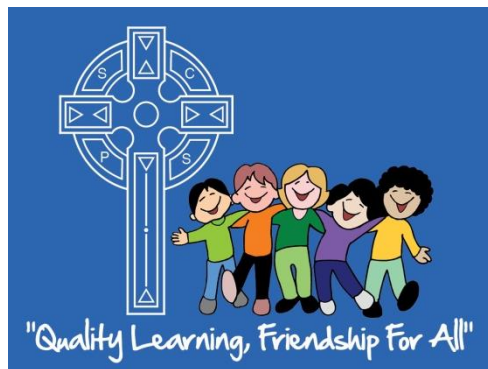




St. Comgall's Primary School  
23 Brunswick Road  
Bangor  
Co. Down  
BT20 3DS

# St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor



*'Quality Learning, Friendship For All'*

## St. Comgall's Primary School, Bangor Pastoral Care Safeguarding Policy 2019



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**Date ratified by Board of Governors:**  
**Date of Review: 17/1/19**

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## **Introduction**

St Comgall's Primary School places a great deal of importance in Pastoral Care and see it as having a central role in everything we do. We see our children as individuals who can grow and develop in a stimulating environment where they are given the opportunities to develop their abilities and talents. The Staff strive to promote a sense of self-respect, self-worth and positive self-esteem within each child.

As a Catholic School we strive to develop in each child a strong sense of the beliefs, morals, values and attitudes of the Catholic faith. We believe in a "Living Catholic Ethos" where children see from the example of others around them how to work and co-operate with others in a spirit of caring and kindness.

Children's learning is more effective when there is active parental involvement. This is encouraged through information sessions and parent/teacher progress meetings. They are made aware that they can make an appointment to talk over any concerns about their child at any time.

We instil in our pupils a grasp of the way in which members of families, adults and pupils in schools and people in the local community depend on each other and how the community functions at a local level. An awareness of the outside world is developed through pupil involvement with outside agencies ranging from those who work in charities, sports, the arts and the environment. This will be done both inside and outside school.

As a staff we feel it is important that our work fosters self-respect, respect for others and the improvement of relationships between people of different cultural traditions. We aim through this work to develop in children confidence in their own worth, enabling them to accept success and failure and to evaluate their strengths and help them to develop the ability to take responsibility for themselves. In learning to build and manage relationships with others our pupils should become aware of the importance of qualities such as patience, respect, gratitude and tolerance.

Our curriculum provision is broad and balanced with staff employing a range of teaching strategies so that effective learning can take place. A differentiated approach in planning and teaching is vital so that pupils with specific requirements are given the chance to reach their full potential. All children need to feel valued and to encourage positive self-esteem we give children opportunities to become involved in a variety of learning experiences both during school and after school hours. Through our teaching methods, classroom management and positive attitude to building relationships we believe we can help pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals. We aim to build on their strengths



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and limitations, personal qualities, interests, abilities, skills, potential values, motivation and needs.

We have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge. We will carry out this duty through our pastoral care safeguarding policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, in which all our pupils can learn and develop to their full potential.

### Aims

- **Embed a culture** which recognises the child's fundamental right to be safe and promote their general welfare
- Ensure the promotion of a **child centred approach**, which is based on obtaining the views of children and an understanding of their needs and rights
- Promote **early identification** of needs and/or risk to children who may require assistance
- Promote **early intervention** to ensure families and children can access and receive help and support at an early point to prevent their situations deteriorating
- Establish clearly defined **processes of reporting** risk of harm toward children which are well-understood and put in place
- Ensure **responses** to risks of harm are proportionate, timely, professional, legal and ethical
- Ensure **effective and co-ordinated multi-agency responses** are provided to the threat and/or occurrence of harm from abuse, exploitation or neglect of children
- **Promote continuous learning and improvement** by identifying and applying learning and assessing the effectiveness of its application

### Objectives

This policy ensures that everyone who works in our school – teaching, non-teaching staff and anyone who has regular contact with our children, is aware of the procedures to follow in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect of a child.

