

UN Convention on the rights of the child.

Article 19

Every child has the right to be protected from being hurt, mistreated, in body and mind.

School Safeguarding Ethos

As a staff in Portadown Integrated Primary school, we are aware of our pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care. All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. This Child Protection Policy is linked to our Pastoral Care Policy and reflects both legal and pastoral responsibilities. The policy will set out clearly the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected abuse. The purpose of the procedures in Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in the school- teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has a clear guidance on the detection and inter agency management of situations where abuse or neglect is suspected.

The principles and philosophy that underpin our work with children are those set out in the "UN Convention on the Rights of the Child" (UK Agreement in 1991) and enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (effective from November 1996) and Human Rights Act 1998. In particular the principle we support is that every child has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and with proper care given to their physical, emotional, spiritual well being, by those looking after them.

The following principles form the basis for effective child protection activity and underpin the guidance which we follow:

- The child's welfare must always be paramount; this over-rides 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 interests must always come first.
- Children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which

may affect their lives. Where a child has a disability, specialist assistance should be sought to achieve this.

- Parents/carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters that affect their family.

This ethos is reflected in all actions and decisions taken by staff as they follow the detailed guidance set out in the SELB Child Protection Procedures, DENI Circular 1999/10. Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 Guidance and the Southern Area Child Protection Committee Procedures.

Other 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
- Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras
- ICT and access to the internet
- Intimate Care

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

Context

In line with advice from SELB, the school will ensure that specific procedures are followed in the event of a member of staff becoming concerned about the abuse of a child. Staff will not try to investigate or keep to themselves any information about abuse that a child gives them

but will immediately inform the Designated teacher or deputy Designated teacher about their concerns. Any information gathered by the school itself will not be considered as proof of abuse.

The safeguarding team

- Mr. Feargal Magee - Principal
- Mrs. Nicola Curran - Designated Teacher
- Mrs. Dionne Houston - Deputy Designated Teacher
- Mr. Michael Hogg - Chairperson of the Board of Governors
- Mr. Scott Cunliffe - Designated Governor For Child Protection

Roles and responsibilities

Role of the Designated Teacher (DT)

Mrs. Nicola Curran - Designated Teacher

Mrs. Dionne Houston- Deputy Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher will:

- Promote a child protection ethos in the school
- Develop and update the school's child protection policy
- Ensure parents receive a copy of the child protection policy every 2 years
- Provide written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Provide training to all school staff including support staff
- Be available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Be responsible for recordkeeping of all child protection concerns & maintain all records in a secure location
- Liaise with parents, when appropriate, over child protection issues
- Liaise with SELB Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Make referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- Co-operate fully with any agency involved with the care of an individual child, compiling information and attending case conferences as required
- The Deputy Designated Teacher will support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

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 SELB Child Protection Support Service for Schools.
- 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

The Designated Governor For Child Protection

The Designated Governor 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

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;
- Relevant Child Protection training is kept up-to-date by at least one governor and a record kept of the same;
- That confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to an entire Board of Governors on a need-to-know basis.

The Principal

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI 1999 / 10 is implemented within the school
- That a designated teacher and deputy are appointed

- That all staff receive child protection training
- That all concerns about possible abuse are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- That complaints or allegations against school staff are appropriately managed
- That the Chairman of the Board of Governors (and the Board of Governors) is kept informed
- That the SELB Designated Officer for Child Protection is consulted and kept informed as appropriate
- 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 activities feature 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, information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.

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 actual words of the child
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed through **the written "Record of Concern" pro-forma** or verbally 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
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children
- Act promptly

The Parents

Parents should play their part in Child Protection 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;
- 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 Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet and Child Protection Policies;
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school
- Raising any concerns they have in relation to their child with the school.

Parents will be made aware that staff may on occasions have to help change pupils' clothes when administering first aid, after toilet accidents, for PE and on other such occasions. The school's Intimate Care Policy, available to view on the school website, applies.

In the event of a parent making a complaint about a member of staff, volunteer or student, the school's complaints procedure should be followed and the complaint addressed directly to the principal. If the complaint is against the principal it should be addressed to the chairman of the governors. If a complaint should include an accusation against another child, the accused child's parents will be informed. Discipline must remain solely in the hands of the staff.

