

**HOLY FAMILY PRIMARY SCHOOL
MAGHERAFELT**



CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING

Policy Statement

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

School Ethos

Holy Family Primary School aims to provide a positive environment suited to all of the pupils entrusted to our care - an environment that is caring, supportive and safe and one in which each child feels welcome and respected. It is the aim of Holy Family P.S. to educate all our children in a stimulating environment where pupils enjoy their learning and are given the opportunity to realise their potential; academically, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Policy Statement

We at Holy Family Primary School acknowledge that along with outside agencies we have a statutory responsibility for the protection of children. It is consistent with the aims and objectives of our school that all staff have a duty to help protect children from abuse or the risk of abuse.

We aim to create a stimulating safe and happy environment which adapts to the needs of all pupils of all abilities and backgrounds.

We take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved. We have a pastoral responsibility for the children in our charge.

The child's welfare is of paramount importance.

The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school.

We are committed to supporting parents/carers in protecting children from harm i.e. ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development.

Necessary action in the interests of child welfare and safety will be considered and well-informed.

The right to confidentiality for parents, carers, teachers and children will be respected. Information will only be shared in the interests of the child's welfare.

Guiding Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- At all times, there must be a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach to commitment to protection, support and safeguarding of children from harm.
- Each agency involved must have an understanding of each other's professional values and accept each other's role, powers and responsibilities.
- Any actions taken by agencies must be considered and well informed so that they are sensitive to and take account of the child's gender, age, stage of development, religious culture and race.
- The right of confidentiality for parents, carers, teachers and children must be respected and information will only be shared in the interests of the child's welfare.

Safeguarding Team

In Holy Family PS there is a Safeguarding Team that deals with all matters of Child Protection. The team is made up of:

Mr Ciaran Purvis – Chairperson BOG

Mrs Dana Doyle – BOG

Mr Peter Donnelly – Principal/ Deputy Designated Teacher Child Protection

Mrs Catherine Mulholland – Vice Principal/ Designated Teacher Child Protection

Designated Teacher

The designated teacher dealing with and leading all matters of child protection in Holy Family Primary School and Nursery Unit is **Mrs Catherine Mulholland** and in her absence **Mr Peter Donnelly and Mrs Mary Monaghan (Nursery)**.

In the absence of the above all other members of Senior Management Team will assume responsibility.

Role of the Designated Teachers

The designated teachers have responsibilities for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of child protection procedures, including internal school arrangements;
- Responsible for discussing child protection concerns of any member of the school/support staff and keeping all records;
- Co-ordinating action by teachers in cases of suspected bullying or child abuse and, in conjunction with the Principal, reporting to the appropriate agencies, the chair of the Governors and Senior Management Officer (CCMS)
- Ensuring that the school's EWO is aware of children in care or on the Child Protection Register;
- Monitoring pupils whose names are on the Child Protection Register;
- Taking the lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy;

What is Child Abuse?

“Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, 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.....” (ACPC Regional Policy and Procedure, Chapter 2)

There are four categories of abuse

- Neglect
- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual

The staff of Holy Family Primary School adhere to the definitions outlined by ACPC Regional Policy and Procedure (Chapter 2) of each category of abuse.

Definition of Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to cause significant harm.
- It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision.
- It may also include non-organic failure to thrive.

Definition of Emotional Abuse

- Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's development.
- It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as he meets the needs of another person.
- It may involve causing a child to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional harm.

Definition of Physical Abuse

- 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, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriate giving of drugs to control behaviour.

Definition of Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.
- They may involve non contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Signs and Symptoms

The following illustrations outline common indicators of abuse and neglect. These signs are not a checklist but guidance. Indeed, many of them could have other explanations. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises or burns particularly if they are recurrent
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries

Behavioural Indicators

- Self destructive tendencies
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Chronic runaway
- Aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of returning home
- Reluctant to have physical contact
- Clothing inappropriate to weather - worn to hide part of the body

Neglect

Physical Indicators

- Constant hunger
- Poor state of clothing and/or personal hygiene
- Untreated medical problems
- Emaciation/distended stomach
- Constant tiredness

