

# Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School.



“Learning and Growing together.”

## Child Protection Policy.

**Date Ratified by Board of Governors:  
Date of Review: November 23.**

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## **1 Child Protection Ethos.**

We in Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School have a responsibility for the safeguarding and child protection of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or harm to a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

### **Key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection.**

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, “Co-operating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland” (DHSSPSNI, 2017), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools” Circular 2017/04 (amended September 2019; updated June 2020, updated June 2022) and the SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy:

- The child or young person’s welfare is paramount.
- The voice of the child or young person should be heard.
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped stay together.
- Partnership.
- Prevention.
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances.
- Protection; and
- Evidence based and informed decision making.

## **2 Aims of Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School regarding Child Protection.**

Our policy aims to:

- Raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse.
- Ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues.
- Lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection

By following the correct procedures, we aim to:

- Care for the child.
- Care for our school.
- Care for the community we serve.
- Respond to the guidelines and procedures of other agencies.

We realise the important role teachers play in identifying potential cases of child abuse. All staff have a total commitment to child protection. We endeavour to raise children's awareness about themselves and to develop a trusting climate in which our children feel able to talk and share their thoughts and feelings.

### **3 Other Related Policies.**

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. The child protection policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance
- Care and Welfare of staff and pupils
- Curriculum
- Drugs
- Educated other than at school (EOTAS)
- Educational Visits
- Guidelines for volunteers
- Health and Safety (including First Aid and administration of Medicines)
- Intimate Care
- Managing Critical Incidents
- Online Safety
- Parental complaints procedure
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Risk Assessment
- Safe built environment
- Safe Recruitment
- Staff conduct and managing allegations
- Supervision of volunteers and visitors
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Whistle blowing
- Record keeping
- Use of mobile phones

THIS POLICY IS UPDATED ANNUALLY

**4                      Safeguarding Team    23-24**

Mrs P Anderson                      Chair of Board of Governors

Mrs P Murtagh                      Designated Governor

Mr S Spillane                      Principal

Mr M McKeefry                      Designated Teacher

Mrs E Black                      Deputy Designated Teacher

Mrs J Black                      Deputy Designated Teacher (Nursery)

## 5 Child Protection Definitions

*(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young People in Northern Ireland August 2017)*

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol, and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

**Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm.**

Harm can be caused by:

**Sexual abuse**

**Emotional abuse**

**Physical abuse**

**Neglect**

**Exploitation**

**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.

**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 opportunity 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

Although 'exploitation' is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register, professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or a combination of these forms of abuse.

Immediately there is suggestion of Domestic Violence or child abuse an automatic referral is made to Social Services. Recent change in legislation requires schools to also inform PSNI's Central Referral Unit (CRU) on

02890 259 299      or      101 Ext 30299

**For a full list refer to Appendix A.**



## 6 Identifying Abuse

It is always preferable to prevent abuse or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. All school staff are well placed to observe outward symptoms which may be due to child abuse.

Signs and symptoms:

- Unexplained delay in seeking treatment which is needed
- Incompatible explanations
- A series of minor injuries
- Unexplained bruising
  - in and around the mouth
  - black eyes - especially if both eyes are black and there is no bruising
  - to forehead or nose
  - grasp marks
  - finger marks
  - bruising of the ears
  - linear bruising (particularly buttocks or back)
  - differing age bruising
- Bite marks
- Burns and scalds
- Cigarette burns
- General physical disability
- Unresponsiveness in the child
- Soiling and wetting
- Change in behavioural pattern
- Frozen look
- Attention seeking
- Apprehension
- Anti-social behaviour
- Unkempt appearance
- Sexually precocious behaviour
- Sexualised drawings and play
- Sudden poor performance in school

- Poor self esteem
- Self-mutilation
- Withdrawal
- Running away
- Reluctance to return home after school
- Resistance to undressing for PE
- Resistance to school medicals
- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Confusing affectionate displays
- Poor attendance - repeated infections etc.
- Excessive dependence
- Poor growth

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. They may give rise to concern but are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he or she must report this immediately to the designated teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection.

