

# St. Anthony's Primary School

43 Fairway, Larne, Co. Antrim BT40 2BG



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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<b>Person Responsible</b>	Mrs C. Tunney
<b>Consultation</b>	Board of Governors, Teaching/Non-Teaching Staff, Parents and Pupils

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## **Introduction: School Mission Statement**

We, in St. Anthony's Primary School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the children in our charge. All members of our school community are committed to safeguarding, with all staff taking their responsibility seriously. In St. Anthony's, we all work towards creating a culture of mutual trust and respect, through which the best interests of the pupils entrusted to our care is of paramount importance.

The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually, taking on board changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection. Training, advice and support is available from the Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) based in the Education Authority.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available to download from our website and a hard copy is also available on request from the School Office.

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, Pastoral Care and Anti-Bullying (including the updated Anti-Bullying Framework 2021).

## **Aims of Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

- To promote a safeguarding and child protection ethos within St. Anthony's school environment, ensuring that there is a culture of mutual trust and respect which contributes to the care, safety and well-being of our pupils
- To ensure that all in St. Anthony's community take responsibility for protecting our pupils and ensure that those in key positions have a clear understanding of their roles in adhering to policies and procedures
- To ensure that all in key positions have undergone initial CPSS training and refresher training
- To ensure that the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers facilitate child protection training for the whole school.
- To ensure that a high priority is given to the delivery of a preventative education programme so that children can make informed choices in their lives so that they can protect themselves
- To offer support to families and promote early intervention to meet the needs of our pupils
- To ensure a culture in which our pupils feel safe and that they are confident and secure in talking to staff about matters that concern them, knowing

that staff will listen to them, take their concerns seriously and consider their age and understanding

- To treat pupils' and parents' concerns in a confidential manner, whilst recognising the need to take appropriate action as and when required in the best interests of the pupil
- To ensure that all staff are familiar with St. Anthony's Code of Conduct for Staff. This extends to both teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers

### **Keeping Our Pupils Safe**

We seek to protect our pupils by adopting a preventative education approach:

- Helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse through Personal Development Programme (PDMU), and Relationships and Sexuality Education lessons (RSE). Also, through the use of outside agencies e.g. NSPCC workshops for pupils and parents
- Helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence, knowledge, understanding and skills they need to keep themselves safe.
- Keeping the school safe and being vigilant regarding strangers on the school site
- Responding immediately and appropriately to any concerns regarding potential abuse
- Implementing the safeguarding elements of the school's ICT Policy

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

In accordance with the Children (NI) order 1995 and with DENI May 2017 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools,' the key principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection are:

- The child's welfare is paramount
- The voice of the child/young person should be heard
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together
- Partnership - safeguarding is a shared responsibility
- Prevention - the importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely support measures
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances
- Protection - children should be safe from harm
- Evidence based and informed decision making- decisions and actions taken must be well informed

**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 health and wellbeing of all children in Northern Ireland. We aim to monitor and review our Safeguarding policy in relation to current Covid-19 guidelines, the school's Covid-19 Response Plan and The Department of Health Mental Health Action Plan 2020.

### **Recruitment, Vetting and Induction of Staff and Volunteers**

All staff are vetted in compliance with Department of Education circulars 203/01 which sets out vetting requirements for schools. All new paid teaching and non-teaching staff must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) before taking up post. There are two types of volunteers working in schools. Volunteers who work unsupervised and who are required to have an EDC, and a volunteer who works under supervision who is not required to obtain an EDC. We also ensure that volunteers, coaches, music tutors etc., who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place and a record of these should be maintained by the Principal.

All vetting documentation and individual confirmation of suitability from Access NI are stored in the main office and by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A list is compiled on an annual basis with regard to persons suitable to work in school. Our school staff are also expected to adopt a Code of Conduct for behaviour towards pupils.

### **Visitors to School**

Visitors to schools, such as parents, suppliers of goods services, to carry out maintenance etc. do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors are managed by the office and caretaking staff and their access to areas and movement within the school is restricted. The school security system operates on all doors from 8.45 am to 3.00pm on a daily basis. All visitors report to reception.

Visitors are:

- Met/directed by school staff
- Requested to sign in and out of the school using the Visitor's Book
- If appropriate be given restricted access to specific areas of the school
- Escorted by a member of staff where possible
- Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes
- Access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit

- If delivering good or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons

Pupils coming into school on work experience do not require Access NI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal induction process will apply.

