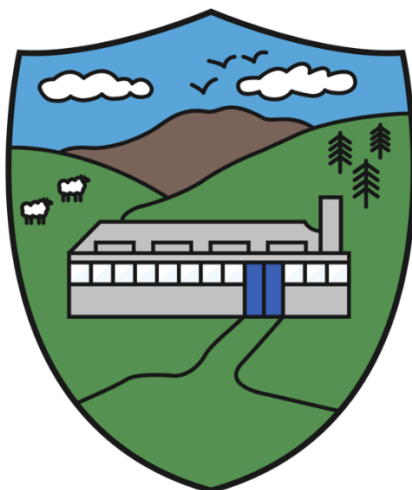


# St. Paul's Primary School Cabra

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Academic Year 2024-2025



Ratified by Board of Governors:  
Next Review Date: Term 1 2025

Signed by:

Principal: Niall Geoghegan

Chair of Board of Governors: Peter McPolin

## **1. Child Protection Ethos**

We in St. Paul's PS have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

## **2. Principles**

The general principles which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance 'Safeguarding and Child Protection – A Guide for Schools' (DENI Circular 2017/04, updated 02/09/19) and the 'Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland' (August 2017).

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

- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps, to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount, this overrides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interest must always come first.

## **3. Other Relevant Policies**

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

- Attendance Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Intimate Care
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- E-Safety

These policies are available to parents and any parent requiring a copy should contact the School Principal or visit the school website at <https://stpaulspscabra.org.uk/>

#### **4. School Safeguarding Team**

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team:

- Designated Teacher- Mrs Janice Truesdale
- Deputy Designated Teacher- Mr Niall Geoghegan
- Principal – Mr Niall Geoghegan
- Designated Governor for Child Protection- Mrs Geraldine McPolin
- Chair of the Board of Governors- Mr Peter McPolin

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **5.1 The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher**

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher must:

- Promote a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.
- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role.
- Organise training for all staff (induction and whole school training).
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents.
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents.
- Maintain a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs.
- Make referrals to Social Services Gateway team or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate.
- Liaise with the Education Authority's {EA} Designated Officers for Child Protection.
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns.
- Keep the School Principal informed.
- Provide written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

##### **5.2 The Principal**

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI 2017/04 guidance is implemented within the school.
- He attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- A Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed.
- All staff receive child protection training.
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner.
- He takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed.
- Child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates & annual report are provided.

- The school's Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this Policy at least once every 2 years.
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.

### **5.3 The Designated Governor for Child Protection**

The Designated Governor should avail of child protection awareness training delivered by CPSSS and will take the lead in child protection issues in order to advise the Governors on:

- The role of the Designated Teachers.
- The content of child protection policies.
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school.
- The content of the termly updates and full annual Designated Teacher Report.
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff.

### **5.4 The Chair of the Board of Governors**

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- Ensure that he has received appropriate Education Authority training.
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment.
- Ensure that the school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy.
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment and selection training, provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools {CPSSS} and the Governor Support and Human Resource departments.
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- Assume lead responsibility for managing a safeguarding or child protection complaint/allegation against the School Principal.
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity.
- Ensure that child protection records are kept and sign and date annually (signed at every BoG meeting) the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members, even if there have been no entries.

### **5.5 Other Members of School Staff**

Staff in school see children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse.

They should remember the 5 Rs: *Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer*

**The member of staff must:**

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal.
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child.
- Act promptly.
- Make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (**Appendix 1**).

- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children.
- **Not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures.
- **Not** investigate.
- **Not** ask leading questions.

**In addition, the Class Teacher should:**

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

We will take seriously any concerns which are raised about a pupil in our school who has self-harmed and/or has expressed suicidal thoughts.

The Designated/Deputy Designated teacher will immediately follow the school's child protection procedures.

## **5.6 Parents**

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- Informing the school if their child has a medical condition or educational need.
- Informing the school if there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- 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 situation.
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school.
- Letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home.
- Informing the school if there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- Familiarising themselves with the School's Positive Behaviour, Anti Bullying, E-Safety and Child Protection Policies.
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school.
- Raising concerns, they have in relation to their child with the school.

## **5.7 The Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors must ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities in keeping with current legislation and DE guidance including:

- Having a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually and ensuring parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- Having a staff code of conduct for all adults working in the school.

- Attendance at relevant training by governors and that up-to-date training records are maintained.
- The vetting of all staff and volunteers through ensuring that there is an official record kept of when vetting checks are successfully completed for all staff.