The safeguarding of our school community involves all pupils and adults. The school will contribute by:

- **Ensuring all pupils have sufficient knowledge** about themselves to be able to understand what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate contact.
- **Enabling children to become aware of strategies**, which they may use to protect themselves from possible abusive situations.
- **Developing** an on-going programme of personal and social education e.g. Keeping Safe Programme, Circle Time.
- **Ensuring that all new staff** are made aware of Safeguarding Procedures on appointment.
- Making sure that **all staff and regular voluntary helpers** have undergone security clearance by the police.



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- Ensuring that the **designated teachers** avail themselves of all opportunities to update their knowledge of Safeguarding / Child Protection procedures.
- Assisting with **regular in-service training** to maintain a working awareness among staff of Safeguarding / Child Protection issues and procedures.
- If a child on a Child Protection Register changes school this information should be passed to the new school and all files destroyed at the original school.

### **Key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection**

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, “Co-Operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland” (DOH, 2017), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools” (DENI Circular 2017/04) and the Safeguarding Board for NI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

#### **The following Principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy:**

- the child-welfare is paramount;
- the voice of the child should be heard;
- parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped stay together;
- partnership;
- prevention;
- responses should be proportionate to the circumstances;
- protection; and
- evidence based and informed decision making.

**Other Related Policies** - these policies should be school specific: The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. The child protection policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

Anti-Bullying Policy  
Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy  
Pupils Well Being Policy  
Complaints policy  
First Aid and Administration of Medicine  
Intimate Care  
Records Management Policy

Attendance Policy  
PDMU and RSE Policy  
Code of Conduct  
Data Protection Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
Privacy Notice



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Special Educational Needs

Relationships and Sexuality Education

Use of Mobile Phones/Camera Social Media Policy

Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling

**These policies are available to parents and any parent wishing to have a copy should contact the School office.**

### **School Safeguarding Team**

The following are members of the school's Safeguarding Team:

- Chair of the Board of Governors (Mr B Jamison)
- Designated Governor for Child Protection (Tom Slack or Parent if Doctor)
- Principal (Mrs C Hunter)
- Designated Teacher (Ms A Higgins)
- Deputy Designated Teacher(s) (Ms JA Mullally)

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Designated Teacher/ Deputy Designated Teacher**

Every school is required to appoint a Designated Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection. They must also appoint a Deputy Designated Teacher who as a member of the Safeguarding team will actively support the Designated Teacher in carrying out the following duties:

- the induction and training of all school staff including support staff;
- being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff;
- responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns;
- maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs;
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate;
- liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection;
- keeping the school Principal informed;
- lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy;
- promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school; and
- compiling written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.



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## Principal

- as secretary to the Board of Governors, assist in fulfilling its safeguarding and child protection duties;
- ensure the Board of Governors are kept fully informed of all developments relating to safeguarding including changes to legislation, policy, procedures, DE circulars, inclusion of child protection on the termly meeting agenda;
- to manage allegations / complaints against school staff;
- to establish and manage the operational systems for safeguarding and child protection;
- to appoint and manage designated teacher/deputy designated teachers who are enabled to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities;
- to ensure safe and effective recruitment and selection including awareness of safeguarding and child protection for new staff and volunteers;
- ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy or summary of the child protection policy at intake and at a minimum every 2 years; and
- to maintain the schools record of child abuse complaints.

## Board of Governors

- a designated governor for child protection is appointed;
- a designated and deputy designated teacher are appointed in their schools;
- they have a full understanding of the roles of the designated and deputy designated teachers for child protection;
- safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training;
- the school has a child protection policy which is reviewed annually and parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- the school has an anti-bullying policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying. See the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016;
- there is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school;
- all school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circular 2012/19;



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- they receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff; and
- the school maintains the following child protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools.

### **Chair of Board of Governors**

The Chair of the Board of Governors:

- has a pivotal role in creating and maintaining a safeguarding ethos;
- receives training from CPSS (Child Protection Support Service) and HR;
- assumes lead responsibility in the event of a CP complaint or concern about the principal; and
- ensures compliance with legislation, Child Protection record keeping and policies.

### **Designated Governor for Child Protection**

Advises the Board of 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; and
- recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.



