

# ***TANNAGHMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL***



## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

## **1. Child Protection Ethos**

We in Tannaghmore P.S. 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.

As a school we aim to protect our children by helping them to learn about the possible risks of abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour from others and guiding them to acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe whenever necessary. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert 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**

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 (NI) guidance “Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools” (Circular 2017/04) and the Area Child Protection Committees’ Regional Policy and Procedures(2005).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides that:

*“children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.”*

Whilst the statutory responsibility for the protection of children rests with Health and Social Services and P.S.N.I., it is consistent with the aims and objectives of Catholic education that all teachers have a duty to help protect children from abuse or the risk of abuse.

Additional to their statutory responsibilities in relation to pupils’ learning, members of staff in Tannaghmore Primary School acknowledge their pastoral responsibility towards pupils, and recognise that the children in their charge have a fundamental right to be protected from all harm.

The school has developed a child protection ethos which it supports through a preventative curriculum delivered by the staff in each classroom. By delivering this curriculum the staff become more aware of the dangers and their own role in protecting the children and themselves from harm.

We offer protection on two levels:

- Immediate protection by creating a listening environment which makes it easier for children to share their concerns and worries.
- Long term protection by enhancing self esteem, encouraging social skills, providing children with prevention strategies for self protection and skills for dealing with difficult or threatening situations.

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

- It is a child's right to always feel safe, 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:

- Attendance
- Positive Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Health and Safety
- Pastoral Care
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers
- Assessment
- ICT and Acceptable Use
- Intimate Care
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Use of Reasonable Force (Safe Handling)
- Educational Visits
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Drugs 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.tannaghmore.reps.com](http://www.tannaghmore.reps.com) and are reviewed at least every three years or as specified in relevant guidance.

### **4. School Safeguarding Team**

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher (**Mrs Anne Davey**)
- Deputy Designated Teachers (**Mrs Una McCreesh & Mrs Sharon Coaker**)
- Principal (**Ms Paula Harbinson**)

- Designated Governor for Child Protection (**Gerard Haddock**)
- Chair of the Board of Governors (**Alison Moriarty**)

The team may also co-opt other members of staff as required to help address specific issues.

## **5. Roles And Responsibilities**

### **5.1 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.
- Induction and training of all staff including support 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.
- Be available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff.
- 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 .
- Maintain a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Hub Services.
- Liaise with the Southern Education & Library Board's Designated Officers for Child Protection.
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns.
- Keep the School Principal informed.
- Promote a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.
- Provide an annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

### **5.2 The Principal**

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI Circular 2017/04 is implemented within the school.
- A designated teacher and deputy are appointed.
- All staff receive child protection training.
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner.
- The Chairman of the Board of Governors (and, when appropriate, the Board of Governors) is kept informed.
- Child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates and an annual report are provided.
- 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.
- Take the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

### 5.3 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.

### 5.4 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 and selection training.
- 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.
- Ensure that child protection records are kept and for signing and dating the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries.

### 5.5 Other Members of School Staff

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

**The member of staff must:**

- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection;
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child;
- care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to, questions about indications of abuse therefore staff **must not** ask leading questions as this can be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind;
- act promptly;
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child using the Note of Concern (**Appendix 1**);
- 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.

**In addition the Class Teacher should:**

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed 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 including disclosures of domestic violence.

## **5.6 Parents**

**Parents should play their part in Child Protection by:**

- telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence.
- informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school.
- informing the school if the child has a medical condition or educational need.
- sharing information if there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- informing the school of any change in a child's circumstances for example – a change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home or if there is a change in arrangements about who brings their child to or from school.
- familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour 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.

## **5.7 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.
- confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to an entire Board of Governors on a need-to-know basis.

## 5.8 Operation Encompass

- Operation Encompass is a new initiative which allows for the sharing of information between PSNI and the school, after incidents of reported domestic abuse, when a child has been present. This initiative will allow for the effective and immediate sharing of **relevant** information through a telephone call from a PSNI officer and an Operation Encompass-trained member of the safeguarding team of the school, usually on the morning following the incident.
- The purpose of this communication is to allow for the appropriate pastoral supports to be put in place for the child affected for any appropriate period required. All information will be treated, as with all Safeguarding information, with the strictest of confidence and the trained member of Millburn staff will only share what they deem to be minimally appropriate with the child's class teacher.
- Those members of staff accredited to accept PSNI Operation Encompass calls are as listed in our Arrangements for Reporting Abuse in School section of this policy.