## **6. What Is Child Abuse?**

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017).

[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)

### **6.1 Definition of 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.

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.

There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards a child.

### **6.2 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

### 6.3 Specific Types of Abuse

**Grooming** of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case.

Grooming is often associated with CSE but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

**Child Sexual Exploitation** is a form of 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 include physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

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

**Sexual Violence and Abuse** 'Any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).'

\* Definitions above taken from 'The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland: A Seven Year Strategy'(2016).

Symptoms which young people may display and which are indicators only include:

- Nervousness
- Low self-worth
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Nightmares / flashbacks
- Physiological – stress / nerves
- Stomach pain
- Bed wetting
- Immature / needy behaviour
- Temper tantrums
- Aggression
- Internalising distress or withdrawal
- Truancy
- Alcohol and drugs
- Bullying

These symptoms can lead to a child/ young person being misdiagnosed as having an illness, learning difficulties, or being naughty or disruptive.

If it comes to the attention of school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a child/young person this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information to Social Services

**Children who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour** It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours- these can be defined as 'healthy', 'problematic' or 'sexually harmful'.

Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention; however, consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting.

Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education.

Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the EA CPSS should be sought.

The CPSS will advise if additional advice from PSNI or Social Services is required.

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when:

- There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim.



Harmful sexualised behaviour can include:

- Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

**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.

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

(1) Sexting between individuals in a relationship:

Pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share 'indecent images' of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship).

(2) Sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress.

**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.**

#### 6.4 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

##### Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing – grip marks on arms</li> <li>• slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions</li> <li>• untreated injuries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-destructive tendencies</li> <li>• aggressive 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; chronic runaway</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uncomfortable with physical contact</li> <li>come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home</li> <li>clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in artwork or stories</li> </ul>
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### **Emotional Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>well below average in height and weight; “failing to thrive”</li> <li>poor hair and skin; alopecia</li> <li>swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet</li> <li>recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders</li> <li>signs of self-mutilation</li> <li>signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness)</li> <li>extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apathy and dejection</li> <li>inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations</li> <li>rocking/head banging</li> <li>inability to play</li> <li>indifference to separation from family</li> <li>indiscriminate attachment</li> <li>reluctance for parental liaison</li> <li>fear of new situation</li> <li>chronic runaway</li> <li>attention seeking/needing behaviour</li> <li>poor peer relationships</li> </ul>

### **Neglect**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>looks very thin, poorly and sad</li> <li>constant hunger; lack of energy</li> <li>untreated medical problems</li> <li>special needs of child not being met</li> <li>constant tiredness; inappropriate dress</li> <li>poor hygiene</li> <li>repeatedly unwashed; 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; compulsive eating</li> <li>begging from class friends</li> <li>withdrawn; lacks concentration</li> <li>misses school medicals</li> <li>reports that no carer is at home</li> <li>low self-esteem</li> <li>persistent non-attendance at school</li> <li>exposure to violence including unsuitable videos</li> </ul>

### **Sexual Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<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 abdominal pains or headaches</li> <li>difficulty in walking or sitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>what the child tells you</li> <li>withdrawn; chronic depression</li> <li>excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness</li> <li>children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal</li> <li>over concerned for siblings</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frequent urinary infections</li> <li>• avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers</li> <li>• unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poor self-esteem; self-devaluation</li> <li>• lack of confidence; peer problems</li> <li>• lack of involvement</li> <li>• massive weight change</li> <li>• suicide attempts (especially adolescents); hysterical/angry outbursts</li> <li>• lack of emotional control</li> <li>• sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour</li> <li>• inappropriate sex play</li> <li>• repeated attempts to run away from home; unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories</li> <li>• vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity</li> <li>• exposure to pornographic material</li> </ul>
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The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.

<b>Do:</b>	<b>Do not:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to what the child says</li> <li>• Assure the child they are not at fault</li> <li>• Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret</li> <li>• Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words</li> <li>• Remember not to promise the child confidentiality</li> <li>• Stay calm</li> <li>• Listen</li> <li>• Accept</li> <li>• Reassure</li> <li>• Explain what you are going to do</li> <li>• Record accurately</li> <li>• Seek support for yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask leading questions</li> <li>• Put words into the child's mouth</li> <li>• Ignore the child's behaviour</li> <li>• Remove any clothing</li> <li>• Panic</li> <li>• Promise to keep secrets</li> <li>• Ask leading questions</li> <li>• Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</li> <li>• Delay</li> <li>• Start to investigate</li> <li>• <b>Do Nothing</b></li> </ul>

## **7. Procedures for Making Complaints in Relation to Child Abuse**

### **7.1 How a Parent can Make a Complaint**

We in St. Paul's Primary School 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 or any member of the school's safeguarding team: the Principal (Mr Geoghegan), the Designated Teacher (Mrs Janice Truesdale) or Deputy Designated Teacher (Mr Geoghegan) for Child Protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors (Mr Peter McPolin). If a parent is not satisfied after taking a complaint to the Board of Governors, they can contact the Public Service Ombudsman. At any time, a parent may talk to a Social Worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Central Referral Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 2**.

