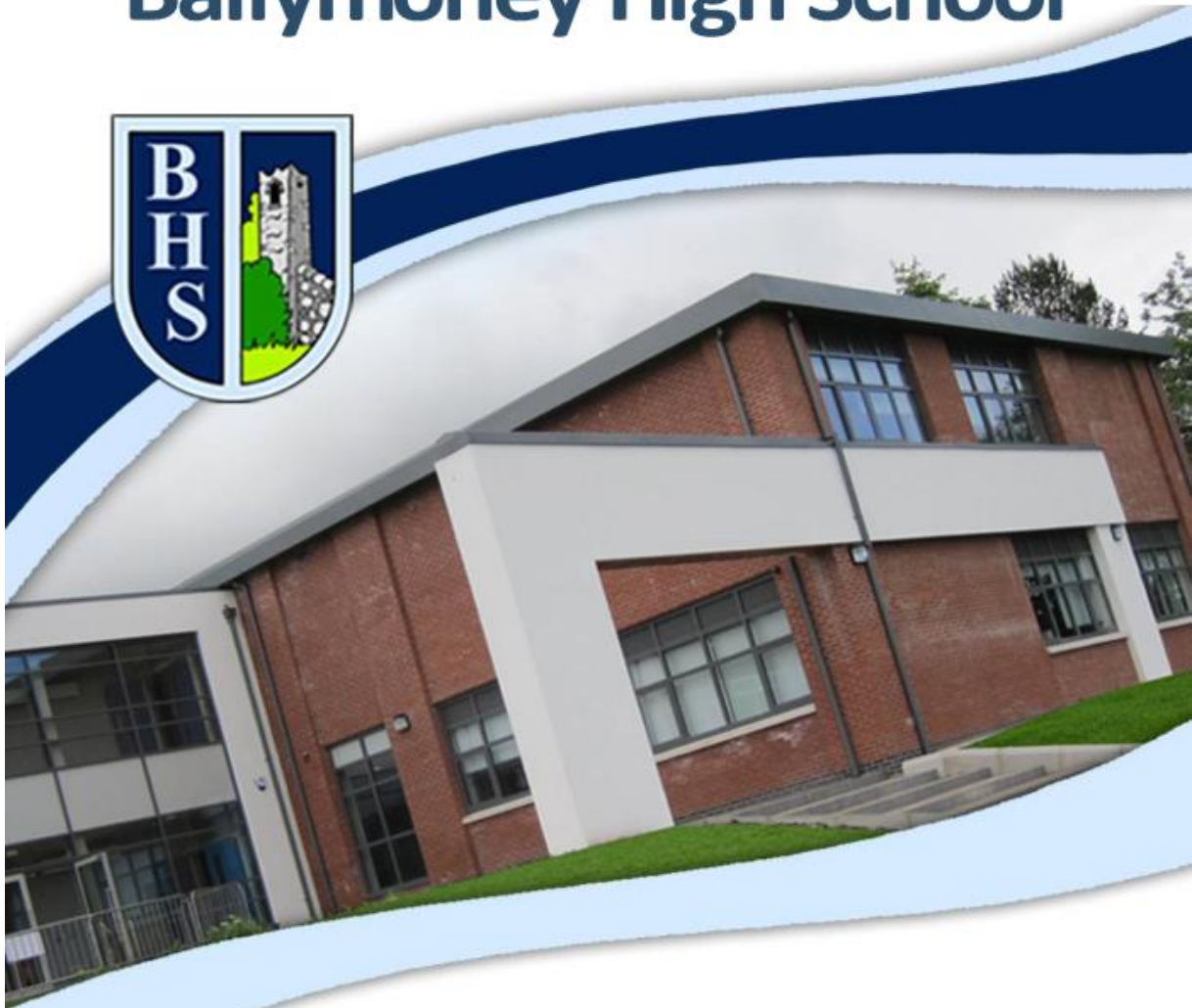


Ballymoney High School



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2022

Ratified by the Board of Governors

Signed _____

(Chairman of the Board of Governors)

Date:

Giving you the opportunity to reach your potential.

Reviewed May 2022

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1. Child Protection Ethos

We in Ballymoney High School acknowledge our pastoral responsibility towards our pupils and recognise that all children and teenagers have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Young people cannot learn effectively or develop unless they feel secure. We in Ballymoney High School have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

There are three main elements to our Safeguarding Policy.

