

Kirkistown Primary School



**Learning together,
building for the future**

Child Protection Policy

Policy Review

Date agreed: September 2021

Next Review Date: September 2022

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Date: _____

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Vision Statement

As a school, we aim to create independence and inspire lifelong learning.

School Ethos

As a community, we will provide an environment that caters for the intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral and cultural development of all pupils.

Mission Statement

- We strive to ensure that the learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of all members of the school community are valued.
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will actively encourage everyone.
- Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility and will be encouraged to make a positive contribution to their learning, school, and the wider community.
- We are committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle and the wellbeing of the whole child.
- Staff, pupils, parents and governors work together to build a learning community that celebrates the values we share.

‘Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop.’

(Working Together Under the Children Act 1989)

1. CHILD PROTECTION ETHOS

All staff in Kirkistown Primary School 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 alerted 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

This policy applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff, Board of Governors, ancillary staff, volunteers, students and any other adult who may come in contact with pupils in Kirkistown Primary School.

Schools do not operate in isolation and the welfare of children is a responsibility of many agencies working in partnership.

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 guidance “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools” (DENI Publication 2017/04), “Co-operating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland” (DHSSPSNI, 2016) and the SBNI Regional Core Child Protection policies and Procedures, 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:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy
- Educational Visits
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Acceptable use of the internet and Digital Technologies Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Pastoral care Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safe Handling Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints policy
- Supervision of volunteers and visitors
- Critical Incident Policy and Plan
- Social Media Policy
- Equality & Inclusion Policy

As policies are renewed they are being added to our website:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/policies.html>

Policies are also available, by request, from our school office.

4. SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The following are members of the schools safeguarding team:

- School Principal - Mr R Graham - 028 427 71455
- Chair of the BoG - Mrs K Edgar - 028 427 71455

- Designated Governors for Child Protection
 - Mrs J Jones - 028 427 71455

- Designated Teacher - Mrs A Harbinson - 028 427 71455
- Deputy Designated Teacher - Mr S Irwin - 028 427 71455

The responsibilities of the team should include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school;
- Support for the Designated Teacher in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post;
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements;
- As best practice, the Safeguarding Team should review their child protection/safeguarding practices annually using the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) pro-forma entitled 'Guidance for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding'. ETI expects the pro-forma to be completed and provided to them as a permanent record on all types of inspections.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Chair of the Board Of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors must:

- 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 EA .
- 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

5.2 The Designated Governors for Child Protection

The Designated Governors will provide the child protection lead 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 Teachers Report
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff
- Any amendments in the safeguarding / Child Protection best practice arrangements identified in audits done by the Safeguarding Team
- Any remedial action taken or recommended to address deficiencies in safeguarding/child protection practice requirements

5.3 The Board of Governors

Board of Governors must ensure:

- That the school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy;
- Attendance at EA Child Protection Training for Governors and that the keeping of up to date Training records are maintained.
- That confidentiality is paramount.
- There is a Code of Conduct for all adults working in the school
- Support for the Designated Teacher in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administration and emotional demands of the post.
- Review safeguarding practices annually using the ETI proforma entitled 'Guidance for the evaluation of child protection / safeguarding.'

5.4 The Principal

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI 2017/04 is implemented in the school.
- That a designated teacher and deputy are appointed, and they attend relevant Child Protection training
- That all staff receive child protection training biannually and new staff on appointment
- That all concerns about possible abuse are taken forward in the appropriate manner.
- Take the lead in following procedures in relation to a complaint against a member of staff keeping the Chairperson informed
- That the EA Designated Officer/s for Child Protection are consulted.
- That a record of Child Abuse Complaints is maintained and made available at least annually to the Board of Governors.
- That the school's child protection records are securely stored and permanently preserved.

- That child protection features on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings (termly updates & annual report).
- That the school child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy of this policy at least once every 2 years.
- That confidentiality is paramount.
- Inform the Governors of any new DE guidance (circulars and letters) related to child protection/safeguarding
- Be actively involved in the school Safeguarding Team
- Ensure that all paid and voluntary staff are vetted and/or risk assessments are in place
- Ensure that the Child Protection Policy is readily available to parents via the school's website and, by request, from the school office.

5.5 The Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher

The designated teacher and deputy must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and roles.
- Organise child protection training for all teaching and non-teaching staff (whole school training) to be delivered at least biannually
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Act as a point of contact for staff (and parents / carers).
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents / carers.
- Make referrals to Social Services (Gateway team) or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate.
- Liaise with the 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.
- Manage the Child Protection concerns of any member of teaching and support staff.
- Take the lead in the drafting and issuing of the summary of the Child Protection arrangements for parents every 2 years.
- Collaborate with the School Principal in making referrals to Social Services or the PSNI Central Referral Unit
- Notify the Chair of the Board of Governors in the event of an allegation against the Principal
- Induction and training of all staff including support staff raising awareness of child protection policy and procedures
- Complete a referral form (UNOCINI) sending this to Social Services with a copy to the Designated Officer of the EA (SER).