## 6. What Is Child Abuse?

### 6.1 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.

### 6.2 Types of Abuse

Child abuse may take a number of forms, including:

**Physical Abuse** is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include 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 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.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet 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.

**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.

**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.

Although 'exploitation' is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register, professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of these forms of abuse.

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.

## **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 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. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case.

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.

Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments, and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared.

Those working or volunteering with children or young people should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming and take early action in line with their child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs.

Practitioners should be aware that those involved in grooming may themselves be children or young people and be acting under the coercion or influence of adults. Such young people must be considered victims of those holding power over them. Careful consideration should always be given to any punitive approach or 'criminalising' young people who may, themselves, still be victims and/or acting under duress, control, threat, the fear of, or actual violence. In consultation with the PSNI and where necessary the PPS, HSC professionals must consider whether children used to groom others should be considered a child in need or requiring protection from significant harm.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE 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. 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. Although younger children can experience 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 children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, the majority of CSE victims are living at home.

### **Identifying CSE**

CSE can be very difficult to identify and a young person may not see themselves as a victim. However, it is our statutory responsibility to protect all children and young people from abuse, irrespective of whether or not they view themselves as a victim of abuse.

Professionals need to be able to identify vulnerability in the midst of challenging behaviour and frequent resistance to, or even apparent disregard for, professional support. Schools should be alert to the likelihood of CSE and plan to protect children and young people accordingly.

### **Potential indicators of CSE:**

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation.
- Truancy/leaving school without permission.
- Persistently going missing or returning late.
- Receiving lots of texts/ phone calls prior to leaving.
- Change in mood - agitated/stressed.
- Appearing distraught/dishevelled or under the influence of substances.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age.
- Physical symptoms e.g. bruising; bite marks.
- Collected from school by unknown adults or taxis.
- New peer groups.
- Significantly older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours.
- Low self-esteem.
- Change in personal hygiene (greater attention or less).
- Self harm and other expressions of despair.
- Evidence or suspicion of substance abuse.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours.

While these indicators can be useful in identifying potential risk, their presence does not necessarily mean CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence mean it is not.

### **What to Do**

CSE is a form of child abuse and, as such, any member of staff suspecting that CSE is occurring should follow the school child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

### **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse 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 age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).’

Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual’s incapacity to give informed consent.

## **Female Genital Mutilation**

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 female 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 in later 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.

In the UK, FGM has been a specific criminal offence since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 replaced the 1985 Act in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Serious Crime Act 2015 further strengthened the law on FGM.

## **Children who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour**

When abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the procedures outlined in section 7 of this policy will be followed. It is important in such situations to distinguish between behaviours which are experimental in nature and those that are exploitative and harmful. Advice and support will be sought in such circumstances from the Education Authority’s Designated Officer for Child Protection and where appropriate a referral made to the statutory agencies. In all such cases a risk assessment will be undertaken and an individual support and safety plan identified. Appropriate services will also be provided for the children involved. The above guidance follows DE Circular 2016/05 subject Children Who Display Harmful Sexualized Behaviour.

## **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 consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in schools and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

Schools 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.

For further information around E-Safety and use of digital technologies in school please refer to the school's E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy which is available on request or via the school website.

### **6.3 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators**

#### **Physical Abuse**

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

#### **Emotional Abuse**

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

#### **Neglect**

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

## **6.3 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators**

### **Sexual Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs;  bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas;  torn, stained or bloody underclothes;  chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches;  difficulty in walking or sitting;  frequent urinary infections;  avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers;  unexplained pregnancies where the identify of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating.</p>	<p>What the child tells you;  Withdrawn; chronic depression;  excessive sexual precociousness;  seductiveness;  children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality;  parent/child role reversal;  over concerned for siblings;  poor self esteem; self devaluation;  lack of confidence; peer problems;  lack of involvement;  massive weight change;  suicide attempts (especially adolescents);  hysterical/angry outbursts;  lack of emotional control;  sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour;  inappropriate sex play;  repeated attempts to run away from home;  unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories;  vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity;  exposure to pornographic material.</p>

## **7. Procedures for Making Complaints in Relation to Child Abuse**

### **7.1 How a Parent Can Raise a Concern**

At Tannaghmore 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**.