- a) **Prevention** —through a positive school atmosphere, good staff pupil relations, pastoral support and by equipping children with the skills and knowledge needed to keep them safe.
- b) **Protection** — ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and by following agreed procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of abuse.
- c) **Support** — establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

2. Principles & Practices

- The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection” (DENI Circular 99/10) and the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland’s Procedures Manual November 2017, with amendments as of August 2020 DE Circular 2020/07. Our policy also reflects the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 and the Family, Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998 and the Children and Young People’s Strategy 2020-2030. (The Children and Young People’s Strategy 2020-2030 is a requirement of the Children’s Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015. It is the overarching strategic framework for government to improve the health and wellbeing of all children in NI. The Emotional Health & Wellbeing Framework in Education February 2021.

Therefore 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.
- We have a duty of care to report concerns about a child to the appropriate agency.
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount, this overrides all other considerations.
- A child is anyone under the age of 18 years old.

Within our school we will also seek to implement and adhere to the following **practices**

- Establishing and maintaining an ethos where pupils feel secure and or encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure our pastoral system encourages good relationships between pupils, Class Tutors, Subject Teachers, Heads of Year, Ancillary staff, Prefects and Peer mentors;
- Make sure pupils and parents and all staff are made aware of the name of the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher, the counselling service available in school (Family Works Counselling) and outside school (eg CAMHS), the school youth worker (EA Youth Service) and the telephone numbers of the Social Services Gateway referral service, NSPCC and CHILDLINE Number. (*See Appendix*)
- Have a collective responsibility to be aware of the signs of possible abuse, to be alert to these, to know the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected or alleged abuse and to implement these as required

"In all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection procedures or policies, the best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration."
(*Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools, DENI, 2017 – updated September 2019*)

3. Other Relevant Policies

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

- Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-Drugs policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy
- SEN Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- * Whistle Blowing Policy
- ICT and acceptable Use of the Internet Policy

4. School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team:

- Designated Teacher: Mrs K Blair
- Deputy Designated Teacher: Mr D Watson
- Principal: Mr J Bingham (Principal)
- Chair of the Board of Governors: Mr Desmond Fulton
- Designated Governor for Child Protection: Mrs Jennifer Reid

5. Roles & Responsibilities

While it is recognised that all adults, workers in school have a role and responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, the members of the School Safeguarding Team have specific roles and responsibilities.

5.1 The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher

The designated teacher and deputy designated teacher must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role
- Organise training for all staff (whole school training)
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents
- Make referrals to Social Services Gateway team or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate
- Liaise with the North Eastern Education & Library Board's Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Maintain appropriate records of all child protection concerns
- Keep the School Principal informed.
- Provide written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding Child Protection.

On receiving a referral, the Designated Teacher will:

- ✓ Inform the Principal immediately.
- ✓ After discussion with the Principal, seek advice from Social Services through the Gateway Team in Coleraine. If appropriate, this will be followed up by a formal referral made on a UNOCINI form and forwarded to the Gateway Team.
- ✓ Advise the parents of a referral whenever possible.
- ✓ Notify the designated officer in the EA of any referrals.
- ✓ Attend any strategy meeting or Case Conference called.
- ✓ Keep appropriate records.

5.2 The Principal

The Principal must ensure that:-

- DENI 1999 / 10 is implemented within the school
- That a designated teacher and deputy are appointed
- That all staff receive child protection training
- That all necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- That the Chairman of the Board of Governors (and, when appropriate, the Board of Governors) is kept informed
- That child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates & annual report are provided
- That the school child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy of this policy at least once every 2 years.
- That confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of

Governors on a need to know basis.

5.3 The Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors must:

- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- Ensure that the school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment & selection training provided by the EA Child Protection Support Service for Schools, the EA 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 updates at each meeting and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity.
 - The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003 places a statutory duty on the BOG to safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils.

5.4 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.

Remember the 5 Rs: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer (see Appendix 1)

The member of staff must:

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection;
- * Be familiar with the main types of abuse and the associated signs and indicators (see section 6)
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- Act promptly
- * Reassure the child.
- Not give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- Not investigate or do anything which would prejudice subsequent enquiries by social service/PSNI
- Not ask leading questions.
- * Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality.
- * Take ALL cases seriously and report them to the Designated Teacher even if they have doubts regarding the information provided or the legitimacy of their own suspicions/concerns
- * Attend any relevant training as required.

In addition the Class Teacher should:

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence. A 'Cause for Concern' form should be completed and passed on to the DT when necessary. This can be completed by any member of staff- teaching or non-teaching.

5.5 Parents

Parents should play their part in Child Protection by:

- Telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the Child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation;
- Informing the school if there are any changes or special arrangements regarding collection of children from school
- Familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet and Child Protection Policies;
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school
- Raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the school.

