

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The principles and philosophy which 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 (NI) Order 1995 (effective from November 1996). In particular, the principle we support is that every child has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and with proper care by those looking after them given to their physical, emotional, spiritual well-being. This policy is informed by the guidance set out by DE guidance, Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools (2017) and the SBNI Regional Policy and Procedures (2017).

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. Where a child is disabled or has special needs these will be taken into consideration and provision made accordingly.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is a 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 disability specialist assistance should be sought to achieve this.
- Parents/carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters, which affect their family.
- Actions taken to protect the child (including clarification) should not in themselves be abusive by causing the child unnecessary distress or further harm.
- Intervention should not deal with the child in isolation; the child's needs should be considered in the context of the family. Agencies' actions must be considered and well informed so that they are sensitive to and take account of the child's gender, age, stage of development, religion, culture and race, and any special needs.
- Where it is necessary to protect the child from further abuse, alternatives that do not involve moving the child and which minimise disruption of the family should be explored.

2. CONTEXT

Ballycastle Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit is situated in the centre of the town of Ballycastle. The catchment area for the school is approximately 8 miles leading into the rural areas of Ballintoy, Mosside, Moyarget, Armoy and Cushendun. The school opened its current premises in 1969.

At Ballycastle Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit we have the responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge. We will carry out this duty through pastoral care aiming to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

We seek to protect our pupils by helping them to -

- recognise unwelcome behaviour in others
- acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe
- learn how to react in an emergency
- avoid becoming a victim of crime
- display good citizenship

3. PROCEDURES

We in Ballycastle Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit recognise our four 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 of the school's responsibilities and procedures and we expect their support in our practice.

3.1 Prevention

We offer a supportive environment to children who have been abused and may in the future be abused. All children 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 (Refer to "Area Child Protection Committee's Regional Policy and Procedures" April 2005)*

- **Long-term protection** - *enhancing self-esteem and encouraging pro social skills, breaking the cycle of abusive behaviour.*

The school's Safeguarding Team (consisting of the Principal, the Child Protection Governor, the Designated & Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection) ensures that Child Protection remains an important feature of the school's ethos.

The Board of Governors ensures that the school curriculum includes a programme for pupils on personal protection. Issues to do with personal safety are addressed through regular sessions of Circle Time, PDMU and Assemblies. A bank of suitable resources is kept in the staffroom for teaching staff to refer to.

The Board of Governors ensures that the school has and follows the Code of Practice for the Conduct of all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, towards the pupils attending the school. The Code of Practice covers all activities organised in and by the school, whether on school premises or elsewhere.

All teachers, non-teaching staff, Extended School personnel, volunteers, students and PTA committee are subject to vetting procedures in keeping with current arrangements for the care and protection of young people.

Sensitive issues

The curriculum programme provides the pupils with a general prevention and protection provision but sometimes this cannot necessarily help an individual pupil deal with their own individual needs. These needs are handled on a need to know basis within the school and are monitored very closely to help the pupil integrate back into the school.

The 'Child Protection' document 1999/10 may be used. Other information, resource materials and support agencies are used when necessary.

3.2 Recognition

We use the following categories to define Child Abuse:

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 different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical

contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 his/her 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.

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.

(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016))

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both victim and bully will be personally contacted immediately if bullying behaviour is identified.

(Ref-BIPS Anti-Bullying Policy)

Domestic Violence and Abuse

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

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

If it comes to the attention of the school staff that domestic abuse may be a factor for a child, this must be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher.