Behavioural Indicators

- Tiredness, listlessness
- Lack of social relationships
- Compulsive stealing, begging or scavenging
- Frequently absent or late
- Low self-esteem

Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators

- Sudden speech disorder
- Signs of mutilation
- Signs of solvent abuse (e.g. Mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness)
- Wetting and/or soiling
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Poor peer relationships

Behavioural Indicators

- Neurotic behaviour (e.g. Rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Reluctance for parent liaison
- Fear of new situations
- Chronic runaway
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations

Sexual Abuse

Signs and Symptoms

- personality change
- feelings of guilt
- depression
- aggression
- eating disorders
- withdrawn
- insecurity
- seeking male/female attention
- explicit drawings/language
- sexualised behaviour
- promiscuity

Bullying

In Holy Family Primary School bullying is also viewed as a form of abuse. 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 bullying behaviour is identified.

Any complaint by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be initially dealt with by the class teacher. If a serious incident has been noted this will be brought to the respective Key Stage Co-ordinators/Vice-principal. If deemed necessary the Principal will be notified. This will usually include ensuring that another child or small group of children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day. A parent making a serious complaint about bullying will have a personal response from a member of the Senior Management Team within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action being taken. (*Refer Anti-Bullying Policy*)

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of any privileges or position of responsibility he/she holds in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

The Responsibility of staff

All staff need to know

- How to identify signs and symptoms of abuse
 - What the relevant Child Protection procedures are
 - How to talk to children about whom there are concerns
 - Know who the designated and deputy designated teachers are.
-
- Where staff members see signs which cause them concern, they should, as a first step seek some discreet preliminary clarification from the child with tact and understanding. **DO NOT INVESTIGATE.**
 - Non-teaching staff should bring their concerns to the attention of a member of the teaching staff or the designated teacher.

Seeking Clarification

Care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to questions about indications of abuse. The same considerations apply when a child makes an allegation of abuse, or volunteers information which amounts to that. In some cases, talking to the child will crystallise initial concerns into a suspicion that abuse has occurred, and point to the need for an immediate referral. Staff should therefore be aware that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings.

**Do not ask the child leading questions - may be interpreted as putting ideas
into the pupil's mind.**

NOTE: No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be given where abuse is alleged.

**PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW WHEN AN ACCUSATION IS
MADE OR THERE IS A SUSPICION OF ABUSE**

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse:

- Do not agree to keep it a secret.
- Tell the child that you want to help and may need to tell someone who can help.
- Do not suggest a reason for what has happened to them.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing to talk about it.

**IMMEDIATELY AFTER A DISCLOSURE OR AFTER YOU SUSPECT ABUSE
HAS OCCURRED:**

- Using Child Protection Disclosure Record, (Refer Appendix 1) write down your suspicions or make a contemporaneous note of the words spoken, and also note the demeanour of the child including a note of when and where disclosure took place.
- Report it immediately to the Designated Teacher along with the completed record sheet.

The steps for Managing a Disclosure are:

RECEIVE

- Stay calm
- No promise of confidentiality can or should be made were abuse is alleged
- Tell the pupil that you want to help and may need to tell someone who can help
- Listen
- Do not ask leading questions
- Do not suggest a reason for what has happened
- Take factual notes if possible or as soon as possible afterwards.

REASSURE

- Reassure the pupil that he/she has done the right thing to have talked about it
- Affirm feelings and explain the process.

RESPOND

- Take action to ensure that the child is safe and secure

RECORD

Complete Incident Referral Form using factual language

If appropriate describe signs of abuse – pupil's clothing should never be removed

Take note of any indication of stress.

REPORT

IMMEDIATELY AFTER DISCLOSURE OR AFTER YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

HAS OCCURRED: Report it immediately to the Designated Teacher -Mrs Mulholland or in her absence to Mr Donnelly the Deputy Designated Teacher

Give the completed referral to the above, where it will be filled in the Vice-Principal's office.