5.6 The Board of Governors

Board of Governors must ensure that:

- The school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy
- Relevant Child Protection training is kept up-to-date by at least one governor and a record kept of the same
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to an entire Board of Governors on a need-to know basis.

6. What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organisations. Abusers come from all walks of life and all occupations and professions. Child abuse can manifest in a number of ways and can involve a combination of the forms of abuse. Those working with children and young people must have an awareness and understanding of the nature and prevalence of different manifestations within their practice area.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Through their day-to-day contact with individual children, school staff, especially teachers, but also Non-Teaching staff including lunch-time supervisors and ancillary or auxiliary staff, are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms, change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm. 'Harm' means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, and the question of whether harm is significant is determined in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Children Order. More detail on the concept of harm and significant harm can be found in Section 2.4 of Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (August 2017) and in the Children (NI) Order 1995.

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations, including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrest-able offence. This includes crimes against children.

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. However, teachers and other staff should be aware of and alert to, the possible implications of all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are repeated regularly. Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection.

The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed, including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school's staff, teaching or Non-Teaching (see Dealing with Allegations Against a Member of Staff - DE Circular 2015/13).

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. In all cases where symptoms displayed by a child give rise to concerns about possible abuse, or about the welfare of the child, the member of staff should report these concerns to the Designated Teacher. A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff of the School which gives rise to concern about possible child abuse by someone outside the School, or by a person working in the School in a volunteer capacity.

The person making the complaint should be advised of their responsibility to refer to the local Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home. Students who are the victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties which may require a holistic assessment of need to determine appropriate level and types of intervention.

6.1 Types of Abuse Child abuse may take a number of forms, including:

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.

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

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

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child an opportunity 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.

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

All the above definitions are from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017)

These types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities, but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of appropriate supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed.

6.2 Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of 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 include physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. Any child (i.e. a person under the age of 18) can be a victim of CSE.

Although younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Students aged 16-17 although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited. Both young females and males can be victims of CSE. CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people's peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males.

While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, the majority of CSE victims are living at home. CSE can be very difficult to identify and a young person may not see themselves as a victim. However, it is our statutory responsibility to protect all children and young people from abuse, irrespective of whether or not they view themselves as a victim of abuse.

Professionals need to be able to identify vulnerability in the midst of challenging behaviour and frequent resistance to, or even apparent disregard for, professional support. Research repeatedly shows that young people rarely report abuse through CSE. Most concerns are identified by professionals, friends or family or by proactive investigation by authorities. In recognition of this, good practice guidelines state that all areas should assume that CSE is occurring within their area unless they have evidence to indicate otherwise. As such, the staff in Ballymoney High School should be alert to the possibility of CSE and plan to protect children and young people accordingly.

Potential indicators of CSE:

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

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

Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

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

Sexual Violence and Abuse:

'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).'

Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent. The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy can be found at:

www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/stopping-domestic-and-sexual-violence-and-abusenorthern-ireland-strategy

6.3 Possible Signs and Indicators of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing – grip marks on arms;- Slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions;- Untreated injuries;- Bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Self destructive tendencies;- Aggressive to other children;- Behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive);- Appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults;- Improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway;- Uncomfortable with physical contact;- Come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home;- Clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide

	part of body; - Violent themes in art work or stories
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Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - poor hair and skin; alopecia; - recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders; - signs of self mutilation; - signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); - extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apathy and dejection; - Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations; - Rocking/head banging; - Inability to play; - Indifference to separation from family; - Indiscriminate attachment; - Reluctance for parental liaison; - Fear of new situation; - Chronic runaway; - Attention seeking/needing behaviour; - Poor peer relationships

Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looks very thin, poorly and sad; - Constant hunger; lack of energy; - Untreated medical problems; - Special needs of child not being met; - Constant tiredness; inappropriate dress; - Poor hygiene; repeatedly unwashed; smelly; - Repeated accidents, especially burns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); - Steals food; compulsive eating; - Begging from class friends; - Withdrawn; lacks concentration; - Misses school medicals; - Reports that no carer is at home; - Low self-esteem; - Persistent non-attendance at school;

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What the child tells you; - Withdrawn; chronic depression; - Excessive sexual precociousness;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas; - Torn, stained or bloody underclothes; - Chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches; - Difficulty in walking or sitting; - Frequent urinary infections; - Avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers; - Unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; - Anorexia/gross over eating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seductiveness; - Children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal; - Over concerned for siblings; - Poor self esteem; self devaluation; - Lack of confidence; peer problems; - Lack of involvement; - Massive weight change; - Suicide attempts (especially adolescents); hysterical/ angry outbursts; - Lack of emotional control; - Sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour; - Repeated attempts to run away from home; - Unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories; - Vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity; - Exposure to pornographic material.
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6.4 Dealing with Disclosures of Self-Harm