3.3 Response

In the event of an allegation of child abuse the teacher will:

- ◆ Listen to the child and accept what is said
- ◆ Record statements
- ◆ Explain what they have to do next and to whom they have to talk
- ◆ Reassure the child they have done the right thing to talk about it
- ◆ Refer information to the Designated Teacher

3.4 Referral

Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse

1. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) is **Mrs C Patterson**. In her absence **Mrs P. Donald**, the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DDT), will assume responsibility for Child Protection matters. Mrs Donald is also the named teacher for Child Protection within the Nursery Unit.
2. If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly.**
3. **He/she 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.
4. The Designated Teacher will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record is made.
5. The Principal, in consultation with the Designated Teacher, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral.** If appropriate, school will inform the parents.
6. The Principal/Designated Teacher may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Designated Officer for Child Protection from the Education Authority and/or the 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 first priority.**

3.4.1 Allegations against a member of staff

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

3.4.2 Allegations against the Principal

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated Teacher (or her deputy, if she is not available) must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

3.4.3 Allegations against the Designated Teacher

Any complaints must be referred to the Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

3.4.4 Suspension from duties

Where the matter is referred to 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 Social Services.

3.5 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

We in Ballycastle Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit consider confidentiality paramount and security of all documents concerning any cases are kept securely in a locked cupboard and not under the public domain. The Designated Teacher has overall responsibility for all records.

4 CODE OF CONDUCT

Staff are aware of and adhere to the Code of Conduct which has been drawn up and agreed through Teachers' Negotiating Machinery.

5 STAFF IN-SERVICE

The school is committed to on-going in-service training for all staff. All staff (teaching and non-teaching) will receive general training once per year on Policy and Procedures with Designated Teacher and Principal. The date and a record of those who attended the training are recorded and retained by the Principal and the Designated Teacher.

7. VISITING SPEAKERS

Within this school we have clear Child Protection guidelines. Most visiting speakers are in school as a result of a request made by the school to address a specific theme/purpose e.g. Assembly; Fire and Rescue Service; School Nurse; charities etc.

Initial appraisal is carried out prior to the visit as suggested on page 92 DENI Child Protection Document.

The visiting speaker's name and contact details are noted and he/she may be asked to outline the nature/delivery of the presentation to ensure it has empathy with the ethos of our school.

7.1 Guidelines for Speakers

- A copy of the school's Child Protection Policy is available for the visiting speaker.
- The presentation must have empathy with the ethos of the school and the appropriate context provided by the member of staff inviting the speaker.
- The speaker may be asked to provide information to the Principal prior to the talk.
- Parents of the pupils involved will be notified on most occasions through the school newsletter of impending visits to the school.
- On occasions when the content is deemed to be sensitive e.g. Puberty Talk to P6/7 pupils, parents will be informed of the content of the talk and will be asked to consent to the attendance of their child at the talk.
- An evaluation of the talk may be carried out after the event
- Staff will be present **at all times** during the visit (exception - Puberty Talk to P6/7 pupils)
- Security and Health and Safety procedures must be adhered to at all times

8 OUT OF SCHOOL VISITS

Parents are requested to grant permission for their child to go on out of school visits at the start of each year. Parents are informed via the school newsletter of all impending

visits. Separate permission is sought for residential visits where the safety of the child is a paramount concern.

(Refer Ed. Visits - Best Practice 2009; BIPS Supervision Policy; BIPS Mobile Phone Policy; BIPS Photo Policy)

9 ACCESS TO THE POLICY

A copy of the full length Child Protection Policy is available on the school website. Paper copies are available if a parent requests one. Every effort will be made to issue the policy within 1 working day.

10 MONITORING/REVIEWING/REVISING THE POLICY

The Principal will monitor the implementation of the policy. Members of the schools Safeguarding Team and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors will attend training as and when necessary. The Designated Teacher is responsible for the planning and delivery of training to students and new/ existing school staff. The Principal is responsible for ensuring all other personnel receive the Child Protection Policy and the 'BIPS Child Protection Guidelines for Staff' leaflet. The Designated Teacher is responsible for the completion of the Annual Child Protection Report for Governors. The school will update this Policy and Procedure in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary. After the review any amended policy will be presented to the Board of Governors for approval.

