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# HOLLYBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

## SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



*Engage, Empower, Excel*

<b>Date of next policy review</b>	<b>AUGUST 2021</b>
<b>Name of person responsible for this policy</b>	<b>N.Culbert</b>
<b>Issued to</b>	<b>Staff, Governors, Parents</b>
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### **School Safeguarding Ethos**

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential. This should be free of impediment, obstruction or discrimination. At Hollybank we recognise that every child has the right to:

- be healthy;
- stay safe;
- enjoy and achieve;
- make a positive contribution; and
- achieve economic wellbeing.

*Every Child Matters (Government Green Paper 2003/cm5860)*

## **Introduction**

The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. In Hollybank Primary School, we recognise our 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 in which all our pupils can learn and develop to their full potential. We also aim to strengthen children's resilience by teaching them about welcome and unwelcome behaviours.

The Governors and staff, both paid and unpaid, of Hollybank Primary School fully recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm.

This Policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A guide for Schools, September 2019, the SBNI Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, 2018.

We are compliant with the legalisation and policy framework in Northern Ireland. The legislative framework for Northern Ireland's child protection system is set out in The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. This sets out parental responsibilities and rights and the duties and powers public authorities must support children.

The creation of the regional Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) was set out in law in the Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. This also established five Safeguarding Panels to support the SBNI's work at a Health and Social Care Trust level (HSCT).

The Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires public authorities to co-operate in contributing to the wellbeing of children and young people, in the areas of:

- ✓ physical and mental health
- ✓ enjoyment of play and leisure
- ✓ learning and achievement
- ✓ living conditions, rights, and economic wellbeing.

Under Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967, it is an offence not to report a 'relevant offence' to the police. This includes

offences against children.

The key principles reflected in the legislative and policy framework is manifest in DE guidance on safeguarding which the school is required to be compliant.

We have consulted on this Policy with pupils, parents, teachers and Governors.

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

Our Policy applies to all staff, Governors and volunteers working in the school. The purpose of the procedures set out in this Policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence. We also recognise that domestic violence may be a cause of a range of physical, emotional and behavioural difficulties for children.

## **Aims and Objectives**

This Policy ensures that all staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary where a safeguarding Child Protection issue arises. In putting the Policy into practice, our aims are to:

- ✓ establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
- ✓ develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- ✓ to ensure effective communication among all staff when dealing with safeguarding issues
- ✓ ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
- ✓ raise awareness of Child Protection issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- ✓ raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse
- ✓ support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed Child Protection plan.

The purpose of the following procedures on Safeguarding is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in Hollybank Primary School teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - have 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.

We believe that children cannot learn effectively unless they feel secure. This document lays out the procedures, roles and responsibilities relevant to addressing allegations of child abuse.

## **Safeguarding Team**

Designated teacher for Child Protection:  
Deputy designated teacher for Child Protection:  
Senior teacher for Child Protection:  
Chairman of Governors:  
Designated Governor for Child Protection:

**Mrs N Culbert**  
**Miss L Brett**  
**Miss N McIlwain**  
**Mr N McCracken**  
**Mrs V Robinson**

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Staff**

If any teacher suspects that a child in his/her class may be a victim of abuse, they immediately inform the Designated Teacher (DT) about their concerns. Abuse may be of a sexual, emotional or physical nature. It may also be the result of neglect, and we recognise that domestic violence has an impact on children.

The school's DT works closely with the Education Authority's CPSS (Child Protection Support Service), Social Services and any other relevant and authorised agency when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved handle such investigations in a sensitive and confidential manner, but the well-being of the child is of paramount importance. The following principles will apply:

- ✓ Any member of the safeguarding team will liaise with Social Services or the Education Authority's Child Protection Support Service to determine if a referral is necessary
- ✓ The complainant will be informed of the outcome, if appropriate
- ✓ A parent will be informed, unless by doing so, could place a child at risk of harm.
- ✓ If the parent is the alleged abuser, then discussions will follow with the CPSS, Social Services and PSNI to determine how the parent will be informed.

If a child alleges abuse in the form of a disclosure, then the DT will contact the CPSS for advice and guidance and follow their recommendations. **Social Services / PSNI will investigate the disclosure - this is not within the remit of the school.**

Designated Staff will work closely with statutory agencies and will attend Child Protection Case Conferences as required. The Case Conference offers the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action to safeguard the child. Staff are expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings held under statutory guidelines.

## Prevention

Our teaching of PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others.

We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations and how to respond to unhealthy and unsafe behaviours from others. School staff will continue to remind children regularly about their own personal safety.

## All Adults

It is the responsibility of **ALL** adults working in the school to record and report possible/disclosed abuse to the DT. It is the responsibility of all adults to:

- ✓ adopt safeguarding guidelines, including the staff Code of Conduct
- ✓ act upon any concern, no matter how small it may seem, in accordance with the school's procedures
- ✓ promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe behaviour
- ✓ ensure all Health and Safety procedures are adhered to
- ✓ ensure they are aware of safeguarding procedures and are appropriately trained.

## Chairman of the Board of Governors

The Chairman of the Board of Governors will:

- ✓ ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- ✓ ensure that the school has a current Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the Policy
- ✓ ensure that appropriate Governors undertake appropriate training in Child Protection and Recruitment & Selection
- ✓ assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the school Principal.
- ✓ Ensuring that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed
- ✓ Ensure that the Board of Governors receive regular updates in relation to child protection activity including a full written annual report



### Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Designated Governor will provide the lead in keeping the Governors informed of:

- ✓ the role of the Designated Teachers
- ✓ the content of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ✓ the content of a Code of Conduct for all adults within the school
- ✓ the content of the termly updates and Designated Teacher's Full Annual Report
- ✓ recruitment, selection and vetting of staff.

