

St Nicholas' Primary School

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



1. Child Protection Ethos

Pastoral Care

We in St Nicholas' Primary School place a great deal of importance in Pastoral Care and see it as having a central role in everything we do. We see our children as individuals who can grow and develop in a stimulating environment where they are given the opportunities to develop their abilities and talents. The Staff strive to promote a sense of self-respect, self-worth and positive self-esteem within each child.

As a Catholic School we strive to develop in each child a strong sense of the beliefs, morals, values and attitudes of the Catholic faith. We believe in a "Living Catholic Ethos" where children see from the example of others around them how to work and co-operate with others in a spirit of caring and kindness. This is further developed through the Sacraments, pupils' participation in the Church services and regular visits by our parish priest.

We see our school in partnership with the Church, parents and the wider community. It is important for us that parents feel involved and are informed about their child's school life.

Children's' learning is more effective when there is active parental involvement. This is encouraged through information sessions and workshops in curriculum areas such as Literacy and ICT. Parents attend a teacher/parent progress meeting about their child twice a year where they are given a report and a chance to discuss it. They are made aware that they can make an appointment to talk over any concerns about their child at any time.

Our children have a sense of belonging to a community with an understanding of what is meant by a responsibility to it. We hope to instil in our pupils a grasp of the way in which members of families, adults and pupils in schools and people in the local community depend on each other and how the community functions at a local level. An awareness of the outside world is developed through pupil involvement with outside agencies ranging from those who work in charities, sports, the arts and the environment. This will be done both inside and outside school.

As a staff we feel it is important that our work fosters self-respect, respect for others and the improvement of relationships between people of different cultural traditions. We aim through this work to develop in children confidence in their own worth, enabling them to accept success and failure and to evaluate their strengths and help them to develop the ability to take responsibility for themselves. In learning to build and manage relationships with others our pupils should become aware of the importance of qualities such as patience, respect, gratitude and tolerance.

Our curriculum provision is broad and balanced with staff employing a range of teaching strategies so that effective learning can take place. A differentiated approach in planning and teaching is vital so that pupils with specific requirements are given the chance to reach their full potential. All children need to feel valued and to encourage positive self-esteem we give children opportunities to become involved in a variety of learning experiences both during school and after school hours. Through our teaching methods, classroom management and positive attitude to building relationships we believe we can help pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals. We aim to build on

their strengths and limitations, personal qualities, interests, abilities, skills, potential values, motivation and needs.

We in St Nicholas' 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 "Pastoral Care in Schools- Child Protection"(DENI Circular 99/10) and the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures(2005).

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

- It is a child's right to always feel safe, 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:

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Special Educational Needs
- Educational Visits
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- E Safety
- Intimate Care

These policies are available to parents and any parent requiring a copy should contact the School Principal or visit the school website at www.stnicholasprimaryschool.org.uk

4. School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher [Mrs Byrne](#)
- Deputy Designated Teacher [Mrs Moloney](#)
- Principal [Miss Doherty](#)
- Designated Governor for Child Protection [Mrs Cowan](#)
- Chair of the Board of Governors [Mrs Louise Mayne](#)

5. Roles And Responsibilities

5.1 The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher

The designated teacher and deputy designated teacher must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role.
- Organise training for all staff (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.
- 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 1999 / 10 guidance is implemented within the school.
- She 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.
- 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 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 Teachers 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/ she 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 & 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 any 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

5.5 Other Members of School Staff

Staff in school see children over prolonged 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 view of this please refer to the following guidelines: -

1. **Don't panic!**
2. **Listen**
3. **Believe** and let them know you believe (it has been proved that only a small percentage of children lie about these matters).
4. **Do not interrogate or question.**
5. **Affirm** – whatever feelings the child has.
6. Refer to any information however trivial it may seem to:
(i) **Mrs C Byrne** (ii) **Mrs L Moloney**
7. Make a written note of anything said.
8. Any such information is **confidential** between you, the child, and the teacher to whom it is referred, who will then pass it on to the necessary departments.
9. Five things to **say** to a young person in such a situation: -
 - a. I believe you – (this is important)
 - b. I am glad you came to me.
 - c. I am sorry this has happened to you.
 - d. It is not (and never was) your fault.
 - e. We are going to do something to get help.

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:

- 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;
- familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet 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
- 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

6. What Is Child Abuse?

6.1 Definition of Abuse

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or more rarely, by a stranger. 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.

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from 'Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016'.

6.2 Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of 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-by a child's peers.

Neglect is the persistent 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 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.