Schools will also be concerned to ensure the welfare of their pupils on work experience and on residential trips. Guidance on organising work experience is available from the EA and from the Health and Safety Executive.

[www.eani.org.uk/school-management/educational-visits](http://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/educational-visits)

### **Other Related Policies:**

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

- Anti-Bullying Policy/Anti-Bullying Framework
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Management & Discipline Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints policy
- Data protection Policy
- Educational Visits
- E-Safety Policy
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care
- Privacy Notice
- Records Management policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Whistleblowing policy
- Covid-19 Response Plan 2020-2021
- Online Learning Policy

## **THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ST. ANTHONY'S P.S**

**Principal:** Ms. A Fleming

**Designated Teacher for Child Protection:** Mrs C Tunney

**Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection:** Ms. A Fleming

**Chair of Governors:** Mr. D Donaghy

**Designated Governor for Child Protection:** Mrs H Sherry

**Online Safety Officer:** Miss C Mc Laughlin

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher must:**

- avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and roles
- organise training for all school staff including support staff
- be available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
- be responsible for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- maintain a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services
- lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy
- 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 Central Referral Unit where appropriate
- liaise with the Education Authority's Designated Officers for Child Protection
- keep the Principal informed
- promote a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
- provide a written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection

The Deputy Designated Teacher should support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

**Principal:**

The principal must ensure that:

- DENI Circular 2017/04 guidance is implemented within the school
- they attend training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- they manage the appointment of a designated teacher and deputy designated teacher
- all staff receive child protection training
- all necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed
- child Protection activities feature on the agendas of meetings of the Board of Governors and termly updates and annual report are provided
- the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils are informed/have access to the policy
- confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors and relevant staff on a need to know basis.

**The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003** places a statutory duty on BoG to safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils.

**The Designated Governor for Child Protection:**

The Designated Governor should avail of child protection awareness training delivered by CPSS 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 Teacher's report
- recruitment, selection and vetting and induction of staff

**The Chair of the Board of Governors:**

- ensure that he/ she has received appropriate EA training
- 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 and 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 Principal
- ensure that the Board of Governors receives termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity
- in an event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint being made against the Principal, the chairperson is responsible for ensuring records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries

### **Safeguarding and Child Protection Definitions**

We use the following definitions taken from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016).

#### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with preventative education and activities which enable young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and well-being is promoted. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection, which refers specifically to the action that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering or likely to suffer harm. In all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection procedures and policies, the best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration

#### **Child Protection**

Child Protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm.

#### **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.

## **Abuse & Definitions of Abuse**

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol, and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals. Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm.

Harm can be caused by: □

Physical Abuse;

- Sexual Abuse;
- Emotional Abuse; □ Neglect; AND □ Exploitation.

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

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

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not 'giving a child opportunities' to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones.

**Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

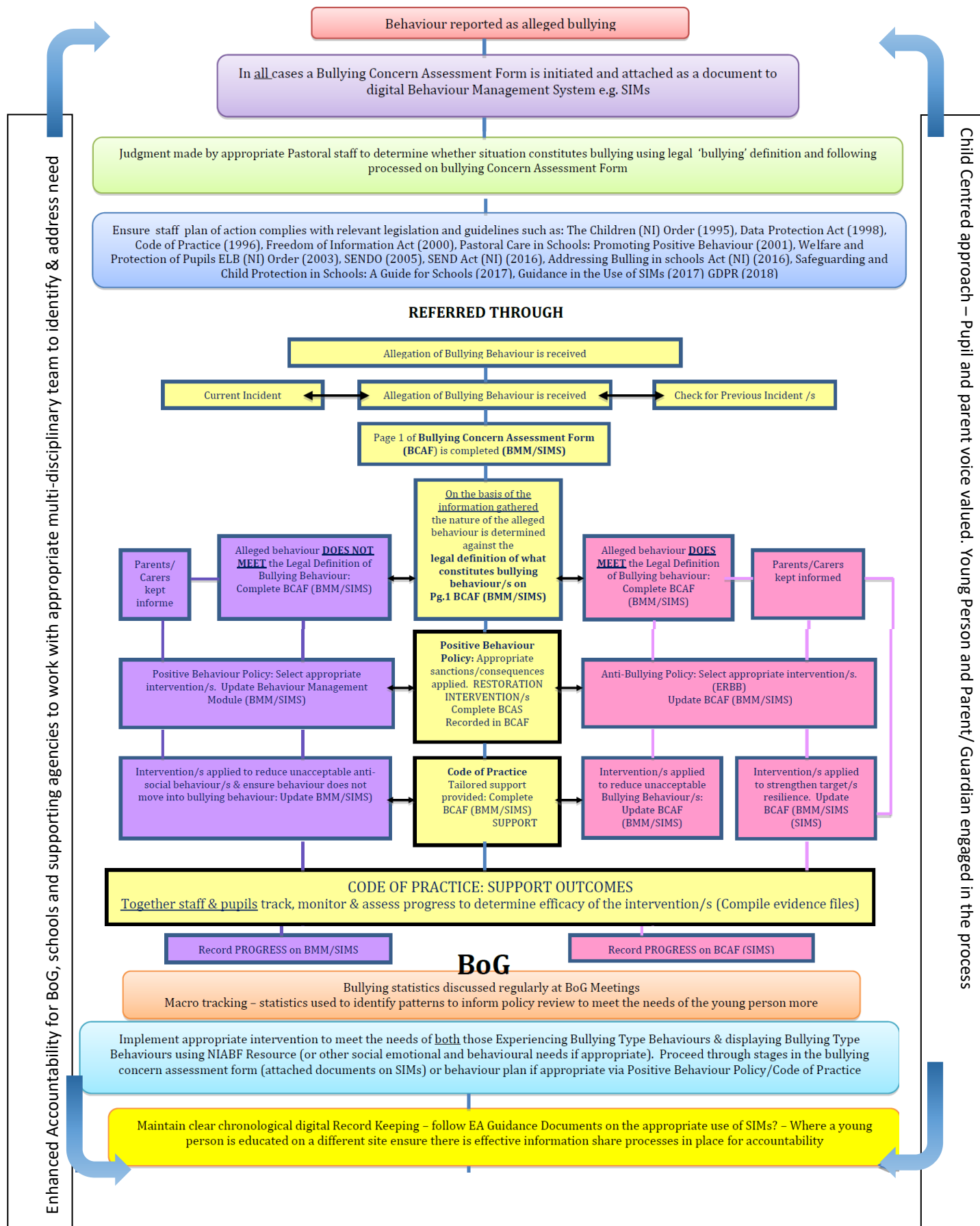
**Exploitation** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement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

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

### **Bullying**

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in St. Anthony's P.S. Our Anti- Bullying policy acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures. 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 those affected and to apply appropriate sanctions to those who have displayed bullying behaviour. Parents of **both** those who have displayed and been subjected to bullying behaviour will be contacted when bullying has been identified. Any complaints by a parent that their child is or may have been bullied will be fully investigated by the DT and action will be taken to protect the child. This will include ensuring that a child/group of children 'befriends' and supports the child being subjected to bullying behaviour. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the DT within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action taken. The sanctions taken against a pupil who displays bullying behaviour will depend on the seriousness of the case but will include those outlined in the Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until appropriate actions have been taken. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the child protection procedures.

## PROCESS TO FOLLOW WHEN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING OR DISPLAYING BULLYING TYPE BEHAVIOURS



# **Guidelines for Internet Use and Safeguarding**

## **Use of Internet and Digital Technology**

We in St. Anthony's promote the safe, healthy, acceptable and effective use of the Internet and other Digital Technologies (following DE guidance as set out in DE Circular 2013/25, Effective and Educational Uses of Mobile Digital Devices 2016/26, Online Safety 2016/27). We actively promote safe and acceptable working practices for all staff and pupils which reassures parents that all relevant procedures are in place safeguarding all of the children. As we are living in a rapidly changing technological world we constantly keep children, staff and parents updated in relation to what is deemed safe/unsafe practices through School Website, Seesaw App, School social media (Facebook) and training opportunities for whole school, including parent assemblies and workshops.

### **Children:**

All children are given clear guidance with regard to the use of Internet and Digital Technology in school. They are made aware of the benefit of these technologies, but are also made aware of the dangers i.e. Use of school rules, giving personal details over the internet, knowing to talk to a trusted adult if they are concerned about something they hear and see over the internet etc. The school is an Online Safety enriched environment which impacts upon all areas of school life. Children are informed at the beginning of each school year that mobile phones are not permitted in school.