Procedures

Portadown Integrated Primary School recognise their five main responsibilities in the areas of Child Protection. These are in the areas of prevention, recognition, response, referral and confidentiality/record keeping. Parents will be made aware our responsibilities and procedures and we hope they will support us in our practice.

1. Prevention

We offer a supportive environment to children who are being abused, have been abused and may be abused in the future. All young people are vulnerable.

The school has developed and provides a "child protection ethos" and a preventative curriculum. We offer children an alternative model to violent or abusive behaviour and alternative methods of responding. We aim to involve the whole school in creating a "listening school".

The school offers protection on two levels:

- Immediate protection - creating a listening environment that makes it easier for children to share their concerns
- Long term protection, enhancing self-esteem and encourage social skills, breaking the cycle of abusive behaviour.

In the classroom, regular Circle Time sessions 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.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there is a **permanent child protection notice board in the main corridor and relevant information throughout the school**, which provides advice and displays child helpline numbers. A flow diagram of how a parent may make a complaint is also on display. An enlarged flow diagram for a teacher allegation is in the staff room.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- Primary 5 pupils take part in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service talks on Fire Safety.
- Whole school - Firework safety assembly by PSNI
- P1-3 Stranger Danger provided by PSNI
- Primary 5-7 Internet safety provided by the PSNI
- Personal Safety/Keep Safe activities delivered at various Key Stages within the NI Curriculum under PDMU.

Programme on personal protection.

The Board of Governors ensures that the curriculum includes a programme for children on personal protection. Where it is appropriate to deliver sex education, management will ensure the programme is

consistent with the Department of Education's circular on this topic, the school nurse can be approached for advice also.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy and we will ensure that we will provide effective management for our staff through adequate training and supervision.

2. What is Child Abuse?

(A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order)

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.' (ACPC, 2005)

Neglect

Actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of a child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Possible signs or symptoms of Neglect include

Poor hygiene

Constant hunger

Inadequate/inappropriate clothing

Constant tiredness

Lack of adequate supervision

Untreated illness

Lack of peer relationships

Compulsive stealing

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)

Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions

Untreated injuries

Self-destructive tendencies

Fear of going home

Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

Inappropriate sexualised language or behaviour

Low self-esteem

Personality changes

Fear of going home

Emotional Abuse

Actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child.

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

Bullying of others

Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn

Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others

Attention seeking

Wetting and soiling

Sudden speech disorders

Low self-esteem

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.

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

Child Protection in Other Specific Circumstances

Bullying

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse. 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.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be investigated by the class teacher, Principal and/or Designated Teacher for Child Protection and action will be taken to protect the victim. This

may include ensuring that another child or a group of children befriends and supports the child being bullied in the playground. Staff will also monitor the situation on a regular basis. The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the child protection procedures.

3. Response / Referral

Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse.

The designated member of staff for child protection is Mrs. Nicola Curran (Pastoral Care Teacher). In her absence, Mr. Feargal Magee or Mrs. Dionne Houston will assume responsibility for child protection matters

How a Parent can make a Complaint

At [Portadown Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit](#) we aim to work closely with the parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of the 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 the Principal/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.](#)

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 make full notes. These notes or records should be factual, objective in nature and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should also include the place and time of and who was present, this should be given to the designated teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The designated teacher will decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to the 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 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 the Southern Education & Library Board's designated officer 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 safety of the child is our prime priority.

If there are concerns that the child or young person may be at risk, the designated teacher is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the designated teacher will telephone the Southern Health & Social Care Trust. She will also notify the Southern Education & Library Board'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 SELB designated officer for child protection.

[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. [Further guidelines are found in Appendix 1](#)

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

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/Designated teacher (or the deputy designated teacher if she is not available) 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/Designated teacher 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.

Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a volunteer

Any complaint about the conduct of a person working in the school in a voluntary capacity should be treated in the same manner as complaints against a person who is not on the school's staff, and the above procedures followed. If the Principal has any concern that a child may be at risk, the services of the volunteer should be terminated immediately.

4. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

Record Keeping

The Principal will ensure that proper records, dated and signed are kept of all complaints or information received and all concerns about possible abuse noted by staff. The written record will be received from the member of staff who received the information/or has concerns.

What should the records contain?

