



# ORRITOR PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy  
March 2022**

## **Abstract**

This Policy was created to outline the current provision for Safeguarding and Child Protection in Orritor Primary School and Nursery Unit. It was devised in line with relevant documentation, current practice and stakeholder consultation.

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## **CHILD PROTECTION RATIONALE/INTRODUCTION**

All stakeholders in Orritor Primary School and Nursery Unit have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care. We will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities and where all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should be vigilant in relation 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.

### **Safeguarding is more than Child Protection.**

Safeguarding begins with **promotion and preventative** activities which enable 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.

## **PRINCIPLES**

The general principles, which underpin our work are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children's (Northern Ireland) Order 1995; the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance "Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools' (DENI Circular 2017/04); the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005) and 'Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland' (August 2017).

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 consideration;
- a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict of interest, the child's interest must always come first.

## **OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES**

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Pastoral Care
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

- Use of Reasonable Force Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

*\*\*\*Policies are available on school website or by request from the school Principal.*

### **The Legislative Context**

Obligations to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare are contained in both international and domestic law. The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) is an international human rights treaty setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the child. It provides the overarching framework to guide the development of local laws, policies and services so that all children and young people are nurtured, protected and empowered. Each of the 41 Articles in the Convention detail a different type of right, all of which interact to form one integrated set of rights for children and young people. Those Articles with particular relevance for this policy include:

- **Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child)** the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration for all actions concerning children taken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies. This includes ensuring the child is given the protection and care necessary for their well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of others towards them. Organisations, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children must conform with appropriately set standards.
- **Article 4 (Protection of rights)** Governments have a responsibility to take all available measures to make sure children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled. This involves assessing their social services, legal, health and educational systems, as well as funding for these services.
- **Article 12 (Voice of the Child)** A child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters which affect them, those views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. This is particularly the case for any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them. A child can either give their views directly, or have their views represented appropriately on their behalf.
- **Article 19 (Protection from all forms of violence):** Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and their right to be protected from harm and mistreatment is upheld.

- **Article 20 (Children deprived of family environment):** Children who cannot be looked after by their own family have a right to be looked after properly by people who respect their ethnic group, religion, culture and language.
- **Articles 34 and 36 (Exploitation):** Governments should protect children from all forms of exploitation.
- **Article 39 (Rehabilitation of child victims):** Children who have been harmed should receive help to recover and reintegrate into society.

Children and young people have the right to express their opinions and to have those opinions heard and acted upon when appropriate. The child's views, however, will not necessarily determine the course of action to be taken, as ultimately, those with [parental responsibility](#) are responsible for keeping the child safe and must act in the best interests of the child.

The [Children \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1995](#) (the Children Order) is the principal statute governing the care, upbringing and protection of children in Northern Ireland. It applies to all those who work with and care for children, whether parents, paid carers or volunteers. The Children Order provides the legislative framework within which this policy operates. The following principles are reflected in the Children Order and should underpin all strategies, policies, procedures, practice and services relating to safeguarding children and young people.

- **The child or young person's welfare is paramount** – The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration for the courts and in childcare practice. An appropriate balance should be struck between the child's rights and parent's rights. All efforts should be made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.
- **The voice of the child or young person should be heard** – Children and young people have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously, taking account of their age and understanding. They should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives and be provided with appropriate support to do so where that is required.
- **Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together** – Parents have responsibility for their children rather than rights over them. In some circumstances, parents will share parental responsibility with others such as other carers or the statutory authorities.
- **Partnership** – Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is through working in partnership.
- **Prevention** – The importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.
- **Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances** – Where a child's needs can be met through the provision of support services, these should be provided. Both organisations and individual practitioners must respond

proportionately to the needs of a child in accordance with their duties and the powers available to them.

- **Protection** – Children should be safe from harm and in circumstances where a parent or carer is not meeting their needs they should be protected by the State.
- **Evidence-based and informed decision making** – Decisions and actions taken by organisations and agencies must be considered, well informed and based on outcomes that are sensitive to, and, take account of, the child or young person's specific circumstances, the risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed needs.

The [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007](#) as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 provides the legislative framework for the establishment of a Disclosure and Barring Service and requirements relating to individuals who work with children and vulnerable adults. This legislation defines 'regulated activity' with children and prevents persons on barred lists from engaging in regulated activity.