### **Staff:**

Staff have participated in training and signed and agreed to an Acceptable Use Policy Agreement and an Acceptable Use of Social Media Policy Agreement for ICT provision in school. An additional C2K Acceptable Use Policy for Managed Service laptops has also been signed by staff. If staff encounter any inappropriate sites, they should report the matter to Ms A. Fleming (Principal, or Mrs C. Tunney (Senior Teacher) immediately.

### **Parents:**

Parents should have opportunities to access and receive training relating to online safety practices. At the beginning of the school year parents also give their written consent with regard to use of their children's photographs and moving images taken only on school devices. These are used for classroom displays, the school website, school social media platforms and local / regional media as well as written work being used for display purposes.

Parents are informed at the beginning of the school year that children are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school in keeping with the school mobile phone policy. If throughout the course of the day parents need to be contacted, this will be done by the main office. We recognise that parents /extended family members may on occasion wish to capture children's performance on digital devices during special events throughout the school year- Christmas Concerts, Assemblies, Sacramental Services, Sports Day etc. Parents are strongly advised that they are permitted to do so but that the footage taken is solely used with the best of intentions and in the best interests of the child. Online safety procedures must be adhered to as outlined on our school website.

## **Safeguarding Procedures for School Activities and Trips**

### **Extended Schools/Shared Education**

All planned activities are an extension of the current good practice that already exists in St. Anthony's P.S. All staff/coaches have been vetted and are appraised of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures. The Extended School's Co-ordinator monitors and supervises all activities. Any concerns by staff are reported directly to Ms A. Fleming (Principal) or Mrs C. Tunney (Designated teacher), and appropriate procedures ensue as detailed in the earlier section for disclosed (suspected) child abuse.

### **School Trips**

To ensure safety of children at all times, there are high levels of supervision on school trips, with a favourable adult-child ratio. Risk assessments are conducted prior to any school trip. All volunteers who assist with educational trips are given a copy of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy/Code of Conduct so that they act in compliance when supporting the school.

Staff are made aware of the importance of high levels of supervision required when children are off site. Particular attention is given to the additional needs children may have when spending a day off site i.e. inhalers, epi pens, blood sugar monitor etc.

All staff are advised of EA North Eastern Region's 'Educational Visits Guidance 2017' Policy Document and all trips are compliant with the guidance set out within. In the event of an emergency the lead member of staff on a given trip will make immediate contact with the Designated Teacher/Principal and school procedures will apply.

## **Children with Increased Vulnerabilities**

- **Children with a disability**

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

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

- **Children with limited fluency in English**

Children whose first language is not English/Newcomer pupils should be given the opportunity to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred.

DTs and other relevant school staff should seek advice and support from the EA's Intercultural Education Service if necessary. All schools should create an atmosphere in which pupils with special educational needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.

### **Early Years Provision**

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

## • Looked After Children

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

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

## • Children / young people who go missing

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

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

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



- **Young people in supported accommodation**

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

- **Young people who are homeless**

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

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

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

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

If we become aware of a child or young person who may be separated, unaccompanied or a victim of human trafficking we in St. Anthony's P.S. will immediately follow our safeguarding and child protection procedures

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

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

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

- **Gender identity issues and sexual orientation**

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

EA has published guidance on how schools can support transgender young people. [www.eani.org.uk/school-management/policies-and-guidance/supporting-transgender-young-people](http://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/policies-and-guidance/supporting-transgender-young-people)

### **Children/young people's behaviours**

- **Peer Abuse**

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

- **Self-Harm**

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

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

#### • **Suicidal Ideation**

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

#### **Operation Encompass (Updated December 2022)**

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children's exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, when the police have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school safeguarding team. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the designated teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns.

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

Further information see [The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2022.](#)

## Procedures for Reporting Suspected (or disclosed) Abuse

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) is Mrs C. Tunney.

In her absence, the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DDT) Ms. A Fleming will assume responsibility for child protection.

See Appendix 4, which includes photographs of our DT and DDT. These are displayed in significant places around the school.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly. The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a Child Protection nature.