### Principal

The Principal takes the lead in managing Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns relating to adults in the school. The role of the Principal is to ensure that:

- ✓ a Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) are appointed
- ✓ this Policy is adopted and followed in the school
- ✓ the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Governors are kept informed where appropriate
- ✓ the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually
- ✓ confidentiality is paramount.
- ✓ Ensuring that all relevant DENI guidance in relation to child protection and safeguarding in particular 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools' - DE 2019 is implemented within the school
- ✓ Maintaining and securely storing the *School Record of Child Abuse Complaints* and to make it available at least annually to the Board of Governors.
- ✓ Ensuring that parents and pupils receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy and Complaints Procedures every 2 years.
- ✓ Managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

### Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The role of the Designated Teacher is:

- ✓ to provide Induction for all adults and to deliver training to all school staff, including support staff, on the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually.
- ✓ to be available to discuss the Child Protection concerns of any member of staff

- ✓ responsibility for the management and keeping of all Child Protection concerns
- ✓ to make referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units where appropriate
- ✓ to develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding Child Protection matters, including attendance at Case Conferences
- ✓ to liaise with Education Authority's Child Protection Support Service Designated Officers for Child Protection
- ✓ responsible for the development and updating of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ✓ to ensure parents receive a copy of the Policy every two years
- ✓ to promote an ethos of safeguarding within the school
- ✓ to provide annual reports to the Board of Governors regarding Child Protection
- ✓ to maintain all records pertaining to Child Protection and to keep them in a secure location (accessed only by The Safeguarding Team as appropriate)
- ✓ when a child changes school, to ensure that the Designated Teacher in the receiving school is informed of the child's circumstances and the name of their Social Worker
- ✓ to ensure that when a child on the Child Protection Register has been absent from school for two consecutive days, that the child's Social Worker is informed of the situation (following regionally agreed protocols).
- ✓ Acting as a point of contact for staff (and parents) in relation to child abuse concerns

### Deputy Designated Teacher

The role of the DDT is to support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

**It should be noted that safeguarding takes precedence over collegiate loyalty or management.**

### Parents

Parents can play their part in safeguarding by:

- ✓ telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's well-being;
- ✓ making requests to the school in advance for permission to allow their child to attend medical or other appointment including providing details of any arrangements for the collection of the child
- ✓ informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school

- ✓ familiarising themselves with the schools safeguarding policies e.g. Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour, E-Safety and Child Protection Policies;
- ✓ reporting to the school office when they visit the school
- ✓ sharing any concerns, they may have in relation to their child with the school.

## Definitions

### What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organisations. Abusers come from all walks of life and all occupations and professions. Child abuse can manifest in several ways and can involve a combination of the forms of abuse. Those working with children and young people must have an awareness and understanding of the nature and prevalence of different manifestations within their practice area.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Through their day-to-day contact with individual children, school staff, especially teachers, but also non-teaching staff, including lunch-time supervisors and ancillary or auxiliary staff, are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms, change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm. '**Harm**' means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, and the question of whether harm is significant is determined in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Children Order. More detail on the concept of harm and significant harm can be found in Section 2.4 of Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (August 2017) and in the Children (NI) Order 1995.

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations, including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the **Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967** makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children.

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. However, teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are repeated regularly.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection. ***The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed***, including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school's staff, teaching or

non-teaching (see Dealing with Allegations Against a Member of Staff - DE Circular 2015/13).

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported **immediately** to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home. Contact details for the PSNI Central Referral Unit and Duty Social Workers can be found in the Contacts Section.

Pupils who are the victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties which may require a holistic assessment of need to determine appropriate level and types of intervention.

### Types of Abuse

Child abuse may take several forms, including:

- ✓ **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.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Looks very thin, poorly and sad;</li><li>*constant hunger;</li><li>*lack of energy;</li><li>*untreated medical problems;</li><li>*special needs of child not being met;</li><li>*constant tiredness;</li><li>*inappropriate dress;</li><li>*poor hygiene;</li><li>*repeatedly unwashed;</li><li>*smelly;</li><li>*repeated accidents, especially burns.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Tired or listless (falls asleep in class);</li><li>*steals food;</li><li>*compulsive eating;</li><li>*begging from class friends;</li><li>*withdrawn;</li><li>*lacks concentration;</li><li>*misses school medicals;</li><li>*reports that there is no carer at home;</li><li>*low self-esteem;</li><li>*persistent non-attendance at school;</li><li>*exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.</li></ul>

- ✓ **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.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Unexplained bruises - in various stages of healing</li> <li>*grip marks on arms;</li> <li>*slap marks;</li> <li>*human bite marks;</li> <li>*welts;</li> <li>*bald spots;</li> <li>*unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns (glove like);</li> <li>*unexplained fractures;</li> <li>*lacerations or abrasions;</li> <li>*untreated injuries;</li> <li>*bruising on both sides of the ear - symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion;</li> <li>*injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Self-destructive tendencies;</li> <li>*aggression to other children;</li> <li>*behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive);</li> <li>*appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults;</li> <li>*improbable excuses to explain injuries;</li> <li>*chronic runaway;</li> <li>*uncomfortable with physical contact;</li> <li>*coming to school early or staying last as if afraid to be at home;</li> <li>*clothing inappropriate to weather - to hide part of body;</li> <li>*violent themes in art-work or stories</li> </ul>

- ✓ **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.

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs;</li> <li>*bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas;</li> <li>*torn, stained or bloody underclothes;</li> <li>*chronic ailments such as recurrent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*What the child tells you;</li> <li>*Withdrawn; chronic depression;</li> <li>*excessive sexual precociousness;</li> <li>*seductiveness;</li> <li>*children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of</li> </ul>

abdominal pains or headaches; *difficulty in walking or sitting; *frequent urinary infections; *avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers; *unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; *anorexia/gross over-eating.	adult sexuality; *parent/child role reversal; *over concerned for siblings; *poor self-esteem; self-devaluation; *lack of confidence; *peer problems; lack of involvement; *massive weight change; *suicide attempts (especially adolescents); *hysterical/angry outbursts; *lack of emotional control; *sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in schoolwork or behaviour; *inappropriate sex play; *repeated attempts to run away from home; *unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories; *vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; *promiscuity; *exposure to pornographic material
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- ✓ **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 Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
*Well below average in height and weight; "failing to thrive"; *poor hair and skin; *alopecia; *swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; *recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; *sudden speech disorders; *signs of self-mutilation;	*Apathy and dejection; *inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations; *rocking/head banging; *inability to play; *indifference to separation from family *indiscriminate attachment; *reluctance for parental liaison;

*signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); *extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).	*fear of new situation; *chronic runaway; *attention seeking/needing behaviour; *poor peer relationships.
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- ✓ **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.

*\*All the above definitions are from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017)*

[www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland)

Child sexual exploitation 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.

The key factor that distinguishes cases of CSE from other forms of child sexual abuse is the concept of exchange - the fact that someone coerces or manipulates a child into engaging in sexual activity **in return for something** they need or desire and/or for the gain of those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. The something received by the child or young person can include both tangible items and/or more intangible 'rewards' OR 'benefits' such as perceived affection, protection or a sense of value or belonging.

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE. The abuse can be perpetrated by adults or peers, on an individual or group basis.

