

*St. Francis' Primary School
Drummaroad*



*Child Protection Policy
October 2020*

Date Ratified	
Signature: Chairperson of the Board of Governors	
Signature: Principal	

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Mission Statement

St Francis' Primary School provides a high quality, rounded education which develops the complete potential of all our school family and teaches each one to respect themselves and others unconditionally. We inspire pupils to thrive in a Christ centred learning environment of faith, friendship and fun. Through the holistic enrichment of every child, we enhance their talents and advocate sharing them for the good of others. We welcome and value our whole school community as full participants in the child's learning journey; working together hand in hand with Christ who is the unseen but ever present teacher.

Everyone is an achiever; with God all things are possible.

Aims:

- A broad and balanced curriculum which will provide learning opportunities for each young person to develop as:
 - an individual
 - a contributor to society; and
 - a contributor to the economy and the environment.
- An awareness of his/her own talents, skills and abilities
 - A lively and enquiring mind, the ability to question and make informed decisions
 - A love of learning, a knowledge of how to learn and the motivation to produce his/her best
 - Effective communication between all members of the school community
 - An awareness of the immediate environment and an attitude which leads to self-discipline, independence, courtesy, good manners and respect for everyone
 - A knowledge and understanding of the wider world in which we live, of the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations and a tolerance of other religions and ways of life.

The staff, pupils, parents and governors are fully committed to the aims of St Francis' and have a strong sense of loyalty to the school. Parents and staff work well together in partnership in the children's education. Parents are welcome in school and are given clear information about their children's progress, the school's curriculum and the day-to-day organisation of the school. Parents' views are taken into account in the School Development Plan.

SCHOOL ROLE

At St Francis' Primary School, Drumaroad, we have a pastoral responsibility towards young people in our care, and by law must take all reasonable steps to ensure that children's welfare is protected. We will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment where each child is valued for his/her unique talents and abilities and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. We also aim to empower pupils to help them deal with any situation in which their own welfare or safety, or the safety/welfare of any other child may be compromised. All staff, teaching and non-teaching and all volunteers 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.

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 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; and
- 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 and Documents

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:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality in Education Policy
- E Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Code of Conduct

These policies are available to parents and any parent requiring a copy should contact the school Principal or contact the school office.

School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of our school Safeguarding Team

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ✓ Designated Teacher: | <u>Mrs Mclvor</u> |
| ✓ Deputy Designated Teacher: | <u>Mr Magee</u> |
| ✓ Deputy Designated teacher: | <u>Mrs Pauline Leitch</u> |
| ✓ Safeguarding Team | <u>Mrs O'Neill</u> |
| ✓ Designated Governors for Child Protection: | <u>Mrs Una Savage</u> |
| ✓ Chair of the Board of Governors: | <u>Mr Paul Marks</u> |

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Teacher: Mrs McIvor (DT) and Deputy Designated Teacher: Mr Magee (DDT)

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of their duties, responsibilities and role
- Organise training for all staff (whole school training)
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
- Act as a point of contact for staff, parents and pupils
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents and pupils
- 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 (if not DT or DDT)
- Update Board of Governors regarding Safeguarding/Child Protection at each meeting of the full board

The Principal: Mr Magee (if different from DT or DDT)

The Principal must ensure that:

- DENI 1999/10 guidance is implemented within the school
- He/she attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- A Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed
- All staff receive Safeguarding/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
- The school's Safeguarding/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 entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis
- All unsupervised volunteers, coaches and tutors are vetted prior to beginning their work with the children

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding/Child Protection: Mrs Una Savage

The Designated Governors should avail of Safeguarding/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 Safeguarding/Child Protection policies
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff

The Chair of the Board of Governors: Mr Paul Marks

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 Safeguarding/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 school Principal

Other Members of School Staff and Volunteers

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 Rs:

Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record, Refer.

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The member of staff and volunteers must:

- refer concerns to the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher (and the Principal)
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- act promptly
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (**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
- **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.

We will take seriously any concerns which are raised about a pupil in our school who has self-harmed and/or has expressed suicidal thoughts.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will immediately follow the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection procedures.

At no time will school be involved in investigating abuse. The role of the school is to inform the relevant outside agencies of its suspicions.

The purpose of these procedures is to protect vulnerable children by ensuring that all members of staff have guidance on the action to be taken and the inter-agency management of situations where abuse or neglect is evident or suspected.