Do	Do not
<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>-Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</li><li>-Delay</li><li>-Start to investigate</li><li>-<b>Do nothing</b></li></ul>

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

## **Raise a Concern**

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 Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection or the Principal. 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.

If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. If after this a parent still has concerns they can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman.

At any time a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Central Referral Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart on Pg. 23.

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

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

The designated teacher will consult with the principal or other relevant staff always taking care to avoid due delay. If principal is not available, concerns should be forwarded to the Designated Governor for Child Protection (Mrs H. Sherry). If required, advice may be sought from an Education Authority Child Protection Officer. The designated teacher may also seek clarification from the child or young person, their parent/carer.

## REFERRAL TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

The staff member should not investigate - this is a matter for social services - but should report concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT. It is the responsibility of the staff member raising a concern to complete a Child Protection: Note of Concern (See Appendices 1 and 2) which will be signed by the DT.

### **How to respond to a child who makes a disclosure: -**

#### **1. Receive**

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the child is saying without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what the child is say
- Be discreet

#### **2. Reassure**

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by talking to you, **do not make promises that you cannot keep**  
(e.g. everything will be all right now, I'll stay with you)
- Do not promise confidentiality, staff have a duty to refer the matter to the designated teacher for Child Protection. Explain that you will need to talk to Mrs Tunney (DT) who will know what to do next - Do reassure and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it

#### **3. Respond**

- Respond to the child only as far as necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter to the designated teacher for child protection
- Do ask open questions (can you tell me what happened? Anything else you wish to tell me? Yes.....)
- Do not ask closed questions (those that will evoke a yes/no response, e.g. Did ----- do this to you?). Such questions invalidate evidence where a subsequent court action is necessary
- Do not criticise the perpetrator as the child may love that person
- Do explain what you will do next (talk with the designated teacher who will know how to get help)

#### **4. Record**

- Make notes as soon as possible after hearing what the child has said and write them up
- Do not destroy these original notes

- Record the date, time, place, people present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour. Record the words the child used as much as possible. If the child uses 'pet' words record those rather than translating them into proper words. Any injuries or marks noticed can be depicted on a diagram showing position and extent
  - Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations and assumptions.
  - Sign the record and hand it to the designated teacher
- \*All written records of concerns about children, even when there is no need to refer the matter immediately should be given to the DT as soon as possible.

## **5. Refer**

**- Concerns about possible abuse must be referred to the designated teacher as soon as possible within the working day. -**

The designated teacher will liaise with the Principal in the decision making process regarding possible referral to statutory services. A Note of Concern will be filed and any additional records completed by the Designated Teacher (Appendix 1). The Principal in consultation with the DT, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services using Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) referral documentation. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral.

The Principal/DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with the CCMS designated officer, Designated Officers for Child Protection at the EA 'North Eastern Region' or Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. 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 first priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the Designated Teacher/Principal will inform:

- **The Social Services**
- **The CCMS designated officer for Child Protection**
- **Designated Child Protection Officer 'Education Authority - North Eastern Region'**

This will be done in an envelope marked '**Confidential - Child Protection**'.



- A phone-call referral is followed within 24 hrs with written documentation using the regionally agreed format of Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI)

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the designated teacher.

**The Designated Teacher will consult with the CPSSS (Child Protection School Support Service) - Designated Officer for Child Protection at the Education Authority (NE Region) before a referral is made.**

**NO DECISIONS TO REFER A CHILD TO SOCIAL SERVICES WILL BE MADE WITHOUT FULL CONSIDERATION AND ON APPROPRIATE ADVICE.**

**The safety of the child is our first priority.**

**PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS, OR HAS BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION,  
ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF STAFF**

Member of Staff completed the NOTE OF CONCERN (appendix 1) on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY. The source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.



Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher (Mrs C Tunney P6/7) or Deputy Designated Teacher (Ms. A Fleming) in her absence and provides note of concern.



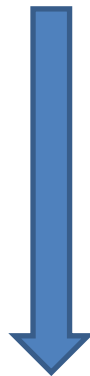
Designated Teacher (Mrs Tunney) should consult with the Principal (Ms. Fleming) or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required advice may be sought from a CPSSS Officer, 028 9448 2223 (operates from Mon-Fri from 9.00am - 4.30pm)



**CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL IS REQUIRED**  
Designated Teacher (Mrs Tunney) seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at significant harm, then telephones the Child Service Gateway Team and/or PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. The Designated Teacher will submit a completed UNOCINI form within 24 hrs.