The potential indicators of CSE can include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phone etc without plausible



explanation;

- ✓ Leaving home/care without permission;
- ✓ Persistently going missing or returning late;
- ✓ Receiving lots of texts/phone calls prior to leaving;
- ✓ Agitated/stressed prior to leaving home/care;
  
- ✓ Returning distraught/ disheveled or under the influence of substances;
- ✓ Truanting from school;
- ✓ Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age;
- ✓ Physical symptoms or infections e.g. bruising, bite marks, sexually transmitted infections;
- ✓ Concerning use of the internet;
- ✓ Entering or leaving cars driven by unknown adults or by taxis;
- ✓ New peer groups;
- ✓ Significantly older 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend';
- ✓ Increasing secretiveness around behaviours;
- ✓ Low self-esteem;
- ✓ Change in personal hygiene (greater attention or less);
- ✓ Self-harm and other expressions of despair;
- ✓ Evidence or suspicion of substance misuse.

Whilst these indicators can be usefully used to identify potential risk, it is important to note that their presence does not necessarily mean that CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence, mean that it is not.

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 Child Protection Register 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.

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

These types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities, but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of appropriate supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed.

### Child Abuse in Other Specific Circumstances

#### ✓ **Bullying**

Bullying is not defined as a category of abuse within the Area Child Protection

Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). The policy does however state that the damage inflicted by bullying behaviour can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and at the extreme cause them significant harm (including self-harm).

The procedure for referral and investigation of abuse may therefore be implemented in certain circumstances such as when anti-bullying procedures have failed to be effective; the bullying behaviour is persistent and severe resulting in the target of the bullying suffering/likely to suffer significant harm; there are concerns that the bullying behaviour is indicative of the child exhibiting this behaviour suffering/likely to suffer significant harm or where concerns exist in relation to the parents/carer's capacity to meet the needs of the child (either the target or the child exhibiting this behaviour).

#### ✓ **Children Who Sexually Abuse Others or Display Sexually Harmful Behaviour**

When abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the procedures outlined in this policy will be followed. It is important in such situations to distinguish between behaviours which are experimental in nature and those that are exploitative and harmful. Advice and support will be sought in such circumstances from the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection and where appropriate a referral made to the statutory agencies. In all such cases a risk assessment will be undertaken, and a Risk Reduction Plan identified. Appropriate services will also be provided for the children involved. *\*The above guidance follows DE Circular 2016/05 subject Children Who Display Harmful Sexualized Behaviour.*

#### ✓ **Indecent Photographs**

The offence of taking indecent pictures of children under 18 years can apply in a situation where a pupil has taken an indecent picture using a mobile phone of others under 18 years of age. It is also an offence to distribute, possess with intent to distribute or show such photographs to others. In such circumstances the PSNI and Social Services will be contacted. The school also has an E-safety Policy and Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy which has been circulated to parents and pupils and which is available from the school.

#### ✓ **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.

Schools have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and should 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 must be reflected clearly in its 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.

It is recommended that rather than having a stand-alone online safety policy, schools should integrate their online safety policy (and, where applicable, their mobile learning policy) into existing safeguarding, behaviour, code of practice and anti-bullying policies.

The online safety policy should incorporate agreements on the acceptable use of:

- ✓ the internet and school-based digital technology
- ✓ personal mobile technology

*(Taken from Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools Sept 2019)*

✓ **Young Person whose Behaviour places him/her at Risk of Significant Harm**

A child who's own behaviours e.g. self-harming behaviour, leaving school without permission etc. places him/her at risk of significant harm, may not necessarily constitute abuse however it may still reach the threshold for referral on Child Protection grounds. The decision to initiate Child Protection procedures is a matter for professional judgement and each case will be considered individually with advice sought from the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection. The criminal aspects of such cases will be dealt with by the PSNI.

- ✓ **Domestic Violence and Abuse** is defined as 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.' (Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016)
- ✓ **Sexual Violence and Abuse** is defined as '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).

Coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent. (**Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016**)

A child may live in a family where there is domestic abuse. In high risk cases involving domestic abuse Social Services and/or the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection will contact the school in order to help assess the child/young person's needs and to ensure that he/she receives appropriate support.

#### ✓ **Gender Identity - Gender Variant/Transgender young people**

Being transgender is a recognised medical condition known as Gender Dysphoria or Gender Identity Disorder. Transgender is separate from LGB. Hollybank will work collaboratively with parents, other services and most important the young person him/her self to support him/her in progressing through their school life showing due regard to their needs.

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 allows people who have lived in their preferred gender for at least 2 years to apply for a gender recognition certificate (GRC) and, if a UK Citizen, a new birth certificate.

#### ✓ **Female Genital Mutilation**

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. 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. - **Multi-agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation. DFP 2014**

All staff in Hollybank should be aware of some of the following in identifying who

could be at risk.

- ✓ Being a girl aged 5 - 8 within a community where FGM is practised
  - ✓ Prolonged return to country of origin for summer break - giving sufficient healing time before return to school
  - ✓ Female elder visiting from a country of origin
  - ✓ Child may tell other children about it
  - ✓ A girl may disclose that she is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'
  - ✓ Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period
- ✓ **Forced Marriage**

Where Hollybank Primary School is made aware or have a reasonable suspicion that a child attending our school is being forced into marriage, we will report this on as appropriate to the relevant agencies. We will be mindful of the following in relation to a child:

- ✓ Absence and persistent absence
- ✓ Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- ✓ Surveillance by siblings or cousins
- ✓ Change in behaviour, performance or punctuality
- ✓ Being withdrawn from school for 'home schooling' and not receiving suitable education at home
- ✓ Not allowed to attend extra-curricular activities
- ✓ Sudden announcement of engagement

We also recognise that there is a danger in involving the family of the child concerned and alerting them to the fact that the school and others are aware and will act to protect the child - ***The Right to Choose: Statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage.*** DFPNI 2012

✓ **Self-Harm and Suicide**

It is most helpful to consider self-harm as a continuum, ranging from behaviour which has a strong suicidal intent (for example, some kinds of overdose) to behaviour which is intended to help the person stay alive (such as cutting)' - **John Coleman 2004**

Self-harm is often a means by which a child can release the tension caused by their anxiety, grief or anger. It can also be seen as a means of communication, to tell themselves and others that they need help. It helps them feel they have a level of control over something in their lives - making 'real' the emotional pain they are unable to express.

It is our policy that in instances where a child expresses suicidal ideation or self-harm or discloses that he/she has self-harmed, we will contact the parents and ask them to take their child to their GP for assessment.

### **Confidentiality**

Where a child confides in a member of staff or a volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the child is told sensitively that it may be necessary to share the information with those who need to know about it, in order to ensure the child's safekeeping.

All staff and volunteers who receive sensitive information about children or parents in the course of their professional duties should be aware that such information is confidential, and is not to be made the subject of general conversation or disclosed to others outside the school other than statutory officials, as required by this Policy.

All records of a Safeguarding/Child Protection nature are held securely within the school. Access to such records is restricted to the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

## How to Respond to a Child who makes a Disclosure

The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.

