

TILDARG PRIMARY SCHOOL



SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Reviewed September 2023

INTRODUCTION

In drawing up Tildarg Primary School's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy all the staff (including ancillary, auxiliary staff and volunteers) are aware of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1991) and their responsibilities as outlined therein:-

"Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, they must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them (Article 19).

....when adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what would be best for the child" (Article 3).

We are also aware that the central thrust of the Children's (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration.

Child Protection Ethos at Tildarg Primary School

The staff at Tildarg Primary School have the primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge. We will carry out this duty through our safeguarding and child protection policy and our other pastoral care policies, which aim to provide a secure and caring environment, conducive to learning and to the development of self-esteem in which all members of the school feel respected, valued and supported. We will also seek to protect our pupils by helping them learn about and recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills that they need to keep themselves safe.

The purpose of the following procedures is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school and who is associated with it, has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse of a child is suspected. The care, welfare and safety of every child is our paramount consideration.

PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

The following principles have been detailed by the Northern Area Child Protection Committee (June 1997).

1. The child's welfare must always be paramount and this overrides all other considerations.
2. A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families but where there is a conflict the child's interests must remain paramount.
3. Children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously taking account of their age and understanding. They should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives.
4. The process of protecting the child from harm should be carried out with the parent/carers involvement whenever possible and they should be encouraged to exercise their responsibilities. Where there is a conflict the child's interests must remain paramount.
5. Information exchange between the child, the parents/carers and all the professional disciplines involved are of the utmost importance.
6. A commitment to supporting parents/carers to prevent harm or further harm and alerting them to the dangers for children is the core of good child protection work.
7. Actions taken to protect a child (including investigation) should not in themselves be abusive by causing a child unnecessary distress or adding to any damage already suffered.
8. At all times the emphasis must be on a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach and commitment to the protection, support and safeguarding of children from harm.
9. Intervention should not deal with the child in isolation. The child must be seen in a family setting. The criminal dimension of any action cannot be ignored.
10. When making decisions and carrying out investigations and assessments professionals should be guided by the child's best interests. Decisions should take into account both the wishes of the child, having due regard to age and understanding, and the wishes of the parents/carers. It must be recognised however that there may be circumstances which dictate that these have to be over-ridden.

11. Where it is necessary to protect a child from further abuse/harm, alternatives which do not involve moving the child and which minimise disruption of a family should be explored.
12. Each agency must have an understanding of each other's professional values and accept each other's role, powers and responsibilities.
13. Actions taken by agencies must be considerate and well informed so that they are sensitive to and take account of the child's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race.

THE SCHOOL'S CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Child Protection/Safeguarding Team at Tildarg Primary School are:

- **Designated Teacher** - Miss J. Wright
- **Deputy Designated Teacher** - Mrs C. McClay
- **Principal** - Mrs L. Moody
- **Designated Governor for Child Protection** - Mrs D. Hunter
- **Chairman of the Board of Governors** - Mr F. Crawford

Any member of the team can be contacted through Tildarg Primary School, 6 Tildarg Road, Ballyclare, Co. Antrim, BT39 9JU. Telephone: 028 93 323948

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DESIGNATED/DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHERS

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher's role:

- be aware of roles, duties and responsibilities
- organise induction and training for all staff
- lead in the development of the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- promote the child protection/safeguarding ethos in school
- be available to discuss child protection and safeguarding concerns with any member of staff
- make parents aware of child protection procedures
- ensure that pupils know to whom they can speak
- keep and maintain records
- liaise with the EA designated Officer for Child Protection
- make referrals to Social Services Gateway Team or PSNI where appropriate
- keep the Principal and Governors informed

PRINCIPAL

The role of the principal is to:

- implement DENI Circular 99/10 within the school
- appoint a Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher
- ensuring there is protected time and support for Designated Teachers to carry out their role effectively
- assist the Board of Governors to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, ensuring that circulars from the DE are shared promptly
- keep the Chairman of the Board of Governors informed
- ensure child protection is on the agenda of Board of Governor's meetings
- ensure that all new staff receive Child Protection training
- ensure that parents have access to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ensure that confidentiality is paramount

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors have a statutory duty to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- have a written Child Protection Policy
- address bullying in school behaviour management policies

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The chair of the Board of Governors must-

- ensure the school has a Child protection/Safeguarding Policy in place
- ensure that a Designated Governor for Child protection/Safeguarding is appointed
- assume lead responsibility for managing any allegation against the Principal
- ensure that the Governors receive regular updates in relation to Child Protection activity (ie. names/details must not be provided)
- ensure that child protection records are kept and the diary of the 'Records of Child Abuse Complaints' is signed and dated annually.