Self-harm is often a means by which a child can release the tension caused by their anxiety, grief or anger. It can also be seen as a means of communication, to tell themselves and others that they need help. It helps them feel they have a level of control over something in their lives – making ‘real’ the emotional pain they are unable to express. It is our policy that in instances where a child expresses suicidal ideation or self-harm or discloses that he/she has self-harmed, we will contact the parents and ask them to take their child to their GP for assessment.

6.5 Bullying

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the victim and to deal with all individuals involved in a restorative way.

Further information on Bullying can be found in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

6.6 Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is a type of aggression defined by Childnet International as the sending or posting of harmful or cruel texts or image using the internet or other digital communication device. The Anti Bullying Association has identified seven types of cyber bullying.

1. **Text Message** – unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
2. **Picture /Video Clips via mobile phone cameras** – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. **Mobile Phone Calls** – silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim’s phone and using it to harass others, making them believe the victim is responsible.
4. **Emails** – threatening or bullying emails often sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name.
5. **Chat-room Bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web based chat-room.
6. **Instant Messaging** – unpleasant messages sent as children or young people conduct real time conversations online.
7. **Bullying via website** – use of defamatory blogs, personal websites and personal polling sites.

For further information on our policy relating to Cyberbullying please refer to both our Anti-Bullying and our ICT and access to the Internet/Cyber bullying Policy

7. Reporting Procedures

7.1 How a Parent can make a Complaint

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

7.2 Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child, they should not investigate – this is a matter for Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the designated teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the designated teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

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

The designated teacher may consult with the Education Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made, the designated teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. He/she will also notify the Education Authority'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 Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection.

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

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

7.3 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 teacher if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal/Designated teacher)

If a complaint is made against the Principal the Designated Teacher will inform the Chairperson of The Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils (and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the appropriate authorities). The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Child Protection procedures as outlined in **Appendix 3** will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

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

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

8. Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & 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.

9. Confidentiality and Information

Sharing Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies.

Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

10. Record Keeping

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

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

11. Vetting Procedures

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

12. 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.

12.1 Private meetings with pupils

- Staff should be aware of the dangers that may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open and during normal school hours. An interview room in a busy corridor is preferred to a quieter location.
- 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 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 will take active measure to facilitate this.
- If possible the interviewer should keep a distance between themselves and the pupil e.g. a table.
- A pupil who becomes distressed during an interview should be comforted by sensitive and caring words. Physical contact may be misconstrued.

12.2 Physical Contact with Pupils

- As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.

- Staff must be aware of a pupil's personal space (the space immediately around a child) and avoid entering this space. The same expectation is in place for pupils not to enter the personal space of staff members.
- It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed or bereaved child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm
- Physical contact to praise or show gratitude towards a pupil must be restrained as it may be misconstrued.
- Teachers should stay outside changing rooms and verbally encourage children to change quickly. Teachers should only enter changing rooms in case of an emergency.
- Adults involved in PE and games should not tackle any pupil, especially in contact sports, due to the differences of age, physique, authority and power. The adult may be regarded as being negligent. PE staff are advised to demonstrate the activity alone or by a group of pupils avoiding physical contact between staff and young people.
- Staff members who have to administer First Aid to a pupil should ensure, wherever possible that this is done in the presence of another child or adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide First Aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present. Contact should be limited to what is necessary and essential for the welfare of the child. Staff members must avoid if possible contact which may be deemed inappropriate.
- 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 his/her Designated Teacher / Principal.
- Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school / work environment.
- Staff should, if possible, avoid using pupil toilets/changing facilities, especially during school hours.
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- At times it may be necessary to restrain a pupil who is in risk of causing themselves or others harm. Please refer to Guidance on the Use of the Reasonable Force to Restrain or Control Pupils (Based on DENI Circular 1999/9), a copy of which is available from the Designated Officer.

12.3 Choice and use of teaching materials

- Teachers should avoid teaching material, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.

- When using teaching material of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might after the event be criticized.
- If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.