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## Other members of school staff

- members of staff **must** refer concerns or disclosures initially to the designated teacher for child protection or to the deputy designated teacher if he/she is not available;
- members of staff should complete the CPIR – Child Protection Incident Report if there are safeguarding concerns such as: 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 and concerns about home circumstances including disclosures of domestic abuse;
- **staff should not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures, should not investigate nor should they ask leading questions.

## Support Staff

- if any member of the support staff has concerns about a child or staff member they should report these concerns to the designated teacher or deputy designated teacher if he/she is not available. A detailed written record of the concerns will be made and any further necessary action will be taken.

## Parents

**The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child.**

Parents can play their part in safeguarding by informing the school:

- if the child has a medical condition or educational need;
- if there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child;
- if there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility;
- if there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school;
- if their child is absent and should send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence. More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at: [www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection](http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection)

**It is essential that the school has up to date contact details for the parent/carer.**



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## Child Protection Definitions

### Definition of Harm

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, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

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 ongoing 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.**

#### **Harm can be caused by:**

- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation

**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 some 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.



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**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.

**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, and 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

### **Specific types of Abuse**

In addition to the types of abuse described above there are also some specific types of abuse that we in **St. Comgall's** are aware of and have therefore included them in our policy. Please see these in **Appendix 1**.

### **Children with Increased Vulnerabilities**

Some children have increased risk of abuse due to specific vulnerabilities such as disability, lack of fluency in English and sexual orientation. We have included information about children with increased vulnerabilities in our policy. Please see these in **Appendix 2**

### **Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) Child Abuse**

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Co-Operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (August 2017)



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## How a Parent Can Raise a Concern?

In **St. Comgall's PS** we aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their 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** the designated or deputy designated teacher for child protection or the principal.

If they are still concerned they may talk to the chair of the board of governors. If after this a parent still has concerns they can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman.

At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Central Referral Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 3**.

## Where School has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff

In **St. Comgall's** if a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff will complete a Note of Concern (see **Appendix 6**) and act promptly. **They will not investigate** - this is a matter for Social Services - but will discuss these concerns with the designated teacher or with the deputy designated teacher if he/she is not available.

The designated teacher will consult with the principal or other relevant staff always taking care to avoid due delay. If required, advice may be sought from an Education Authority Child Protection Officer. The designated teacher may also seek clarification from the child or young person, their parent/carer.

If a child protection referral is not required the school may consider other options including monitoring, signposting or referring to other support agencies e.g. Family Support Hub with parental consent and, where appropriate, with the child/young person's consent.

If a child protection referral is required, the designated teacher will seek consent from the parent/carer unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm.

The designated teacher will phone the Gateway team and/or the PSNI and will submit a completed UNOCINI referral form. Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed of the action taken.

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<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland>



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For further detail please see **Appendix 4.**

### **Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff or a Volunteer**

When a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff the Principal (or the designated teacher if the principal is not available) must be informed immediately. If the complaint is against the principal, then the designated teacher should be informed and he/she will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will consider what action is required in consultation with the employing authority. The procedure as outlined in **Appendix 5** will be followed.

The CCMS considers that whilst the statutory responsibility for the protection of children from abuse rests with the Social Services, it is consistent with the aims and objectives of a Catholic school that all teachers have the duty to help protect children from abuse or the risk of abuse. When teachers see signs, which cause them concern, they may have the opportunity to talk to the child with tact and sympathy.

**However, staff should not carry out any investigation or examination of the child.**

It is not the responsibility of school staff to undertake investigations or to make enquiries of parents or guardians and in some cases it could be counterproductive for them to do so. It is for the Social Services departments to investigate suspected abuse and determine what action to take, including notifying the police.

**The staff's responsibility is to immediately make their concerns known to the designated teacher if they have reasonable grounds to suspect abuse.**

### **Consent, Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Record Keeping**

Concerns about the safety or welfare of a child/young person, should, where practicable, be discussed with the parent and consent sought for a referral to children's social services in the local HSC Trust, unless seeking agreement is likely to place the child/young person at further risk through delay or undermine any criminal investigative process (for example in circumstances where there are concerns or suspicions that a crime has taken place); or there is concern raised about the parent's actions or reactions. The communication/language needs of the parents/carers should be established for example in relation to disability/ethnicity and the parent's/carer's capacity to understand should be ascertained. These should be addressed through the provision of appropriate communication methods, including, where necessary, translators, signers, intermediaries or advocacy services.