All staff should recognise that to protect children from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action in the child's best interest.

No promise of confidentiality can or should be given where abuse is alleged.

## 7 Procedures.

### The First Step

- Where teachers see signs that cause them concern they should seek some clarification from the child, with tact and understanding.
- Where another member of the school staff sees signs, he or she should immediately bring them to the attention of either the class teacher or the designated teacher so that the necessary clarification can be carried out by the teacher.
- Care must be taken in asking and interpreting the child's responses to questions about indication of abuse.
- Staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to a child could have an effect on the evidence, which may be put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings.

### Guidelines for Dealing with a Disclosure: The 5 Rs.

- 1) RECEIVE
- 2) REASSURE
- 3) RESPOND
- 4) REPORT
- 5) RECORD

As soon as it is safely and sensitively possible to do so the member of staff completes

#### **School Welfare Concern Form (APPENDIX B)**

**Located in classrooms or available from Designated Teacher.**

This form is then given to the Designated Teacher or, in their absence, to a member of the Safeguarding team.

- Never ask leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.
- Do not ask questions that would encourage the child to change their version of events in any way or which would impose your own assumptions. Use "Tell me what happened/ Explain to me/ Describe to me as opposed to "Did they do X to you?".
- Listen to the child. Do not interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events. Make a note of the discussion to pass on to the designated teacher. The note should record time, date, place, and people who were present and what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail or sketched. Under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed.

- Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or other adult, about how an injury occurred should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, preferably quoting words used.
- Do not give the child undertakings of confidentiality but reassure the child that information will only be disclosed to those professionals who need to know.
- Notes of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings.
- Be sensitive to what a child says, treat it seriously and value what they say.

While discreet preliminary clarification from the child, parent or other carer will often help to confirm or allay concerns; it is not the responsibility of teachers to carry out investigations, or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers!

**See Appendix C, D and E for reporting guidance.**

### **Referral and the Role of the Designated Teacher**

In the event of an incident the lead/key person within school is the Designated Teacher. In their absence the Deputy Designated Teacher will assume responsibility.

- In all cases where abuse is suspected or where an allegation has been made by a pupil or a third party that abuse has taken place, or where serious concerns exist about the welfare of a child, teachers and other members of staff should report the information to the Designated Teacher.
- The Designated Teacher should not speak to the parents.
- The Designated Teacher should immediately refer these cases to or consult with Social Services.
- Where physical or sexual abuse is suspected or alleged, refer the case to the Police, and notify the Principal.
- Contact with or referral to Social Services will not automatically trigger a Child protection investigation; however, it may result in an investigation whether or not the teacher intended a formal referral.
- Any allegation by a child that he or she is suffering or has suffered abuse should immediately trigger the reporting procedures.
- The Principal should be alerted immediately to a case and should be kept informed by the Designated Teacher.
- Where the Designated Teacher is suspected of abuse, the Principal should be informed immediately and the normal reporting procedures should be instigated.
- Where the Principal is suspected of abuse, the Designated Teacher should report the matter to Social Services, the Police, and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

- When making a referral, the Designated Teacher should be informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies, which will decide whether and how to investigate. Clarify, when, how and by whom the parents and the child will be told that a referral has been made.
- The Designated Teacher or a teacher who knows the child well should be prepared to contribute to the strategy discussion the school's knowledge of the child.
- A parent can also make a complaint.
- It may be appropriate to signpost a family "in need" as opposed to a CP issue to the website [www.familysupportni.gov.uk](http://www.familysupportni.gov.uk)

Making a referral is a serious decision. Advice, information and guidance may be sought from the Principal, a senior member of staff or the class teacher.

Advice and support are also available from:

- CPSS - 028 9598 5590
- Child Protection Team, Social Services Gateway  
028 9050 7000 (9am-5pm) 028 9056 5444 (After 5pm)  
Regional Emergency Social Work 028 9504 9999

Reports will be made available to the parents at the Child Protection Conference and may be used in court. *Use of translated documents and/or interpreter should be made available if necessary.*

All reports should be checked and signed by the DT or a deputy. If a child is known to Social Services and/or is on the Child Protection Register and they are in Year 7 or moving to another school, then the DT will liaise with the DT in the new school.