These guidelines define child abuse and outline the action to be taken when it is known or suspected that a child is at risk, or has been subjected to abuse. Often teachers or other members of staff may feel that reporting alleged abuse may be disloyal to the child. They may also be concerned that it may damage their relationship with the child's parents. There is also concern that should the referral turn out to be unfounded, this may lead to the child's parents or others seeking legal redress.

In spite of this, it must be remembered that a staff member's first and foremost obligation is to the child. Reporting facts in accordance with agreed procedures will not put any member of staff at risk.

REMEMBER: IF IN DOUBT - REPORT

Parents

Parents 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 that the school is kept well informed 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 there are changes to children's living arrangements
- being aware of other relevant school policies
- reporting to the office when they visit school
- raising any concerns they may have in relation to their child or any other child within the school

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/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.

CHILD ABUSE – DEFINITION

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and on-going information sharing is key between professionals.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm.

Harm can be caused by:

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect; and
- Exploitation.

(Taken from: Co-operating to Safeguard Children & Young People in Northern Ireland. March 2016)

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

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

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express 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 failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

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.

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

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

Symptoms which young people may display and which are indicators only, include:

- Nervousness
- Low self-worth
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Nightmares / flashbacks
- Physiological – stress / nerves
- Stomach pain
- Bed wetting
- Immature / needy behaviour
- Temper tantrums
- Aggression
- Internalising distress or withdrawal
- Truancy
- Alcohol and drugs
- Bullying

These symptoms can lead to a child/young person being misdiagnosed as having an illness, learning difficulties, or being naughty or disruptive.

If it comes to the attention of school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a child/young person this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information to Social Services.

A child may suffer from 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.

Signs & Symptoms of Abuse – Possible indicators

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<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

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<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

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<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>

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<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 identity 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>

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a person(s) exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse.

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

FGM is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland. If a member of staff in St. Francis' has a concern that a child or young person may be at **immediate** risk of FGM, this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. If there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, a referral will be made to the relevant Health and Social Care Trust.

FORCED MARRIAGE:

A Forced Marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced Marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and if a member of staff in St. Francis' has knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person, they should contact the PSNI immediately.

GENDER IDENTITY

Young people from the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual or Transgender community in Northern Ireland may face particular difficulties which could make them more vulnerable to harm. These difficulties could range from intolerance and homophobic bullying from others, to difficulties for the young person themselves in exploring and understanding their sexuality. At such times young people may be more vulnerable to predatory advances from adults seeking to exploit or abuse them. This could impede a young person's ability or willingness to raise concerns if they feel they are at risk, or leave young people exposed to contact with people who would exploit them.

Professionals in St. Francis', working with young people from the LGBT community, should support them to appropriately access information and support on healthy relationships and to report any concerns or risks of abuse or exploitation.

Guidelines for use by Staff should a child disclose concerns of a Child Protection nature

Do:	Do not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Listen to what the child says ✓ Assure the child they are not at fault ✓ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret ✓ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words ✓ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality ✓ Stay calm ✓ Listen ✓ Accept ✓ Reassure ✓ Explain what you are going to do ✓ Record accurately ✓ Seek support for yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Ask leading questions. ✗ Put words into the child's mouth. ✗ Ignore the child's behaviour. ✗ Remove any clothing. ✗ Panic ✗ Promise to keep secrets ✗ Ask leading questions ✗ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily ✗ Delay ✗ Start to investigate ✗ Do Nothing

Children with Increased Vulnerabilities

- **Children With a Disability**

Children and young people with disabilities (i.e. any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse. Staff in St. Francis' working with children with disabilities should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues.

Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult. Staff and volunteers working with children with disabilities will receive training to enable them to identify and refer concerns early in order to allow preventative action to be taken.

- **Children With Limited Fluency in English**

Children whose first language is not English/Newcomer pupils should be given the opportunity to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred. DTs and other relevant school staff should seek advice and support from the EA's Intercultural Education Service if necessary. All schools should create an atmosphere in which pupils with special educational needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.

- **Work Experience, School Trips and Educational Visits**

Our duty in St. Francis' P.S is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, this also includes periods when they are in our care outside of the school setting. We will follow DE guidance on educational visits, school trips and work experience to ensure our current safeguarding policies are adhered to and that appropriate staffing levels are in place.

