

St Joseph's Primary School



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Reviewed: April 2017

Ratified by Governors: September 2017

To be reviewed: April 2018

Child Protection Ethos

We in St Joseph's Primary School have a responsibility for the pastoral care, 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 aware of the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action that is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected.

The over-riding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child. The welfare of each child is of paramount consideration.

Principles

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance "Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection" (DENI Circular 99/10) and the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

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

- It is a child's right to 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 need to 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 consideration.
- 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.

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:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Policy for Promoting and Sustaining Good Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Attendance Policy

- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT and E Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Intimate Care Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

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

School Safeguarding Team 2016/2017

The following are members of the school's Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher: Mrs Michelle Connolly
- Deputy Designated Teacher: Mrs Nuala O'Hare

- Acting Principal: Mrs Pauline Fleming
- Designated Governor for Child Protection: Mrs Anne Cormican
- Chair of the Board of Governors: Mrs Eileen Cooley

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role.
- Organise training for all staff (whole school training)
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents
- Make referrals to Social Services Gateway Team or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate.
- Liaise with the Education Authority's (EA) Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns
- Keep the school Principal informed
- Provide a written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

The Principal

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI 1999/10 guidance is implemented within the school

- Attend training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- A designated teacher and deputy designated teachers are appointed.
- All staff receive child protection training
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner.
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed
- Child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates and annual report are provided.
- The school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this policy at least once every 2 years.
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the Board of Governors on a need to know basis.
- Safeguarding team meet regularly

The Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Designated Governor should avail of child protection awareness training delivered by CPSSS and will take the lead in child protection issues 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 Teacher's report
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff

The Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- Ensure that he/she has received appropriate Education Authority training
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- Ensure that the school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment and selection training provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools {CPSSS} and the Governor Support and Human Resource Departments.
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the Principal
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity

Other Members of School Staff

Staff in school see children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse. They should remember the 5 R's:

Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer

The member of staff must:

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- Act promptly
- Make a considered written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (Appendix 1 – forms available from either the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher))
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children.
- *Not* give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- *Not* investigate
- *Not* ask leading questions

In addition the Class Teacher should:

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians should play their part in safeguarding by:

- Telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation.
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school
- Letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home
- Familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet and Child Protection Policies
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school
- Raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the school

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors must ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities in keeping with current legislation and DE guidance including:

- Having a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually
- Having a staff code of conduct for all adults working in the school
- Attendance at relevant training by governors and that up-to-date training records are maintained

- The vetting of all staff and volunteers

What Is Child Abuse

Definition of Abuse

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards a child.

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

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 a severe and persistent adverse effect on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Neglect is the persistent failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it is adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often suffer from other types of abuse.

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing.

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.

Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People – Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual

assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

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

Domestic Violence: 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

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.

The Responsibility of Staff

Procedures for Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse

All staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals.

Appendix 2 outlines the procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff.

- When teachers see signs that cause concern they should, as a first step, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a classroom assistant or another member of the school's ancillary or auxiliary staff sees such signs, he/she should immediately bring them to the attention of either, Mrs Connolly as the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or in his absence, Mrs Nuala O'Hare, as the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, or The Principal.
- Staff must take care in asking and interpreting children's responses to questions about indications of abuse. Staff should not ask leading questions

or questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events or which impose the adult's own assumptions.

- If a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, the member of staff must act promptly and follow the "5R" Principles.

How to Respond To a Disclosure – The '5 R' Principles

Receive

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the child is saying without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is being said
- Be discreet

Reassure

- Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable, for example, **do not** make promises you may not be able to keep, such as 'I'll stay with you' or 'everything will be all right now'.
- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to report. Explain that you will need to get some **help** to deal with what you have been told.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it.

Respond

- Respond only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details or make the child repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Do not ask leading questions for example, 'What did she/he do next?' or 'Did she/he touch you?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence and the child's in any later investigation or prosecution.
- Do ask open questions like 'anything else to tell me?', 'Yes?' or 'And?'
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator, as the child or young person may love her/him.
- Do explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.

Record

- Make some notes at the time on any paper that comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes.
- Using the **Child Protection Reporting Form (Appendix 1)**, record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour observations and the words used. If the child uses 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words. Any injuries or bruises noticed may be recorded on a diagram showing position and extent.
- Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.
- Note down when the suspicions were reported and to whom.

Refer

- Concerns about possible abuse must be referred as set out above **within the working day**. It is never suitable for staff to carry out any investigation. Remember to follow our guidelines and consult as appropriate.
- The chief task is to listen to the child and as soon as possible make a note of the discussion to pass on to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, but under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed. Any subsequent comments by the child, a parent, carer or adult about how the injury occurred should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used. A written record of disclosure or concerns must be kept at all times. Any issues or concerns should be logged in the *Class Record of Concern Book*. If these issues of concern are persistent then the information must be recorded in the Child Protection Reporting Form (Appendix 1) and passed to the DT/DDT.
- Staff should not give a child any undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should reassure the child that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know. No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.
- A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff which gives rise for concern about possible child abuse. The member of staff should listen, take notes and advise the person making the complaint that the matter will be brought to the attention of Mrs Connolly, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Concerns should be reported immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. The Designated Teacher will discuss the child protection issue with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action and ensure that a written record is made in the School Child Protection Book, located in the school safe.