### Receive

- ✓ Stay calm.
- ✓ Listen to what the child is saying without displaying shock or disbelief.
- ✓ Accept what the child is saying, making brief cursory notes. These notes should be retained.
- ✓ Be discreet.

### Reassure

- ✓ Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by talking to you, but **do not make promises that you cannot keep** (such as, "Everything will be all right now").
- ✓ Do not promise confidentiality. Staff have a duty to refer the matter to the Designated Teacher. Explain that you will need to talk to Mrs Culbert (DT) or Miss Brett (DDT), who will know what to do next.
- ✓ Reassure and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it.

### Respond

- ✓ Respond to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether you need to refer the matter to the DT.
- ✓ Ask open questions (such as, "Can you tell me what happened?" "Is there anything else you wish to tell me?")
- ✓ Do not ask closed questions (those that will evoke a yes/no response, such as, "Did \_\_\_\_\_ do this to you?") Such questions invalidate evidence where a subsequent court action is necessary.
- ✓ Do not criticise the perpetrator as the child may love that person and reconciliation maybe possible.
- ✓ Explain what you will do next (talk with the DT, who will know how to get help).

### Record

- ✓ Make notes as soon as possible after hearing what the child has said, using the record of concern form (Annex D Circular 2016/20). (Appendix 3) **Staff should not record in a journal or diary but must use the Note of Concern. In the event, that a staff member has made use of a post-it or other means of recording, these should be securely attached to the**



**Note of Concern. Staff must not retain a copy of a Note of Concern or any other record of a CP nature.**

- ✓ Do not destroy these original notes.
- ✓ Record the date, time, place, people present, what is seen and heard and any noticeable non- verbal behaviour. Record the words the child used as much as possible (if the child uses 'pet' words, record those rather than translating them into 'proper' words). Any injuries or marks noticed can be depicted on a diagram showing position and extent. **Under no circumstances should a child be photographed or a child's clothing removed.**
- ✓ Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations and assumptions.
- ✓ Sign the record and hand it to the DT.

### Report

- ✓ Refer the matter to the Designated Teacher.
- ✓ Respect confidentiality i.e. the matter should only be discussed on a need to know basis.

All written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately, are securely maintained, separate from the main pupil file and in a locked location.

### Refer

**Concerns about possible abuse must be referred to the DT as soon as possible within the working day.**

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional Child Protection agencies, following a referral from the DT.

### Procedures for Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Abuse

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) is Mrs. Culbert. In her absence, the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DDT), Miss Brett, or Miss McIlwain, will assume responsibility for Child Protection.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly. He/she should not investigate - this is a matter for Social Services - but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them) and hand the notes to the DT. (Record of Concern Annex D Circular 2016/20)(Appendix 3)

The DT will plan a course of action and ensure that a written record of decisions is made. They will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to Social Services. Unless there are concerns that a parent/guardian may be the possible abuser, the parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

Before a referral is made, the DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Designated Officer for Child Protection at Education Authority's Child Protection Support Service or a senior Social Worker. No decisions to refer a child to Social Services will be made without full consideration and appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse of a child, the DT will inform:

- ✓ Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection.
- ✓ Social Services - using the regional UNOCINI framework (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland). The UNOCINI referral will be made within 24 hours of the initial telephone referral to Social Services' Gateway Team. This will be sent in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL - CHILD PROTECTION' or sent electronically by encrypted email.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/she should talk to the DT. It should be noted that the information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held in confidence.

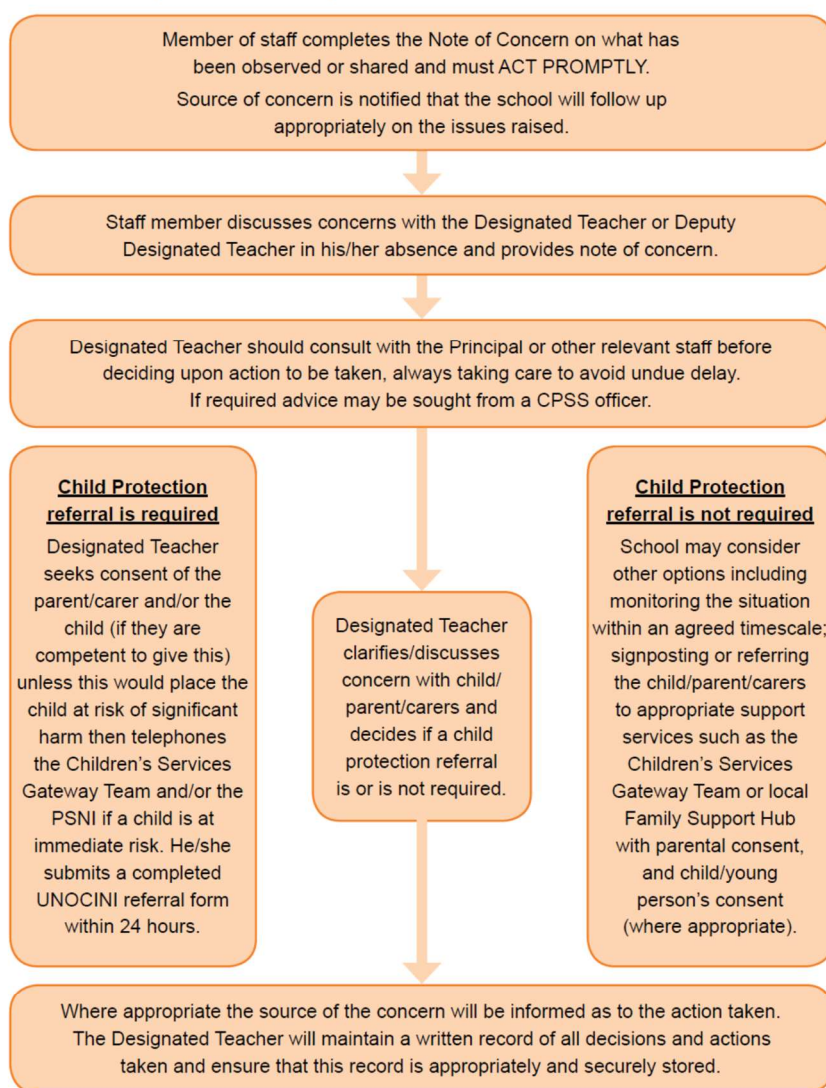
The procedures for the reporting suspected or disclosed abuse are made clear within the diagrams mentioned below:

- ✓ Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers

#### Dealing with Child Protection Concerns

### 5.7 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<sup>7,8</sup>



7 It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home. Contact details for the PSNI Central Referral Unit and Duty Social Workers can be found in the Contacts Section.

