

**BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL**  
**Education Authority - LOCALITY EAST**



**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2024 - 2025**

**THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL**

<b>Chair of Governors:</b>	Mrs Louise Stevenson
<b>Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance:</b>	Mr Niall Ferguson
<b>Principal:</b>	Miss Pamela Algie
<b>Designated Teacher for Child Protection :</b>	Miss Pamela Algie
<b>Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection:</b>	Miss Brooke Hanna

We in BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our Safeguarding Policies. These policies are based on guidance from the Department of Education NI (Circulars 2017/04 Safeguarding and Child Protection: 2016/20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools: 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Pupils: 1999/17 Parental Responsibility: Guidance for Schools).

We aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. We seek to protect our pupils by helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate criminal background checks. The staff of our school have also adopted a Code of Conduct for our standards of behaviour towards our pupils. Given the nature of our work and the age of the pupils, certain caring personal tasks will present themselves from time to time. These tasks will always be carried out in an appropriate manner. Close liaison with parents ensures that there is trust and understanding of such situations. Our school gives information for parents on how to make an official complaint should the need arise.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – have clear guidance on the action which is required when abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and

safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

### **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 a number of 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. (DENI Circular 2017/04)

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 (March 2016) 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, Miss Algie, 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 Section 5.5 on 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 a number of 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 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.

**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 opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones - by a child's peers.

**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 (2016)

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

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

**Bullying-** Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL. The early years are a crucial time for the development of an individual's health and well being. Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, healthy, well balanced and supportive environment.

It is uncommon for children of Nursery age to purposefully bully another child. Through our curriculum we support our pupils' personal, emotional and social development so that they understand the way in which they should behave. We encourage the development of positive relationships with children having a sense of right and wrong and an understanding of their needs and feelings and those of other people.

All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both victim and bully will be personally contacted immediately bullying behaviour is identified.

Any complaint by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the designated teacher for child protection, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the designated teacher within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action being taken.

Sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will be in accordance with our pupil disciplinary policy and will depend on the seriousness of the case. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

The relationships which staff have with children and parents are based on trust and confidentiality. However, in order to protect children from abuse, neglect or exploitation, a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families.

### 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.](#)

### **Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse.**

**The Designated Teacher (DT) for child protection is Miss P Algie, Principal.**

In her absence **Miss B Hanna, Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT)** will assume responsibility for child protection matters.

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.**

**She should not investigate** –this is a matter for the Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her and make full notes, signed and dated.

The designated teacher will, as a matter of urgency, plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

The DT 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, the school is obliged to make a referral.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

The Principal may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Education Authority -Locality East's Designated Officer for Child Protection or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice.

### **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the Principal will inform:

1. Social Services
2. EA-Locality East Designated Officer for Child Protection.

**(This will be in an envelope marked "CONFIDENTIAL – CHILD PROTECTION")**

### **Complaints against Staff**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the DT Miss Algie must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal). Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