5.6 The Class Teacher

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

The teacher must:

- Listen to what is being said and support the child.
- Make a concise written record of a **child's disclosure** using the **formal 'Note of Concern'** (Appendix 5 Circular 2016/20).
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed through the written "Note of Concern" pro-forma (Appendix 5) about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions.
- Make note of any **background concerns / concerning choices** made by the child using the **school's internal 'Report of Concern'** document (e.g. small difficulties in the playground, challenges with attitude and demeanour). This document should be completed electronically and forwarded to the Safeguarding Team. These notes are invaluable in assisting with transitions and when dealing with more serious issues (e.g. a disclosure) that may warrant a 'Note of Concern' and subsequent referral.
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children.
- Act promptly.

5.7 Parents / Carers

Parents / carers should play their part in Safeguarding by:

- Telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence or else sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's health / circumstances.
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school.
- Providing the school with written evidence i.e. a Court Order to support any request to the Principal for changes to arrangements for contact with their child.
- Informing the school of any changes of address, contact details or living arrangements for their child e.g. child going to live with a relative.
- Familiarising themselves with the School's Safeguarding Policies.
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school.
- Raising any concerns they have in relation to their child with the school.

6. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

6.1 Definition of Abuse

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

“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.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Through their day-to-day contact with individual children, teachers and support staff are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms of abuse such as change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm.

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations, including reporting of offences. It is also an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. “ (DE Guidance 2017/04)

6.2 Types and Signs and Symptoms of Abuse (these are outlined in Appendix 1)

- **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.
- **Physical Abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of 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.
- **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 involve 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.

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. These types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities, but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed. (DE 2017/04)

Due to COVID-19 the pressures on children and their families are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty and financial or health anxiety. This may have an impact on the mental health of both parents and children and the resulting behaviour. Should any member of staff be concerned about the behaviours of any child / family or should a child or family member contact them by Seesaw / Google Classroom and make a disclosure, they must contact the Principal and Designated Teacher without delay, detailing the nature of their concerns and any relevant information regarding any potential disclosure. An informal 'Report of Concern' should be completed at the nearest opportunity and, should a disclosure be made, a formal 'Note of Concern' completed.

6.3 Specific Types of Abuse

- **Grooming** 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. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (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. The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 provides for offences relating to sexual grooming of

children and young people. In Kirkistown PS we need to be aware of this type of abuse and to look out for any possible signs of it happening to any of our children.

- **Child Sexual Exploitation** CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can be 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. CSE does not 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. Any child under the age of 18 can be a victim of CSE. The average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Sixteen and seventeen year olds, although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited. Young males can also be victims of CSE. CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people's peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males. While CSE is not a specific criminal offence, it does encompass a range of sexual offences and other forms of serious criminal misconduct. The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 provides for a number of offences that between them could enable prosecution of all cases of CSE. The Children (NI) Order 1995 and the Child Abduction (NI) Order 1985 can also be used in cases where children are going missing as part of the exploitation. Research repeatedly shows that young people rarely report abuse through CSE. Most concerns are identified by professionals, friends or family or by proactive investigation by authorities. In Kirkistown PS we should be alert to the likelihood of CSE and plan to protect children and young people accordingly.
- **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse** are defined as follows:
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 ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).'

Defined by 'The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and abuse Strategy (2016)

If it comes to the attention of school staff at Kirkistown PS that Domestic Violence is or may be affecting a child this must be passed on to the

Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non- medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as ‘cutting’, ‘female circumcision’ and ‘initiation’. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and much later in life. FGM is a form of child abuse and as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed and established school procedures. The majority of cases are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight, putting children in this age bracket at highest risk. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. Where there is concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Team. All staff in our school should be aware of warning signs, appropriate response and signposting to further information and sources of help.

Multi-agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation. DFP 2014

FGM Issues

- It is illegal in the UK to subject a girl or a woman to FGM or to assist a non-UK person to carry out FGM overseas
- FGM is prevalent in 28 African countries as well as in parts of the Middle East and Asia
- It has been estimated that over 20 000 girls under the age of 15 are at high risk of FGM in the UK each year and that 66 000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM (majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 – therefore girls of this age at higher risk)
- FGM constitutes a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls, and has severe short-term and long-term physical and psychological consequences

DFP NI published Multi-Agency Guidelines July 2014

Indicators that FGM is Imminent

- Being a girl aged 5 - 8 within a community where FGM is practised
- Prolonged return to country of origin for summer break – giving sufficient healing time before return to school
- Female elder visiting from a country of origin

- Child may tell other children about it
- A girl may disclose that she is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'

Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.