12.4 Relationships and attitudes

- Within the Pastoral Care Policies of the school and the employing authority, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanor and language all require care and thought.
- Staff must behave with propriety at all times towards all pupils maintaining the highest professional standards.
- The discipline policy promotes a positive discipline approach. However, at times appropriate and approved sanctions may need to be implemented in order to raise the standards of work and / or behaviour. In administering sanctions staff are advised to;
 - Apply approved sanctions consistently
 - Refer pupils who do not respond to the use of their sanctions
 - Remain in control of their emotions and avoid shouting or yelling at pupils. Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect. Members of staff should be alert to the risk of **emotional abuse**, such as persistent and vindictive sarcasm, verbal bullying, or severe and persistent negative comment or actions, particularly when directed consistently at a single pupil or a small number of pupils in a class. **Such bullying behaviour is unacceptable.** Members of staff should be encouraged to reflect on every aspect of their contact with children which may give rise to perceptions or allegations of this form of abuse.
- At times a raised voice is necessary to gain attention of a larger group and on occasions pupils may need to be spoken to in a way that highlights particularly unsatisfactory behaviour. However, staff must use appropriate language and tone in all situations
- Social networking with pupils e.g. Facebook would be deemed inappropriate and staff should not engage in such activities.

13. Staff Training

Ballymoney High School is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on Policy and procedures with some members of staff receiving more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic child protection awareness training and annual refresher training.

The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will also attend relevant child protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support service for Schools.

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

14. Staff Support

Any member of staff who follows school procedures in making a report of suspected child abuse by any person (whether or not connected with the school) and who follows the guidelines in the Staff Code of Conduct is acting within the course of his/her employment, and in such circumstances, where he/she has acted in good faith will receive the full support of his/her employing authority and will not be legally or financially liable should any consequential action be brought against him/her.

We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated teacher and to seek further support as appropriate.

15. Visitors to the School

The member of staff involved in organisation the event will inform the visitor/ agency, in advance of the visit, of the ethos, aims and expectations of the school. They will also be well aware of the issues and resources to be presented by the visitor or external agency. Where appropriate, assurance will be sought that visiting speakers have staff vetting procedures completed. Issues for staff organisation events to consider are:

- all visitors must sign in at the Reception;
- the suitability of the content and presentation for the age group involved;
- ensuring that the visitor is accompanied by school staff and that cover has been organised to ensure adequate supervision of groups;
- ensuring that, where necessary, permission is sought from Parents/ carers for pupils to take part in the event;
- where necessary, the organisation of rooms or a schedule, keeping in mind the health and safety needs of the young people, visitors and staff;
- the role of school staff in the visitor's activities;
- how well the visitor is prepared for the visit;
- how the visit will be built upon and followed up;
- Ensuring, where appropriate, visitors are given advance notice of the composition of the class and an idea of how their contribution fits into the scheme of work.
- where appropriate, visitors or agencies are made aware of any particular situations or needs of individual pupils which may impact on the activity

Where there is significant risk involved a Risk Assessment and Action Plan should be completed and forwarded to the Principal. (See Risk assessment policy)

16. Whistle Blowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. (See Whistle Blowing Policy)

17. The Preventative Curriculum

In the classroom, regular morning Class Teacher assemblies are used as a means of encouraging children to raise social and emotional concerns in a safe environment and to build self confidence, respect and sensitivity among classmates, includes lessons and talks on a range of topics throughout the school such as:

- Dealing with stress
- Sexual health
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco awareness
- Risk taking behaviours

18. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in Ballymoney High School will update this Policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually. The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the child protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher. On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Date Policy Reviewed: _____

Signed: _____ (Designated Teacher)

_____ (Principal)

_____ (Chair of Board of Governors)

Appendix 1: The 5Rs

Recognition

The ability to recognise behaviour that may indicate abuse is of fundamental importance. Whether the abuse may occur on the School premises or in the home or in any other setting in which the learner may find themselves. All those playing a role in meeting the learners' needs should be aware and informed so that possible abuse can be recognised, investigated and acted on.

Response

Appropriate response is vital. No report of, or concern about, possible abuse should ever be ignored. Do not lead or probe with questions. Remain calm and demonstrate interest and concern. Listen well. Inform the person sharing a concern with you that the concerns they have raised must be recorded and passed on so that possible abuse can be dealt with, and that this will be done on a limited "need to know" basis, with as few others as possible knowing the identity of the complainant and all in the chain of reporting will respect confidentiality.

Reassure

Reassure that they have done the right thing in reporting their concerns and that you will do everything you possibly can to help. Do not make unrealistic promises. Ensure that testimony is recorded and reported, and that the complainant and subject of the complaint are treated in line with policy and guidance.

Reporting

You should report your concerns directly to the, Designated Teacher In the event of this not being possible you should report your concerns to the Deputy Designated Teacher / Principal / Chair of the Board of Governors.. Once you have reported concerns about abuse to any of the colleagues mentioned above the responsibility for taking any further decisions and/or actions resides with them.