Children/Young People's behaviours

Children and young people may be at risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse from their peers. Such abuse is always taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. Where a child or young person has been harmed by another, all school staff should be aware of their responsibilities in relation to both children and young people who perpetrate the abuse as well as those who are victims of it at and, where necessary, should contribute to an inter-disciplinary and multi-agency response.

Self-Harm

Self-harm encompasses a wide range of behaviours and things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way, which are damaging. It may indicate a temporary period of emotional pain or distress, or deeper mental health issues which may result in the death by misadventure or suicide. Self-harm may involve abuse of substances such as alcohol or drugs, including both illegal and/ or prescribed drugs.

Self-harming behaviours may indicate that a child or young person has suffered abuse; however this is not always the case. St. Francis' P.S staff should share concerns about a child or young person who is self-harming with a member of the safeguarding team who will seek advice from appropriately qualified and experienced professionals including those in the non-statutory sector to make informed assessments of risk in relation to self-harming behaviours.

Suicidal Ideation

Staff must act without delay if they have concerns about a child or young person who presents as being suicidal as it is important that children and young people communicate thoughts of suicide or engage in para-suicidal behaviours are seen urgently by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, including those in the non-statutory sector, to ensure they are taken seriously, treated with empathy, kindness and understanding and informed assessments of risk and needs can be completed as a matter of priority.

Procedures for raising concerns in relation to child abuse

How a Parent can raise a concern

We aim to work closely with the parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of the child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or the Principal/Designated teacher for child protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. At any time a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 2.**

Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff 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 (Mrs McIvor) 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 may consult with the Education Authority South Eastern Region'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 EASER 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 EASER 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.**
Where a concern has been raised about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

If a concern about possible child abuse is raised 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 concern is about the Principal/Designated teacher)

If a concern is raised 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 4 will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance. This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 4.**

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 & 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 relevant 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.

Consent

Data Protection Act 1998 Section 29

Disclose personal information without consent to detect or prevent crime
Defined category of public interest: The protection of vulnerable members of the community.

When children are suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, concerns must always be shared with children's Social Services or the PSNI.

Schools should make it clear to parents that they have general duty to share information with other agencies where they have safeguarding concerns. However, consent must be sought directly from parents on a case-by-case basis. A general statement does not replace the need to ask for consent when required.

It is good practice that schools should work in partnership with parents and carers. This means that in general schools should share information with other agencies with the parents' knowledge and consent.

When schools feel that a referral should be made to Social Services, they should seek the consent of the parent. However, the duty to refer overrides this, as the safety of the child is paramount.

Seeking consent is not required, if to do so would:

- place a person at increased risk of harm (usually the child, but also a family member or another person);
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime; or
- lead to an unjustifiable delay in making enquiries.

Record Keeping

All Safeguarding/Child Protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked cabinet. 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. (DT & DDT)

Vetting Procedures

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in our school are vetted or 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 Francis' Primary School is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on policies and procedures where some members of staff will receive more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic Safeguarding/Child Protection awareness training and refresher training annually. The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governors 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.

The Preventative Curriculum

Throughout the school year, Safeguarding/Child Protection issues are addressed through class activities, assemblies and meetings. Flow diagrams are on display around the school building in relation to how a parent can make a complaint and in relation to others reporting Child Protection concerns.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in St Francis' 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 & Principal. On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Covid-19

During the Covid-19 pandemic we are adhering to guidelines provided by Education Authority Safeguarding Children Guidance For Schools & EOTAS Centres.

Date Policy Reviewed:

Signed:

Mrs Seaneen Mclvor

(Designated Teacher)

Mr John-Paul

(Deputy Designated Teacher)

Mrs Pauline Leitch

(Deputy Designated Teacher)

Mrs Una Savage

(Designated Governors for Child Protection)

Mr Paul Marks

(Chair of Board of Governors)

Date:

APPENDIX 1

Safeguarding Children Record of Concern

Child's Name :			
Child's DOB :			
Male/Female :	Class	Teacher	
Date and time of concern :			
Your account of the concern : what was said (use the actual words spoken by child), observed, reported and by whom			
Your name :		Your signature :	
Your position in school :		Date and time of this recording :	
Further Action if necessary:			
Signe d:			
Name :			
Date			