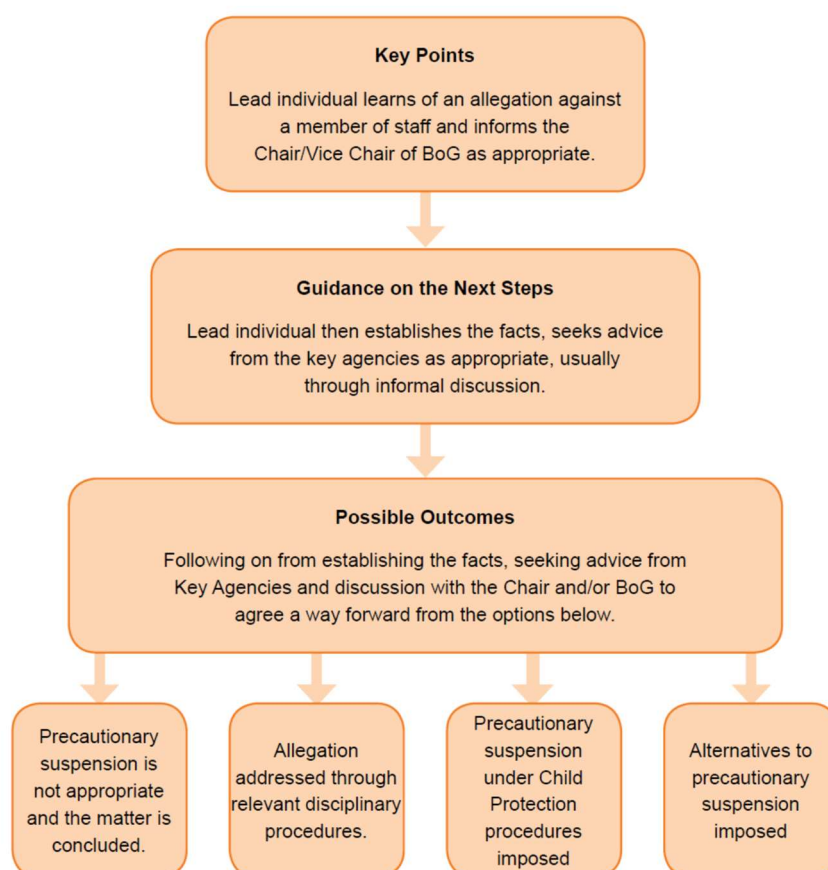
8 DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools.

✓ **Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff or a Volunteer**

When a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff the Principal (or the Designated Teacher if the Principal is not available) must be informed immediately. If the complaint is against the Principal then the Designated Teacher should be informed and she will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will consider what action is required in consultation with the employing authority. The procedure as outlined in **Figure 2** will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance (DE Circular 2015/13).

*Dealing with Child Protection Concerns*

**Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff<sup>9,10</sup>**



<sup>9</sup> DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools.

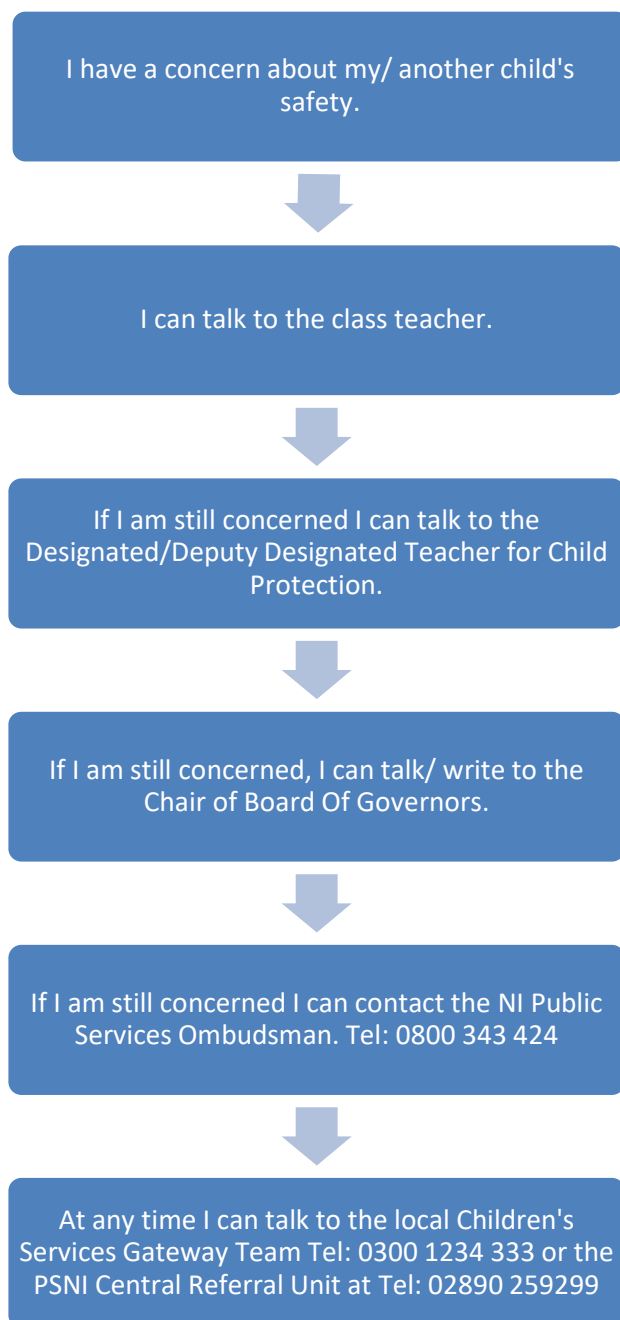
<sup>10</sup> As noted previously a Lead Individual to manage the handling of an allegation should be identified from the outset, normally the Principal or a designated senior member of staff.

### ✓ **How a Parent can make a Complaint**

We aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern, they can talk to the Class Teacher, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Vice Principal) or the Deputy Designated Teacher (Principal). If they are still concerned, they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Figure 3**.

### **Fig. 3 How a Parent/Carer can raise a Safeguarding concern**

There is a Designated staff member in our school who is the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. This is the acting Vice Principal Mrs. Culbert, with the Principal, Miss Brett, as the Deputy Designated Teacher in the Primary School and the Senior Teacher, Miss McIlwain. Any parent may use the following procedure to raise a concern about the safety of their (or another) child at the school:



## Record Keeping

The school will adhere to DE guidance under Circular 2016/ 20. The school will keep accurate records of concerns expressed and action taken. These records will be maintained in a secure location, separate from general records.

It will be the responsibility of the Designated Teacher to ensure that such records are kept up-to-date and forwarded when a child moves school (in compliance with DE guidance). In accordance with DE policy on the disposal of Child Protection records these records will be stored until the child is 30 years old.

Only the DT/DDT will have access to Child Protection records. However, in the case of an emergency where neither the DT/DDT are onsite then the responsibility will fall to the Senior teacher named within the Child Protection Team.