Effective protection for children/young people may, on occasions, require the sharing of information without prior parental/carer consent in advance of that information being shared.



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Where staff decide not to seek parental consent before making a referral to children's social services in the local Health and Social Care Trust or the police, the reason for this decision must be clearly noted in the child/young person's records and included within the verbal and written/UNOCINI referral.

When a referral is deemed to be necessary in the interests of the child/young person, and the parents/carers have been consulted and do not consent, the following action should be taken:

- the reason for proceeding without parental consent must be recorded;
- the withholding of permission by the parent/carer must be included in the verbal and written referral to children's social services;
- the parent/carer should be contacted to inform them that, after considering their wishes, a referral has been made.

Staff making a referral may ask for their anonymity to be protected as far as possible because of a genuine threat to self/family. In such instances this anonymity should be protected with an explanation to the staff member that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as information may become the subject of court processes.

### **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. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a ‘need to know’ basis.

Where there have been, or are current, child protection concerns about a pupil who transfers to another school we will consider what information should be shared with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Where it is necessary to safeguard children information will be shared with other statutory agencies in accordance with the requirements of this policy, the school data protection policy and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

### **Record Keeping**

In accordance with DE guidance we must consider and develop clear guidelines for the recording, storage, retention and destruction of both manual and electronic records where they relate to child protection concerns.



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**In order to meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in our School Name are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child's date of birth plus 30 years. If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.**

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/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

### **Safe Recruitment 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. All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in St. Comgall's Primary School are vetted / supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

### **Code of Conduct**

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. All members of staff are expected to comply with the school's Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers which has been approved by the Board of Governors.

### **Private meetings with pupils**

Staff should be aware of the dangers, which may arise from private meetings 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.



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## 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, other or property from harm. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (Power of Member of Staff to Restrain Pupils).

Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint.

Staff who have to administer first-aid should ensure wherever possible that it 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.** All incidents should be recorded in the Accident Book and an Accident Report Form filled in. A copy of this is sent to the EA and one retained by the school.

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.

If a child has to have clothing changed, this should be done in the presence of two adults.

Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in close proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

## Relationships and Attitudes

Within the Pastoral Care Policies within the school and the employing authority, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the



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pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

### Guidelines for Self-Protection

In the event of injury to a child, ensure that it is recorded and witnessed by another adult.

If a child touches you or talks to you in a sexually inappropriate way or place, record what happened and **tell another adult**.

If you take children on journeys, always have two along. If it is an overnight trip, always check the room in pairs.

If it is a one-to-one, make sure the door is open. Tell another member of staff if you are going to see a child on your own.

All members of staff should carry identification when on journeys with children.

If you must physically restrain a child for any reason, be aware that it could be misinterpreted as assault.

Do not make sexually suggestive comments about a child even in jest.

Never keep suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a colleague to yourself.

Ensure that you have the opportunity to discuss your own feelings, if possible, with other members of staff.

### The Preventative Curriculum

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the presentation of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protections.

The school community will therefore: -

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.



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- Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social development which equip children. With the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises.

Support for all pupils in the school in developing skills in self-protection and developing confidence will be afforded as follows:

St. Comgall's Keeping Safe Policy provides an integrated, developmentally staged and comprehensive approach to teaching pupils keeping safe messages from Primary 1 to 7. In 2016-18 we are integrating the EA supported 'Keeping Safe' whole school pilot initiative into our School Development Plan. This whole-school approach will help us further integrate preventative education within all aspects of school life and involve the whole school community.

*'Adopting a whole-school approach that integrates preventative education within all aspects of school life and involves the whole school community has been identified as significant in building a schools' capacity to teach preventative education.'* Cross et al (2011)

St Comgall's Primary School is a Rights Respecting School. We make use of agencies and professionals such as **UNICEF, NSPCC and PSNI** to educate our children about how to protect themselves. We strive to ensure that through the teaching of our **Religious Programme 'Grow in Love, our PDMU including The Keeping Safe Programme and RSE programmes and through the use of 'Circle Time'** that all children in our school know that they have the right: -

**To be safe:** We will teach children that everyone has rights, such as the right to breathe, which should not be taken away. Tell children that no one should take away their right to be safe.