## **8 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held “in confidence”. In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a ‘need to know’ basis.

Where there have been, or are current, child protection concerns about a pupil who transfers to another school we will consider what information should be shared with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Where it is necessary to safeguard children information will be shared with other statutory agencies in accordance with the requirements of this policy, the school data protection policy and the General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR)

In accordance with DE guidance, we must consider and develop clear guidelines for the recording, storage, retention and destruction of both manual and electronic records where they relate to child protection concerns.

To meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in our Lough View Integrated Primary and Nursery School are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child’s date of birth plus 30 years.

If information is held electronically, whether on a PC, a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.

These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

### **Reports for Child Protection Conferences: -**

- should focus on child's educational progress and achievements, attendance, behaviour, participation, relationships with other children and adults within the school and where appropriate the child's appearance.
- if relevant, should include what is already known about the child's relations with their family and the family structure.
- should be objective and based on evidence.
- should contain only fact, observations and reasons for concern.

Reports will be made available to the parents at the Child Protection Conference and may be used in court. All reports should be checked and signed by the designated teacher or their deputy.

## **9 Board of Governors**

All governors receive child protection training and are aware of their responsibilities in safeguarding our pupils. In addition, a designated governor takes a special interest in Child Protection and is able to advise the members of the Board on the following:

- The role of designated teachers
- The content of the Child Protection policy.
- The content of termly updates and full annual Designated Teacher's report
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff including sitting on selection panels.

## **10 Safe Recruitment Procedures**

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals' access to children and vulnerable adults through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate if they are engaged in regulated activity. All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in Lough View Integrated Primary School are vetted/supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

## 11 The Preventative Curriculum

The statutory personal development curriculum requires schools to give specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships, and the development of a moral thinking and value system. The curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive issues with children and young people in an age-appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours.

Our school seeks to promote pupils' awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues, including those related to child protection through its curriculum. The safeguarding of children is an important focus in the school's personal development programme and is also addressed where it arises within the context of subjects. Through the preventative curriculum we aim to build the confidence, self-esteem, and personal resiliencies of children so that they can develop coping strategies and can make more positive choices in a range of situations.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there are permanent child protection notice boards in the corridors and dining hall.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues include-

- Ambulance Service visits.
- Baby visit, Year Two.
- Calm Plan.
- Healthy Happy Minds.
- Helping Hands.
- Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service visits.
- NSPCC pant song and discussion. (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/pants-underwear-rule/>)
- PASS.
- PATHS.
- PSNI visits.
- Roots of Empathy.
- RSE lessons.
- Safer Internet Day.

Reviewed with staff-

- 13-10-22
- 4-1-23
- 28-9-23



## **12 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.](#)

## **General Matters**

Our school recognises the importance of a partnership between home and school but where issues of child abuse or suspected child abuse arise, our first and only responsibility is to the child.

We may not be able to prevent child abuse but by following child protection procedures, we will try our best to protect all our children and this is our prime objective.

The school will keep a list of children causing concern and who need to be monitored. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on this list. The Principal will be kept informed of any changes or additions to the list.

In the unlikely event of the Principal, Designated or Deputy Designated Teachers not being available, any emergency involving Child Protection issues will be referred to a member of the Senior Management Team.

This policy will be reviewed and updated from time to time particularly in the light of new advice from DENI or Education Authority.

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually. An information flyer which summarised our full policy will be sent to parents every two years. This document and its associated policies are available on the school website.

Updated – October 2023

Signed..... Chair of Board of Governors  
Date .....

Signed..... Principal  
Date .....

Signed..... Designated Governor for CP  
Date .....