When a child moves to another school a copy of his/her Child Protection file if one exists, will be transferred to the receiving school. This process will be followed by the Designated Teacher in the school of origin who will transfer the file (minus third party information) to the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

### Child Protection Register

Where pupil names are known by the school to be on the Child Protection Register maintained by Social Services, they will also be entered in the Child Protection Register held by the school. All teaching staff will be informed of pupils on the CPR and will monitor and support in accordance with their child protection plan.

The DT or DDT will attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences, Core Group or Family Support Planning Meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust, where practical. If this is not possible, a written report will be provided to the relevant Social Worker which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. This written report will be provided by the DT/DDT (upon request) on a recording sheet (Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection 1999 Appendix 8.) Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis.

### Supporting Vulnerable Children

The staff of Hollybank Primary School recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school, their behaviour may be challenging or they may be withdrawn. We will endeavour to support pupils who are exposed to risk of harm in accordance with their agreed protection plan.

Support for all pupils in developing confidence and skills of self-protection will be provided through:

- ✓ lessons in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- ✓ promotion of the school's ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of value
- ✓ the school's Positive Behaviour Policy, which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours towards themselves and others
- ✓ liaison with other agencies that support the pupil, such as Social Services, Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, PSNI and the school nurse.

### Children with Limited Fluency in English

As with children with a Special Educational Need, children who are not fluent in English should be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred. Designated teachers should work with their SEN coordinator's along with school staff with responsibility for newcomer pupils, seeking advice and support from the Intercultural Education Service to identify and respond to any communication needs that a child may have. All schools should try to create an atmosphere in which pupils with Special Educational Needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.



### Safeguarding Concerns about an Adult working in the School

The school will adhere to and be guided by DE Circular 2015/13, Managing Allegations Against School Staff. Where a concern is raised about possible child abuse by an adult working in the school, the DT must be informed immediately. These procedures will apply, unless the complaint is about the Designated Teacher. If a concern is raised about possible child abuse by the DT, the DDT must be informed immediately. Allegations or concerns should not be exclusive to their current role and may also relate to the following:

- ✓ Allegations against someone working in the school can include their alleged behaviour outside of their job/role, including in their own home or community, relating to children.
- ✓ Allegations can also be made against Temporary and Substitute Teachers on the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR) that work in or have recently worked in the school.
- ✓ Allegations may also be historical, for example: where the person making the allegation has left the educational establishment or where the member of staff may have worked in another educational establishment.

If an allegation of child abuse (in relation to an adult working within the school) is made, then the Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately, and advice will be sought from the Education Authority and Social Services.

Every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity, while an allegation is being investigated or considered, will be made. Allegations should not be shared with other staff and children. A Lead Individual (usually the Principal - unless the allegation is against them) will be appointed to manage the handling of the allegation.

While it is necessary for the Lead Individual to establish the facts of the allegation, he/she MUST NOT investigate the incident by interviewing either those directly involved or any witnesses. It is the role of Social Services/PSNI to conduct any investigations.

In accordance with agreed disciplinary procedures the BOG, the Chair or the Principal can impose a precautionary suspension on a member of staff and should only do so following full consideration of an individual case in conjunction with the Lead Individual and advice from the relevant Employing Authority.

Upon taking advice, the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by Social Services. However, precautionary suspension will only be used when there is no reasonable alternative and will be reviewed monthly.

Employers have a duty of care to their staff and should ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the member of staff with a named contact in the school if they are suspended. The individual should be advised to contact

their trade union regularly if they are a member and wish to do so.

Precautionary Suspension will only be considered where:

- ✓ A child/pupil is at risk of significant harm.
- ✓ The allegation is so serious that, if proven, there may be grounds for dismissal.
- ✓ It is necessary to allow the conduct of the investigation to proceed unimpeded e.g. there is a possibility of the member of staff named in the allegation exercising an influence over the child/pupil and other witnesses or tampering with potential evidence.
- ✓ Following the discussion with the key agencies it is decided that any of the above apply.

Alternatives to Precautionary Suspension can include, where available and appropriate:

- ✓ Moving the member of staff to other duties that do not involve direct contact with a specific child or children identified as being at risk.
- ✓ Moving the member of staff to other duties that do not involve direct contact with children e.g. within the Employing Authority.
- ✓ Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children.

All investigations of possible abuse will be investigated thoroughly, and the outcome of these investigations may be dealt with outside of the parameters of this policy.

## **Hollybank Primary School's Vetting Procedures**

The selection and appointment process is the starting point for ensuring that only those who are suitable are employed to work in close proximity with children, in either a paid or unpaid capacity in our school.

In order for all reasonable steps to be taken to employ and engage suitable staff to work with the children in our care, we follow the following guidance on pre-employment checking and safe recruitment practices provided by the Department of Education and have adopted the new arrangements for vetting and checking of staff prior to appointment or volunteering within the school:

- ✓ DE Circular 2006/06: Child Protection: Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings
- ✓ DE Circular 2006/07: Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- ✓ DE Circular 2006/08: Child Protection: Training Requirements for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels
- ✓ DE Circular 2006/09: Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of Staff in Schools - Programme to Extend Coverage
- ✓ DE Circular 2006/25: Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors
- ✓ DE Circular 2008/03: Pre-Employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools - New Arrangements
- ✓ DE Circular 2008/10: Employment of Substitute Teachers.
- ✓ DE Circular 2012/19: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements.
- ✓ DE Circular 2013/01: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements.
- ✓ DE Circular 2015/13: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff.
- ✓ DE Circular-2016/20: Child Protection record keeping schools.
- ✓ DE Circular-2017/04: Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools guide.

Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: click on 'Circulars'.

All staff - whether paid or unpaid - are inducted in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

There may be occasions when volunteers or visitors may sometimes be unvetted by the Education Authority. In such cases volunteers or visitors will be required to provide an undertaking that they must:

- ✓ Adhere to a code of conduct for volunteers and visitors
- ✓ Agree to be supervised by an appropriate agent of the school during the time they are in the school

### Links with other School Policies

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

- ✓ Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Related Technologies Policy
- ✓ Administration of Medication to Pupils Policy
- ✓ Attendance Policy
- ✓ Health and Safety Policy
- ✓ Using ICT Policy
- ✓ Special Educational Needs Policy
- ✓ Pastoral Care Policy
- ✓ Positive Behaviour Policy
- ✓ Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- ✓ Code of Conduct for Volunteers Policy

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is not tolerated in Hollybank Primary School. The DE publication Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999) defines bullying as "deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself".

Our Anti-Bullying Policy is set out as a separate Policy and we acknowledge that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under Child Protection procedures.