The [Children's Services Co-operation Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2015](#) places a requirement on individuals and organisations providing children's services to children to co-operate with each other to devise and implement cross cutting strategies. The Act is key to ensuring improved outcomes for children by supporting, enhancing and encouraging co-operation so that services are integrated from the point of view of the child or young person.

The [Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland \(SBNI\)](#) - was established under the [Safeguarding Board \(Northern Ireland\) Act 2011](#) (the 2011 Act). The Act establishes a statutory objective for the SBNI, attributes a number of functions to it and imposes a number of duties upon it. The primary aim of the SBNI is to co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Northern Ireland. The Act requires member organisations to co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

The [Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland \(UNOCINI\) framework](#) is used to assess the child's needs and the most appropriate forms of intervention to meet identified needs of the child or young person. The framework recognises that services may be required from a range of professions, disciplines and organisations and services should be co-ordinated on a multi-disciplinary and inter-agency basis. Services should be planned and provided, in consultation with families, by professional staff and voluntary organisations with the appropriate skills and resources to meet those needs.

[Article 19 of the Education and Libraries \(NI\) Order 2003](#) places a responsibility on schools to have measures in place within their discipline policies to prevent and deal with bullying.

## **Education**

The Department of Education (DE) has lead responsibility for policy and strategy relating to the education of children in Northern Ireland. The Education Authority (EA) delivers educational services, including an Education Welfare Service within which sits the Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS).

## Schools

Schools and colleges have a vital role to play in educating children about risks of harm, how to prevent harm occurring and also to be alert to and respond appropriately to concerns.

Age-appropriate education programmes must be built into the school curriculum to make children and young people aware of risk factors, where support can be obtained and empower them to seek assistance when they are at risk of harm or being harmed.

**Every school** should establish a school safeguarding team comprising a core membership of the Principal (Chair), Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers, the Chair of the Board of Governors and a Designated Governor for Child Protection. More information on the role of Governors, Principals and Designated Teachers can be found in [the CPSSS School Governors Handbook Safeguarding Child Protection \(2015\)](#).

The DE guidance [Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection](#) provides detailed advice and guidance for schools and others in relation to their responsibilities for child protection and procedures to be followed to enable cases of suspected abuse to be properly considered and pursued.

Boards of Governors of grant-aided schools have statutory duties under [Articles 17](#) and [18 of the Education and Libraries \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2003](#) to promote and safeguard the welfare of their pupils, including protecting them from abuse when required.

Boards of Governors have a pastoral care responsibility towards their pupils and are expected to do whatever is reasonable to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils. They may be supported in delivering their broad safeguarding responsibilities by members of the school's Safeguarding Team and, if required, other staff with specific expertise, for example, the ICT Co-ordinator, or Special Education Needs Co-ordinator.

The school also has a range of other safeguarding policies, for example, policies on discipline, on bullying and on e-safety. These should be regularly reviewed, made available to parents and should explain the school's general approach to safeguarding within the context of the specific issue being addressed and the procedures that will be followed.

## **SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING TEAM**

The following staff are members of the schools Safeguarding Team

- Principal – Mr Andrew Frizzell
- Designated Teacher – Mrs Karen Black
- Deputy Designated Teacher – Mrs Julie Curroe (Primary)
- Deputy Designated Teacher – Miss Sarah Thompson (Nursery)
- Designated Governor for Child Protection – Rev Diane Matchett
- Chair of the Board of Governors – Mr Wilbert Mayne

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Orritor Primary School and Nursery Unit has a school safeguarding team comprising of the Principal/Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teachers; Mrs Black and Miss Thompson, the Chair of the Board of Governors and a Designated Governor for Child Protection.

These members may be supported in delivering their broad safeguarding responsibilities by members of the school's Safeguarding Team and, if required, other staff with specific expertise, for example, the ICT Co-ordinator, or Special Education Needs Co-ordinator.

It is expected that these people should be familiar and supportive of the EA and the school's procedure for receiving, recording and reporting suspected cases of abuse, and complaints about the behaviour of all members of staff. Proper procedures, as led down in paras 28 – 35 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection', will be followed at all times.