6.3 Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

6.4 Domestic Violence and Abuse

It is now recognised that children who live in an atmosphere of domestic violence may be at risk. Domestic violence is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
- Virtual

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
illness, learning

If it comes to the
child/young person
has an obligation

diagnosed as having an

is or may be a factor for a
Deputy Designated Teacher who

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.

6.5 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

Physical Abuse

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
Unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing – grip marks on arms; slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns;	Self-destructive tendencies; aggressive to other children; behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive);

<p>especially cigarette burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</p>	<p>appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults; improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway; uncomfortable with physical contact; come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories</p>
---	---

Emotional Abuse

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

Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Looks very thin, poorly and sad; constant hunger; lack of energy; untreated medical problems; special needs of child not being met; constant tiredness; inappropriate dress; poor hygiene; repeatedly unwashed; smelly; repeated accidents, especially burns.</p>	<p>Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); steals food; compulsive eating; begging from class friends; withdrawn; lacks concentration; misses school medicals; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at school; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.</p>

6.4 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen, or thighs; bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas; torn, stained or bloody underclothes; chronic ailments such as recurrent 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.</p>	<p>What the child tells you; withdrawn; chronic depression; excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness; children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of 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 artwork or stories; vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity; exposure to pornographic material.</p>

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

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

7. Procedures for making complaints in relation to child abuse

7.1 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 or any member of the school's safeguarding team: the Principal, the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection. 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 **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. 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. He/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 will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 4**

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 is 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. Staff should not use diaries as a means of recording child protection issues. St Nicholas' will follow the guidance issued in Department Circular number: 2016/20 available for download at www.education-ni.gov.uk

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 Nicholas' 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.

14. The Preventative Curriculum

Children's right to self-protection.

St Nicholas' Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. We make use of agencies and professionals such as **NSPCC, PSNI and CEOPs** to educate our children about how to protect themselves. We strive to ensure that through the teaching of our **Religious Programme 'Grow in Love', our PDMU and RSE programmes and using 'Circle Time'** that all children in our school know that they have the right: -

To be safe: We will teach children that everyone has rights, such as the right to breathe, which should not be taken away. Tell children that no one should take away their right to be safe.

To protect their own bodies: Children need to know that their body belongs to them, particularly the private parts covered by their swimsuits.

To say NO: Tell children it's all right to say no to anyone if that person tries to do something to them that they feel is wrong. Most children are taught to listen to and obey adults and older people without question.

To get help against bullies: Bullies usually pick on younger children. Tell children to enlist the help of friends or say no without fighting – and to tell another adult. Bullies are cowards and firm; loud 'no' from a group of children with the threat of adult intervention often puts them off.

In cases of real physical danger, children often have no choice but to surrender to the bully's demands. Sometimes children will fight and get hurt to protect a possession because of the fear of what will happen if they arrive home without it. 'My mum will kill me for letting the bullies take my bike, it cost a lot of money'. Tell children that keeping themselves safe is the most important consideration.

To tell: You must assure children that no matter what happens you will not be angry with them and that you want them to tell you of any incident that frightens them or confused them or makes them unhappy.

To be believed: When children are told to go to an adult for help, they need to know they will be believed and supported. This is especially true in the case of sexual abuse, which children rarely lie about. If the child is not believed when he or she tells, the adults may continue for years and result in suffering and guilt for the child.

Not to keep secrets: Teach children that some secrets should not be kept, no matter if they promised not to tell. Child molesters known to the child often say that a kiss or touch is 'our secret'. This confuses the child who has been taught always to keep secrets.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there is child protection information in the main corridor which provides advice and displays child helpline numbers. Photographs of Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are displayed in each classroom. A flow diagram of how a parent may make a complaint is also on display in the school entrance and an enlarged flow diagram for a teacher allegation is in the staff room.

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:	101 ext 30299
24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline	08088021414
NSPCC Adult Helpline 18 or under email – help@nspcc.org.uk	0808 800 5000 text 88858 08001111
Gateway Social Services	0300 1234 333

15. Physical Restraint and Safe Handling

Staff guidelines on Physical Restraint by staff are set out in a separate Policy, in accordance with guidelines from EDUCATION AUTHORITY OF N. IRELAND. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that always it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to the child, to another person or to school property.

16. E-safety

Our ICT Policy is set out in a separate document. It includes acceptable use of the Internet and is informed by DE guidance (DE Circular 2011/22 and 2013/25). 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.