## **7.2 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**

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child, they should not investigate as this is the responsibility of Social Services and/or PSNI. Staff should report these concerns immediately to the Designated/Deputy Teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher (**Appendix 1**). The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether in the best interest 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 parent will be informed immediately.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher may consult with members of the school's safeguarding team, the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Education Authority's Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. 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 prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. She will also notify the EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team with a copy sent to the EA Designated Officer for Child Protection and a copy will be kept in the school's child protection file.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 3**.

## **7.3 Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher if the Principal is not available) **must be informed immediately**. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal/Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher)

If a complaint is made against the Principal the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils or may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the appropriate authorities. The Chair of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Child protection procedures as outlined in **Appendix 4** will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

### **8. Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings**

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust. They will provide a written report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis. Children whose names are on the Child Protection register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the child protection plan.

### **9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected, schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

Should a child transfer to another school whilst there are current child protection concerns we will share these concerns with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

### **10. Record Keeping**

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked drawer. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by members of the safeguarding team.

### **11. Vetting Procedures**

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in the School are vetted / supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

### **12. Code of Conduct for all Staff Paid or Unpaid**

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.

The school's code of conduct is available on request.

### **13. Staff Training**

St. Paul's PS is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on Policy and procedures, with some members of staff receiving more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic child protection awareness training and annual refresher training. The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will also attend relevant child protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

When new staff or volunteers start at the school, they are briefed on the school's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of these policies. They also sign and date the 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in St. Paul's Primary School proforma,' shown in **Appendix 5**. These proformas are returned to the Designated Teacher Mrs Janice Truesdale and kept confidently in the Child Protection File.

### **14. The Preventative Curriculum**

- Throughout the school year Safeguarding and Child Protection issues are addressed through whole school assemblies, led by our Safeguarding staff members and pupil Pastoral Care Team/Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- There is a permanent child protection notice board at the Reception area and both Key Stage Resource Areas.
- The Safeguarding Team poster with photographs are displayed throughout the school. These members are referred to regularly throughout the school year, during whole school/key stage assemblies.
- NSPCC/Childline numbers are also displayed in various areas throughout the school.
- A number of flow diagrams of how a parent may make a complaint are also on display at the Reception Area.
- Copy of Staff Code of Conduct and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, displayed on staff room notice board.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- Weekly class PDMU lessons/activities/Circle Time
- Whole school participation in yearly Anti-Bullying Week initiatives (November) and Safer Internet Day (February).
- RE Programme- Grow in Love /Wonder of My Being Term 3
- Safe Guarding training for all staff on biannual basis presented by Designated Teacher
- Fire Safety Programme P5

**15. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Safeguarding Team in St. Paul’s PS will update this Policy and Procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually.

The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Date Policy Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Designated Teacher)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of Board of Governors)





Appendix 1

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**Child Protection Note of Concern**

<b>Name of Pupil:</b>	
<b>DOB:</b>	
<b>Class:</b>	
<b>Date/time of incident/disclosure:</b>	
<b>Circumstances of incident/ disclosure (record place):</b>	
<b>Nature and description of concern:</b>	
<b>Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom: (record actual words used by pupil)</b>	
<b>Action taken at the time:</b>	

<b>Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:</b>	
<b>Any further action taken:</b>	
<b>Written report passed to Designated Teacher: (If 'No' state reason)</b>	<b>Yes:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Date and time of report passed onto the Designated Teacher:</b>	
<b>Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file: (If 'No' state reason)</b>	<b>Yes:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Any further actions taken by DT:</b>	

**Name of staff member making a report:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of staff member:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