11 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Throughout the guide the term 'child' should be taken to mean any young person under the age of 18.
- The term 'teacher' should be taken to mean any responsible adult i.e. Professional, auxiliary or ancillary staff in schools and those involved in the Youth Service, including voluntary workers.
- The term 'school' should be taken to mean any institution or organisation where persons under the age of 18 attend on a full time or part time or occasional basis.

APPENDIX 1: CODE OF CONDUCT

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

Introduction

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

Code of Conduct

1. Private meetings with pupils

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

2. Physical Contact with Pupils

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils;
- b. It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this;

- c. Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, 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 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.* (Refer BIPS First-Aid Policy);
- 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 his/her line manager. (Ref -Reasonable Force Policy & BIPS Intimate Care Policy)
- 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.

3. Photos, phones and Social Networking

Our school Photo Policy clearly states the approved policy for taking, retaining and disposing of photos. This policy includes details relating to the use of photos and class work on our school website. Our school Mobile Phone Policy gives clear guidance on the use of mobile phones in our school or on trips etc. (Refer BIPS Photo Policy & BIPS Mobile Phone Policy). Pupils must sign the "ICT Code of Practice for Pupils" form at the start of each school year. Within it, there are references and guidelines to the use of Social Media which pupils must adhere to.

4. Choice and Use of Teaching Materials

- a. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.
- b. When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might after

the event be criticised. Schools have received advice on the value of consulting parents and Governors when proposing to use materials such as the AIDS education for schools and in connection with sex education programmes.

- c. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.

5. Relationships and Attitudes

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

Conclusion

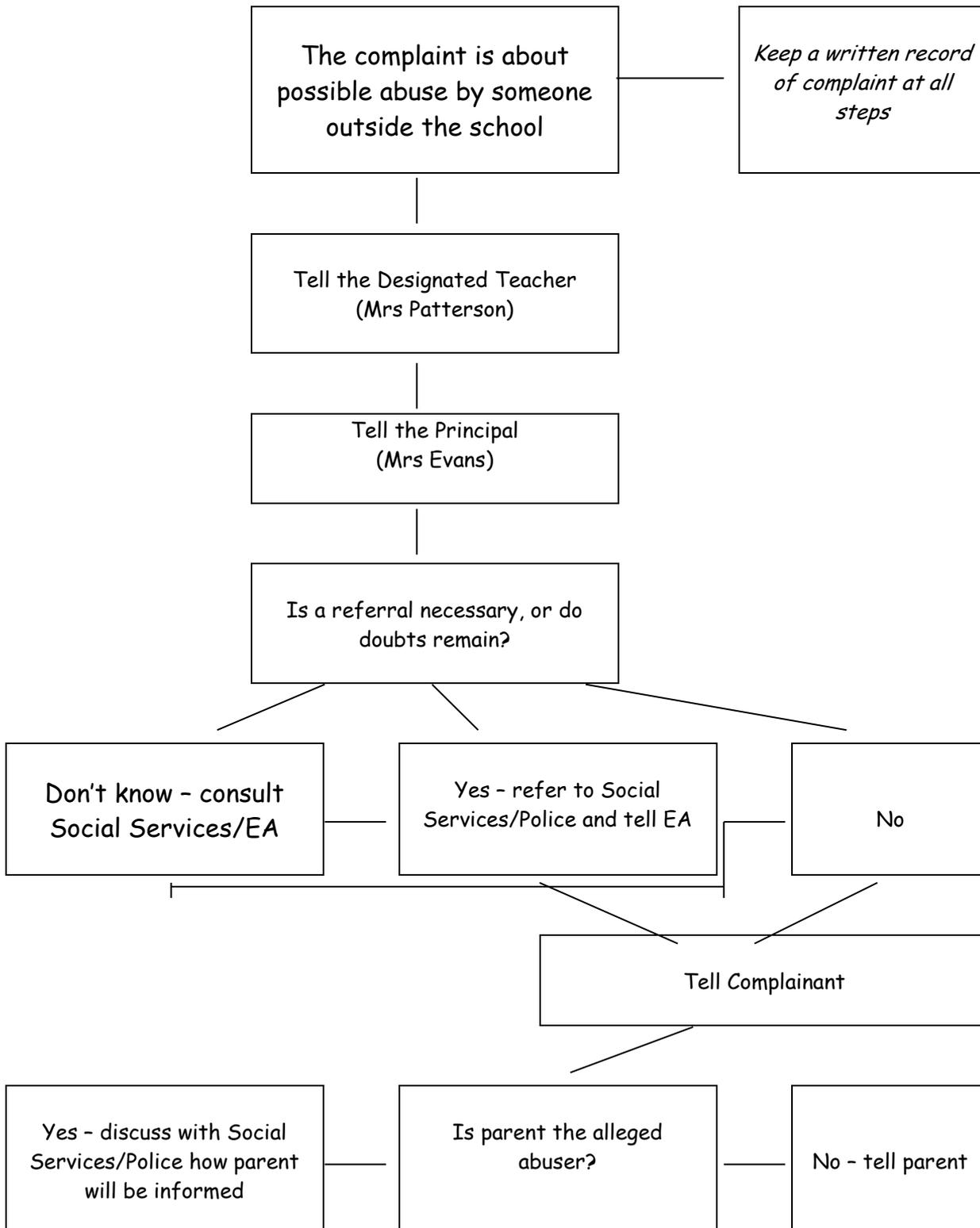
It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff inter-relate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