1. Time, date, circumstances
2. Who gave the information
3. Nature of the information
4. If appropriate a description of signs or symptoms of possible abuse

The Principal or designated teacher will supplement this record with:

1. Details of advice sought - from whom and when
2. Decision reached
3. If referred to Social Services - how, when and by whom
4. If not referred - reasons why
5. When, by whom and how the person who made the complaint or gave the information is told of the decision.

All records will be signed and dated by the designated teacher.

Maintaining Records

1. Complaint not referred or referred complaint to Social Services (child not put on Register)

School will maintain record on child's file until his/her 21st birthday. Confidential file will be sent to transferring school.

2. Child on Child Protection Register

School will maintain file with documentation from Social Services. School will notify transferring school - destroy all social services information on file.

School will notify child's Case Co-ordinator in Social Services.

All records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked cabinet. These only identify the child by their initials. These records are kept separate from any other files, which are held on the child.

Vetting Procedures

The school's vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars 2006/06, 2006/07, 2006/08, 2006/09, and 2008/03 Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: <http://www.deni.gov.uk>

We ensure that persons beyond the school staff who are invited to be involved as helpers/leaders on educational visits, residential visits, or other out of school educational activities are subject to vetting procedures in keeping with current arrangements for the care and protection of children.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that include familiarisation with the school's child protection policy and identification of their child protection training needs.

All staff sign to confirm they have received a copy of the child protection policy and we will ensure that we will provide effective management for our staff through adequate training and supervision.

Code of conduct

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.

Staff In-Service

Portadown Integrated 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 and given a copy of the policy which includes what to do if you are worried that a child is being abused

Safe handling and use of reasonable force.

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with 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.
- 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, others 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 a 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 necessary restraint.
- e. Staff who have to administer first aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this 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.

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 Principal

h. Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

Intimate Care

As a general principle, members of staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils. It is, however, unrealistic to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies; in particular, a distressed child may need reassurance that involves appropriate physical comforting.

The Internet and Digital Technologies

Our policy on the internet and digital technologies is set out in a separate document and is informed by DE guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies. Specifically it addresses safeguarding issues that may arise in the use of the internet and digital technologies.

Extended Schools

Where extended school activities are provided by and managed by the school, our own child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place, including safer recruitment procedures.

When our students attend off-site activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Policy and Procedures will be updated in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary, and reviewed annually. The Board of Governors will receive a termly report on the application of the Child Protection Procedures. On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the policy.

Absence of Designated or Deputy teacher

In the event of an incident or suspected incident and the designated teacher and/or the deputy designated teacher are not present in school staff should contact Child Protection @ SELB in the first instance for advice. (028 38341975)

Staff should always try to contact the Designated Teacher on her mobile.
[See Appendix 3.](#)

APPENDIX 1

DISCLOSURE

If a child discloses that he/she has been abused there are 6 points to remember:

1. **Receive** - stay calm, listen, accept, take notes.
2. **Reassure** - not child's fault, but do not make promises.
3. **React** - no leading questions, do not criticise perpetrator, do not ask child to repeat to another person or member of staff.
4. **Record** - brief at time and write up later. Record date, time, place, behaviour of child and words of child. Draw diagram to indicate bruising.
5. **Remember** - to follow your group's guidelines, consult as appropriate, refer to Social Services.
6. **Relax** - support for yourself

Five things to say

- I believe you
- I am glad that you have told me this
- I am sorry that this has happened to you
- It is not, nor ever was your fault
- We are going to do something together about this

Appendix 2
Complain procedure

What to do if I have a child Protection concern?

I have a concern about my child's or another child's safety

I can talk to the class teacher

Or

I can talk to Mrs. Curran the Designated teacher for child protection or Mrs. Houston the deputy designated teacher for child protection.

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal -
Mr. Magee.

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Chairman of the Board of
Governors-
Mr. M. Hogg

***If the next person in the link is the teacher you have a complaint
about please go one step higher.***

At any time you can talk to the social worker or the police

Appendix 3

Contact numbers

Principal - Feargal Magee - 07796277087

Designated teacher - Nicola Curran - 07799283348

Deputy Designated Teacher -
Dionne Houston - 07971407231

Education Welfare Officer for Child Protection SELB -
Mrs. Jennifer McCann or Mrs. Cathy McCann -
028 38341247

Southern Health and Social Care Trust -
028 37415285

Regional Emergency Social Work Services -
028 95049999

Portadown
Integrated
Primary School

Child Protection
Policy