## **The School Safeguarding Team**

The responsibilities of the team include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school
- Supporting the DT in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post
- Ensure attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training – including refresher training – in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements
- Review their child protection/safeguarding practices annually using the Education and Inspectorate (ETI) pro-forma

## **The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher**

The designated teacher and deputy designated teachers must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role;
- organise training for all staff (whole school training);
- lead in the development of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- act as a point of contact for staff and parents;
- assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents;
- make referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate;
- liaise with the Education Authority's (EA) Designated Officers for Child Protection;
- maintain records of all child protection concerns;
- keep the School Principal informed;
- provide written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

## **The Principal**

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI Circular 2017/04 guidance is implemented within the school;
- he attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- a designated teacher and deputy designated teacher are appointed;
- all staff receive child protection training;
- take the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff;

- new staff and volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions;
- all necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner;
- the Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed;
- assist the BOG to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring any circulars and guidance from DE are shared promptly;
- child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates & annual report are provided;
- the school's Safeguarding and 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.

### **The Board of Governors**

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

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

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

The Designated Governor should avail of child protection awareness training delivered by Child Protection Support Service for Schools and will take the lead in child protection issues in order to advise the Governors on:

- the role of the Designated Teachers;
- the content of child protection policies;
- the content of a code of conduct for adults within the school;
- the content of the termly updates and full Annual Designated Teachers Report;
- recruitment, selection and vetting of staff.

### **The Chair of the Board of Governors**

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- ensure that he has received appropriate Education Authority training;
- ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment;
- ensure that the school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy;
- ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment & 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;
- ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity;
- sign and date the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries.

### **Other Members of School Staff**

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

They should remember the 5 Rs: *Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record* and *Refer*.

### **The members of staff must:**

- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal;
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child;
- act promptly;
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure, using the actual words of the child (**Appendix 1 Concern**);
- 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 and concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

### **Parents**

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- reporting and recording absences through the form on the school website;
- informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school;
- letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home;
- informing the school of any change in a child's circumstances – change of address, contact details, name, parental responsibility, etc;
- familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies;
- reporting to the office when they visit the school;

- informing the school if their child has a medical condition or educational need;
- informing the school if there are any Court Orders relating to the safety and wellbeing of a parent or child;
- raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the school.

## **DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE**

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

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

### **TYPES OF ABUSE**

#### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent 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 suffer from other types of abuse.

#### **Physical Abuse**

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

#### **Sexual Abuse**

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

#### **Emotional Abuse**

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.

#### **Exploitation**

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young

person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking.

### **Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

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

### **Children Who Display Sexually Harmful Behaviour**

When abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child, the procedures outlined in the section – 'Procedures for making complaints in relation to child abuse' of this policy will be followed. It is important in such situations to distinguish between behaviours which are experimental in nature and those that are exploitative and harmful. Advice and support will be sought in such circumstances from the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection and where appropriate a referral made to the statutory agencies. In all such cases a risk assessment will be undertaken and an individual support and safety plan identified.

Appropriate services will also be provided for the children involved. The above guidance follows DE Circular 2016/05 'Children Who Display Harmful Sexualized Behaviour'.

### **Domestic Violence and Abuse**

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 of 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
- Virtual/Online

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 displaying disruptive or challenging behaviours.

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.

**It must be recognised that a child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.**

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE – POSSIBLE INDICATORS

#### Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, abrasions, bites, ligature marks.  Burns or scalds, especially those with a clear outline.  Unexplained fractures.  Repeated minor injuries.  Bruising in a non-mobile child.  Ingestion of substances.  Old scarring which may not have received medical treatment.	Is wary of adults or of a particular individual.  Is dressed inappropriately to hide bruises or other injuries.  May be extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn.  Cannot recall how the injuries occurred and/or gives inconsistent explanations.

## Neglect

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Failure to thrive with no medical cause identified, developmental delay in all areas. Poor hygiene, untreated headache or other infestations, inappropriate dress for the weather.</p> <p>Lack of supervision, caring for other children. Malnourished or abnormal eating behaviour – bingeing or hoarding.</p> <p>Anaemia, untreated/unmet medical needs. Soiling/wetting. Poor and unsafe home conditions.</p>	<p>Developmental delay/special needs, presents as under stimulated.</p> <p>Abnormal reaction to separation – attachment disorder.</p> <p>Poor school attendance and/school performance.</p> <p>Poor social skills, overactive and/or aggressive.</p> <p>Offending behaviour including stealing food. Is very demanding of affection or attention. Has no understanding of basic hygiene.</p>

## Emotional Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Underproduction or overprotection which has a significant negative impact on a child's development.</p> <p>Developmental delay.</p> <p>Repeated illnesses, severe toileting problems. Eating disorders – anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Sleep problems.</p>	<p>Symptoms of depression, anxiety, withdrawal.</p> <p>Symptoms of self-destructive behaviour – self-harming, suicide attempts, engaging in drug or alcohol abuse.</p> <p>Low self-esteem and low expectation of others, unable to accept praise or to trust. Extremes of self-stimulatory behaviours, head banging, comfort seeking, masturbation.</p>