### **7.2 Where The School Has Concerns Or Has Been Given Information About Possible Abuse By Someone Other Than A Member Of The School Staff Including Volunteers**

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate – this is a matter for Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the designated teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should

include details of the place and time and who was present and 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 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 will consult with the Principal and if required may consult with the Southern Education & Library Board's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. 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.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the designated teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. He/she will also notify the SELB 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.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

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

A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff of the school which gives rise to concern about possible abuse by someone outside the school, or by a person working in a volunteer capacity. The person making the complaint should be advised of their responsibility to refer to the local Health & Social Care Trust Gateway Team. The staff member should also inform the Designated Teacher responsible for child protection matters in the school who will refer, if necessary to the appropriate statutory authorities.

### **7.3 Where A Complaint Has Been Made About Possible Abuse By A Member Of The School's Staff Or A Volunteer**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or Designated teacher if he/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 the Designated Teacher will inform the Chairperson of The Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

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 the appropriate authorities). The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Child protection procedures as outlined in Appendix will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 4**.

## 7.4 Consent

Prior to making a referral to Social Services the consent of the parent/carer will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek such consent would put that child or others at increased risk of serious harm, or it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

In circumstances where the consent of the parent/carer has been sought and is withheld we will consider and where possible respect their wishes. However, our primary consideration must be the safety and welfare of the child and we will make a referral in cases where consent is withheld if we believe on the basis of the information available that it is in the best interests of the child to do so.

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

<b>Do:</b>	<b>Do not:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Listen to what the child says</li> <li>❖ Assure the child they are not at fault</li> <li>❖ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret</li> <li>❖ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words</li> <li>❖ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality</li> <li>❖ Stay calm</li> <li>❖ Listen</li> <li>❖ Accept</li> <li>❖ Reassure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ask leading questions.</li> <li>❖ Put words into the child's mouth.</li> <li>❖ Ignore the child's behaviour.</li> <li>❖ Remove any clothing.</li> <li>❖ Panic</li> <li>❖ Promise to keep secrets</li> <li>❖ Ask leading questions</li> <li>❖ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</li> <li>❖ Delay</li> <li>❖ Start to investigate</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Explain what you are going to do</li> <li>❖ Record accurately</li> <li>❖ Seek support for yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Do Nothing</b></li> </ul>
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### **8. 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 and 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.

At any case conference, the safeguarding team should only offer professional opinions based on their knowledge and experience. All opinions must be based on facts and be objective.

### **9. 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.

### **10. Record Keeping**

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked drawer. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal.

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.

## **11. Vetting Procedures**

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals access to children and vulnerable adults through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate.

DE Circular 2013/01 (updated September 2015) sets out vetting requirements for schools. In brief, the following groups must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from AccessNI **before** taking up post:

- All new **paid** teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Examination Invigilators.
- Private contracted transport providers - named drivers.

### **Volunteers**

There are two types of volunteers working in schools: those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision. Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, however, schools/ organisations must determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard - see DE Circular 2012/19.

Schools must ensure that volunteers, e.g. coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc, who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place.

### **Visitors to School**

Visitors to schools, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors should be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

#### **Visitors will be:**

- Met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- Granted access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.

## **Pupils on Work Experience**

Pupils coming into the school on work experience do not require AccessNI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal child protection induction processes will apply.

Those pupils undertaking Health and Social Care Programmes will require an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate for pupils on long term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/ shadowing placements.

## **12. Code Of Conduct For all Staff Paid Or Unpaid**

### **Conduct of Staff**

The protection and promotion of the welfare of children and young people is a responsibility for all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching. In meeting this, staff should work towards a culture of mutual trust and respect in school through which the best interests of the children and young people entrusted to their care is paramount.

Naturally, implicit in this is the assumption that the conduct of school staff towards their pupil group must be above reproach. This holds true whatever the age, gender, or developmental maturity of the pupils, but clearly the younger the child, or the greater the degree of learning difficulties he/she has, the less likely it will be that he/she will be able to recognise and respond appropriately to an abuse by any member of staff or the trust that his/her position confers.

Tannaghmore PS operates a Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers' Policy and adherence to the Code will reduce the risk of allegations being made.

The Code cannot address every possible circumstance in which staff might find themselves, however it is intended that staff will be mindful of the Code which will raise awareness of issues and situations which can potentially arise. In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for most employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their safe practice.

## **13. Staff Training**

Tannaghmore PS 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 every second-year 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 provided by the Child Protection Support service for Schools.

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.