The Procedures to follow for making a Referral:

The Designated Teacher:

- Will consult with the Principal, members of the Safeguarding Team and together will agree the subsequent action and who will undertake it
- May along with the Principal seek discreet preliminary clarification
- May seek advice from the Designated Officer for Child Protection at NEELB, and or Senior Management Officer CCMS, Gateway Team or Social Services
- If needed make a referral to Social Services – using UNOCINI or to the Public Protection Unit
- Will inform parents that a referral is being made
- Will forward copies of the referral to both NEELB and CCMS
- Will continue to liaise with all relevant agencies
- Will up-date the pupil's records accordingly (Refer Appendix 2)

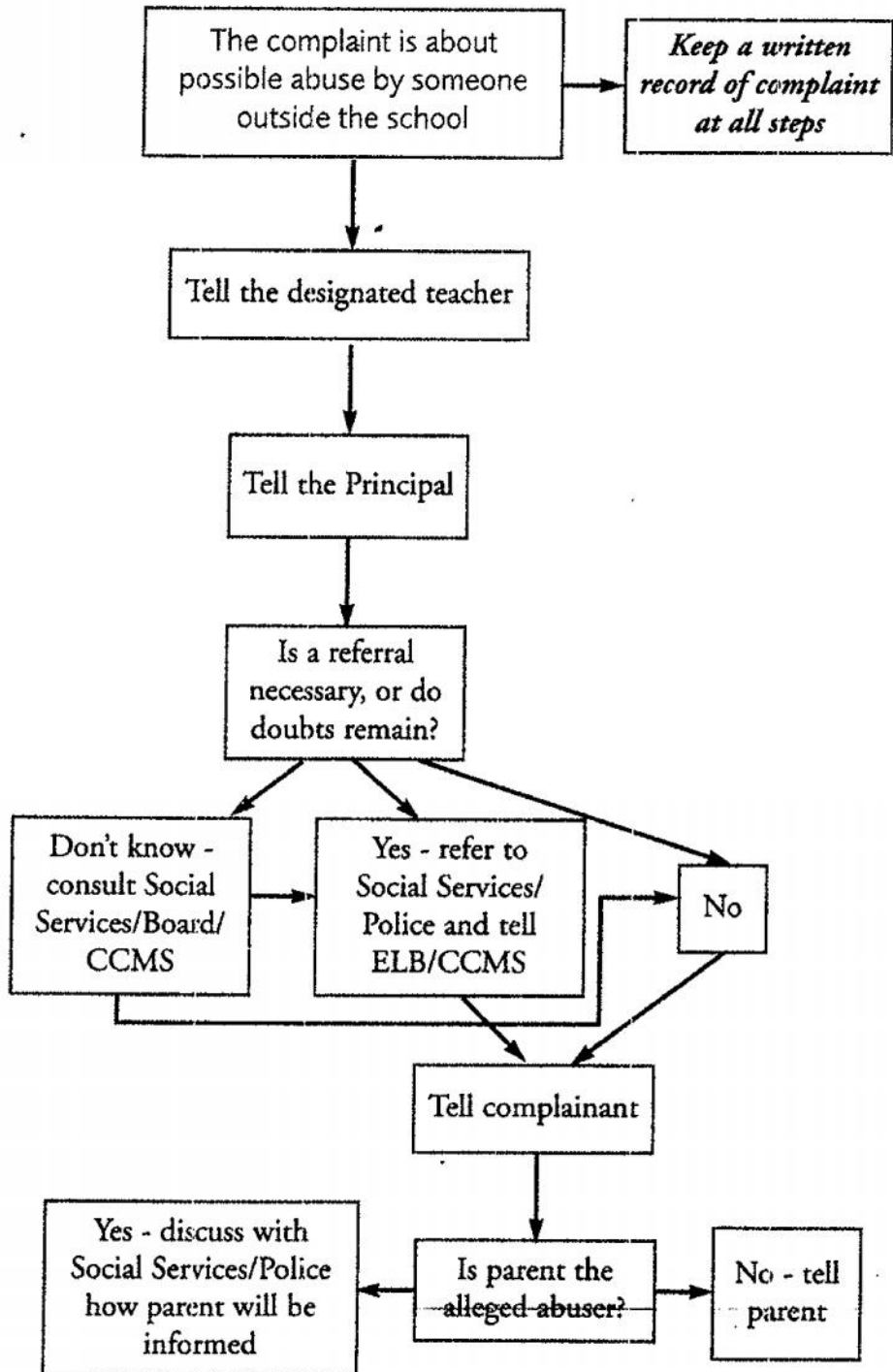
Investigation

The only agencies who will investigate concerns are:

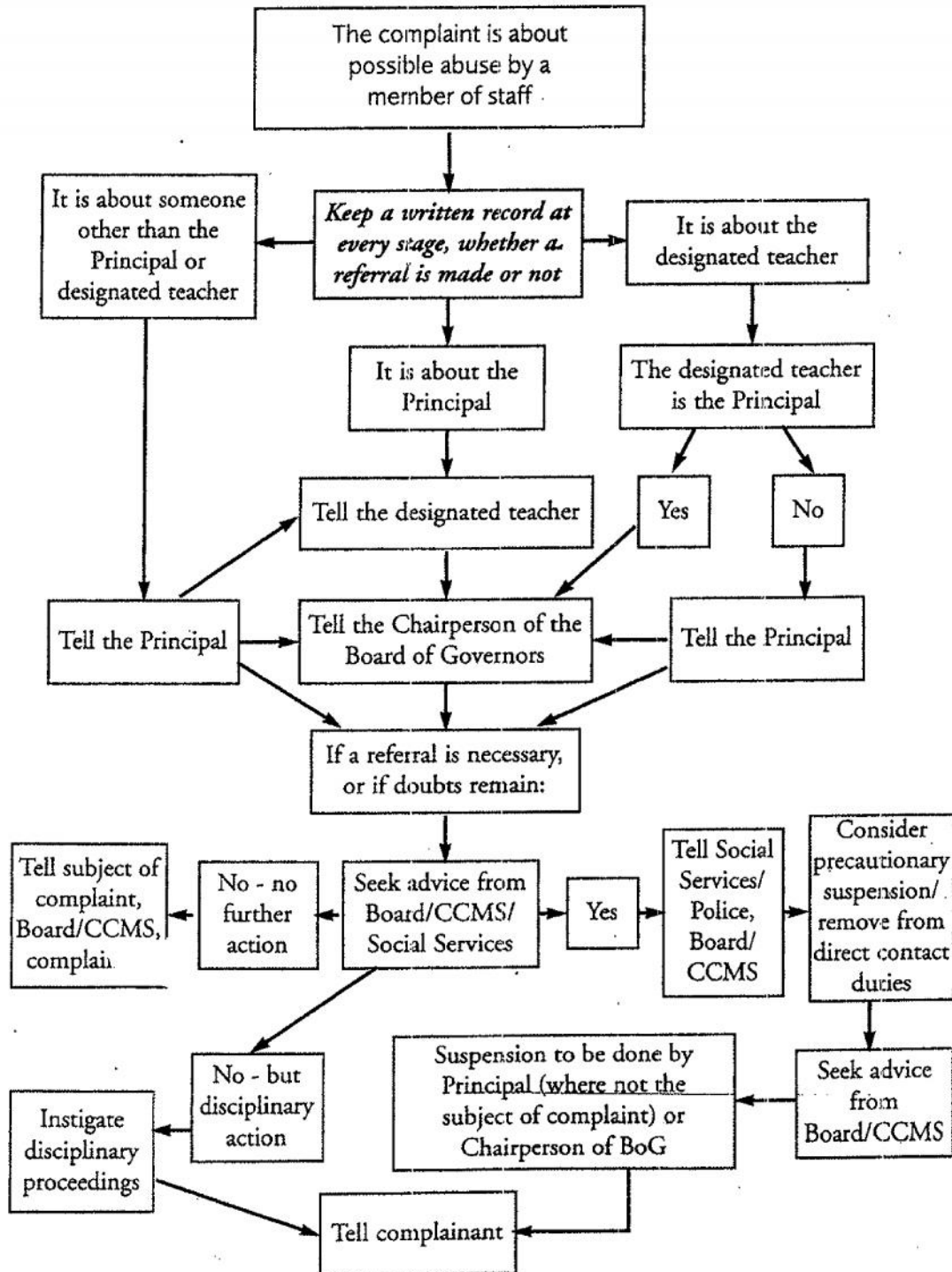
Social Services

Public Protection Unit (PSNI)

If a case of child abuse is suspected the following diagram shows the correct procedure to follow.