Appendix 2

How a parent can raise a concern

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



I can talk to the class teacher



At any time a parent can talk to a Social Worker at the Gateway Team
Tel: 0800 7837745
{Free phone from a Landline}
Or can contact the PSNI Public Protection Unit (PPU)



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal



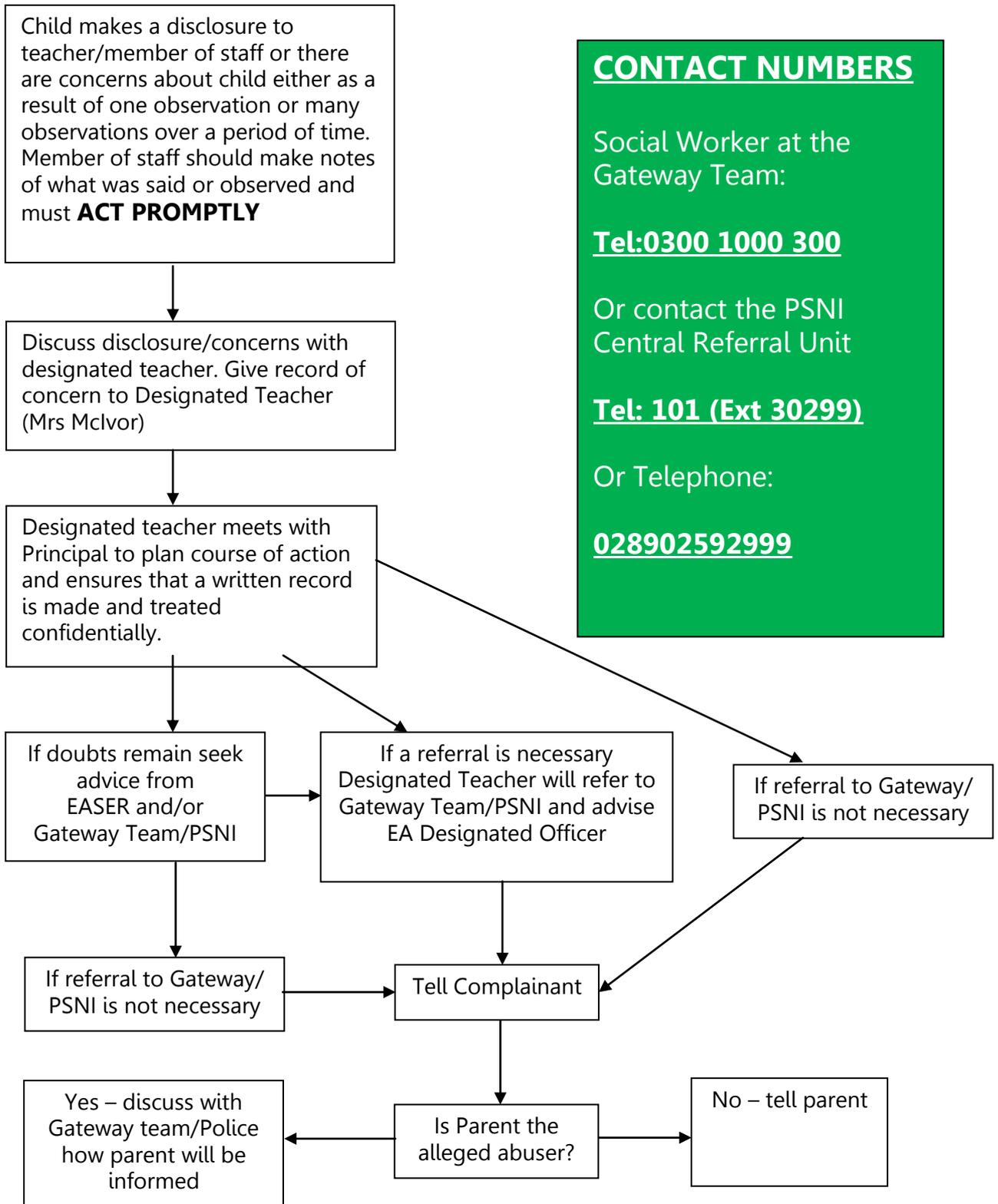
If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors
Mr Paul Marks