- **Forced Marriage** A Forced Marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and where an agency, organisation or practitioner has knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person, they should contact the PSNI immediately. There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether to accept the arrangement or not remains with the prospective spouses. In forced marriage, one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with support needs, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. It is advised that in all cases where there is a suspicion that a child or young person is being, or has been forced into a marriage, our school should contact CPSS for advice and assistance.

- **Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour.** Learning about sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. At School we will support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Staff in our school are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It must also be borne in mind that sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed through our school's positive behaviour policy, but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centered.

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 (Child Protection Support Services) may be required. The Child

Protection Support Service (CPSS) will advise if additional advice from PSNI or Social Services is required.

- **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 and 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 identifies 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.

In school we have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and should be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like. Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

Managing the risks Children and young people need to be protected from these dangers, they also need to be educated about how to recognise and avoid the risks and become 'Internet Wise'. Pupils need to know how to cope if they come across inappropriate material or situations online and should be encouraged to seek help and advice when they need it without fear of censure or criminalisation.

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

Sexting between individuals in a relationship

As adults, we can question the wisdom of this, but the reality is that children and young people consider this to be normal. Clearly pupils need to be aware that this 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) and in these cases you should contact local police for advice and guidance. However, it is important that particular care is taken with any such issues. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of sexual images. Advice should be sought from the CPSS.

Sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress.

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that you **do not forward it to anyone else**. Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent. If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures should be followed. It is also vital to ensure that the victim of abuse gets the correct support. They are likely to be ashamed and embarrassed and worried about parental reaction.

Self-Harm and Suicide

“It is most helpful to consider self-harm as a continuum, ranging from behaviour which has a strong suicidal intent (for example, some kinds of overdose) to behaviour which is non-life threatening (such as cutting, banging, scratching and deliberately damaging parts of the body)”

Paraphrase from John Coleman 2004

Why Do Young People Self Harm

- To release tension caused by anxiety, grief or anger.
- As a means of communication, to tell themselves and others that they need help.
- To feel as though they have control over something in their lives.
- To make ‘real’ emotional pain they are unable to express.

7. DEALING WITH CHILDREN WITH INCREASED VULNERABILITIES

7.1 Children with a disability

Children and young people with disabilities (ie any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse. Staff in our school must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult.

7.2 Children with limited fluency in English

Children who are not fluent in English should be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff in our school or other professional with appropriate language/ communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred. Advice can be sought from the EA's Inclusion and Diversity Service to identify and respond to any particular communication needs that a child may have. All children should feel confident to discuss matters that may be worrying them in Kirkistown PS.

7.3 Pre- school provision

Young children may have limited communication skills in our Reception Class and Foundation classes. Teachers and other adults will come into contact with children

while helping them with toileting, washing and changing their clothing. *See Intimate Care Policy

7.4 Gender identity issues/Sexual orientation

In Kirkistown Primary School we should strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

ADDITIONAL CHILD PROTECTION RELATED PROCEDURES

Police Checks

Adults working with pupils in school or in the after-school club will be checked using the appropriate ACCESSNI vetting form. These will be updated as appropriate and guidance from the Education Authority will be followed.

Photographs and Videos

All parents will be asked to give permission at the beginning of the school year for photographs to be taken of their children and displayed. These will include press articles, photographs for the school display boards, the school website and social media. Teachers will receive a list of pupils in their class who are not allowed to have their photographs used and the relevant context. A copy of the complete list will be displayed in the school's reception office for reference purposes. The school is also aware that with smartphone technology, it is now impossible to monitor the photographing and videoing of children at school events. Staff however will be vigilant for any activity that they may feel is inappropriate.

School Visits

On all school visits, whether they be to the swimming pool or on an educational residential trip, the correct adult / pupil ratio will be observed. A risk assessment will be carried out for all school visits in line with current COVID-19 regulations. A copy of the relevant risk assessments will be signed by the Chair of the Board of Governors and filed for future reference.

Transportation

If pupils are being transported by coach, the company must be recommended by the Education Authority or a reputable travel agent if outside Northern Ireland. All coaches must have fitted seatbelts installed and these will be worn at all times by the children while travelling.