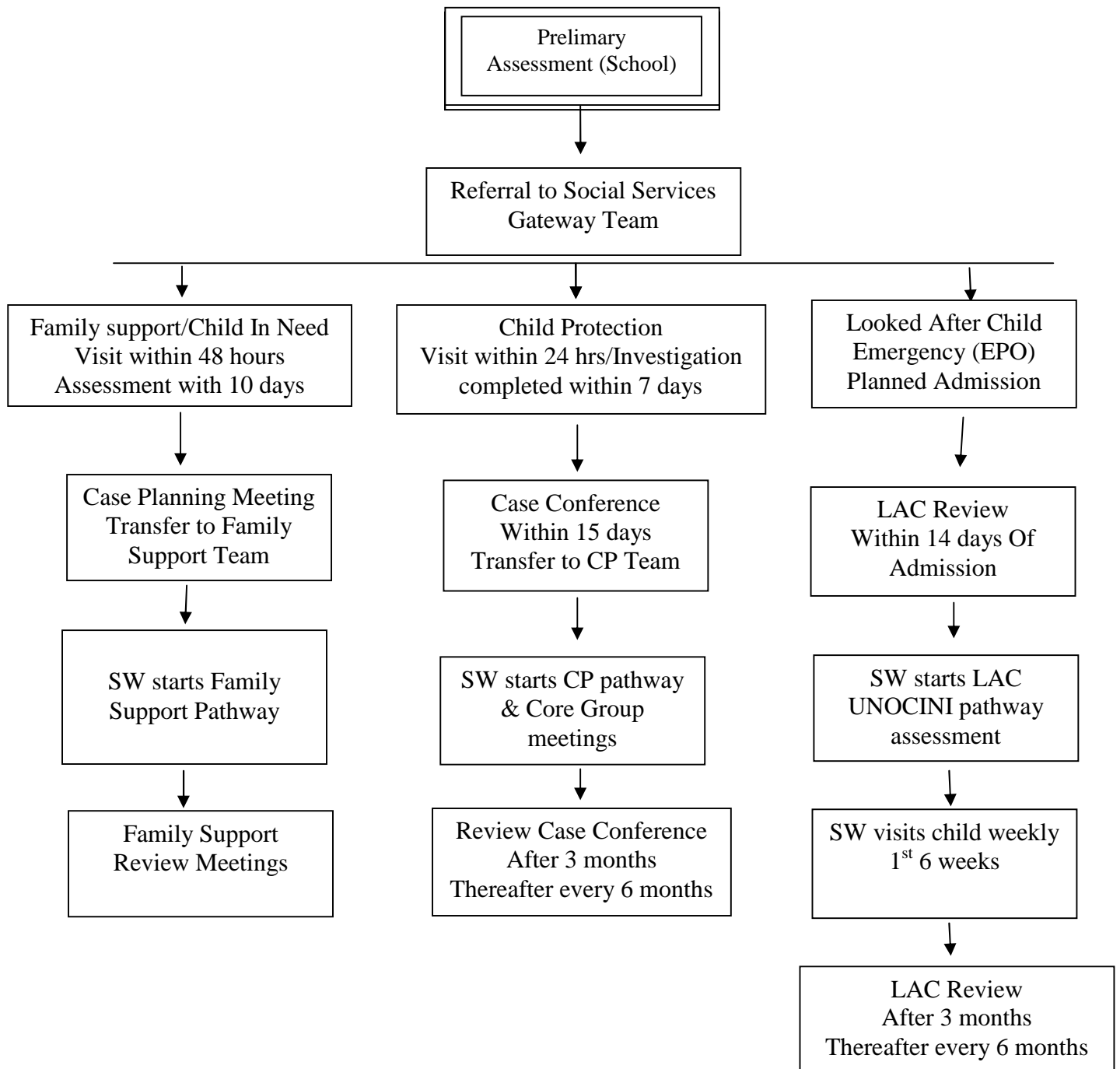


Procedures to follow where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff.