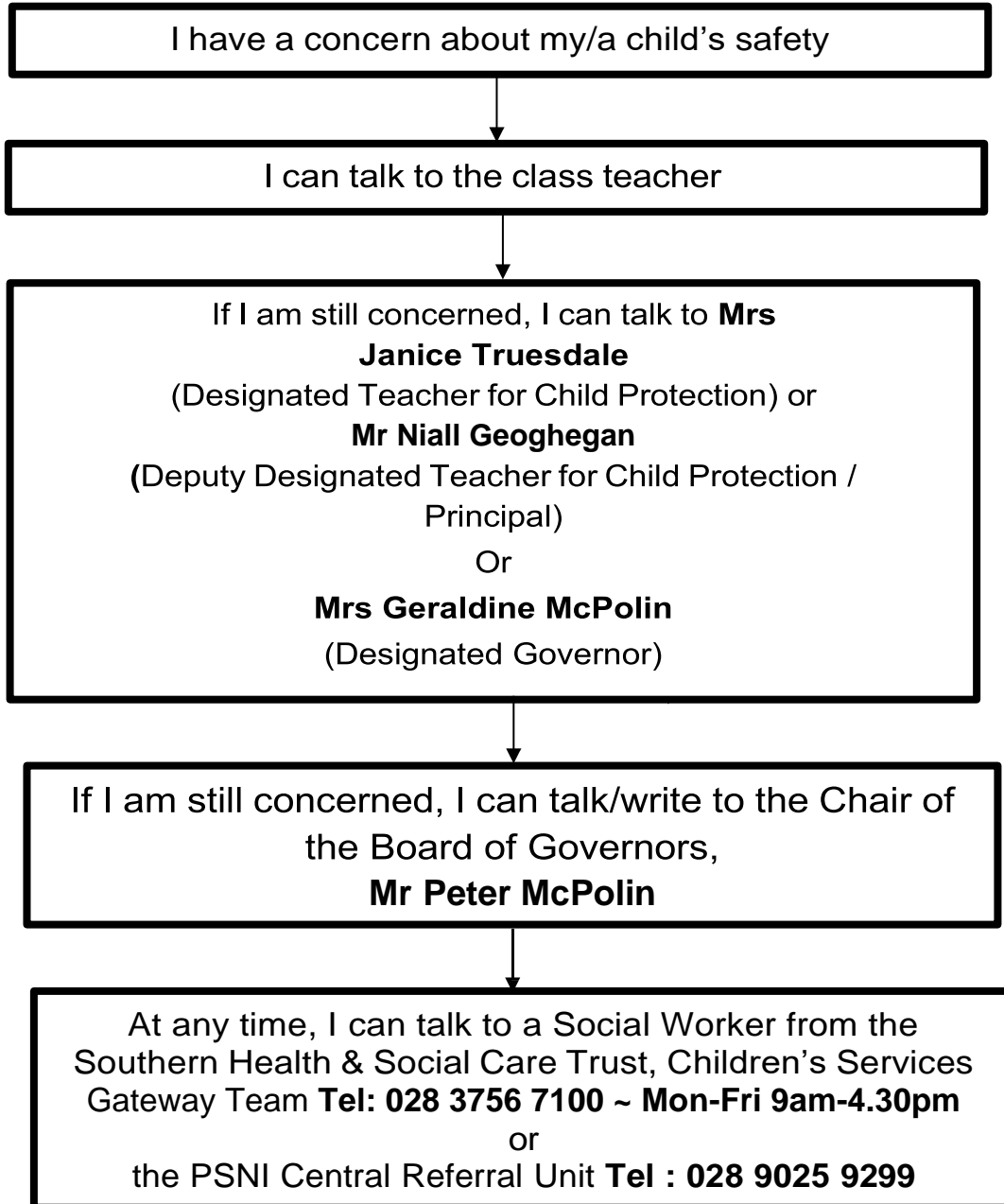
**Signature of Designated Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 2

**Child Protection Procedures**

**How a parent can raise a concern**

If any parent has any concerns about their child or another child's welfare, the following procedures may be followed.



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

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

**Appendix 3**

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

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

Staff member discusses concerns with Mrs Janice Truesdale (Designated Teacher) or Mr Niall Geoghegan (Deputy Designated Teacher) in her absence and provides Note of Concern.

Designated Teacher should consult with Mr Niall Geoghegan (School Principal) or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required, advice should be sought from a CPSS officer.