DESIGNATED GOVERNOR FOR CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING

The Designated Governor will advise the Governors on -

- the role of the Designated Teachers
- the content of the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- recruitment, selection and vetting of staff
- the content of a 'Code of Conduct' for adults within the school

STAFF

All members of staff must -

- read the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- read the Code of Conduct for Staff and sign related form
- attend annual school training
- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher
- listen to what is being said and support the child
- act promptly
- make a written record of the disclosure using the actual words of the child, including the time and date.
- **not** give the child a guarantee of confidentiality
- keep the Designated Teacher informed of regular poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour, sudden deterioration in educational progress, concerns about home conditions or parental concerns about their child.

PARENTS

Parents should play their role in Child Protection by -

- informing the school of absences
- informing the school should their child need collected by someone other than those stated on their Data Collection forms
- familiarising themselves with the school's policy on Child Protection/Safeguarding
- raising concerns they may have about their own child or another within the school

RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

CATEGORIES AND SIGNS/SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

The staff have been made aware, by the Designated Teacher, of the different categories of child abuse and how to recognise them. The definitions of abuse are taken from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016).

"Children may be abused by a parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer (i.e. a person who has actual custody of a child such as a foster parent or staff member in a residential home), an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or of a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both."

The abuse may take a number of forms, including:

NEGLECT:

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.

SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

- constant hunger
- inadequate/inappropriate clothing
- poor hygiene
- untreated illnesses
- persistent tiredness
- lack of peer relationships
- low self-esteem
- compulsive stealing/begging

PHYSICAL 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.

SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

- scratches or welts
- bite marks
- burns
- bruises in places which are difficult to mark
- untreated injuries
- undue fear of adults
- fear of returning home

SEXUAL ABUSE:

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.

SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

- pain or bleeding around genital/anal areas
- difficulty walking or sitting
- bruising to inner thighs/buttocks
- anorexic/bulimic
- use of inappropriate language for age
- making sexual advances to adults or other children
- low self-esteem or depression

EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

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.

SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

- sudden speech disorders
- wetting and soiling
- frequent vomiting
- attention seeking behaviour
- fear of change

EXPLOITATION:

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.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE:

Domestic violence and abuse can have a profoundly negative effect on a child's emotional, psychological and social well-being. A child does not need to directly witness domestic violence to be adversely affected by it.

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse as follows:-

'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.'

BULLYING

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the targeted child and to discipline the child displaying bullying behaviour. Any complaint by parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the staff (following the school's anti-bullying policy).

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED CHILD ABUSE

1. Where a teacher, other member of staff or a volunteer suspects that a child has been abused, is at risk of abuse or where serious concerns exist about the welfare of a child, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding should be consulted immediately.
2. The Designated Teacher will take the lead role in subsequent actions.
3. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding may wish to discuss the concern with the School Medical Officer, School Nurse, Educational Welfare Officer, Educational Psychologist, the Board's Designated Officer.
4. The Designated Teacher will seek guidance from the Designated Officer for Child Protection in the Education Board, North Eastern Area (CPSS).
5. Where concern remains the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding should consult with the Duty Social Worker (Gateway) for advice and guidance on the way forward.
6. The parent/carer should be involved as early as possible and informed by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding of actions to be taken or already taken.
7. Once the concern is clarified, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding should make a referral to Social Services as appropriate and follow up in writing.
8. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding and/or the Principal should attend all Case Conferences as appropriate.
9. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding should construct a written report which should be made available to the Chair of the Case Conference prior to the Case Conference being held.
10. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding should make a record of all discussions held and actions taken.
11. In the event of an allegation, statement or disclosure being made to a member of staff outside of school hours and where the Designated Teacher is not present, it should be reported to the Deputy Designated Teacher and in her absence, the Principal. If none of these staff are present, and if a child is deemed to be at risk if sent home, then the Designated Teacher (Deputy or Principal if contact cannot be made) may be telephoned for further guidance.