What happens next....?

- The Principal, DT and DDT will decide, whether in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that a 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 parents will be informed immediately.
- The Principal, DT and DDT may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Education Authority (EA) and CCMS's Designated Officer or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and an appropriate advice.

- The DT or DDT for Child Protection will contact Social Services regarding any referral and complete the UNOCINI Initial Assessment Referral Form-Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland.

All written correspondence will be marked 'Private and Confidential'.

- The Principal/DT or DDT for Child Protection will attend any Case Conferences organised by Social Services and will supply any relevant documentation or reports that are requested. Information from Case Conferences will be communicated to the Governors and appropriate staff on a need to know basis.
- The Principal/DT/DDT for Child Protection will be involved in the training and in-service work necessary for the effective implementation of Child Protection Procedures by all staff, including new members of staff.

Procedures for Making Complaints in Relation to Child Abuse

How a Parent Can Report Concerns

If a parent is concerned about their child or another child's safety or well-being they should follow the steps outlined in **Appendix 2a**.

Appendix 2b outlines the procedures for reporting an incident of child abuse.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the Designated Teacher or in his/her absence the Deputy Designated Teacher.

It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible abuse cannot be held in confidence. In the best interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be told.

Complaints Against Members of Staff

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal must be informed immediately. Any complaints will be recorded in the "Complaints Against Staff" book located in the school safe.

Appendix 3 outlines the procedures to follow when a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff.

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

Complaints Against The Principal

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the designated Teacher for child Protection must be informed immediately. The complaint will be recorded in the “Complaints Against Staff” book located in the school safe. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

Appendix 3 outlines the procedures to follow when a complaint has been made against the Principal.

Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust. They will provide a written report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. Feedback will be given to staff under the ‘need to know’ principle on a case-by-case basis. Children whose names are on the Child Protection Register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the child protection plan.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held “in confidence”. In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected, schools, have a legal duty to refer to the statutory agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a ‘need to know’ basis. Should a child transfer to another school whilst there are current child protection concerns we will share these concerns with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Record Keeping

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked cupboard. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by members of the safeguarding team.

Vetting Procedures

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

Code of Conduct For all Staff Paid or Unpaid

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach. The school's code of conduct is available on request.

Staff Training

St. Joseph's 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 Teachers, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for child Protection will also attend relevant child protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support Service for School.

When new staff or volunteers start at the school they are briefed on the school's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of these policies.

The Preventative Curriculum

Throughout the school year, child protection issues are addressed through class and whole school assemblies and there is a permanent child protection notice board in the main corridor 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 staff room.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- ✓ Anti-bullying week
- ✓ E-safety/Internet Safety
- ✓ Anti-smoking awareness
- ✓ Healthy eating and lifestyle awareness
- ✓ PDMU
- ✓ Love for Life events
- ✓ PSNI initiatives
- ✓ Fire safety talks
- ✓ Road Safety
- ✓ Cycling Proficiency Scheme
- ✓ Evacuation drills
- ✓ Awareness events for parents (eg E safety)
- ✓ Safety in the Sun

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in St Joseph's 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 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher.