If children are travelling in a teacher's car or the vehicle of another member of staff or parent e.g. to a football match or inter-school quiz, then consideration should be given to an individual booster seat and the issue discussed with the parents of the

relevant child. For the safety of all concerned an adult should not travel alone in a car with a child. Staff should also have appropriate insurance to cover the transportation of children however this is unlikely to take place during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Intimate Care

Very occasionally a child has an “accident” of an intimate nature while at school. If it is a minor accident, the child is given fresh underwear and changes in a toilet cubicle. When a more serious incident happens we try to contact home so that a parent can come and change their child themselves or take him / her home if the child is upset or unwell. If that is not possible and the child is unable to change themselves with supervision, then they will be changed by two teachers or classroom assistants, where possible, in the adult toilet in the Reception area, as part of our duty to care. Parents will be informed of any such action at the earliest convenience and a record of care provided will be kept by the school. In such circumstances, appropriate PPE should be worn by staff. (*See Intimate Care Policy*)

Sanitary protection is available from Mrs. Harbinson should it be required by any of the senior girls. A disposal bin and designated cubicle is located in the disability access toilet at the front of school.

Changing for PE

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, all pupils from primary one through to primary seven will wear suitable PE clothing to school on the days that PE is due to take place in each class. This is to eliminate the need for a class to change clothing in other classes or other school areas including toilets.

Individual Meetings with Children

There may be times during the school day when a teacher or member of staff has to meet with a child on a one to one basis. This may occur during the delivery of some additional support, individual counselling or when discussing a confidential matter. On these occasions it is important that the meeting takes place in clear view of the outside corridor to ensure that other adults passing by can see the member of staff with the child. There are glass panels in the doors of all offices and classrooms, with many of the rooms also having internal glass windows. It is best practice for a member of staff to inform another adult that a meeting with a child is going to take place, especially if this consultation is not part of a normal timetabled session. Staff should try, where possible, to maintain social distancing from children outside their class bubble.

Injury or Illness

If a child takes ill or is injured at school, they will be dealt with by a member of staff on duty or the class teacher. Parents will be contacted if the child has received

a cut or bump to the head. They will be asked to collect the child if it is felt that they need outpatient treatment or would be better at home. Suitable PPE is available for staff to wear during the administration of any first aid treatment.

Accident Report Forms

Should an accident occur to a child an 'Accident Report Slip' will be completed and sent home. This slip will record details of the incident and how it was treated. For more serious falls or injuries that occur in school, there is a formal accident report form that will be completed by staff and signed by the Principal.

Supervision

It is important that children are supervised in the playground and throughout the school at all times. Children who are being asked to work independently or delivering a message for a teacher must behave in a manner expected in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

At the end of After School Activities, the teacher in charge of the activity will ensure that all children have been collected and leave the school in an appropriate manner. If children are not collected and an agreed time period has elapsed then responsibility falls on the Principal or in his absence, a senior teacher who is deputising. Parents will be contacted and informed that their child has not been collected and the child will be placed into the care of the after school club when in operation. No one member of staff, including the Principal, can be left alone with a child after school.

Signing in / out

Visitors to the school sign in and out of the school building using the visitor's book. This provides a physical record of who is in the building at a particular date and time. Visitors to the school will be given a lanyard at reception for identification. This record will form part of the school's track and trace records.

Arriving at School

Each morning parents should drop their children off as quickly as possible to avoid traffic congestion. Children should be dropped off at the entrance assigned to their class at the appropriate time.

The inside of the school is a sterile area and only adults with appointments or a prior arrangement can be admitted.

Leaving School

At collection times parents should wait outside the school grounds until teachers escort the children out. If a child has an appointment and has to be collected early, parents must contact reception to arrange this. A member of staff will then collect the child from the classroom.

Online Safety

It is important to highlight the challenges to child protection which have been brought about by the mass use of the internet. Children will be educated in the safe usage of online resources and websites and an Acceptable Use of the Internet policy is in place throughout the school. Staff and parents will also be informed of risks involving the internet and social media through staff training, parent talks and presentations on the school website:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/staying-safe-online.html>

Mobile Phones

The school operates an agreed Mobile Phone policy. Mobile phones should not be used by pupils on school premises and must be kept switched off until the school day ends. Should your child need to make an emergency phone call, using his/her mobile, he/she must obtain permission from a senior member of staff. If you need to contact your child, please phone the school office.

8. PROCEDURES FOR MAKING COMPLAINTS IN RELATION TO CHILD ABUSE

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

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is risk to the child at home.

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

8.1 How a Parent / Carer can make a Complaint

At Kirkistown Primary School we aim to work closely with the parents/carers in supporting all aspects of the child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent/carer may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent / carer has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or the Principal/Designated Teacher for Child Protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. If they are still concerned they can contact the NI Public Service Ombudsman. 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.

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

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child, they should not investigate – this is a matter for the Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the designated teacher, discuss the matter with her and complete a Note of Concern. These notes or records should be factual, objective in nature and include what was seen, said, heard or reported, the place and time of who was present and should be given to the designated teacher. The school’s informal ‘Report of Concern’ documentation will provide very useful background information when completing a formal ‘Note of Concern’ (Appendix 5). The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence. 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. *See APPENDIX 5 – ‘Note Of Concern’ Form.