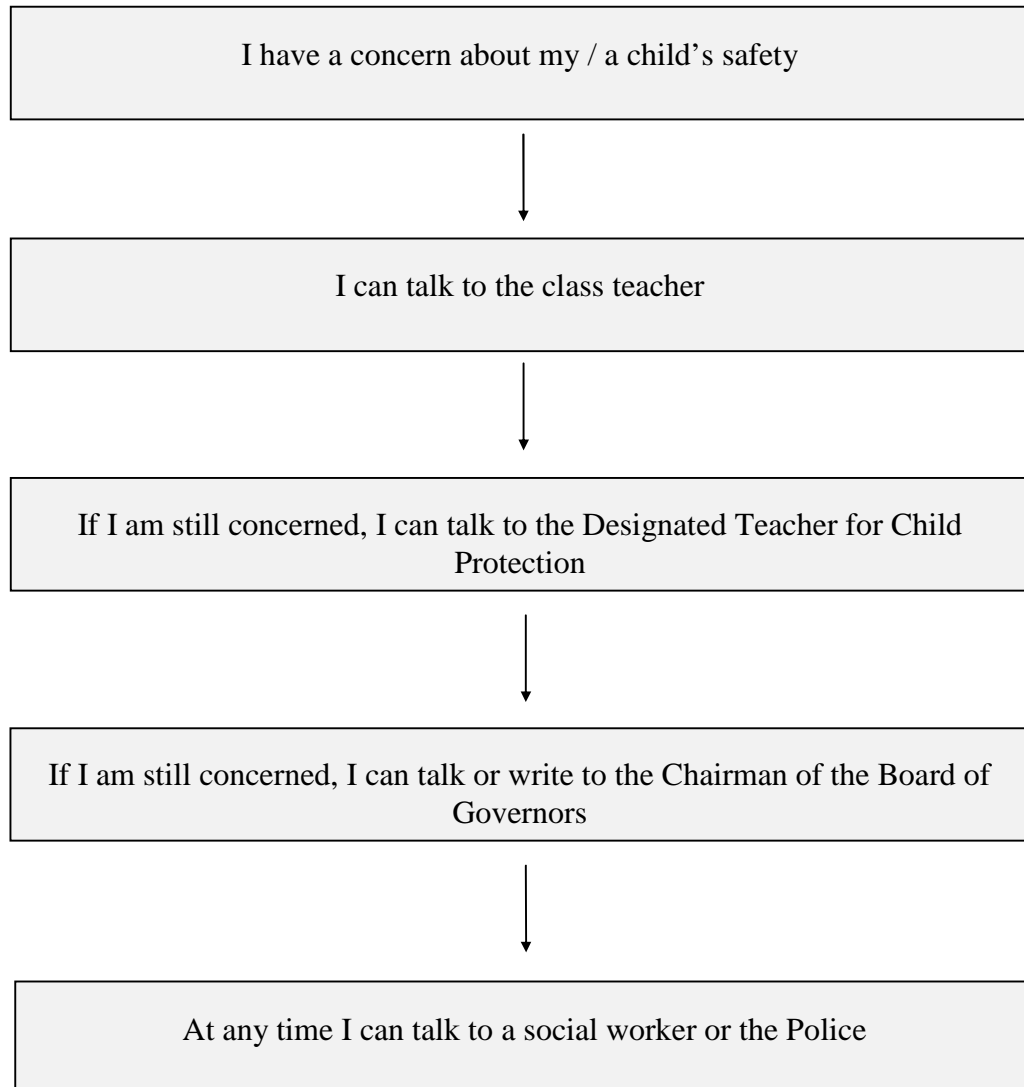


What Happens After a Referral is Made Roles of Other Agencies

The welfare of the child is paramount and the following interagency procedures are intended to ensure a prompt and co-ordinated response to any referral.



Procedure showing how a parent can make a complaint



Designated Teacher:

Mrs. C. Mulholland

Deputy Designated Teacher:

Mr. P. Donnelly

Statutory Responsibilities

In Holy Family Primary School we recognise and adhere to our statutory responsibilities to ensure that all children feel both safe and protected in the school environment. The welfare of the child is paramount.