Staff are always vigilant to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both the bully and the victim will be personally contacted when bullying has been identified.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the DT for Child Protection, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that another child or group of children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the DT within one week of making the complaint, outlining the investigation and the action taken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case but will include the loss of privileges in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to consider instigation of the Child Protection procedures.

### The Preventative Curriculum

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with clear lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of safeguarding and protection. The school community will therefore:

- ✓ establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- ✓ ensure that all children know that there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- ✓ follow the curriculum for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, which equips children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and teaches who they should turn to for help if the need arises.

### Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy

Staff guidelines on Physical Restraint by staff are set out in a separate Policy, in accordance with guidelines from Education Authority of Northern Ireland. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times, it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to the child, to another person or to school property.

## E-safety Policy

Our E-Safety Policy is set out in a separate document. It includes acceptable use of the Internet and is informed by DE guidance (DE Circular 2007/01). It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the Internet and digital technologies. In school, we take the following precautions:

- ✓ all computer systems are protected by username and password
- ✓ access to the Internet is passed through a filtering system that blocks inappropriate websites
- ✓ E-safety education is provided to pupils across the curriculum to help them understand what safe and responsible online behaviour means and how to report any concerns they may have.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can be defined as using digital technologies, particularly mobile phones and the Internet, to upset someone else. School staff, parents and pupils aim to work together to prevent such behaviour and to act appropriately and effectively when it occurs.

Deliberate abuses which happen outside school, but which impinge upon or affect school pupils and staff, will be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary and, where appropriate, external agency action.

## Grooming and images of child abuse

If school staff, parents or pupils suspect or are made aware of any of the following illegal acts, the matter must be reported to the Designated Teacher immediately:

- ✓ a child enticed or coerced to engage in sexually explicit conduct on-line
- ✓ importing or transporting obscenity using telecommunications public networks
- ✓ knowingly receiving images of child abuse whether via the Internet or other digital device (such as mobile phone); these include images which appear to be photographs, whether made by computer graphics or otherwise.

### Educational Visits Policy

Our Policy on Educational Visits is informed by the EA guidance 2017 (accessible on the EA website)\_document which provides guidance in planning and carrying out educational visits in accordance with Health and Safety and Child Protection requirements.

### Intimate Care Policy

Our Policy on Intimate Care is adapted from the regional SBNI policy and Procedures 2018.

### Code of Conduct for all Staff Paid or Unpaid

Our Policy on Conduct of Staff outlines the guidelines for employees in relation to Child Protection and their position as role models.

All actions concerning children and young people 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 that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

All members of staff are expected to comply with the School's Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers which is included as Appendix 2 to this Policy.

### Concerns and Complaints Policy

Our Complaints Policy is set out in a separate document. The purpose of the Complaints Procedure is to address complaints raised by parents/guardians. The procedures cover all matters relating to the actions of staff employed in the school and the application of school procedures, where they affect individual pupils. If following all stages, a parent/guardian remains dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint, they can refer the matter to the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO). The Ombudsman provides a free, independent and impartial service for handling complaints about schools in Northern Ireland. A Parent/Guardian has the right to complain to the Ombudsman if they feel that they have been treated unfairly or have received a poor service from a school and their complaint has not been resolved to their satisfaction. A complaint should normally be referred to NIPSO within six months of the final response from the School.



All policies must be kept up to date, with regular risk assessments carried out where required.

All policies are available to parents/carers, with hard copies available on request. Any parent/carer requiring a copy should contact the school Principal or visit the school website. ([www.hollybankps.co.uk](http://www.hollybankps.co.uk))

## Emergency Numbers

Should any adult in the school find themselves in the rare position of being the only adult remaining in the school and in need of immediate safeguarding advice, they should use the contacts below (in the given order) to seek help:

ChildLine:	0800 1111
Child Sexual Exploitation Helpline NSPCC :	0800 3891701
PSNI:	0845 600 8000
24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline	08088021414
NSPCC Adult Helpline	08088005000 text 88858

### Education Authority Northern Region

*Designated Officer for Child Protection*

*Antrim Board Centre - 17 Lough Road, Antrim BT41 4DH*

*Tel: 028944 82223*

### Northern Gateway

*Oriel House*

*Antrim*

*0300 1234 333*

### PSNI (Public Protection Unit)

*Tel: 999 (Emergency)*

*or 101 (Non-Urgent)*

*Central Referral Unit - 02890 259 299*

### **Reviewing the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**

The Safeguarding Team at Hollybank Primary School will review this Policy annually, or in the event of a change of legislation or following an incident, when the Policy's effectiveness will be evaluated. Any necessary changes will be made in light of any lessons learnt.

Date Policy reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman of Governors

\_\_\_\_\_ Designated Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ Deputy Designated Teacher

## *Appendix 1*

### **GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff in our school and in contributing, by their efforts and initiative, to the life of the school.

It is essential, however, that appropriate steps are taken, through screening and selection arrangements, to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school.

#### **Who is a Volunteer?**

A volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory procedures below, either:

- ✓ assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis, or
- ✓ is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips, residential activities or to undertake coaching in sports activities.

Under the new DBA (Disclosure & Barring Arrangements) the law regarding the vetting of school volunteers has changed. There are now two types of volunteers working in schools:

- ✓ Those who work supervised; and
- ✓ Those who work under supervision

Volunteers that work unsupervised are defined as persons carrying out Regulated Activities and these activities include:

- ✓ teaching
- ✓ training
- ✓ instructing
- ✓ caring for or supervising children
- ✓ providing advice/guidance on well-being
- ✓ driving a vehicle only for children

In order to be regarded as Regulated Activities such activities must be performed on a regular basis, Regular means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on four or more days in a 30 day period (or in some cases, overnight).

**ALL VOLUNTEERS CARRYING OUT REGULATED ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT SUPERVISED REQUIRE AN ENHANCED DISCLOSURE CERTIFICATE (EDC) FROM ACCESS NI.**

Activities that are not regarded as Regulated activities (under the new DBA) include:

- ✓ Activities performed by volunteers that are supervised at a reasonable day to day level, or
- ✓ Volunteers who work occasionally or temporary by providing a service that assists with maintenance or repairs with the school setting

**IF A VOLUNTEER IS SUPERVISED THEN UNDER THE NEW DBA THEY ARE NOT REGARDED AS WORKING IN REGULATED ACTIVITY AND THEREFORE A SCHOOL IS NOT REQUIRED TO OBTAIN AN EDC FROM ACCESS NI. \***

\*Schools may still require an EDC if they wish but cannot seek a barred list check for volunteers working in unregulated activities that are supervised.

The Department of Education continues to fund all EDC checks for volunteers.

### Use of Volunteers

There are three main categories into which the use of volunteers might be grouped and to which guidance will apply:

- ✓ during school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- ✓ outside school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- ✓ during school hours but not usually involving direct contact with pupils.