Recording

You should record precisely what has been alleged, using the words of the complainant. Your record should use accurate quotation. It should also, if felt appropriate, include factual observations about the observable physical and emotional state of the individual sharing their concerns with you. This information should be recorded and stored securely, in line with confidentiality policy and should be accessible only to those who need to access it as part of action taken to resolve a complaint or allegation.

Referral

The decision to refer to a case to an external agency eg PSNI / Social Services will rest with the Designated Officer / Deputy Designated Officer / Principal / Chair of the Board of Governors. Appropriate support and advice regarding referral is available through the EA / Social Services Gateway Team if required.

Appendix 2 – Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff.

Child makes a disclosure to teacher/member of staff or there are concerns about child either as a result of one observation or many observations over a period of time. Member of staff should make notes of what was said or observed and must **ACT PROMPTLY**

Discuss disclosure/concerns with designated teacher. Give record of concern to Designated Teacher. (Mrs K Blair)

Designated teacher meets with Principal to plan course of action and ensures that a written record is made and treated confidentially.

If doubts remain seek advice from EA and/or Gateway Team/PSNI

If a referral is necessary Designated Teacher will refer to Gateway Team/PSNI and advise EA Designated Officer

If referral to Gateway/PSNI is not necessary

CONTACT NUMBERS

Northern Gateway Team
 Coleraine Child Care Team
 7A Castlerock Road
 Coleraine
 BT51 3HP
 EMAIL:
northern.gateway@northernturst.hscni.net
 Tel: 028 7032 5462

Out of Hours (After 5pm each evening, weekends & Bank Holidays) 028 9446 8833

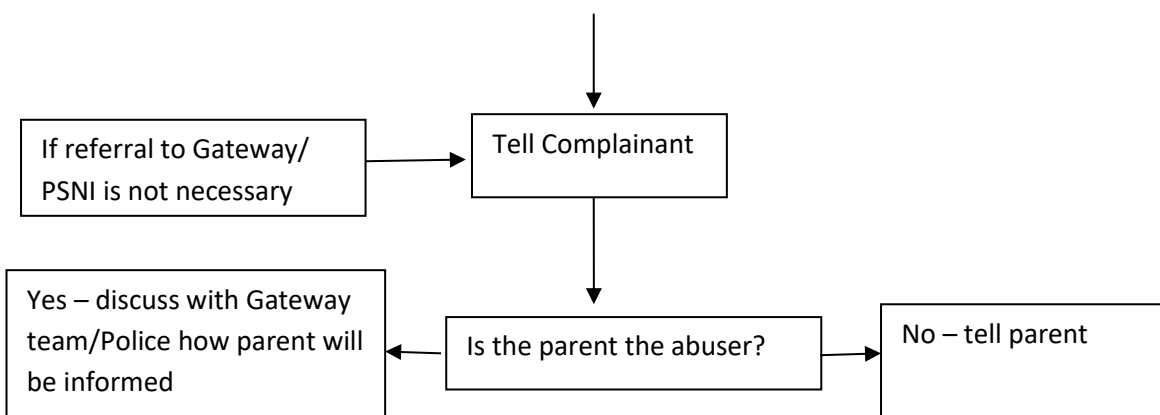
PSNI Public Protection Unit -
 Tel: 0845 6008 0000

NSPCCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

Childline – 0800 1111

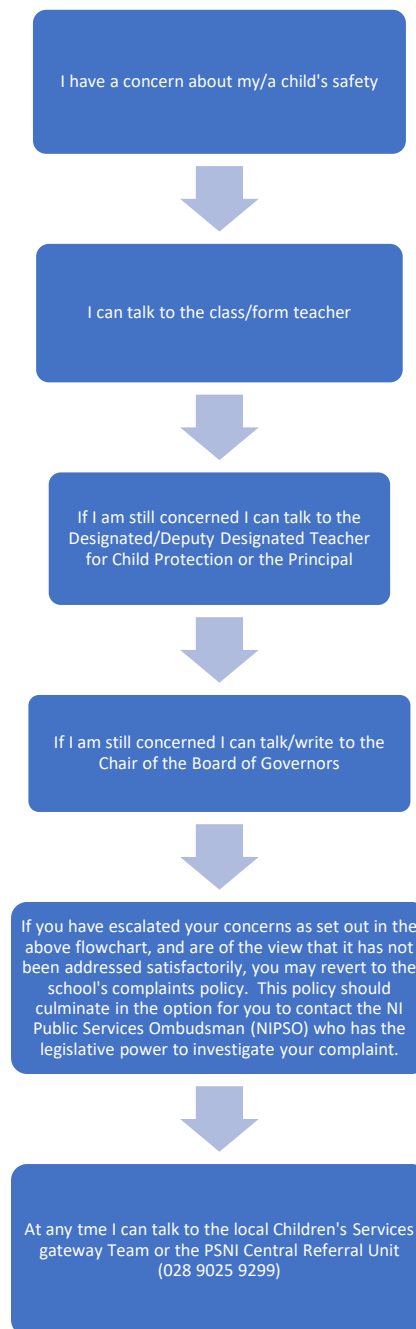
Samaritans – 0845 790 9090

Youth – 808 808 8000

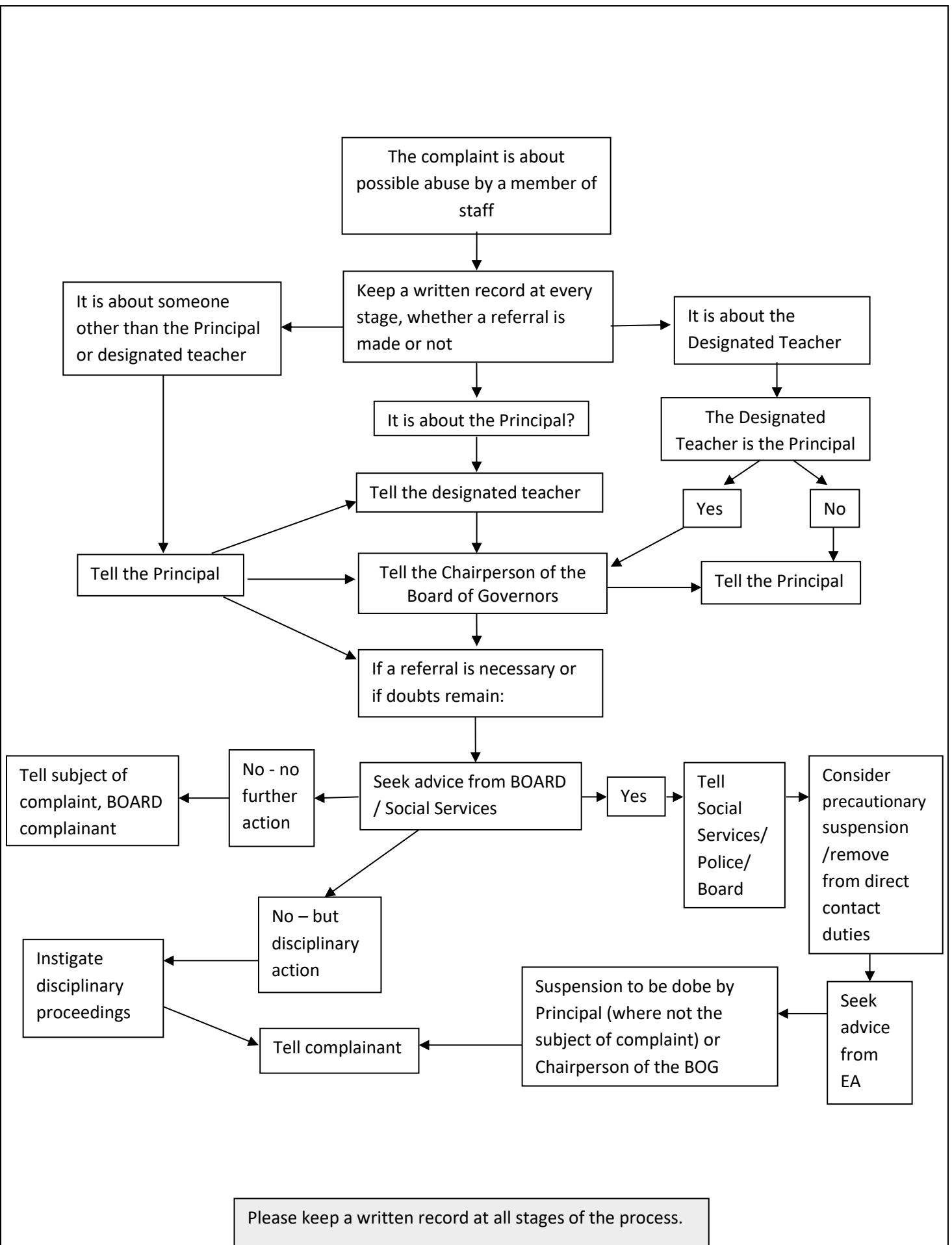


Please keep a written record at all stages of the process.