12. Where one of the Designated Teachers is suspected to have abused a child, or such an allegation is made, the member of staff who is made aware of the possible offence should inform the Principal immediately, who will instigate the normal reporting procedures.
13. Where the Principal is suspected, or an allegation is made against him/her, the matter should be reported to the Designated Teacher, who should report the matter immediately to Social Services (or to the Police), the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and to the Designated Officer of the Education Authority, North Eastern Region.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN A DISCLOSURE IS MADE?

RECEIVE - listen to what is being said but do not ask leading questions

REASSURE - reassure the child that he/she will be safe and that their interests come first

RESPOND - only to reassure the child that they are safe and secure

RECORD - make note of what has been seen or heard, include the time and date

REFER - refer to the Designated Teacher if you have concern for the child

CONFIDENTIALITY

The relationships which teachers, education professionals and other staff in the education service have with the children in their charge is based on trust and, often, on confidentiality: such relationships are an integral feature of a secure, caring environment which fosters learning and personal development.

Staff, however, have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. All staff should recognise, therefore, that, in order to protect children from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action, by involving others, in the child's best interests. No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be given where abuse is alleged.

RECORD KEEPING

It is essential that an accurate record of all cases of abuse is maintained, detailing all action taken.

The school will ensure that:

- school staff are aware of the need to record and report child protection issues
- all documents relating to child protection issues are confidential
- files are kept in a separate, locked filing drawer in the Principal's office
- files can only be accessed by the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal
- files must not be removed

See DE Circular 2020/07 (pgs10,26,29,31,32,33,65 & 66) for detailed guidance on Child Protection Records.

CURRICULUM

"Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and well-being is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection."
From 'Co-operating to Safeguard Children & Young People in NI 2016'

The school will include within its curriculum, elements which will support pupils in their physical and emotional well-being and which supports pupils in learning to manage their general interests and personal relationships.

With regard to helping prevent child abuse, the school will contribute by -

- ensuring pupils have sufficient knowledge about themselves to be able to understand what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact
- enabling children to become aware of strategies which they may use to protect themselves from possibly abusive situations
- delivering a programme of Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

Other issues (eg. bullying) which arise under the umbrella of Child Protection/Safeguarding are covered by the School's Pastoral Care, Anti-Bullying, Intimate Care, Acceptable Use of the Internet and Reasonable Force policies.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, EDUCATIONAL VISITS & SCHOOL TRIPS

All extra-curricular activities, educational visits and school trips are covered by the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding policy.

BREAKFAST CLUB/AFTER SCHOOLS CLUB

The breakfast club and after-schools club are covered by the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding policy.

STAFF

CONDUCT OF STAFF:

At Tildarg Primary School we are aware that we must safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils in our charge. This duty rests with all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, and implicit in it is the assumption that the conduct of school staff towards their pupils must be above reproach. The younger the pupil, the less likely it will be that he or she will be able to recognise and respond appropriately to an abuse by any member of staff or the trust that his or her position confers. Any abuse of that position of trust by any member of staff must be regarded with the utmost gravity. It is the responsibility of School Governors to ensure that all staff are clear about the standards of behaviour expected of them.

As well as the more obvious physical or sexual abuse, members of staff should be alert to the risk of emotional abuse, such as persistent sarcasm, verbal bullying, or severe and persistent negative comments or actions. Members of staff and volunteers should be encouraged to reflect on every aspect of their contact with children which may give rise to perceptions or allegations of this form of abuse.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF:

Should any allegation of abuse be made against any member of staff, procedures outlined above will be followed.

* The term "staff" also includes volunteers.

VETTING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

STAFF

To ensure their suitability to work with the children in our school, all staff are vetted through Access N.I., inducted and supervised as appropriate.

VOLUNTEERS

Staff may, from time to time, be involved in supervising pupils with the help of volunteers. When this occurs the volunteers will normally be in the company of a teacher who has already been vetted. Where it is likely that they would be left alone with pupils, an Assess N.I. check will be sought by the Principal through the Education Authority, North Eastern Region.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Tildarg P.S will only employ as substitute teachers, those who are on the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR).