## Recruiting and Selecting Volunteers

The school may canvass for volunteers or people may come forward to help. In many cases, potential volunteers may already be known to the school. Others may come forward from the local community. Engagement of volunteers is only undertaken with agreement of the Board of Governors.

## Initial Appraisal

As a minimum requirement, all potential volunteers are asked to provide the following information:

- ✓ personal details
- ✓ qualifications and previous work with children
- ✓ a declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for Child Protection
- ✓ agreement to a criminal record search being carried out
- ✓ the names of two referees who are not family members or members of staff in the school
- ✓ agreement to meet the school Principal and provide proof of identity.

No individual will be admitted to the school as a volunteer until these basic steps have been completed and the results assessed.

## Accepting Volunteers

Where the previous procedures have been followed as appropriate and the school is satisfied that:

- ✓ the volunteer is a suitable person to have contact with the children and has the character, skills and experience to support the work of the school in a voluntary capacity
- ✓ well-defined and worthwhile activities have been identified for the volunteer to undertake and he/she is competent to undertake them

Once the school has completed the above audit then the school will notify the individual that he/she has been accepted for voluntary duties in the school.

## The Use of Volunteers

These are the fundamental principles observed when using volunteers:

- ✓ the purpose of the volunteer is to assist staff, whether teaching or non-teaching. They are not used as substitutes either to cover activities normally undertaken by paid staff who are absent, or to release such staff to undertake other duties
- ✓ volunteers only work under the supervision and guidance of paid staff; these arrangements should minimise the opportunities for direct, unsupervised access to children
- ✓ volunteers are not placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, premises or equipment
- ✓ volunteers should understand the tasks they are to undertake and should receive relevant training
- ✓ volunteers are allocated duties only after consultation and agreement with the teacher or other member of staff with whom the volunteer will be closely involved. Teachers are not to be placed under any pressure to accept a volunteer in their classroom
- ✓ volunteers are not given access to records or other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception might be made where a child has a medical condition and where agreement of the parent has been provided.

## Health and Safety Insurance

Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety legislation. Our school therefore ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of the school's obligations under the legislation.

## Information and Training

The school ensures that the volunteer receives such information, guidance, preparation and, where necessary, training to enable him/her to perform tasks effectively. As a minimum, volunteers are briefed on:

- ✓ the school's Policies on Pastoral Care and Safeguarding/Child Protection
- ✓ the school's Health and Safety Policy

### Visitors to School

Visitors to school, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc. do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors should be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors should be:

- ✓ Met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- ✓ Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- ✓ If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- ✓ Where appropriate, escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- ✓ Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- ✓ Access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.
- ✓ If delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

### Pupils on Work Experience

Health and Social Care Programmes will require an EDC for pupils on long term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/shadowing placements. Schools should apply through their Access NI Registered Body in advance (See DE Circular 2013/01 for more information).

Pupils coming into the school on work experience do not require Access NI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal Child Protection induction processes should apply.



## **Appendix 2**

### **Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers in Schools**

Date Ratified by BOG: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct, which applies to all staff and volunteers, is designed to give guidance on the standards of behaviour which should be observed. School staff and volunteers are role models, in a unique position of influence and trust and their behaviour should set a good example to all the pupils within the school. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It is merely for guidance and specific breaches of the Code must not be viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The Code includes sections on:

- ✓ Setting an Example
- ✓ Relationships and Attitudes
- ✓ Private Meetings with Pupils
- ✓ Physical Contact with Pupils
- ✓ Honesty and Integrity
- ✓ Conduct Outside of Work
- ✓ E-Safety and Internet Use
- ✓ Confidentiality

#### Setting an Example

All staff and volunteers in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff and volunteers should therefore, for example, avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times, and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. All staff and volunteers should be familiar with all school policies and procedures and to comply with these so as to set a good example to pupils.

Staff and volunteers must always comply with statutory requirements in relation to such issues as discrimination, health and safety and data protection.

#### Relationships and Attitudes

All staff and volunteers should treat pupils with respect and dignity and not in a manner which demeans or undermines them, their parents or carers, or colleagues. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their relationships with

pupils are appropriate to the age and maturity of their pupils. They should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require thought to ensure that conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.

Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times and sexual relationships with current pupils are not permitted and may lead to criminal conviction.

Staff and volunteers may have less formal contact with pupils outside of school; perhaps through mutual membership of social groups, sporting organisations, or family connections. Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school would be aware of any such relationship and should therefore consider whether the school should be made aware of the connection.

Staff and volunteers should always behave in a professional manner, which within the context of this Code of Conduct includes such aspects as:

- ✓ acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and other stakeholders;
- ✓ co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service;
- ✓ respect for school property;
- ✓ taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises
- ✓ being familiar with communication channels and school procedures applicable to both pupils and staff and volunteers;
- ✓ respect for the rights and opinions of others.

#### Private Meetings with Pupils

It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews with individual pupils must take place. As far as possible, staff and volunteers should conduct interviews in a room with visual access or with an open door and ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. Where possible, another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview.

#### Physical Contact with Pupils

To avoid misinterpretations, and so far as is practicable, staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with a pupil.

Staff and volunteers should therefore be cognisant of the guidance issued by the Department on the use of reasonable force (Circular 1999/09 and guidance document 'Towards a Model Policy in Schools on Use of Reasonable Force).

### Honesty and Integrity

All staff and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school (eg a supplier of materials) must be declared to the Principal. A record should be kept of all such gifts received. This requirement does not apply to "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents eg at Christmas or the end of the school year. Staff and volunteers should be mindful that gifts to individual pupils may be considered inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

### Conduct outside of Work

Staff and volunteers should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/ volunteer's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

Staff and volunteers may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary and should ensure it does not affect their work performance in the school. Advice should be sought from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

### E-Safety and Internet Use

A staff member or volunteer's off duty hours are their personal concern but all staff and volunteers should exercise caution when using information technology and be fully aware of the risks to themselves and others. For school-based activities, advice is contained in the school's Online Safety Policy.

Staff and volunteers should exercise particular caution in relation to making online associations/friendships with current pupils via social media and using texting/email facilities to communicate with them. It is preferable that any contact with pupils is made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when necessary.

## Confidentiality

Staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about pupils including highly sensitive or private information. It should not be shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff or volunteer may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals should pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

If a member of staff or volunteer is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior leadership.

Staff and volunteers need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same under any circumstances. Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Principal or a member of the safeguarding team without delay.

The school's child protection arrangements should include any external candidates studying or sitting examinations in the school.

*(Taken from Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools Sept 2019)*

**Appendix 3**

ANNEX D

PROFORMA

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 report to Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file.

Yes ☐ No ☐

If No state reason:

Name of Staf Member making th report: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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