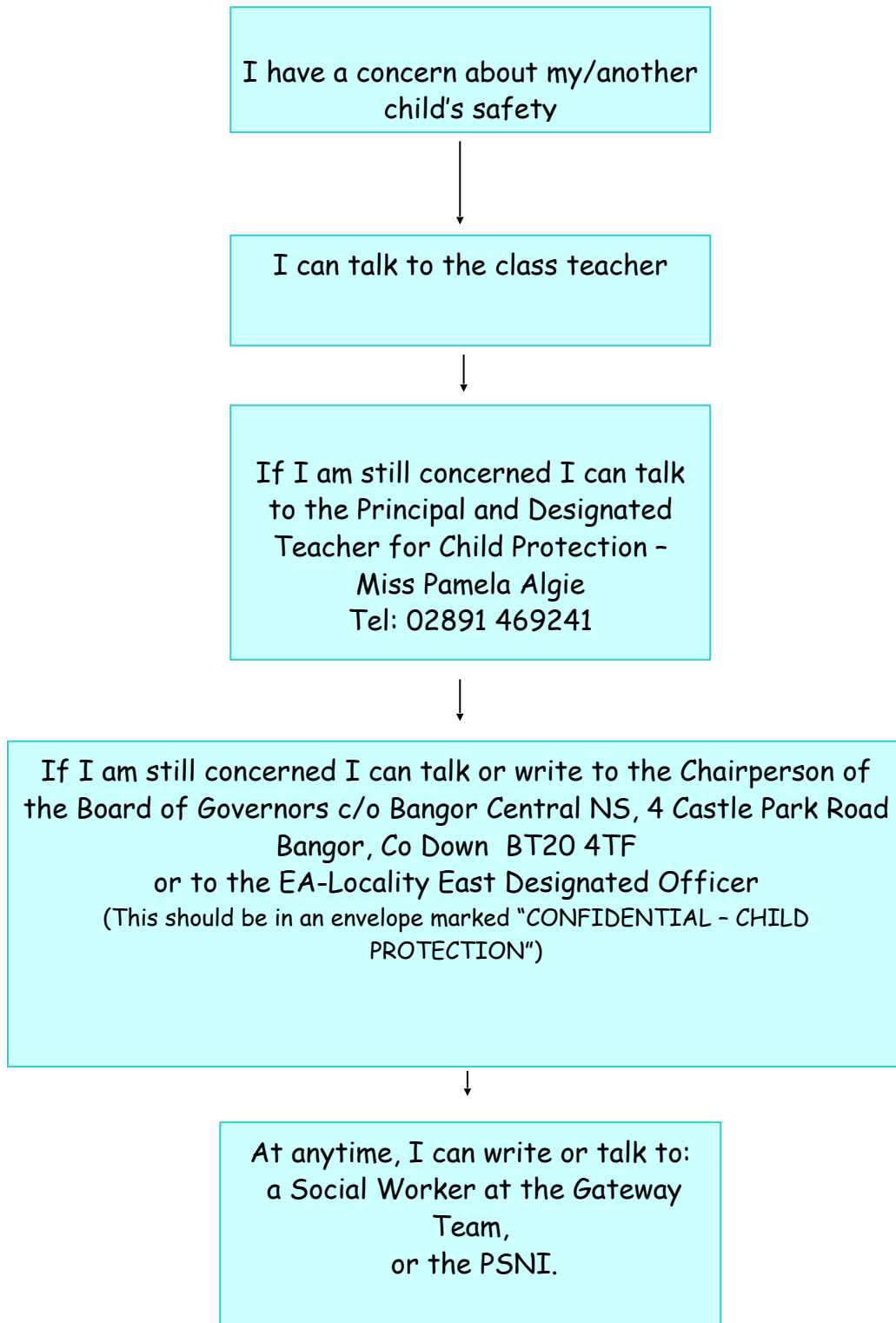
If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Chairperson of the Board of Governors must be informed immediately. The Chairperson will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse she should speak to the Designated Teacher, Miss Algie.

It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be informed.

## How Parents may make a complaint

Should a parent have concerns regarding the safety of their/another child they should follow the procedures set out below



## CHILD PROTECTION CONTACT NUMBERS/ AGENCIES

Name of Contact	Address	Telephone Number
BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL Designated Teacher Miss P Algie Deputy DT Miss B Hanna	4 Castle Park Road Bangor BT20 4TF	028 91469241
BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL Chair of Board of Governors - Mrs L Stevenson Designated Governor - Mr N Ferguson	c/o BANGOR INTEGRATED NURSERY SCHOOL as above	028 91469241
Education Authority - South Eastern Region (EA-SER) Designated Officer Child Protection Officers	Grahamsbridge Road Dundonald Belfast BT16 2HS	028 9056 6987  028 90566434 028 90566274
Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust (Social Services)	Duty Social Worker Mon - Fri 9 - 5 00pm Emergency Duty Social Worker (after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays)	028 91818518  028 90565444
Gateway Team	Out of hours	0300 1000 300 02895049999
PSNI Central Referral Unit (for child sexual and physical abuse allegations)  (part of the Public Protection Unit)	Antrim Road PSNI Station	02890650222
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline		24 hours Call Free 0808 800 5000
NSPCC	Jennymount Court North Derby Street Belfast BT15 3HN	028 90351135
Childline Northern Ireland Free confidential helpline for Children and Young People	Free post Bel 1111 Belfast BT1 2BR <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>	Freephone 0800 1111



## **Parental Permission**

Parental Permission will be sought at the beginning of the year for the following:

- to take photographs of pupils for assessment purposes, to use in displays in school, for use on Seesaw to share with parents, and if required in local press to celebrate achievements.
- to go on Educational trips/visits outside of school
- to take children out on short walks in the local area throughout the year.
- to reapply sun cream to children in hot weather after it has been initially applied by the parent prior to coming to school.
- to allow Nursery Staff to clean and undress children if necessary e.g. when they have a toileting accident, are hurt or unwell.

In regards to the above please note:

- The use of personal digital recording media e.g. cameras/mobile phones by **parents or staff** is **prohibited** on school premises or on outings/educational visits.
- Any Parent helping on a visit and looking after a child other than their own will be fully vetted through the EA-Locality East vetting procedures (ACCESS NI).

## **Responsibilities**

The school's Principal, Miss P C Algie has direct responsibility for maintaining this policy and providing advice and guidance on its implementation. All staff and governors are responsible for policy implementation and for ensuring that staff they manage also adhere to the standards.

## **Implementation**

This policy will be made available to all pupils, parents, guardians, staff (whether permanent or temporary) and governors.

## **Review**

The school's Principal will review this policy every year and any changes necessary as a result of this review will be implemented without delay.

This Policy was adopted on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Chair of Governors)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

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