The designated teacher may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information or from others who may have relevant information. The designated teacher may also consult with EA designated officers for child protection or Social Services (Gateway Team) before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The paramountcy of the welfare of the child is our priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made, the designated teacher will telephone the South Eastern Health & Social Services Gateway Team. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team.

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

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

Do’s	Don’ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay calm• Listen• Accept• Reassure• Explain what you are going to do• Record accurately• Seek support for yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panic• Promise to keep secrets• Ask leading questions• Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily• Delay• Start to investigate• Do Nothing

8.3 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 teacher must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal/Designated teacher).

If a complaint is made against the Principal the Chairperson of The Board of Governors will be informed and he/she will ensure that necessary action is taken.

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

The investigation and management of such a complaint will take place in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education and the relevant agencies involved. In the exercise of its duties towards pupils and staff appropriate levels of support will be provided to both the child and the staff member concerned. This may involve the provision of external support services. SEE APPENDIX 4

9. ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCES AND CORE GROUP MEETINGS

The Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review child protection Case Conference or core group meeting convened by the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust and where possible a school representative will be in attendance. A written report will be provided for these meetings and will be compiled after discussion 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 in line with what has been agreed in each child's protection plan.

10. 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 and where physical or sexual abuse is suspected, a legal duty to report this. However, only those who need to know will be told.

11. RECORD KEEPING

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked filing cabinet in the SEN room. The Principal stores electronic copies of informal 'Reports of Concern' in a private folder that only he can access. Only the DT, DDT and School Principal have access to them. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person. Written records will comply with DENI Circular 2016/20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is received by the school and is not referred to Social Services – or if it is referred and Social Services do not place the child's name on the Child Protection Register – a record on the child's file will be preserved in accordance with DE Circular 2016/20 and a confidential copy will be sent to any school to which the child subsequently transfers.

If the Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register, a record of this fact and associated documentation from the Social Services will be maintained on the child's file while he or she continues to attend our school.

When the child's name is removed from the child protection register then all Social Services records will be destroyed and only the school records retained for preservation. Should a child transfer to another school whilst their name is on the child protection register then we will inform the receiving school that his/her name is on the register and the name of the child's social worker. All Social Services records held by us in relation to the child will then be destroyed. The schools own child protection records in relation to the child will be held in secure and confidential storage for preservation.

12. SAFE RECRUITMENT MEASURES

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

13. 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 has a code of conduct for staff which 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. It is not intended to detract from the enriching

experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within the education sector.

14. STAFF TRAINING

Kirkistown Primary School 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.

When new staff or volunteers start at the school they are briefed on the school Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct by the Principal, Designated Teacher or Executive Officer and given a copy of the policy which includes what to do if you have child protection concerns.

15. THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

In the classroom, regular Circle Time sessions and PD&MU lessons are used as a means of encouraging children to raise social and emotional concerns in a safe environment and to build self-confidence, respect and sensitivity among classmates. It is important that children and young people are provided with information and skills in building healthy behaviours and relationships. Children should be provided with the opportunity to develop good mental health and emotional resilience to enable them to identify abuse and exercise prevention skills. The curriculum provides the opportunity for specific attention to be given to a pupil's emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationship and the development of a moral thinking and value system. It also offers a vehicle for exploring with children and young people sensitive issues such as domestic violence and sexual abuse in an age appropriate way and appropriate protective behaviours. Teachers or other school staff who suspect that a pupil is a victim of domestic violence or sexual abuse should raise their concerns with the designated teacher.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through whole school assemblies and there is a child protection notice board in the reception area with relevant information.

Some examples of other initiatives which can address child protection and safety issues in School:

- The NSPCC can visit the school and provide information on a range of child protection issues through Assemblies, talks, workshops and resources.
- Pupils can participate in community awareness programmes run by the PSNI
- Pupils can take part in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service talks on Fire Safety.

- Pupils can participate in Drowning Awareness Week prevention workshops, supported by the RNLI.
- Primary 7 pupils can participate in emergency life saving awareness workshops with the support of local First Responders
- Primary 7 pupils can participate in the “Bee Safe” Activity Day which is run jointly by Health Promotion Agency and the South Eastern Health and Social Services Trust and involves all the emergency services.
- Internet safety talks can be provided by the PSNI.
- Personal Safety/Keep Safe activities delivered at various Key Stages within the NI Curriculum under PDMU.
- Activities to support Anti Bullying/ Friendship week
- Circle Time in class.

16. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Kirkistown Primary school 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 child protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of annual reports from the Designated teacher and through the Principal’s Report at each meeting. On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Appendix 1

Signs and Symptoms of abuse – possible indicators

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing – grip marks on arms;</p> <p>slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions;</p> <p>untreated injuries;</p> <p>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>Self-destructive tendencies;</p> <p>aggressive to other children;</p> <p>behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive);</p> <p>appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults;</p> <p>improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway;</p> <p>uncomfortable with physical contact;</p> <p>come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home;</p> <p>clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories</p>

Neglect

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

Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Well below average in height and weight; “failing to thrive”; poor hair and skin; alopecia;</p> <p>swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet;</p> <p>recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders;</p> <p>signs of self-mutilation;</p> <p>signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness);</p> <p>extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia,</p>	<p>Apathy and dejection;</p> <p>inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations;</p> <p>rocking/head banging;</p> <p>inability to play;</p> <p>indifference to separation from family</p> <p>indiscriminate attachment;</p> <p>reluctance for parental liaison;</p> <p>fear of new situation;</p> <p>chronic runaway;</p> <p>attention seeking/needing behaviour;</p> <p>poor peer relationships.</p>

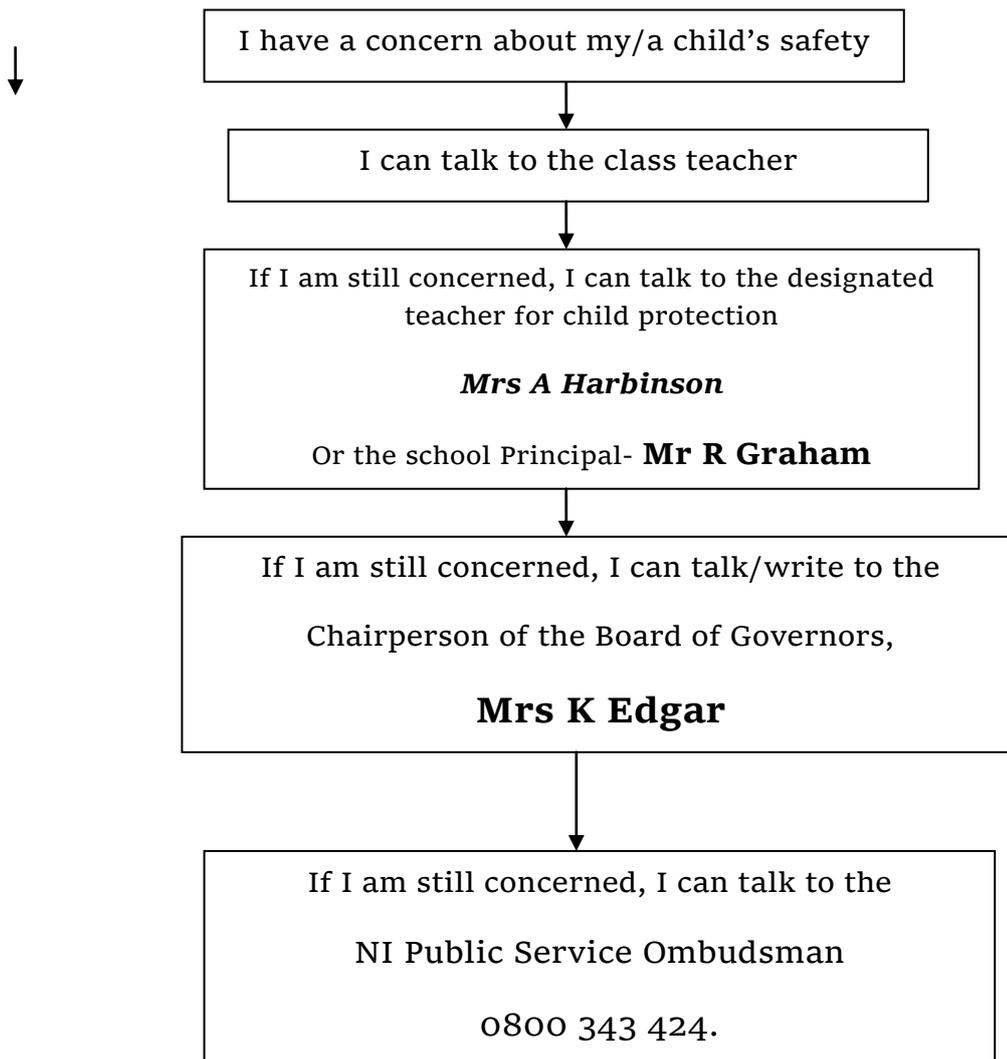
Sexual Abuse

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;</p> <p>torn, stained or bloody underclothes;</p> <p>chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches;</p> <p>difficulty in walking or sitting;</p> <p>frequent urinary infections;</p> <p>avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers;</p> <p>unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating.</p>	<p>What the child tells you;</p> <p>Withdrawn; chronic depression;</p> <p>excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness;</p> <p>children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal;</p> <p>over concerned for siblings;</p> <p>poor self-esteem; self-devaluation;</p> <p>lack of confidence; peer problems;</p> <p>lack of involvement;</p>