Young people use e-technologies extensively from an early age. While it is clear that technology offers children unprecedented opportunities to learn, communicate, create, discover and be entertained in a virtual environment, there are some inherent risks. Whilst most children and young people's confidence and competence in using technologies is high, their knowledge and understanding of the risks associated with its use may be low.

Children and young people need to be facilitated and encouraged to develop safe and responsible online behaviours as this provides the best defence for keeping them safe online. They should be provided with education and guidance in developing their own set of responsible behaviours. Schools and colleges must incorporate online safety into their e-technology curriculum and support children and young people in the safe use of all forms of e-technology. Parents and carers and those who provide services to/for children and young people should make themselves aware of:

- the diverse ways children and young people interact with technology and get online;
- what children and young people are doing online i.e. creating content as well as consuming it;
- the importance of developing good risk awareness by children and young people, parents and carers;
- the potential for online bullying and the indicators that a child or young person may be being bullied online;
- practical tips for e-safety in the home e.g. using filters and favourites, creating appropriate user profiles;
- consider activities to raise awareness amongst young people about the safe use of e-technology.

17 A Code of Conduct for all Employees within the Education Sector whose work brings them into contact with children/young people

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 young children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. It is the responsibility of the staff and volunteers to

implement the Anti Bullying Policy. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within the education sector. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

Code of Conduct for Staff

1. Private meetings with pupils

- a. Staff should be aware of the dangers, which may arise from private meetings with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- b. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- c. Where possible another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview, and the school should take active measures to facilitate this.

2. Physical contact with pupils

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.
- b. It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- c. Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, other or property from harm. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (Power of Member of Staff to Restrain Pupils).
- d. Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint.
- e. Staff who have to administer first-aid should ensure wherever possible that it is done in the presence of other children or another adult. **However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.** All incidents should be recorded in the Accident Book and an Accident Report Form filled in. A copy of this is sent to the NEELB and one retained by the school.

- f. Any physical contact, which would be likely to be misinterpreted, by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- g. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Designated Teacher.
- h. If a child has to have clothing changed, this should be done in the presence of two adults.
- i. Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be near pupils in circumstances quite different from the normal school/work environment.

3. Choice and use of teaching materials

- a. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, including the Internet, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.
- b. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal before using it.

4. Relationships and Attitudes

Within the Pastoral Care Policies within the school and the employing authority, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour, and language all require care and thought.

Guidelines for Self-Protection

In the event of injury to a child, ensure that it is recorded and witnessed by another adult.

Keep records of any false allegations a child makes against you or other staff including – “you’re always picking on me”, “you hit me”, or comments such as “don’t touch me”.

If a child touches you or talks to you in a sexually inappropriate way or place, record and report what happened to the DT. It may be totally innocent but remember that ignoring this or allowing it to go on may place you in an untenable situation. Neither is it a good idea for the child to go on doing this as the next person might take advantage and then say the child instigated it.

If you take children on journeys, always have two along. If it is an overnight trip, always check the room in pairs.

Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from other people. If it is a one-to-one, make sure the door is open. Tell another member of staff if you are going to see a child on your own.

If you are on a holiday or residential setting never, under any circumstances, take a child or children into your room.

Do give firm guidelines on sexually inappropriate behaviour to the child. Explain that the behaviour is unacceptable and could get the child into difficulty, but do not make the child feel guilty. The behaviour may be an imitation of the abuse the child has suffered and is not the child's fault.

Never do something of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves. This includes cleaning bottoms etc, or any other activity that could be misconstrued.

Do not go into the toilet alone with children if possible.

Be mindful of how and where you touch children. Never pat a child on the bottom. If you work with young children or children with special needs who sit on your lap, get a 'lap cushion' which they can sit on. Be careful of extended hugs, kisses on the mouth should never take place.

When taking children on an outing, think how you appear to the public – they may misunderstand your actions. It may mean that disruptive children cannot go on outings.

All members of staff should carry identification when on journeys with children.

Physical restraint should always be in accordance with the school's 'Reasonable Force and safe Handling Policy.'

Use of Social Media

- School staff will not invite, accept, or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at St Nicholas'
- Communication received from any personal social media sites must be reported to the DT or Principal
- All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account.
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to contact members of the school community on school business except on circumstances given prior approval by the principal.
- Staff are advised to avoid posts or comments that refer to specific, individual matters related to the school and members of its community on any social media accounts.
- Staff should not accept any pupil as a friend, follower, or subscriber on any social media account.
- St Nicholas' operates its own twitter, Facebook, and website accounts. All uploaded content should always reflect well on the school.