**CONTACT NUMBERS:**

Child Protection Support Service:  
**028 9598 5590**  
**Mon-Fri 9am-4.30pm**

Duty Social Worker Gateway Team Southern Health & Social Care Trust:  
**028 3756 7100**

PSNI Central Referral Unit (CRU)- Public Protection Unit:  
**028 9025 9299**

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

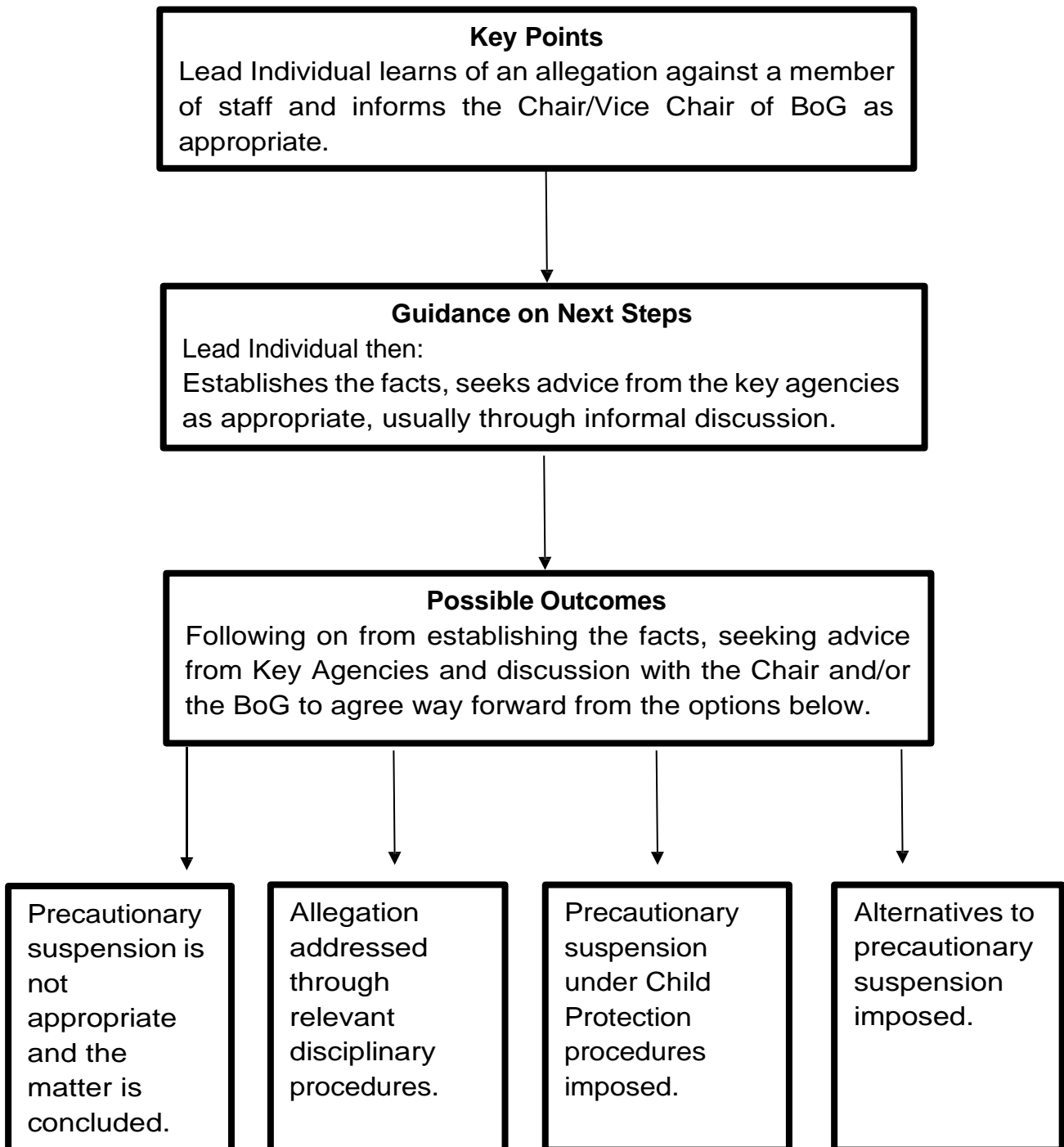
Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.

**Child Protection referral is not required**  
School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

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

Appendix 4

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff



**Appendix 5**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection in St. Paul's Primary School proforma signed by all new staff and volunteers**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection in St. Paul's Primary School**



I have read and am aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures in St. Paul's Primary School.

I am aware that the Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Janice Truesdale and the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mr Niall Geoghegan (Principal) and Mrs Geraldine McPolin (Child Protection and Safeguarding Board of Governor Representative) are also members of the Safeguarding Team. I know how to raise a concern.

I have read and am aware of the agreed Code of Conduct Policy in St. Paul's Primary School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