At any time I can talk to a Social Worker at the Gateway Team
Tel: 0300 1000 300
Or can contact the PSNI Central Referral Unit
Tel: 101 (Extension 30299)
Or Telephone: 028 902 59299

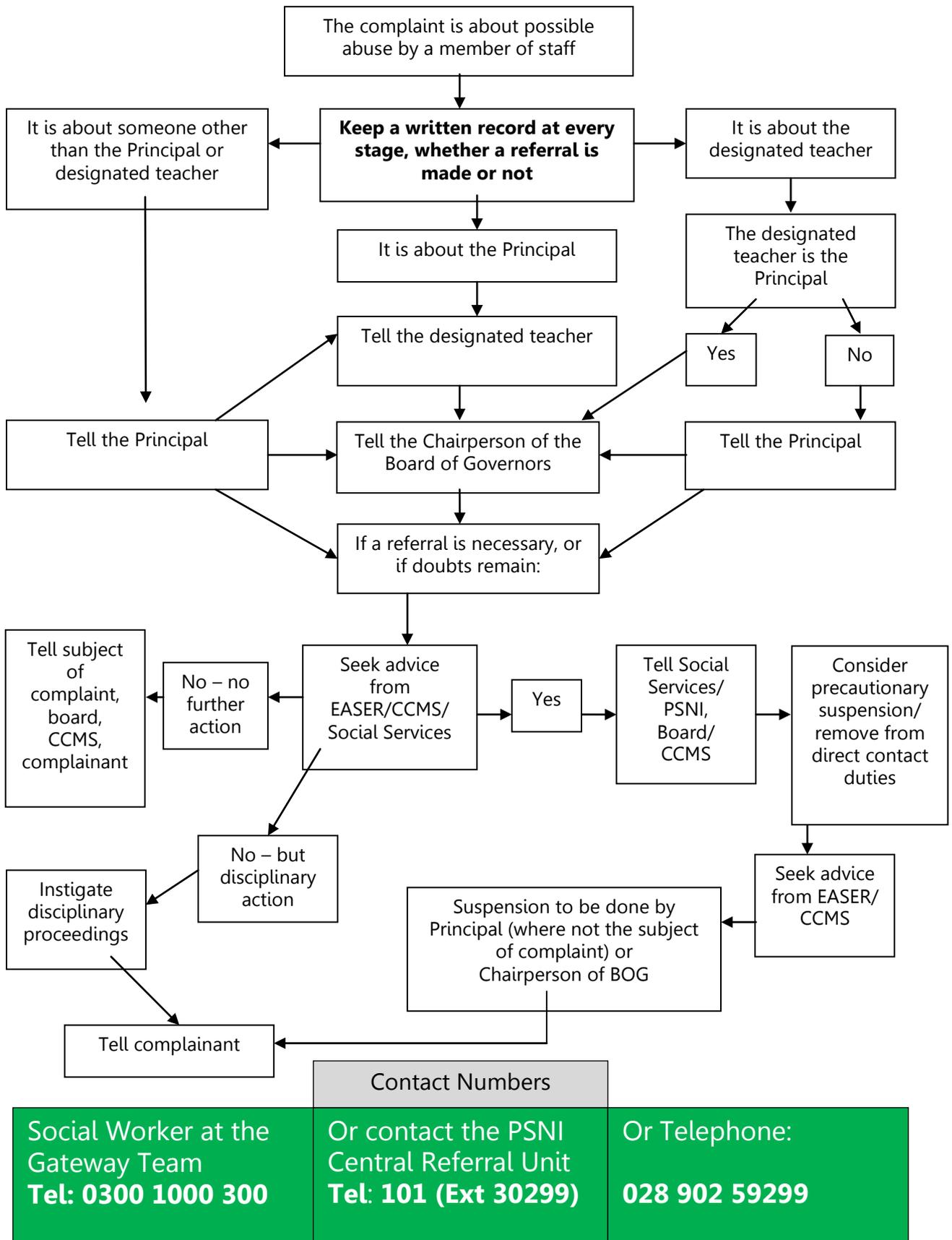
Appendix 3

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



Appendix 4

Procedure where a concern has been raised about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff.



Contact Numbers

Social Worker at the Gateway Team
Tel: 0300 1000 300

Or contact the PSNI Central Referral Unit
Tel: 101 (Ext 30299)

Or Telephone:
028 902 59299