18. Monitoring And Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in St Nicholas' 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)

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

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:
If 'No' state reason:

Yes: No:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file
If 'No' state reason:

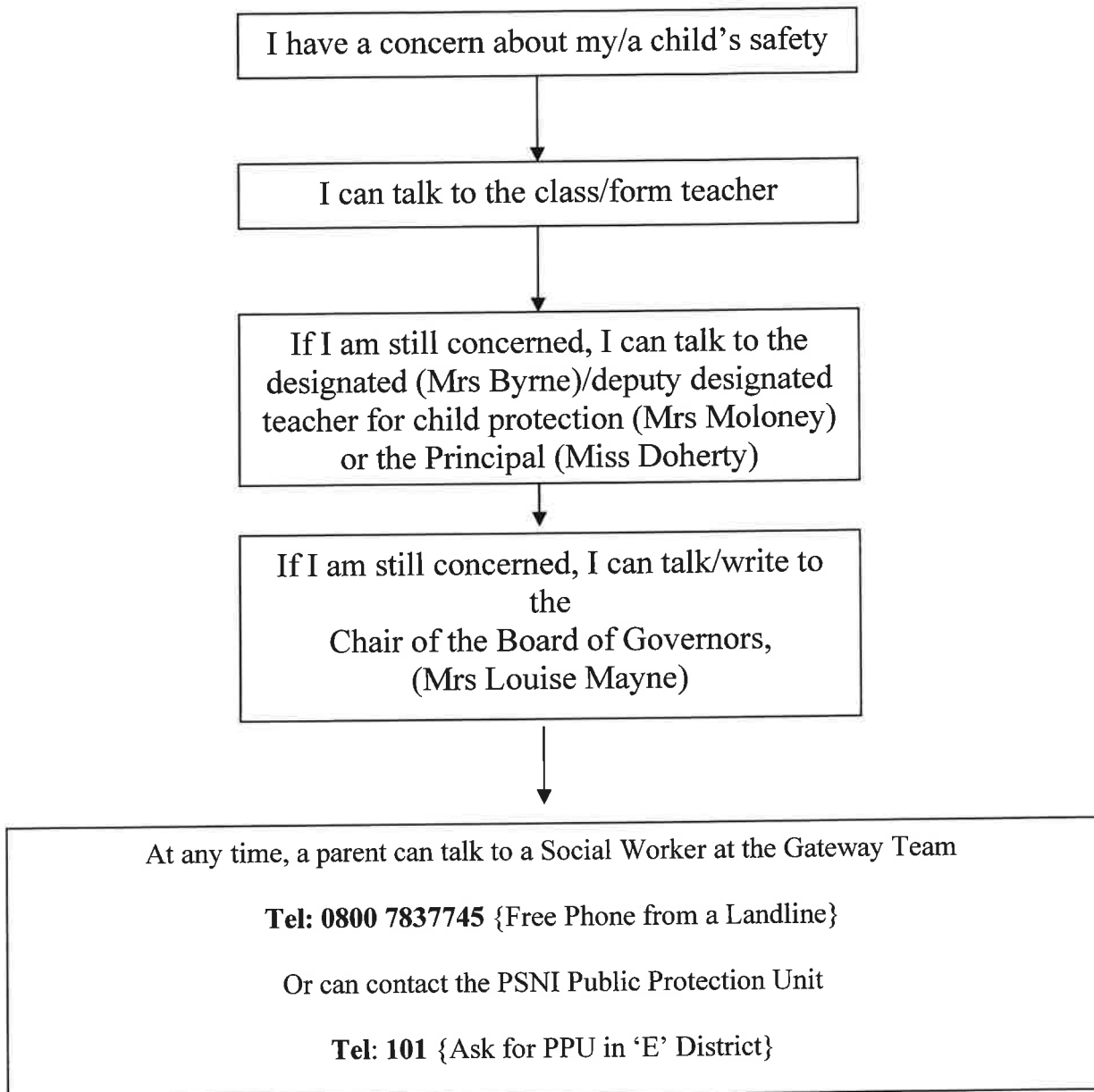
Name of staff member making the report: _____

Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

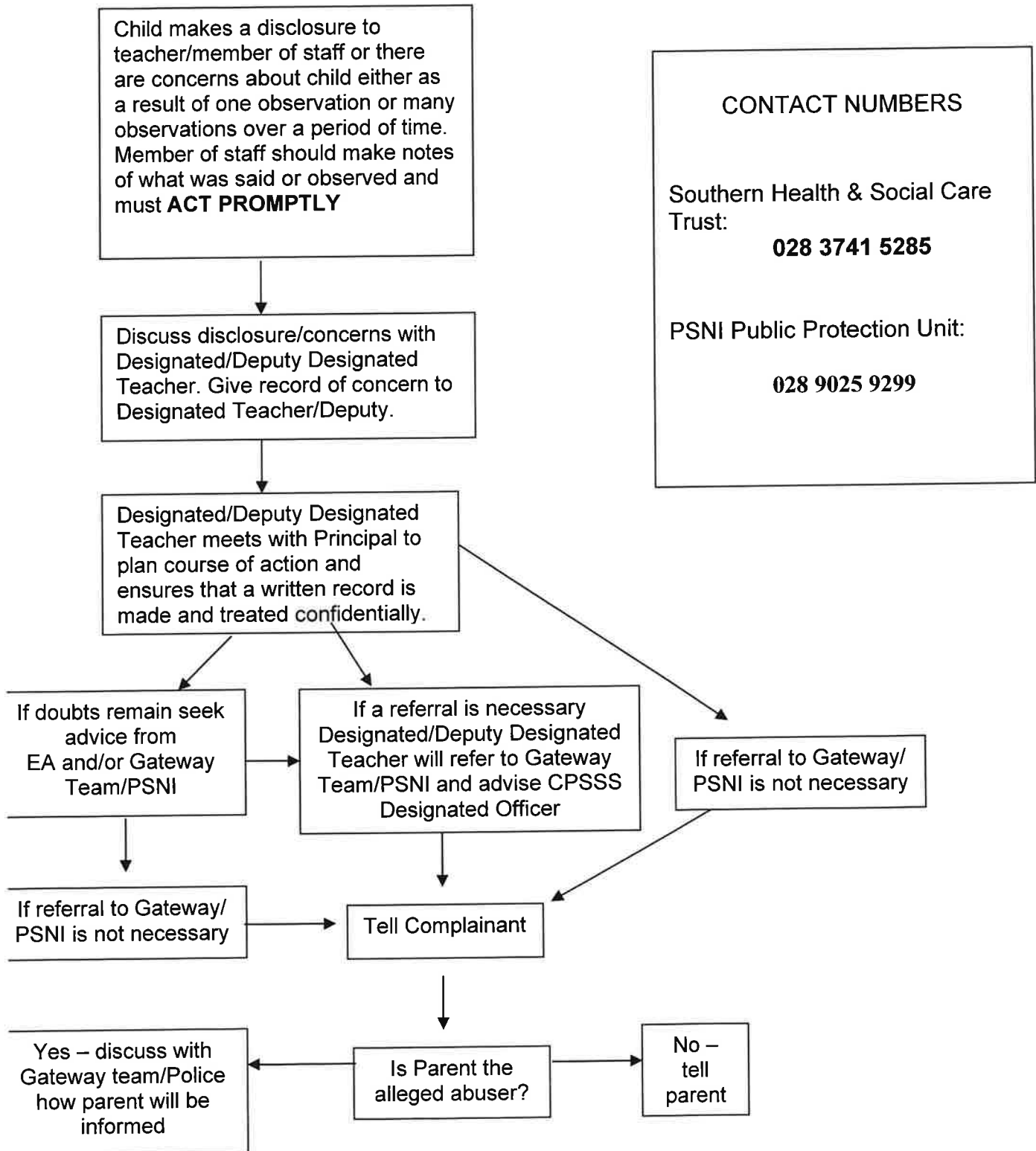
Appendix 2

How a Parent can make a Complaint



Appendix 3

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



Appendix 4

Dealing With Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

Key Points

Lead Individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG, as appropriate.

Guidance on next steps

Lead Individual then:
Establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.

Possible Outcomes

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or the BoG to agree way forward from the options below.

Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded

Allegation addressed through relevant Disciplinary Procedures

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection Procedures imposed

Alternatives to Precautionary Suspension imposed

Safeguarding Our School Community,

Part of the charm and unique atmosphere of St. Nicholas' Primary is the fact that we are a small and family-oriented school. As a staff we endeavour to get to know every child and their family members and to create a climate in which all are welcome and feel that they can get involved.

However, unfortunately in today's society it is necessary to be extra mindful of the increased potential risks to children that an 'open door' policy can create.

I would ask for your support in the following matter, not just to protect your own and others' children but also to protect yourselves as adults.

Entry to the morning club is via the external assembly hall doors only, where your child will be met by a member of school staff.