**To protect their own bodies:** Children need to know that their body belongs to them, particularly the private parts covered by their swimsuits.

**To say NO:** Tell children it's alright to say no to anyone if that person tries to do something to them that they feel is wrong. Most children are taught to listen to and obey adults and older people without question.

**To get help against bullies:** Bullies usually pick on younger children. Tell children to enlist the help of friends or say no without fighting – and to tell another adult. Bullies are cowards and firm; loud 'no' from a group of children with the threat of adult intervention often puts them off.

In cases of real physical danger, children often have no choice but to surrender to the bully's demands. Sometimes children will fight and get hurt to protect a possession because of the fear of what will happen if they arrive home without it. 'My mum will kill me for letting the



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bullies take my bike, it cost a lot of money’. Tell children that keeping themselves safe is the most important consideration.

**To tell:** You must assure children that no matter what happens you will not be angry with them and that you want them to tell you of any incident that frightens them or confused them or makes them unhappy.

**To be believed:** When children are told to go to an adult for help they need to know they will be believed and supported. This is especially true in the case of sexual abuse, which children rarely lie about. If the child is not believed when he or she tells, the adults may continue for years and result in suffering and guilt for the child.

**Not to keep secrets:** Teach children that some secrets should not be kept, no matter if they promised not to tell. Child molesters known to the child often say that a kiss or touch is ‘our secret’. This confuses the child who has been taught always to keep secrets.

St. Comgall’s Positive Behaviour Policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours towards themselves and others.

St. Comgall’s Pupil Well Being Policy ensures that each pupil is able to access their education without hindrance and expectations placed upon them.

St. Comgall’s E-Safety and Social Media Policies ensures that pupils are able to use the internet and related communications technologies appropriately and safely.

### **Guidance on Intimate Care**

**Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact must be avoided at all times.**

- Staff should never carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves
- Unless a child has a particular need, staff should not accompany children to the toilet
- Where help with a personal task or toileting is essential, staff must always be accompanied by a colleague and record their actions on a Confidential Incident Record Form which is then held on file in the office
- Always ensure that there are 2 members of staff present in a room/area/outside. If you need to leave that room/area/ outside ensure a replacement for you is found without delay. It is school policy that only one child is permitted to enter the toilet area at a time. Children who need to use the toilet during break time must seek the permission of the teacher or assistant on duty
- During break time the toilet area closest to the playground will be used. A playground helper or Assistant will supervise the child’s trip to the toilet



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- If a child has a wetting accident during the school day, a staff member will assist them change into dry clothes
- Before assisting the child the staff member will inform a second staff member and the second person will remain in the room adjoining the toilet area
- It is school policy to call a Parent/Guardian if a child soils themselves in school and requires intimate care. In the unlikely event of failing to make contact staff will follow the procedures as above.
- Staff must respect children's privacy and dignity particularly when providing intimate care, e.g. toilet assistance and changing. Such assistance should only be given with the full consent and understanding of the parents.

### **Safeguarding Our School Community.**

Part of the charm and unique atmosphere of St.Comgall's Primary is the fact that we are a small and family-oriented school. As a staff we endeavour to get to know every child and their family members and to create a climate in which all are welcome and feel that they can get involved.

Entry to the Breakfast club is via the doors next the school hall, where your child will be met by a member of staff: either Miss Leanne Pickard or Mrs Sinead Mc Laughlin.

**Parents should not escort children through the school.**

Pupils are asked to be punctual to morning assembly in either the Foundation/KS1 or KS2 playgrounds at 8.45am, those arriving after 8.55am should enter via the main entrance.

We appreciate that often parents may need a quick word with teachers, but, where possible, if it's only to inform us that collection arrangements have changed or lunch boxes have been forgotten etc, please inform the school office instead as it's the secretarial staff that deal with these issues. If a quick chat is needed please do so in the playground before or following morning prayer. All teachers can be contacted by telephoning the school office.

