-time or part-time, or temporary, is aware of the Child Protection Policy and procedures to follow if a child makes a disclosure or they have a concern about a child.
2. Reporting suspected child abuse to the appropriate Social Services Officer and the EA's Designated Officer.
3. Ensuring that the Principal, Teachers and the School's Education Welfare Officer are kept aware of children 'Looked After Children' (LAC) or on the Child Protection Register.
4. Ensuring that the children at Ballysillan Primary School know how to make a disclosure and who to speak to in school when they have concerns.

Procedures for reporting

All children in Ballysillan Primary are aware of "Bubble Time". This is where the children go and speak to the "Safe Guarding Teachers" either Mrs Davidson, Mrs Kelly or Mrs Chambers if they feel sad, worried, have problems at home they want to talk about, or anything else they wish to share.

Each class, through circle time have discussed these feelings and the children know that they can ask at any time to have "Bubble Time".

The issues that may be raised during "Bubble Time" may be solved within the classroom or by speaking to parents directly. However, it is up to the Safe Guarding Team to use their training to decide if further action is needed involve outside agencies.

It should be noted that information given to the Safe Guarding Team about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'.

If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make an immediate UNOCINI referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

In the interests of the child, we may need to share this information with the EA Designated Officer, Social Services and the PSNI. However, only those who need to know will be told.

The Safe Guarding Team may seek clarification or advice and consult the EA'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 safety of the child is our first priority.