#### **14. The Preventative Curriculum**

In the classroom, regular Circle Time and PDMU teaching 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 are posters on display around 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 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.
- Primary 7 pupils participate in the “Bee Safe” Activity Day which is run jointly by Health Promotion Agency and the Southern Health and Social Services Trust and involves all the emergency services. Primary 7 also take part in the “I’m Special, You’re Special” programme with the Love For Life team.
- Primary 7 children are given the opportunity to take part in a cycling proficiency course.
- Primary 4 to Primary 7 take part in Firework safety talk run by the PSNI.

#### **15. Monitoring And Evaluation**

The Safeguarding Team in Tannaghmore P.S. 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 reports from the Designated Teacher.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Date Policy Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Designated Teacher)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of Board of Governors)

**Appendix 1**

**PROFORMA**

**NOTE OF CONCERN**

Child Protection Record – Reports to Designated Teacher

Name of Pupil:
Year Group/Class:
Date, Time of Incident / Disclosure:
Circumstances of Incident / Disclosure:
Nature & Description of Concern:
Parties involved, including 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 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
If 'No' state reason:	
Date & 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:	

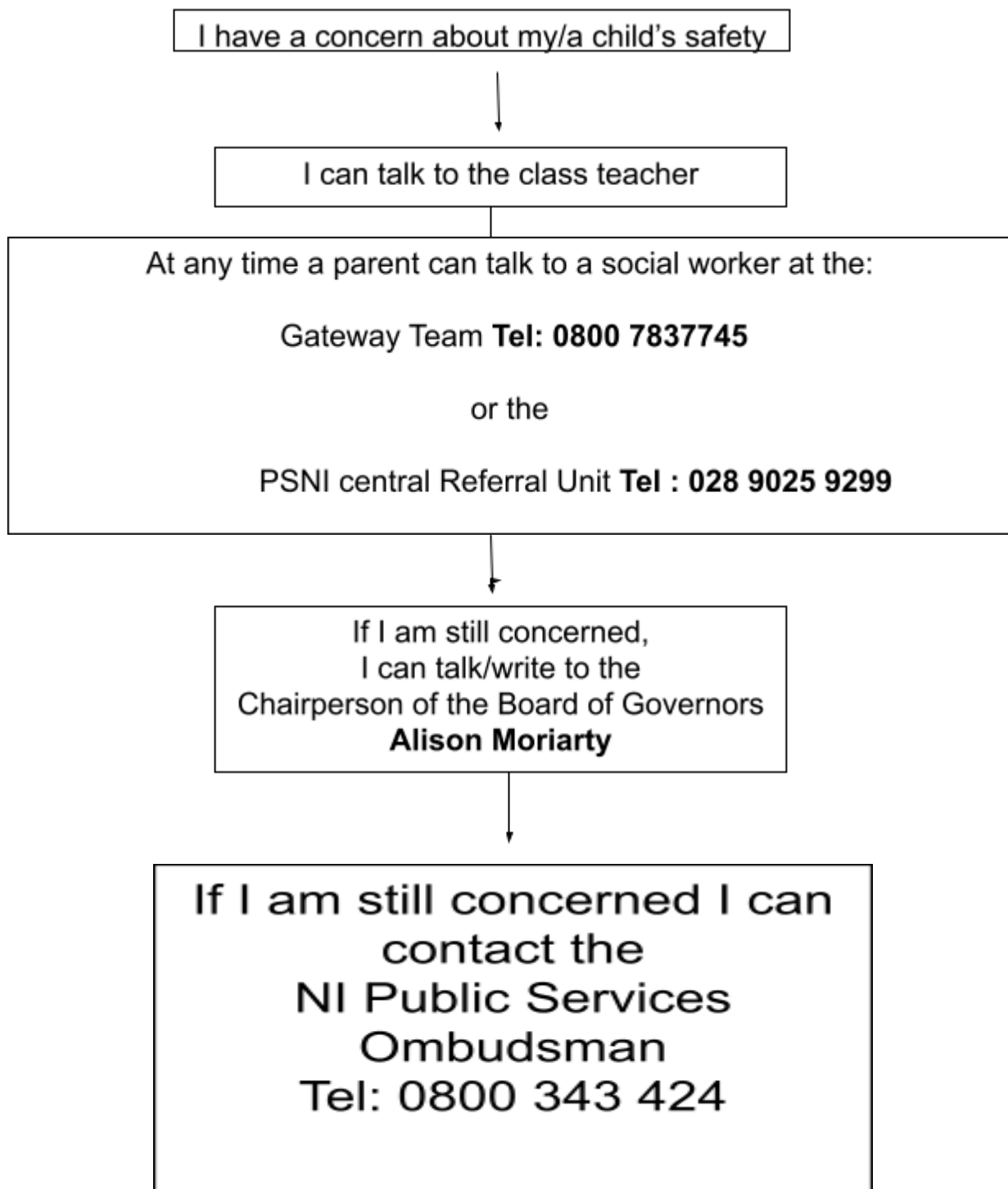
Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