Parents should not escort children through the school.

In the mornings, cloakroom doors will remain locked until 8.45am except for wet days, when teachers will supervise children in class from 8.30am. Doors will be locked again at 8.55am. Pupils are asked to be punctual to morning assembly in the KS2 playground at 8.45am, those arriving after 8.55am should enter via the main entrance.

We would ask that parents do not enter the school via cloakroom doors but only use the main entrance.

All parent/carers and visitors are asked to sign in at reception, where you will be given a visitor's ID badge, this can be returned as you sign out again on exiting the building.

This badge will clearly identify and protect you by recording your visit and purpose.

I appreciate that often parents may need a quick word with teachers, but, where possible, if it's only to inform us that collection arrangements have changed or lunch boxes have been forgotten etc, please inform the school office instead as it's the secretarial staff that deal with these issues. If a quick chat is needed, please do so in the playground before or following morning prayer. All teachers can be contacted by telephoning the school office.

School staff should be clearly identifiable by our or **school branded workwear**, visitors are expected to have followed the security signing-in procedures and been issued with **visitor badges**.

Visitors not in compliance with these procedures will be challenged.

Please do not take offence as this is to safeguard all the children in our care.

Staff are well trained and have very specific child protection procedures and guidelines to adhere to. Parents and visitors however are very vulnerable and therefore in the interests of protecting everyone, **at no time** should an adult find themselves in the position of having access to or being alone with children on school premises.

This is not to say we want to lose touch with our parents but in the interests of **everyone's safety**, we must tighten-up our security procedures and follow the appropriate protocols.



Code of Conduct for Visitors

Visitors' Code of Conduct - St. Nicholas' Primary School

In St. Nicholas' P.S. we aim to provide a varied and stimulating range of experiences for our children which will:

- develop their abilities and talents
- promote self-esteem and self-respect
- develop a sense of community and co-operation
- develop qualities of patience, respect, gratitude and tolerance

For all these reasons we welcome visitors to our school and recognise the wealth of experiences they bring with them.

However, for the protection and safeguarding of our children, (and for the protection of our visitors themselves), it is important that all who come into our school, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, are aware of the **Code of Conduct** which exists for all members of staff.

Please read the following information.

If you have any queries or concerns over the content of this guidance material, please contact Mrs Claire Byrne, (Designated Teacher for Child Protection).

When entering the school, let the secretary know that you have arrived and which room you will be in, (and which children you will be with).

If an incident should occur while you are in the school eg.

- an injury to a child
- misbehaviour
- a child talking to you in an inappropriate way
- a child making an allegation (eg. "You pushed me" etc.)
- or any other incident that raises your concern

1. Another teacher / adult should be contacted as soon as possible. (Send another child for **Mrs Byrne** or go to the teacher in the nearest classroom).
2. Record the incident on paper and give it to **Mrs Byrne** (Designated Teacher for Child Protection), or **Mrs Moloney** (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection), before you leave the school.

Private meetings with pupils

Visitors should be aware of the dangers which may arise from meetings with individual pupils and, when possible, should avoid being with a pupil on their own. When this is not possible, (eg. Educational Psychologist conducting an assessment), the following guidelines should be followed:

- Another adult should know that the interview / lesson is taking place.
- When possible, the door, (eg. to the Learning resource /Playroom), should remain open.
- It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.

Physical contact with pupils.

As a general principle, visitors are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with the pupils.

- A distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. If a permanent, and therefore familiar, member of staff is available he / she should act. Otherwise, the visitor should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- If a visitor feels there is a need to touch a child to protect that child, others or property from harm, a permanent member of staff should be sent for immediately.
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint. (see above).
- Visitors (eg. coaches) who must administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult.
- Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.

Choice and use of teaching materials

Any material used by visitors should be appropriate to the subject area agreed with the school. Material should be avoided, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material the visitor should consult with the teacher or principal before using it.

Relationships and attitudes

Visitors should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

It is hard to lay down rules to cover every situation.

Please treat our children with patience and respect and expect these same qualities from them.

Thank you for coming to our school to contribute to the development of our children. We hope that, as you are enriching their lives, you too may gain some fulfilment from their growth, appreciation and gratitude.

Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for most employees, this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. If employees have any doubts about points in this booklet, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the principal or a representative of their professional association.

From time to time however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children / young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children / young people or of their parents / carers.

The work that goes on in our school is extremely important and valuable. We make a difference to these children by providing opportunities for them to learn and achieve in many, different ways. This is a special privilege, and we should enjoy it.