Policy Drafted: April 2017

Ratified by Governors on: _____

Review Date: September 2017

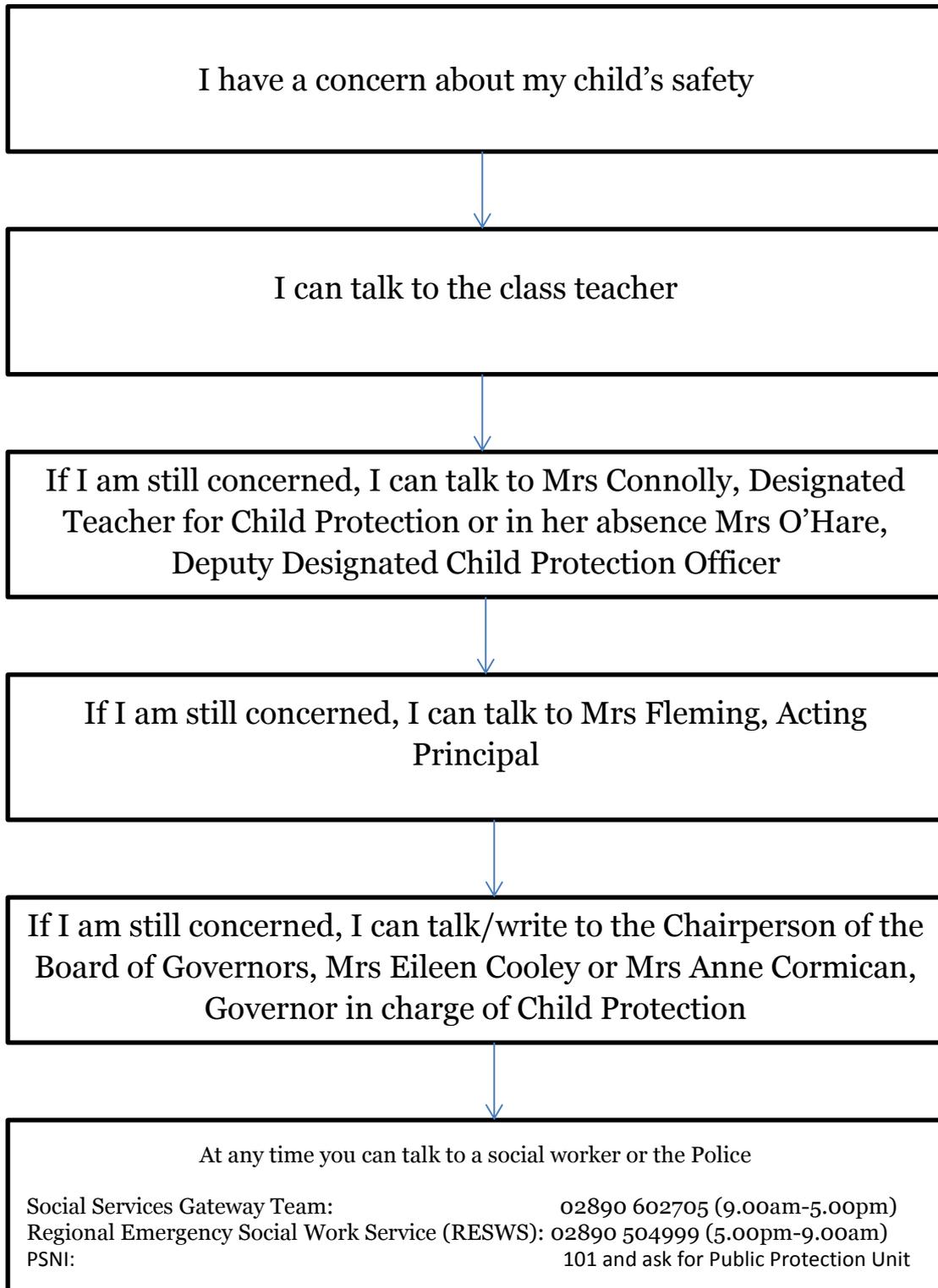
Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 2a

CHILD PROTECTION

HOW A PARENT CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT OR RAISE A CONCERN



Appendix 2b

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL'S STAFF

*The Designated Teacher (DT) for Child Protection is Mrs Connolly
Mrs O'Hare is the Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection*

Designated teachers should be contacted for all child protection matters

Procedures for Reporting an Incident of Child Abuse

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

Member of staff does not investigate but listens carefully to child and records what the child has to say.

MEMBER OF STAFF MUST ACT PROMPTLY

A written record of disclosure or concerns must be kept at all times. Any issues or concerns should be logged in the Class Record of Concern Book. If these issues of concern are persistent then the information must be recorded in the Child Protection Reporting Form (CPRF) and passed to the DT/DDT (**staff only**).

If a disclosure is made it must be recorded in the CPRF immediately and passed to the DT/DDT. Record the name of the child, date, time and place. It is very important to record the actual words used by the child. Any injuries or bruises noticed should also be recorded.

Member of Staff refers matter to DT/DDT. They will record disclosure or concerns in the child Protection Book which is located in the Child Protection Safe. The CPRF will also be kept in this book.

DT/DDT will meet with the Principal, Mrs Fleming, to plan a course of action and ensure that a written record is made.

If there is any doubt whether to take further action, advice will be sought from:

- Social Services – Gateway Team 02890 602705 (9.00am-5.00pm) or
- Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS) 02890 5049999 – Out of Hours
- CCMS Senior Management Officer (Schools) 02890 426972
- EA Designated Officer 02890 566434

When seeking advice names of those involved in the disclosure or concerns will not be given. It is only an enquiry.

Principal/DT/DDT makes referral to **Social Services Gateway Team** using the **UNOCINI** Initial Assessment Referral Form.

Copies of UNOCINI to:

- CCMS Senior Management Officer (Schools)
- EA Designated Officer. Indicate that it is a Child Protection issue in an envelope marked '**CONFIDENTIAL**'

If further action is needed

Other Actions:

- Record advice given
- Maintain regular contact with Social Services
- Monitor
- Review

Appendix 3

PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT T POSSIBLE ABUSE BY A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL'S STAFF