All staff adheres to the following procedures.

Vetting

All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks. Procedures for the recruitment of all staff are in line with DENI, CCMS and Access NI - New Guidelines for Criminal Record Checking, as part of the new Disclosure and barring Arrangements (DBA –Sept 2012) guidance is followed by the school.

All staff/volunteers will be vetted accordingly.

Substitute Teachers

On arrival to the school all first time substitute teachers will be provided with a copy of the day to day school routines and expectations of their duties. A summary leaflet of the Child Protection Policy will also be given – outlining the procedures to follow if a disclosure or signs of abuse have been noted.

Volunteers

Volunteers to the school will have been vetted before commencing any duties. On arrival to the school they will attend a meeting an induction meeting with the Designated Teacher for Child Protection – addressing school policies and procedures as well as outlining Child Protection procedures.

All staff/volunteers to the school will be furnished with a copy of the Child Protection Policy or Summary leaflet, in which they have clear guidance on the action which is required, where abuse of a child is suspected or if a disclosure has been made.

Code of Conduct

The staff of our school have adopted and agreed to a Code of Conduct for behaviour towards pupils. (Refer Appendix 3)

Photographic and Media Coverage

It is common place for schools to be involved in public relations exercises and this can often include children having their photograph taken with a school team or as part of a school activity. Also children's photographs will be taken and used for a variety of reasons. These may include school photographer, school displays or as part of project work. The school will from time to time video children as they take part in school events or school performances.

If it is the wish of any parent, not to have their child's image used or stored via any of the above mentioned media, the school must be informed in writing so that any such children can be withdrawn from these events at the appropriate time. (Refer Appendix 4)

Contribution of the Curriculum

The PDMU programme is integrated in to our cross curricular planning.

Through the delivery of this we aim to empower our pupils to recognise and avoid the danger of abuse across a range of issues including bullying. Each year group covers a planned scheme of skills, values and attitudes and knowledge and understanding. The overall objective is to encourage all children to talk about their feelings and experiences and to know that they will be listened to. Teachers work on increasing the confidence and self esteem of children so that they have the assertiveness to resist any form of bullying. Children are helped to develop realistic and responsible attitudes and are made aware of the support that is available through their friends and the school community to help them recognise and deal with potentially dangerous situations.

Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate 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. From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise 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.

Policy Review

This document reflects the guidance from "Pastoral Care in Schools, Child Protection 199/10" and the CCMS circular 'Child Protection'.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually in conjunction with staff training. Parents will receive a summary version every two years.

Important Contact Numbers

Mr Stephen Walsh
Senior Management Officer (CCMS)
Armagh Diocesan Education Office
1 Killyman Road
Dungannon
Co Tyrone
BT71 6DE

Tel.: 028 87752116
Fax: 028 87752783

Lorraine O'Neill
Chief Education Welfare Officer
NEELB
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
Ballymena
Co Antrim
BT42 1HN

Tel: 028 94482223

NEELB Educational Psychologist

Mr P Mc Guckin 028 25653333

Local Social Services 028 79301700

Local Police 028 79633701

Public Protection Unit 028 90650222 Ex 40462
Magherafelt G District

School Nurse 028 79634831

NSPCC 0800 800 500

NEELB Education Welfare Officer

C Rhodes 028 79632186

CHILD PROTECTION
Disclosure of Child Abuse

CONFIDENTIAL

Date: _____ Time: _____

Pupil Name: _____ Class: _____

Location of Disclosure _____

Present at time of disclosure:

Signs of Abuse:

Report of what was said:

Action Taken:

Signature(s): _____

Position: _____

Report forwarded to: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2

Child Protection records are exempt for the disclosure requirements outlined in the Data Protection Act 1998. Moreover, under the Education (Pupil Records) Regulations (NI) 1998, any information held (manually) in school on a child, whether or not directly related to possible child abuse, need not be disclosed where, the Principal believes the disclosure may cause serious physical harm to the child or any other person.

PUPIL RECORDS

PURPOSE: To protect individuals from the unauthorised and unreasonable use of disclosure of information about themselves (personal data).