WORK EXPERIENCE PUPILS

Pupils from a post primary school on work experience will not need Access NI clearance as they will be fully supervised by school staff.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

Visitors do not need to be vetted before being allowed on the school premises. Visitors should be managed by staff, and access and movement around the school should be restricted as needs require. All visitors should sign in and out.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be updated in light of any new guidance or legislation. The Board of Governors will also monitor Child Protection/Safeguarding through regular updates from the Principal and /or Designated Teacher.

SIGNED:	Designated Teacher
SIGNED:	Deputy Designated Teacher
SIGNED:	Chair of Board of Governors
SIGNED:	Principal
DATE:	

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Code of Conduct

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.

Appendix 3 Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

Appendix 4 How a parent can raise a concern

Appendix 5 Pastoral Concern Log Pro forma

Appendix 6 Child Protection incident report Pro forma

Appendix 7 Useful contact numbers and email addresses

Appendix 8 Site and access policy

Appendix 9 Covid-19 arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Appendix 10 Operation Encompass

Appendix 1

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

All actions concerning children 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 their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experience children gain from the 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. This Code of Conduct applies to all staff and volunteers and does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

1. Private Meetings with Pupils

- a. Staff should be aware of the dangers that 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 (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. Staff who administer first aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. No member of staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
- f. Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- g. 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 the Principal.
- h. 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.
- i. In extreme cases, staff are empowered to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him/her from committing an offence, causing injury to him/herself to others or to property or otherwise from behaving in an undisciplined way. See DE guidelines and our school policy on The Use of Reasonable Force.

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.

- 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

- a. All staff must declare any relationships they have with pupils outside of school eg. membership of social groups, tutoring or family connections. A declaration form should be signed (Appendix 1 in 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools' folder).
- b. All staff should treat all pupils with respect and dignity and aim to ensure their safety and welfare.
- c. All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation of the school or their own reputation.
- d. Staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their daily responsibilities. This confidential or personal information should not be shared or used for their own or others' advantage.

5. E-Safety

- a. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the school's range of E-safety policies.
- b. Staff should exercise caution in their use of social media and should not engage in inappropriate use of it.
- c. Contact with students must only be via school authorised mechanisms. If contacted by a student through an inappropriate route, it must be reported to the Principal immediately.
- d. Photograph and video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment and only where parental consent has been given.

Appendix 2

Processes for Referral are set out in the Flowcharts below:

Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff.

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY. Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.

Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.

Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal 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.

Child Protection referral is required

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.

Child Protection referral is not required

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

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

Appendix 3

Procedure where an allegation has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

Key Points

Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BOG 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

How a Parent Can Raise a Child Protection Concern.

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



I can talk to the class teacher.



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Miss J Wright) or the Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs C. McClay).



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal (Mrs L. Moody).



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors (Mr F. Crawford, c/o Tildarg Primary School, 6 Tildarg Road, Ballyclare. BT39 9JU).



If I have exhausted the above pathway, I can contact the N.I Public Services Ombudsman. (0800 343 424)



I can also talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team (0300 1234 333) or the PSNI Central Referral Unit (028 9025 9299).

***The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy can be found on the school website or a copy can be obtained from the Principal.**



Name of Child:		
Year Group:		Class Teacher(s):
Pastoral Concern		
Date :	Reported by :	Position :
Action Taken		
Signed :		Date :
Position :	Designated Teacher <input type="checkbox"/>	Deputy Designated Teacher <input type="checkbox"/>
		Principal <input type="checkbox"/>



Name of Child :	
Year Group:	DOB :
Details of Incident/Disclosure*	
Name of person completing the report:	
Position :	Date:
Signature:	* Record actual words used by the child/young person

Appendix 7

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Education Authority, North Eastern Region
County Hall,
182 Galgorm Road,
Ballymena,
Co. Antrim, BT42 1HN.

Telephone: 028 2565 3333

Fax: 028 2564 6071

Designated Officers (based at the Antrim Board Centre):

Elaine Craig, Margaret Brady, Colleen Ellison.