## Sexual Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Torn, stained or bloody underclothing. Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, mouth, vaginal or anal area.</p> <p>Blood in urine or faeces and pain on urination.</p> <p>Sexually transmitted disease, recurrent urinary tract infections.</p> <p>Pregnancy.</p> <p>Self-mutilation, picking at sores, sticking sharp objects in the vagina and head-banging.</p>	<p>Running away from home, substance abuses, school absences, suicide attempts and self-mutilation.</p> <p>Fear of a particular individual or place.</p> <p>Eating disorders, promiscuity or prostitution. Sleep problems, social isolation, reluctance to participate in physical activities – swimming or PE.</p> <p>Poor peer group relationships.</p> <p>Unusual reluctance or fear of going home from school.</p> <p>Unusual or bizarre sexual themes in a child's</p>

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

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

## PROCEDURES FOR MAKING COMPLAINTS IN RELATION TO CHILD ABUSE

### How a Parent can make a Complaint

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 or any member of the school's safeguarding team: the Principal, the Designated or Deputy 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 as this is the responsibility of Social Services and/or PSNI. Staff should report these concerns immediately to the Designated/Deputy 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/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parent will be informed immediately.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher may consult with members of the school's safeguarding team, the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Education Authority's 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/Deputy Designated Teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. She will also notify the EA's 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 EA Designated Officer for Child Protection and a copy will be kept in the school's child protection file.

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

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher if the Principal is not available) **must be informed immediately**. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal/Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher)

If a complaint is made against the Principal the Designated/Deputy 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 or may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the appropriate authorities. The Chair of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

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

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

## **ATTENDANCE AT CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCES AND CORE GROUP MEETINGS**

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

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING**

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

Should a child transfer to another school whilst there are current child protection concerns we will share these concerns with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

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

## **VETTING PROCEDURES**

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

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF PAID OR UNPAID**

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

The school's code of conduct is available on request.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

Orritor Primary School and Nursery Unit is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on Policy and procedures with some members of staff receiving more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic child protection awareness training every two years. The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will also attend relevant child protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

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

## **THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM**

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there is a permanent child protection notice board in the main corridor which provides advice and displays child helpline numbers. A flow diagram of how a parent may make a complaint is also on display. An enlarged flow diagram for a teacher allegation is in staff room.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- Creating a happy, caring, learning environment with a positive ethos, by promoting values such as openness, honesty, respect, tolerance and caring for self and others in order to enhance self-esteem and encourage positive, assertive social skills.
- Providing a listening environment which encourages children to share their concerns – Circle Time, 'Help' poster displayed in each classroom.
- Delivering a curriculum, which addresses relevant issues in a positive and sensitive manner – P.D.M.U., R.E., The World Around Us.

- Our 'Anti-Bullying Policy' encourages children to tell, and support one another.
- Assemblies, speakers and educational visits, encouraging our children to develop attitudes, values and skills which will help them make the right choices.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of, and adhere to, the Code of Conduct governing our behaviour towards pupils.

### **Policy Review/ Design/ Implementation**

Designed	September 2021
Reviewed by Principal	September 2021
Reviewed by Staff	September 2021
Reviewed by Parents/Guardians	November 2021
Reviewed by Governors	November 2021
Ratified by Governors	
Implemented	
Due for Review (2 years)	September 2023

Chairman:

Date:

### **MONITORING AND EVALUTING**

The Safeguarding Team in Orritor Primary School and Nursery Unit 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.

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

# Appendices



CONFIDENTIAL

**NOTE OF CONCERN**

**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: If 'No' state reason:	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:	
Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file If 'No' state reason:	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

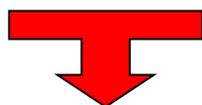
Signature of DT/DDT: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## How a Parent Can Make a Complaint...