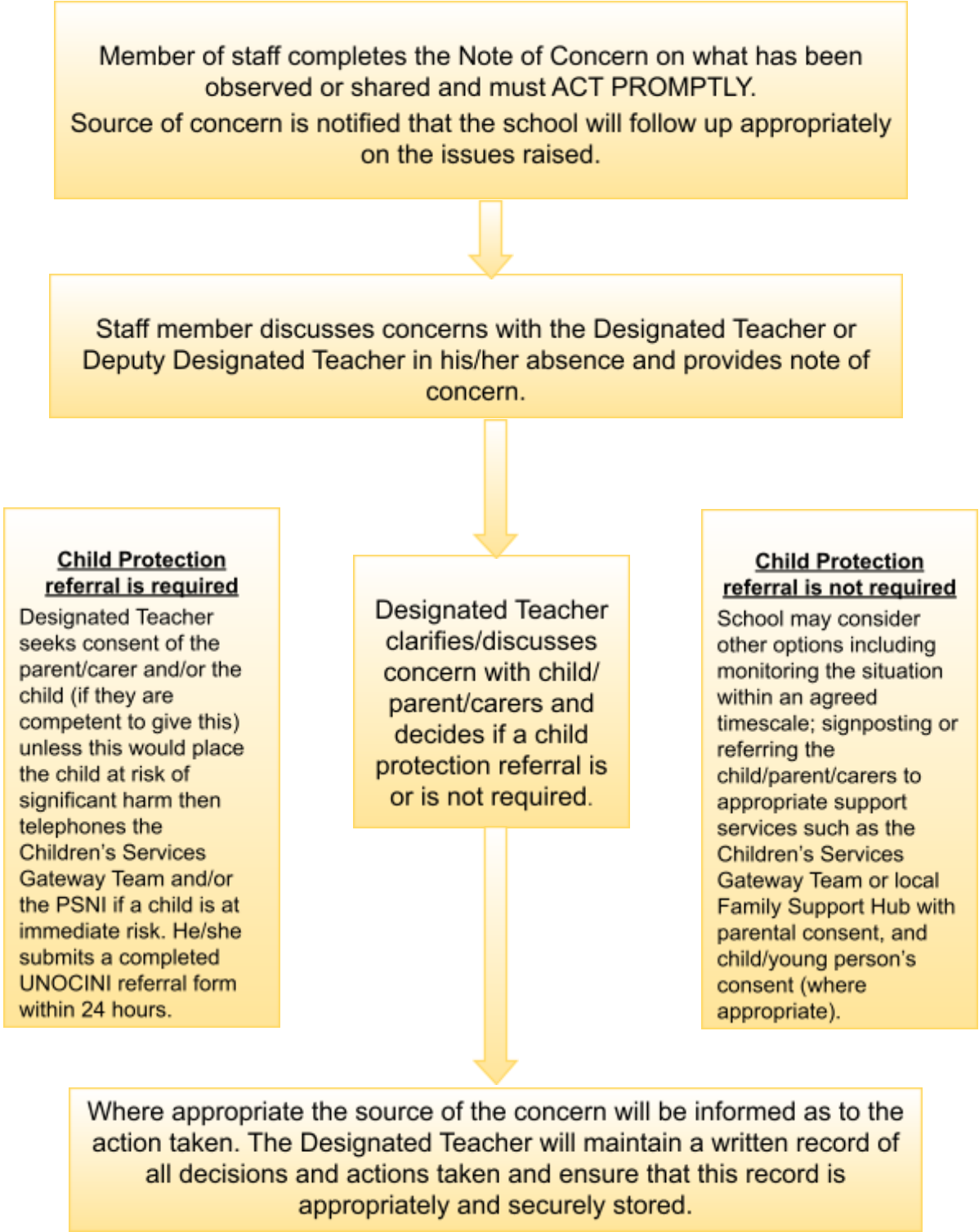
## Appendix 2

### How a Parent Can Make a Complaint



**Appendix 3 Processes for Referral are set out in the Flowcharts below:**

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



## Appendix 4

### Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

