

**ST COLUMBA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL  
STRAW  
PARENTAL SUMMARY**



*This document is a brief summary leaflet of our school's  
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.  
A full copy of the Safeguarding Child Protection Policy can be  
found on the school website [www.stcolumbasstraw.com](http://www.stcolumbasstraw.com)*

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) states that the most important right for a child is the right to protection:-

*'Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them'* (Article 19).

*'When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what would be best for the child.'* (Article 3).

**DEFINITION OF A CHILD**

A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in 'The Children (NI) Order 1995'.

**4 Cs for  
Child Protection**

- Care
- Concern
- Communication
- Confidentiality

All staff have a Duty of Care to listen to/report any Concerns that they may have and to Communicate these to the appropriate personnel, keeping the facts Confidential.

**WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?**

The following definitions (from ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures 2005) state that - child abuse can take many forms –

**Neglect                      Physical                      Emotional**  
**Female Genital Mutilation      Forced Marriage**  
**Sexual                      Sexual exploitation                      Domestic Violence**

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse which may take place on a **single occasion or repeatedly over time**. All school staff are trained to observe outward symptoms which may be due to child abuse.

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

Also it must be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of abuse. It is always preferable to *prevent abuse* from starting or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage.

**BULLYING**

DENI defines bullying as "deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself". Bullying is not tolerated in our school.

All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully.

### PROCEDURES

Various circumstances that would invoke Child Protection procedures:

- A child makes a disclosure to a member of staff.
- A member of staff has concerns about a child either as a result of one observation or many observations over a period of time.
- A parent expresses concern about the safety of a child.

Other sources of concern e.g. Social Services etc.

All concerns should immediately be brought to the attention of the one of the following:

Mrs Patricia McAlister~ Designated Teacher

Mrs Donna McElhatton~ Deputy Designated Teacher

Mrs Fiona Kennedy Burns ~ Principal

1. The disclosure/concern is raised regarding abuse
2. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is informed
3. Advice may be sought from NEELB CP Officer /Social Services and a referral decision is made
4. If no referral is made, parents are informed of the school's concern and school will continue to monitor pupils as appropriate
5. If a referral is required, Social Services and NEELB are informed. They will advise if the parent is to be informed. School will continue to monitor pupils as appropriate

### CONFIDENTIALITY

*"All staff should recognise that in order to protect people from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinate to the need to take appropriate action by informing and involving others in the child's best interests".* DENI Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection 1999/10

Therefore, no promise of confidentiality can or should ever be given where abuse is alleged although staff can and should reassure the child that the information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know. The class teacher or the designated teachers for child protection should seek clarification from the child, preferably in the presence of another adult.

### PROCEDURES FOR RAISING A CONCERN - PARENT

1. I have a concern regarding a/my child's safety
2. I can talk to the class teacher.
3. If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher ( Mrs McElhatton) the Deputy Designated Teacher (Mr Henry) or the Principal (Mrs Patricia McAlister)
4. If I am still concerned I can write to the Child Protection Representative of the Board of Governors, at the school address. 84 Sixtowns Road, Draperstown BT45 7BB
5. I can talk to : NSPCC 0808 800 5000 Childline 0800 1111  
EA Child Protection Support Services for Schools 02895985590  
Out of hours emergency social services 02895049999  
PSNI central referral unit 02890259299 or on **101 ext 30299** or in an emergency situation 999  
Gateway Social Services 028 9050 7000  
St Columba's Straw 02879628685

### PUPIL PROCEDURES FOR RAISING A CONCERN -

1. I can talk to the teacher or supervisor in the playground
2. I can talk to my class teacher
3. I can talk to Mrs McElhatton ~ Designated Teacher for Child Protection
4. I can talk to Mr Henry~ Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection
5. I can talk to Mrs McAlister ~ Principal
6. I can talk to someone at home.
7. I can call the NSPCC **0808 800 5000** **CHILDLINE 0800 1111**

### **I MUST ALWAYS TALK TO SOMEONE**

*Child Protection is every-*



*body's responsibility!*