School staff should be clearly identifiable by our **ID badges** and/or **school branded workwear**.



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## Visitors' Code of Conduct - St. Comgall's Primary School

In **St. Comgall's P.S.** we aim to provide a varied and stimulating range of experiences for our children which will:

- develop their abilities and talents
- promote self-esteem and self-respect
- develop a sense of community and co-operation
- develop qualities of patience, respect, gratitude and tolerance

For all these reasons we welcome visitors to our school and recognise the wealth of experiences they bring with them.

However, for the protection and safeguarding of our children, (and for the protection of our visitors themselves), it is important that all who come into our school, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, are aware of the **Code of Conduct** which exists for all members of staff.

**Please read the following information.**

**If you have any queries or concerns over the content of this guidance material, please contact **Miss A Higgins**, (Designated Teacher for Child Protection) or **Miss JA Mullally**.**

**When entering the school**, let the secretary know that you have arrived and which room you will be in, (and which children you will be with).

**If an incident should occur** while you are in the school eg.

- an injury to a child
  - misbehaviour
  - a child talking to you in an inappropriate way
  - a child making an allegation (eg. "You pushed me" etc.)
  - or any other incident that raises your concern
1. Another teacher / adult should be contacted as soon as possible. (Send another child for **Miss Higgins** or go to the teacher in the nearest classroom).
  2. Record the incident on paper and give it to **Miss Higgins** (Designated Teacher for Child Protection), or **Miss Mullally** (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection), before you leave the school.

### Private meetings with pupils

Visitors should be aware of the dangers which may arise from meetings with individual pupils and, when possible, should avoid being with a pupil on their own. When this is not possible,



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(eg. Educational Psychologist conducting an assessment), the following guidelines should be followed:

- Another adult should know that the interview / lesson 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.

### **Physical contact with pupils.**

As a general principle, visitors are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with the pupils.

- A distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. If a permanent, and therefore familiar, member of staff is available he / she should act. Otherwise the visitor should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- If a visitor feels there is a need to touch a child to protect that child, others or property from harm, a permanent member of staff should be sent for immediately.
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint. (see above).
- Visitors (eg. coaches) who have to administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult.
- 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 visitor

### **Relationships and attitudes**

Visitors 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.



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## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the safeguarding team and approved every 2 years by the Board of Governors for dissemination to parents, pupils and staff. It will be implemented through the school's staff induction and training programme and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the designated teacher for child protection and periodically by the Schools Safeguarding Team. 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.

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

**Signed:**

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

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

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



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## Appendix 1

### Specific Types of Abuse

**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 in order 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.

If the staff in St. Comgall's PS become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the school's child protection policies and procedures.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/ or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. DHSSPS version 2.0 2017)

The key factor that distinguishes cases of CSE from other forms of child sexual abuse is the concept of exchange – the fact that someone coerces or manipulates a child into engaging in sexual activity **in return for something** they need or desire and/or for the gain of those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. The something received by the child or young person can include both tangible items and/or more intangible 'rewards' OR 'benefits' such as perceived affection, protection or a sense of value or belonging.

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE, including those who can legally consent to have sex. The abuse most frequently impacts upon those of a post-primary age and can be perpetrated by adults or peers, on an individual or group basis.

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

**Domestic and Sexual violence and abuse** can have a profoundly negative effect on a child's emotional, psychological and social well-being. A child does not have to witness domestic violence to be adversely affected by it. Living in a violent or abusive domestic environment is harmful to children.



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Domestic violence and abuse is defined as ‘threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.’ Sexual Violence and Abuse is defined as ‘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).’ (Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016).

If it comes to the attention of school staff that Domestic Abuse, is or may be, affecting a child this will be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.

**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 established procedures set out in our school policy.

**Forced Marriage** A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in SCHOOL NAME we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

### **Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour**

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child’s development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. As a school we support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as ‘healthy’, ‘problematic’ or ‘sexually harmful’. Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention, however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting. Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be



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more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the EA CPSS may be required. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2016/05 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

### **What is Harmful Sexualised Behaviour?**

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when:

- There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or
- the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim
- Harmful sexualised behaviour can include: Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed through the Oschool's positive behaviour policy but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and in our school we will refer to our child protection policy and, seek the support that is available from the CPSS.