Appendix 3: If a parent has a potential child protection referral within the school:

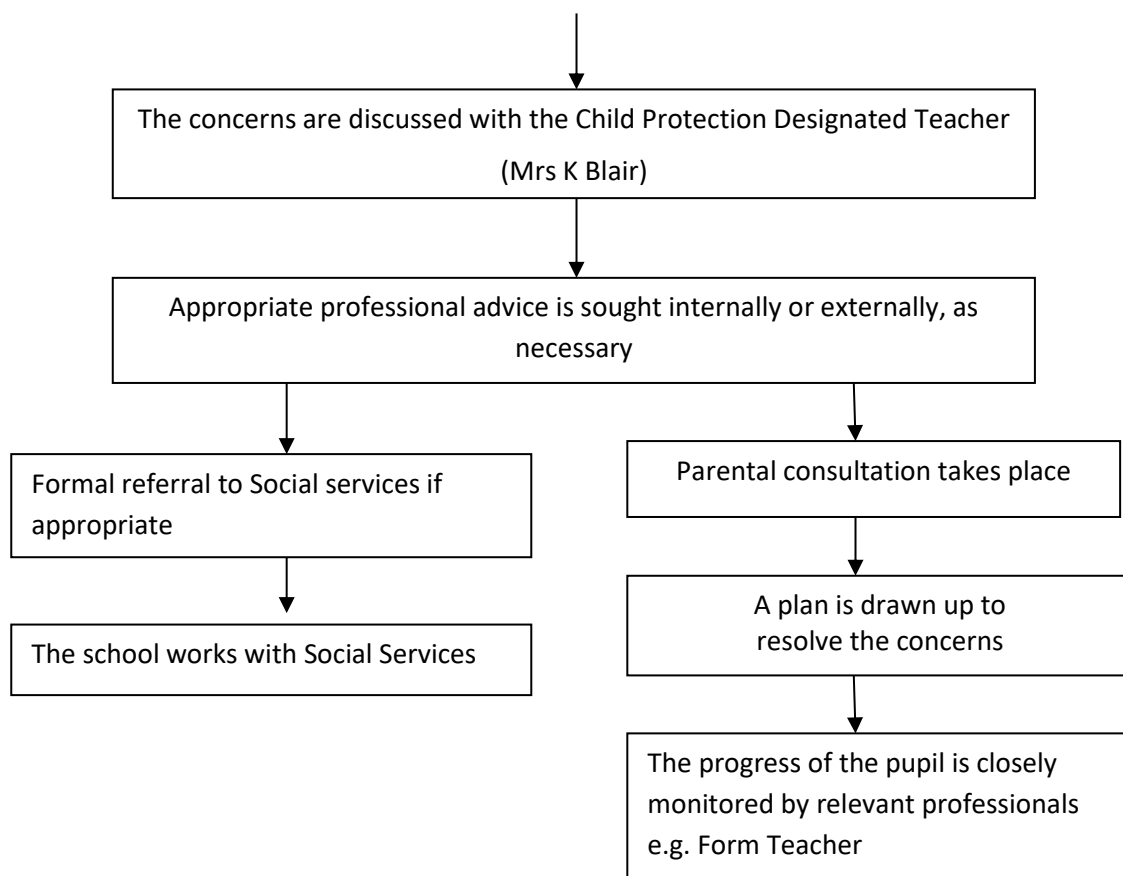


Appendix 4 – Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff



Appendix 5: General Concerns

A member of staff concerned about the physical and or emotional appearance of the child should make detailed notes of the concerns. (An example may be a Form Teacher who notices changes in behaviour, appearance, attendance/ punctuality patterns)



Appendix 6 – Child Protection Referral Form

(to be used in all incidences relating to Child Protection)

Pupil's name	
Class	DOB
Parent / Guardian name	
Address	GP address / contact number
Contact numbers	Involvement of Professional agencies
Disclosure / Concern (What? Who? When? Where?)	

Referred to Designated / Deputy Designated teacher/ Principal (delete as appropriate)

Date	Time
Name	
Signature	

School Safeguarding team meeting	
Date _____	Time _____
Present _____	

Official Use by Designated Teacher / Principal

Agency	Date	Advice
EA		
Social services		
PSNI		

Outcome (Tick appropriate box)

- **Concern not referred** Date _____
- **Concern referred to Social Services** Date _____
- **Concern referred to PSNI** Date _____

Reasons for outcome

	Signature	Date
Designated Teacher		
Principal		
Chairperson of BOG		
Parent / Guardian informed		