	<p>massive weight change;</p> <p>suicide attempts (especially adolescents); hysterical/angry outbursts;</p> <p>lack of emotional control;</p> <p>sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour;</p> <p>inappropriate sex play;</p> <p>repeated attempts to run away from home; unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories;</p> <p>vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity;</p> <p>exposure to pornographic material.</p>
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Appendix 2

How a Parent can make a Complaint



At any time a parent can talk to:

A social worker at the Gateway Team (South Eastern Trust)

Tel: 0300 1000 300

or the

PSNI Central Referral Unit

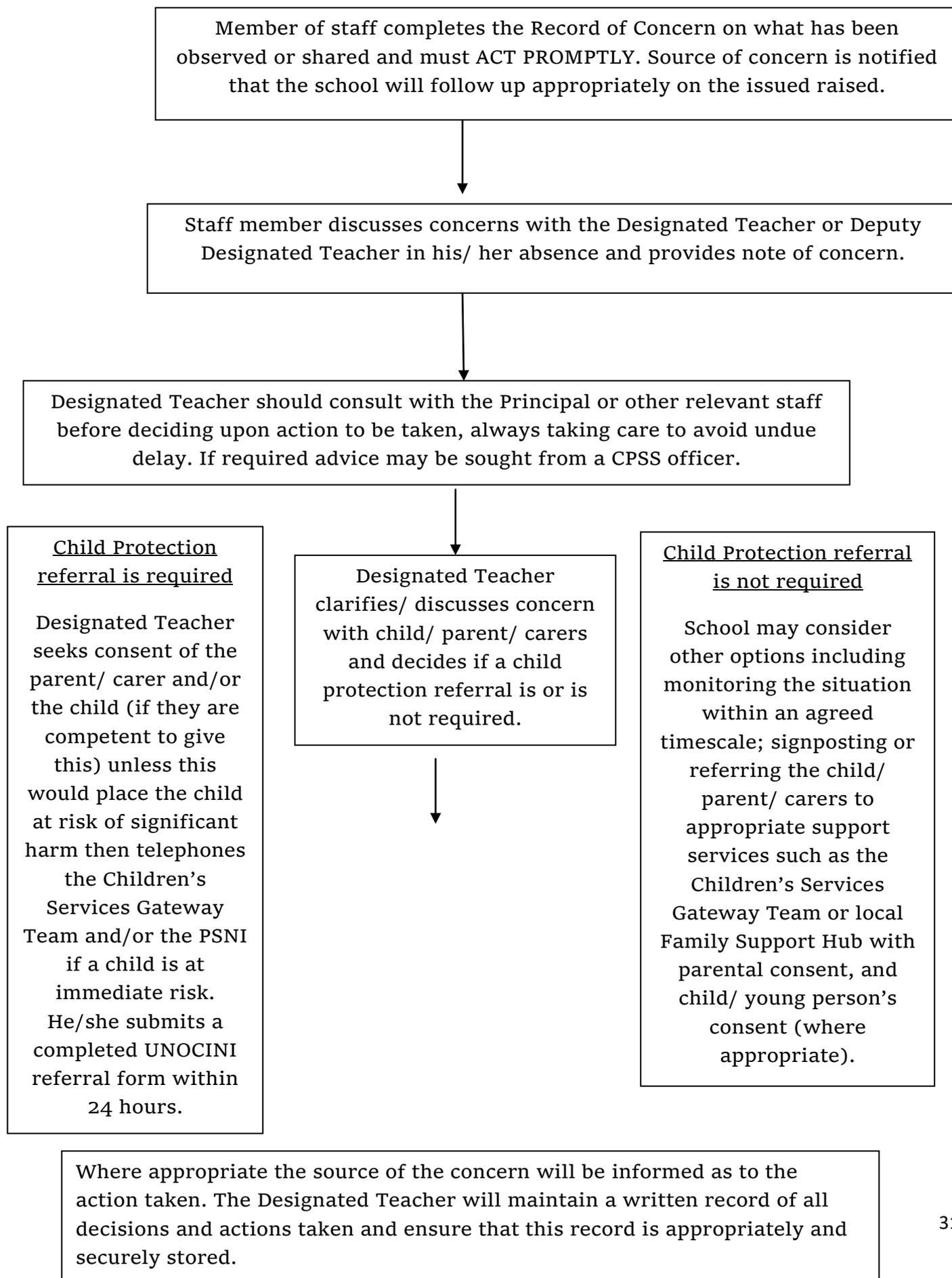
Tel: 02890 259299

Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service

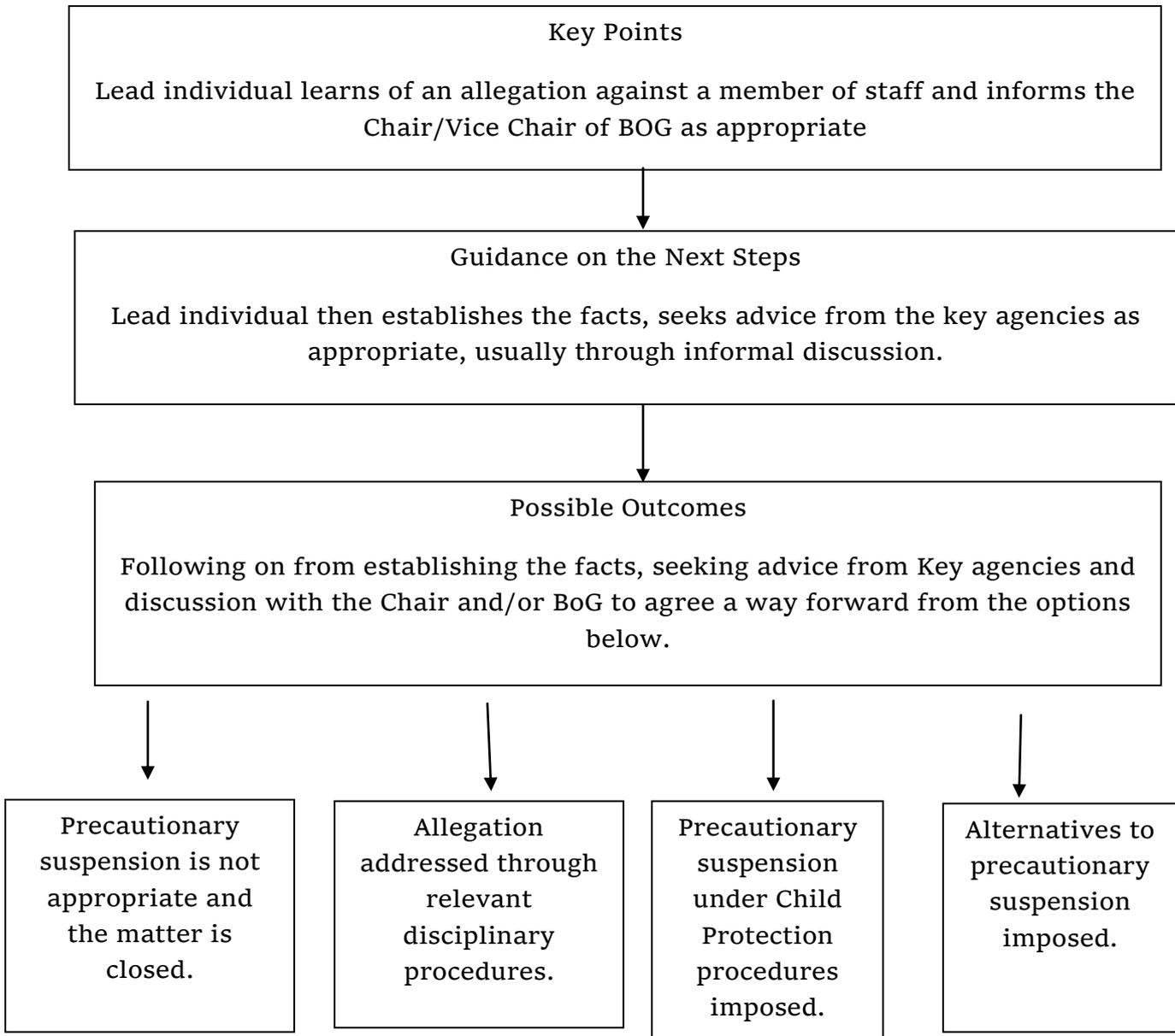
Tel: 02895049999

Appendix 3

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



Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff



PROFORMA

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTE OF CONCERN

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature and description of concern:

Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher:

Yes:

No:

If 'No' state reason:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:	
Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'No' state reason:	

Name of staff member making the report: _____

Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6



Learning together,
building for the future

Report of Concern

Please add detail that fully explains your concern.

<p><u>Name of Pupil:</u></p> <p><u>Year Group:</u></p>
--

Nature of Issue:

Comments:

Action taken:

Follow up conversation meeting with Parent / Carer:

Follow up meeting required?

Was the meeting reported verbally to a member of the SLT?

Which member of the SLT?