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

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to re-appraise their teaching styles, relationships with children/young people and their manner and approach to individual children/young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children/young people or of their parents/guardians.

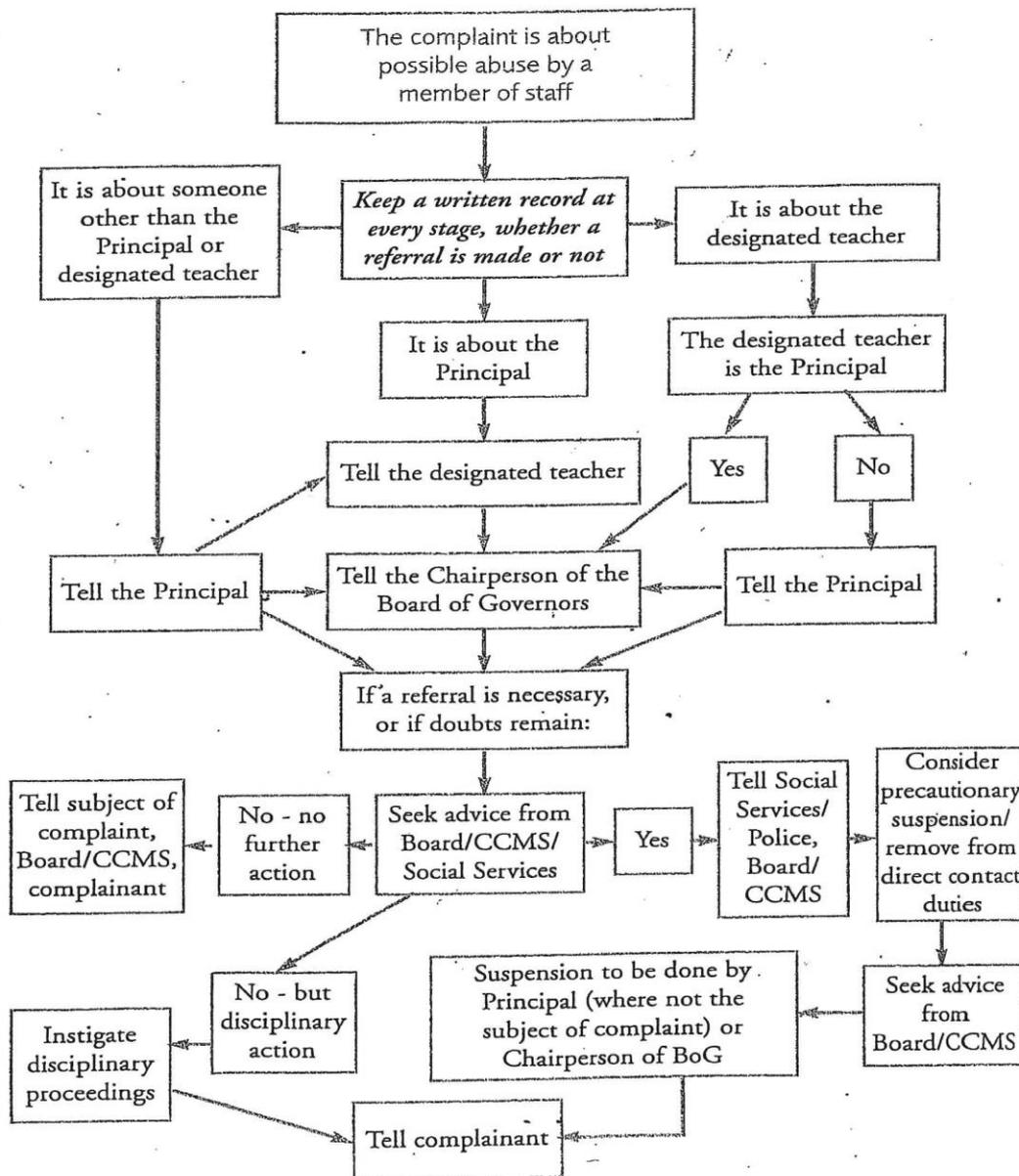
APPENDIX 2

PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS, OR HAS BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION, ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF SCHOOL'S STAFF



APPENDIX 3

PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL'S STAFF



APPENDIX 4

Procedure if a parent has a concern.

I have a concern about my/a child's safety



I can talk to the class teacher



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the

Designated Teacher: **Mrs C. Patterson** or
Deputy: **Mrs P. Donald**



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal: **Mrs D. Evans**



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chairman of the
Board of Governors



At any time, I can talk to the Gateway Team or
PSNI (Public Protection Unit)

APPENDIX 5

TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES

Education Authority-North Eastern Region Child Protection Support Service for Schools:

"Help Line" - operates 9am to 4.30pm during school term
Tel 028 94 482223

EA Education and Welfare Service

Coleraine Office: Tel 028 70 357290

CHILDLINE

Tel 0800 11 11

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Telephone: 0800 800 500

PSNI Public Protection Unit

Coleraine Police Station
17-19 Lodge Road