### **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.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report 'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland' which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content risks:** the child or young person is exposed to harmful material.
- **Contact risks:** the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- **Conduct risks:** the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.



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- **Commercial risks:** the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

We in St. Comgall's PS have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will 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.

The school's actions and governance of online safety are reflected clearly in our safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

**Sexting** is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile or over the internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

**Sexting between individuals in a relationship** schools should look at this individually. Whilst their procedures should be the same as below they may want to include something specific here re what their preventative curriculum approach will be.

Pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share 'indecent images' of anyone under 18 and in these cases we will contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance. We may also seek advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service.

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

### **Sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress**

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 ([www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted)) to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent.

If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared further whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures of the school will be followed.



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## Appendix 2

### 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 and those 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**

As with children with a special educational need, children who are not fluent in English should be given the chance 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.

Designated Teachers should work with their SEN co-ordinators along with school staff with responsibility for newcomer pupils, seeking advice from the EA's Inclusion and Diversity Service to identify and respond to any particular communication needs that a child may have. All schools should try to 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.

- **Pre-school provision**

Many of the issues in the preceding paragraphs will be relevant to our young children who may have limited communication skills. In addition to the above, staff will follow our Intimate Care policy and procedures in consultation with the child's parent[s]/carer[s]



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- **Looked After Children**

In consultation with other agencies and professionals, a Health and Social Care Trust may determine that a child or young person's welfare cannot be safeguarded if they remain at home. In these circumstances, a child may be accommodated through a voluntary arrangement with the persons with parental responsibility for the child or the HSCT may make an application to the Court for a Care Order to place the child or young person in an alternative placement provided by the Trust. The HSCT will then make arrangements for the child to be looked after, either permanently or temporarily. It is important that the views of children, young people and their parents and/or others with parental responsibility for the looked child are taken into account when decisions are made.

A member of school staff will attend LAC meetings and will provide a written report. Where necessary, school support will be put in place for the child/young person. Information will be shared with relevant staff on a need to know basis.

- **Children / young people who go missing**

Children and young people who go missing come from all backgrounds and communities and are known to be at greater risk of harm. This includes risks of being sexually abused or exploited although children and young people may also become homeless or a victim or perpetrator of crime. Those who go missing from their family home may have no involvement with services as not all children and young people who run away or go missing from their family home have underlying issues within the family, or are reported to the police as missing.

The patterns of going missing may include overnight absences or those who have infrequent unauthorised absences of short time duration. When a child or young person returns, having been missing for a period, we should be alert to the possibility that they may have been harmed and to any behaviours or relationships or other indicators that children and young people may have been abused.

School staff will work in partnership with those who look after the child or young person who goes missing and, if appropriate, will complete a risk assessment. Current school policies will apply e.g. attendance, safeguarding, relationships and sexuality education.



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- **Young people in supported accommodation**

Staff will work in partnership with those agencies involved with young people leaving care and those living in supported accommodation and will provide pastoral support as necessary.

- **Young people who are homeless**

If we become aware that a young person in our school is homeless we will share this information with Social Services whose role is to carry out a comprehensive needs and risk assessment. We will contribute to the assessment and attend multi-disciplinary meetings.

- **Separated, unaccompanied and trafficked children and young people**

**Separated children** and young people are those who have been separated from their parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver. **Unaccompanied children** and young people are those seeking asylum without the presence of a legal guardian. Consideration must be given to the fact that separated or unaccompanied children may be a victim of human trafficking.

**Child Trafficking** is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child or young person, whether by force or not, by a third person or group, for the purpose of different types of exploitation.

If we become aware of a child or young person who may be separated, unaccompanied or a victim of human trafficking we in School Name will immediately follow our safeguarding and child protection procedures

- **Children of parents with additional support needs**

Children and young people can be affected by the disability of those caring for them. Parents, carers or siblings with disabilities may have additional support needs which impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the family, possibly affecting their education or physical and emotional development. It is important that any action school staff take to safeguard children and young people at risk of harm in these circumstances encompasses joint working between specialist disability and children's social workers and other professionals and agencies involved in providing services to adult family members. This will assist us in ensuring the welfare of the children and young people in the family is promoted and they are safeguarded as effectively as possible.