## **Appendix A**

### **Specific Types of Abuse**

**Grooming** of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation, or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared. Those working or volunteering with children or young people should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming, and take early action in line with their child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs. Practitioners should be aware that those involved in grooming may themselves be children or young people, and be acting under the coercion or influence of adults. Such young people must be considered victims of those holding power over them. Careful consideration should always be given to any punitive approach or 'criminalising' young people who may, themselves, still be victims and/or acting under duress, control, threat, the fear of, or actual violence. In consultation with the PSNI and where necessary the PPS, HSC professionals must consider whether children used to groom others should be considered a child in need or requiring protection from significant harm

If the staff in Lough View Integrated Primary School become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the school's child protection policies and procedures. The HSCT and PSNI should be involved as early as possible to ensure any evidence that may assist prosecution is not lost and to enable a disruption plan to reduce the victim's contact with the perpetrator(s) and reduce the perpetrator(s) control over the victim to be put in place without delay.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/ or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. DHSSPS version 2.0 2017).

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE. Although younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Sixteen and seventeen year olds, although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited.

CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people's peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males. While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, **the majority of CSE victims are living at home.**

### **Statutory Responsibilities**

CSE is a form of child abuse and, as such, any member of staff suspecting that CSE is occurring will follow the school's child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

### **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland: A Seven Year Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse as follows: -

#### **Domestic Violence and Abuse:**

'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.'

#### **Sexual Violence and Abuse**

'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).' Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent.

If it comes to the attention of school staff that Domestic Abuse, is or may be, affecting a child this will be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed established procedures set out in our school policy. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. Contact can be made directly to the Sexual Referral Unit (based within the Public Protection Unit) at 028 9025 9299. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Team.

**Forced Marriage** A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in Lough View Integrated Primary School we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

### **Children Who Display Harmful Sexual Behaviour**

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. As a school we support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It must also be borne in mind that sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed through the school's positive behaviour policy but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as normal, inappropriate, abusive or violent. Normal sexual behaviour will generally have no need for intervention, however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting. Inappropriate sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the EA CPSS may be required. The CPSS will advise if contact with PSNI or Social Services is required. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2022/02 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

**Abusive Sexual Behaviours** are of significant concern and guidance on the management of the pupils and referrals to other agencies such as Social Services or the Police should be sought from CPSS.

Some examples of abusive sexual behaviours are victimising intent or outcome, the misuse of power, coercion and force to ensure victim compliance, they may be intrusive and may include elements of expressive violence, informed consent is lacking or is not given by the victim, for example because of their special needs or they may have been under the influence of alcohol or other substances

**Violent Sexual Behaviours** are also of significant concern. They may have features of threat, force, coercion or harm to others.

Some examples of violent sexual behaviour include physically violent sexual abuse which is highly intrusive, instrumental violence which is physiologically and or sexually arousing to the perpetrator and may involve sadism.

Advice from CPSS will be required if we are aware of a young person displaying violent sexual behaviour.

## **E Safety/Internet Abuse**

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social environments and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in schools and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report 'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland' which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content Risks:** the child or young person is exposed to harmful material.
- **Contact risks:** the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- **Conduct Risks:** the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.
- **Commercial Risks:** the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

We in Lough View Integrated Primary School have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like.

The school's actions and governance of online safety are reflected clearly in our safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

**Sexting** is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile or over the internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

### **1/Sexting between Individuals in a Relationship**

Pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share 'indecent images' of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship) and in these cases we will contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance. We may also seek advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

### **2/Sharing an Inappropriate Image with an Intent to Cause Distress**

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent. For further information see: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted)

If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared further whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures of the school will be followed.

## **Appendix B**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**NOTE OF CONCERN**



## Child Protection Record - Reports to Designated Teacher

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, Time of Incident/Disclosure:
Circumstances of Incident/Disclosure:
Nature and Description of Concern:
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:
Action Taken at The Time:
Details of Any Advice Sought, From Whom and When:
Any Further Action Taken:

Written Report Passed to Designated Teacher:                      Yes:                      No:
If 'No' state reason:
Date and Time of Report to The Designated Teacher:
Written Note from Staff Member Placed On Pupil's Child Protection File
Yes                      No
If 'No' state reason:

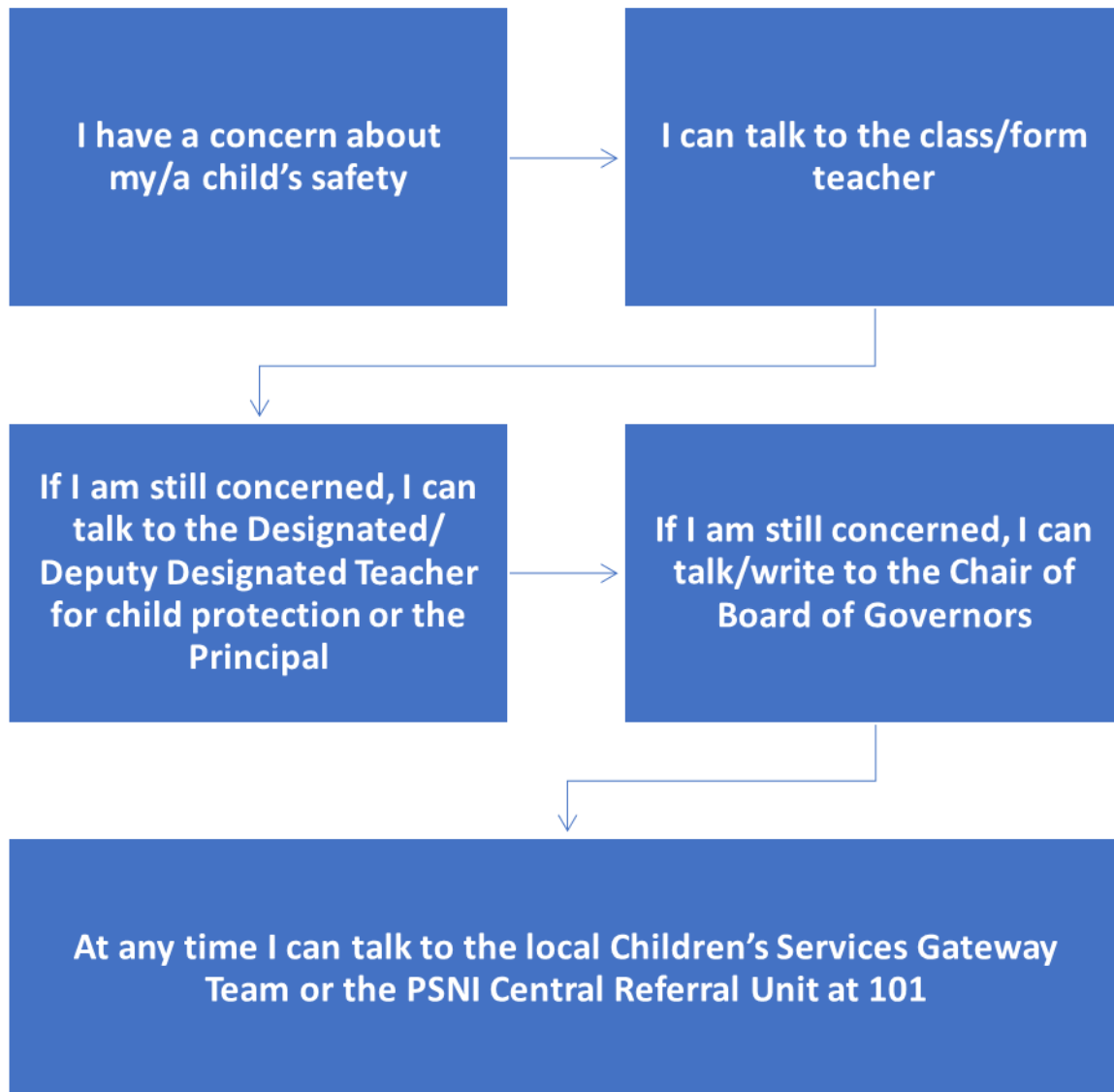
**Name of Staff Member Making the Report:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Staff Member:** \_\_\_\_\_                      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Designated Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_                      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### If a Parent Has a Potential Child Protection Concern Within the School