Coleraine
BT52 1LY

Tel 028 90 650222 Ext 83133

Northern Gateway Team

Coleraine Child Care Team
7A Castlerock Road
Coleraine
BT51 3HP

Tel 028 70 325462

APPENDIX 6

REFERENCES

1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UK Agreement 1991)
2. Children (NI) Order 1995 - An Introductory Guide for Schools 1996
3. DENI Pastoral Care in Schools : Child Protection 1999/10 Circular and Guidance
4. Educational Trips - A Good Practice Guide
5. CCEA Integrating Child Protection into the Curriculum
6. ETI Evaluating Pastoral Care - Guidance 1999
7. Area Child Protection Committee's Regional Policy and Procedures, April 2005
8. Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour 2001
9. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016
10. SBNI Regional Policy and Procedures

APPENDIX 7

USE OF PUPIL'S DIGITAL IMAGES BY THIRD PARTIES

- All visitors to school must seek written consent prior to taking any photographs/video footage of pupils.
- Consent forms must state clearly how and when the images/footage are to be used.
- The images and/or footage must not be uploaded to any website/social media site without prior consent being given by the parents of the children involved.
- Permission slips should be on headed notepaper from the organisation or individual seeking to take the photographs and sent to Mrs Evans who will distribute them to the relevant parents.
- It is the responsibility of the staff member who has organised the visit, to ensure that all necessary consent forms have been completed by the parents and meet the above criteria.

Amended August 2018

Approved by Governors on 10th September 2018

Review by June 2019