Where it is known or suspected that parents or carers have impaired ability to care for a child, the safeguarding team will give consideration to the need for a child protection response in addition to the provision of family support and intervention.



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- **Gender identity issues and sexual orientation**

Young people from the LGBTQ community 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.

As a staff working with young people from the LGBT community we will support them to appropriately access information and support on healthy relationships and to report any concerns or risks of abuse or exploitation.

- **Boarding schools and residential settings**

Children in the above settings are particularly vulnerable to abuse. We will ensure that staff are appropriately vetted and trained in accordance with DE guidance.

- **Work experience, school trips and educational visits**

Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 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**

- **Peer Abuse**

Children and young people may be at risk of physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. Such abuse should always be 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 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



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of emotional pain or distress, or deeper mental health issues which may result in the development of a progressive pattern of worsening self-harm that may ultimately result in 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. School 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 who 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.



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## Appendix 3

### How a Parent can make a Complaint

If a parent has a potential child protection concern:

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

I can talk to the class teacher

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated/ Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection or the Principal

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

If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman  
Tel: 0800 343 424

At any time, I can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team [insert local Gateway telephone] or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 028 9025 9299



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## Appendix 4

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

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY.

Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.



Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.



Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required, advice may be sought from a CPSS officer.

#### **Child Protection referral is required**

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.



Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/ parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.



#### **Child Protection referral is not required**

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored.

## Appendix 5

### **Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff**

#### **Key Points**

Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate.



#### **Guidance on the Next Steps**

Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.



#### **Possible Outcomes**

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.



Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.

Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures imposed

Alternatives to precautionary suspension imposed

## Appendix 6

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT REPORT

#### CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature and description of concern:
Parties involved, including any 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:



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If 'No' state reason:
Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:
Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file
Yes                      No
If 'No' state reason:

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

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

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



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## Model Pro-Forma for Report to Child Protection Conference

Pupil's name \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Carers \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance in current school year \_\_\_\_\_ days out of possible \_\_\_\_\_ days

Attainment level/educational performance

---

Intellectual ability (eg below average/average/above average)

---

Performance in relation to intellectual ability

---

Presentation of work, including homework

---

Participation in teaching/learning activities

---

Behaviour in class

---

Behaviour out of class

---

Relationships with other children

---



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## Contacts and Help lines

### **EA**

Chief Education Officers.  
Colm Boal/ Alison Casey.  
Grahamsbridge Road.  
Dundonald.  
Tel: 02890566434/  
02890566274

### **Keeping Safe Programme (NSPCC)**

Phyllis Stephenson  
Education Advisor, Children's Services Development & Delivery  
NSPCC, Lanyon Building, Jennymount Business Park,  
North Derby Street, Belfast, BT15 3HN  
02820441588 (direct line)

### **NSPCC**

Jennymount Court  
North Derby Street  
Belfast BT15 3HN  
Tel: 028 90 351135

### **NSPCC Child Protection Help line**

24 hours call free –  
0800 800500

### **Childline UK.**

Freepost 1111.  
London N1 0BR.  
Tel: 0800 1111 (free)

### **Children's Law Centre**

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Philip House  
124-137 York Street  
Belfast BT15 1AB  
Tel: 028 90 245704  
Advice Line: 028 90 43424

### **Child Care (NI)**

216 Belmont Road  
Belfast BT4 2AT  
Tel: 028 90 652713

**\*\*This policy was reviewed March 2019 – Mrs C Hunter, Miss Mullally and Miss Higgins**



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## EA CHILD PROTECTION SUPPORT SERVICE

**Clare Mangan**

Director C&YPS



**Una Turbitt**

Assistant Director



**Godfrey Young**

Interim Head of Service



**Antrim Office**  
**02895985590**

**Colleen Ellison  
Elaine Craig  
Margaret Brady  
Laura Doran**

**Dundonald Office**  
**02895985590**

**Colum Boal  
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