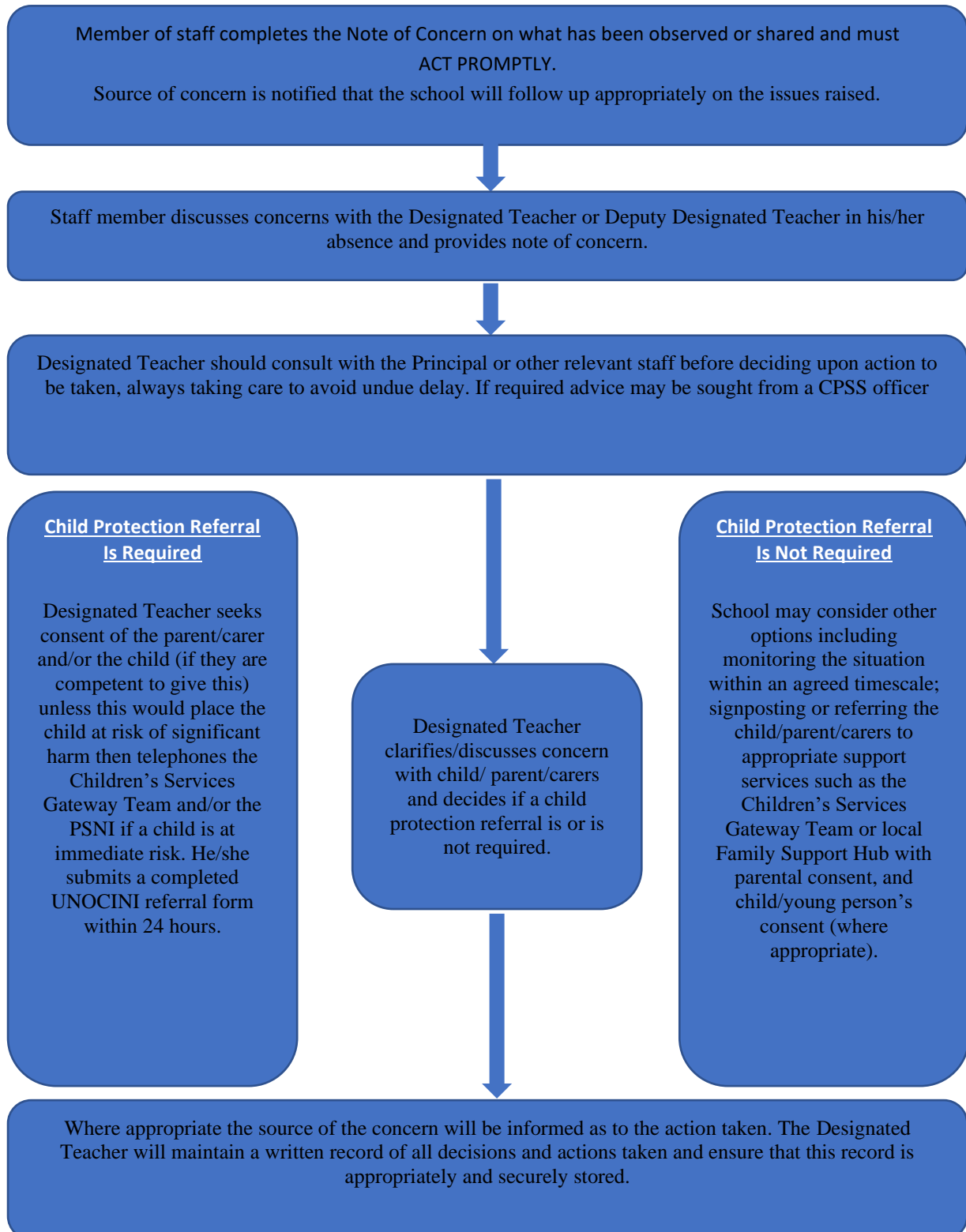


If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy should culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

If a parent has a concern about a child's safety or suspect child abuse within the local community, it should be brought directly to the attention of the Children's Services Gateway Team.

## Appendix D

### Procedure Where the School Has Concerns, or Has Been Given Information, about Possible Abuse by Someone Other Than a Member of Staff



## Appendix E

### Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