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 Teacher for Child Protection (**Mrs Black**)/Principal (**Mr Frizzell**)

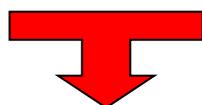
or

the Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection -

**Mrs Currie (Primary)**

or

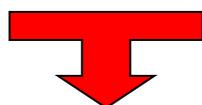
**Miss Thompson (Nursery)**



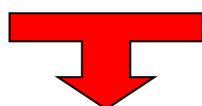
If I am still concerned, I can talk to/write to the Chair of the Board of Governors –

**Mr Wilbert Mayne**

Orritor P.S. – **Tel: 02886751412**



If I am still concerned, I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman – **Tel: 0800343424**



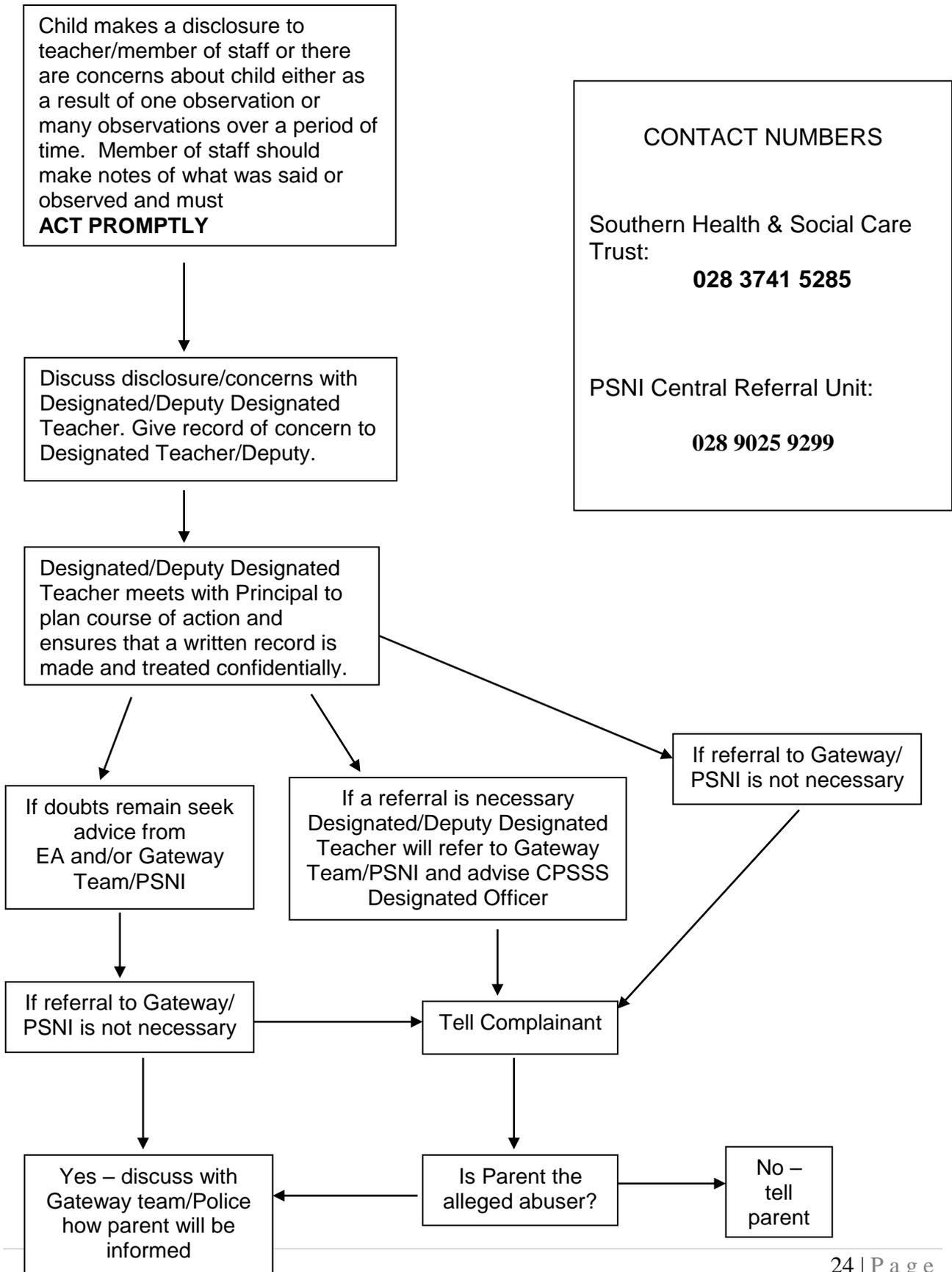
At any time a parent can talk to a Social Worker at the Gateway Team

**Tel: 08007837745** (Free Phone from a Landline)

**or** can contact the PSNI Central Referral Unit – **Tel: 101**

**APPENDIX 3**

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



## APPENDIX 4

### 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 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 the BoG to agree 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