**Education Authority, North Eastern Region,
Antrim Board Centre,**
17 Lough Road,
Antrim,
Co. Antrim.
BT41 4DH.

Telephone: 028 9448 2200

Fax: 028 9446 0794

Designated Officers (as above)

Direct line: 028 9448 2223

Social Services

Regional Emergency Social workers (out of hours)

Telephone: 028 9504 9999

Children's Gateway Northern HSCT

Telephone: 0300 1234 333

South Eastern Locality Gateway Team, Ballyclare

Telephone: 028 9334 0165

PSNI Central Referral Unit

Telephone: 028 9025 9299 or 101 ext. 30299

Appendix 8

SITE SECURITY AND ACCESS POLICY

Tildarg Primary School aims to provide a secure site, which is controlled by precise management directives, but the site is only as secure as the people who use it. All people on site, therefore, must adhere to the rules which govern it. Laxity could cause potential problems to safeguarding. At Tildarg Primary School we appreciate and encourage positive and active partnerships with parents, however, the safety and welfare of the children in our care is of paramount importance. Together we can provide a safe environment in which our children can learn.

It is therefore essential that:

- Entrance doors are kept locked.
- All doors should be closed to prevent intrusion but also to facilitate smooth exits.
- On entry to the school, visitors, volunteers and students should report to the Principal and if not available, another member of staff.
- Visitors, volunteers, students and staff should sign in/out and wear a visitor's lanyard if applicable.
- If a parent wishes to speak to their child's teacher, an appointment, agreed by both parties, should be made.
- Children will only be allowed home with adults named on the pupil's 'data collection' form.
- Empty classrooms should have closed windows and doors.
- Children are never permitted to leave the school alone during school hours and must be collected by an adult.
- Parents should not interrupt class teaching time unless it is deemed urgent and essential.
- All parents should enter and exit the school via the pedestrian entrance.
- Should a child ever leave the school premises without permission, staff have been instructed not to chase after the child, but to report the matter immediately to the Principal. The parents, and if appropriate, the police, will be informed of the circumstances.
- Should a parent wish their child to leave school at the end of the day without an adult present eg. to walk home down/across the lane, along/across the road, a note requesting permission must be sent to the Principal. Once a child leaves the school property, the parent/carer is responsible for their child's safety.

Appendix 9

Covid-19 Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

1. CONTEXT

On 20th 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.

2. 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, principal's email address, teachers' email addresses and the main school phone number have been made available to all parents. Parents have been informed that the DT/DDT is available at all times via email and 8.45-4.00pm by telephone.
- Teachers provide online learning via the school website/ C2K platform with strict procedures in place to minimise risk.

- The website provides parents with a range of resources and links to additional online learning, support and guidance.
- We would remind everyone to stay safe when using online resources and to report any concerns to a member of the safeguarding team.
- In line with the information previously provided to schools by the Education Authority Child Protection Schools Service, teachers may make phone calls to parents. These will be pastoral in nature and a record will be kept of any issues reported by parents. Any concerns around pupil well-being will be shared without delay with a member of the Safeguarding team.
- If a member of staff is using their personal telephone, their number will be withheld to ensure the protection of private information of staff.

3. 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.

- Teachers and pupils need to be fully dressed and should not wear pyjamas/sleepwear during the session.
- Students should not 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.

4. HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE AN ISSUE OR EXPRESS A CONCERN

We would 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.

5. 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.

If our school is part of a cluster of schools, which are open, we will share relevant safeguarding information with the Designated Teacher and/or Principal. In accordance with our Child Protection procedures, this information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

In any event, we will follow current Department of Education and Department of Health guidelines regarding social distancing, hygiene and personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff.

6. 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.

- When contacting parents via phone, we may ask to speak to their child or young person.
- All our pupils will be given an email address as one way to connect with school.

Other Agencies:

- NSPCC Childline
- CEOP
- Safer Schools App

7. SOME USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS: -

- <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/>
- School email address info@tildargps.ballyclare.ni.sch.uk
- School telephone number (028 93 323948)
- Children's Services Gateway Team (0300 1234 333)
- PSNI Central Referral Unit (028 9025 9299).

8. 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 10

Operation Encompass

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children's exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, when the police have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school safeguarding team. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the designated teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns.

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

Further information see [The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2022.](#)