PERSONAL DETAILS

- Collated: Time of entry to school
- Store: Logged onto system. Monitored by secretarial staff
- Retained: For 10 years after leaving school, then deleted from CLASS
- Access: Principal's permission necessary

EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

- Collated: Period to time in school. Monitored by class teacher under direction of SMT
- Storage: Records stored
- Retained: For 10 years after leaving school, then shredded accordingly.

CHILD PROTECTION RECORDS

- Collated: Period in school. From Designated Teacher in Nursery/play Group to school's Designated Teacher.
- Stored: Child Protection File in Vice-Principal's Office for storage of Child Protection reports and minutes of meetings/referral to Social Services.
- Retained: Until pupil's 21st birthday
- Access: Principal has power to withhold access to files except:
 - (i) Solicitor – Discovering Order
 - (ii) Guardian at Liten (voice of the child)

Presented annually to BOG

PHOTOGRAPHIC AND MEDIA RECORDS: (Photographs/Records/CD's/Videos/DVD's, etc)

At the beginning of each academic year the school seeks permission from parents/guardians to allow their child/children to be photographed or to be part of any media coverage.

- Collated: Approval sought from parents on entry to school and responses/records kept by the Principal.
- Stored: Filed on Computed System (Password Protected). Teacher responsible for access of all digital images he/she has created.
- Created: All temporary files to be deleted periodically. Teacher responsible for creation of digital image to store such images in appropriately named files.

Monitoring display of photographic evidence

NOTE: DO NOT DISPLAY PUPIL NAMES

Teacher maintains record of digital images and photographs on display.

- Classroom: Teacher monitors use of display photographs
- Corridors: Teacher responsible for removal, storage and destruction of same.
- Publications: S.M.T. has responsibility.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Registering School: Information Commissioners Officer
(Every three years) Principal

A Code of Conduct for Employees within Holy Family Primary School.

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*

- 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.
- 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.
- 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*

- As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.
- 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.
- 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.
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.

- 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.*
- Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Designated teacher.
- 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. Choice and Use of Teaching Materials

- Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.
- 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 already 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.
- If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal before using it.

4. 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.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET AGREEMENT

Dear Parents

Children are being given more and more opportunity to use computers and have greater internet access as part of their learning environment. This access must be governed by rules for child safety as outlined below. Pupils must be made aware of these rules and must agree to them in order to be given access.

Using the Computers/Laptops

I will only access the computer system with the login and password which I have been given

I will not attempt to access other peoples files

I will not bring discs or software from outside school and attempt to use them on the school machines.

Using the Internet

I will ask permission from a teacher before using the internet

I will report any unpleasant material to my teacher immediately because this will help protect myself and others.

I understand that the school may check my computer files and monitor the internet sites I visit.

I will not complete any forms online without the permission of my teacher.

I will not give my full name, my home address or telephone number when completing any forms.

Using e-mail

I will ask permission before checking any e mail.

I will report any unpleasant messages immediately to my teacher because this will help protect myself and others.

I understand that any e mail messages I receive or send may be read by others.

I will not give my full name, home address or telephone number in any e mail

I will not use e mails to arrange to meet anyone outside school hours.

This Internet Use Agreement is in place for the safety and of all children as they access the Internet.

Please read through this information with your child and complete overleaf.

(Whilst I understand that this may not all be applicable to the very young children please complete in principle.)

PUPIL NAME _____ **CLASS** _____

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET AGREEMENT SLIP

I understand and accept that the above rules [see overleaf] are in place for my child's safety and I agree that my child will follow the rules guiding Acceptable Use of the Internet.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

MEDIA PERMISSION SLIP

During the course of the year your son/daughter may be photographed or videoed participating in school activities such as:

- Sporting activities;
- School trips and other curriculum activities;
- Publicity e.g. in the school prospectus or on the school website.

These photographs/video clips would be used for display purposes in the school, for publication in the local press or for promotional purposes on school notice boards or website and so on as we feel it is important that pupil achievements are recognised.

I do / do not give permission for my child to be photographed/videoed and the photographs/video clips to be displayed as mentioned above.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Please return the completed permissions page to your child's class teacher as soon as possible.

Thanking you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

PRINCIPAL