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

**CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL IS NOT REQUIRED**  
School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parents/carers to appropriate support services such as Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

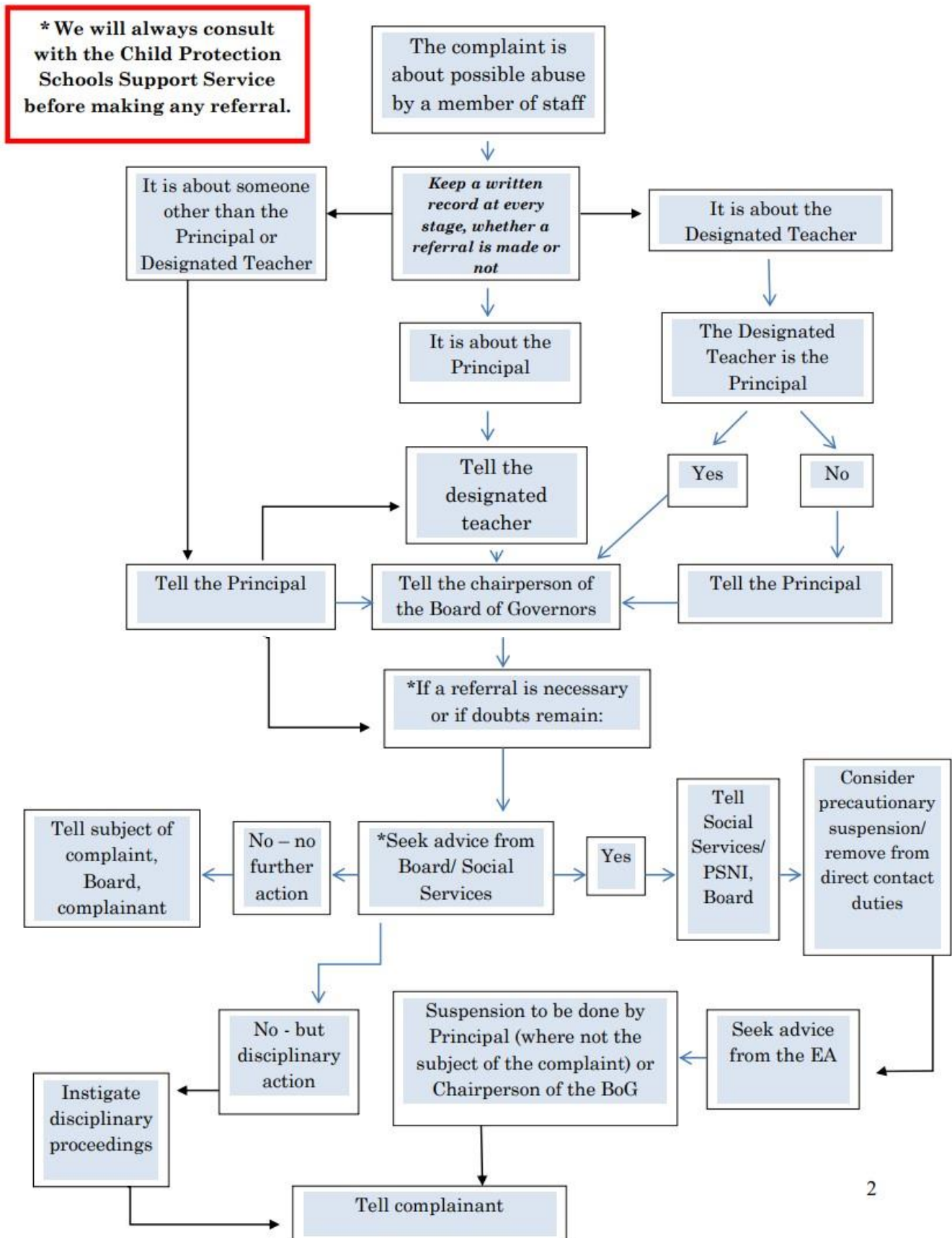


Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions made and actions taken and ensure that this record is

\* We will always consult with the Child Protection Schools Support Service before making a referral.

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. This is particularly important where the child is at risk at home - refer to contacts section.

# PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL'S STAFF



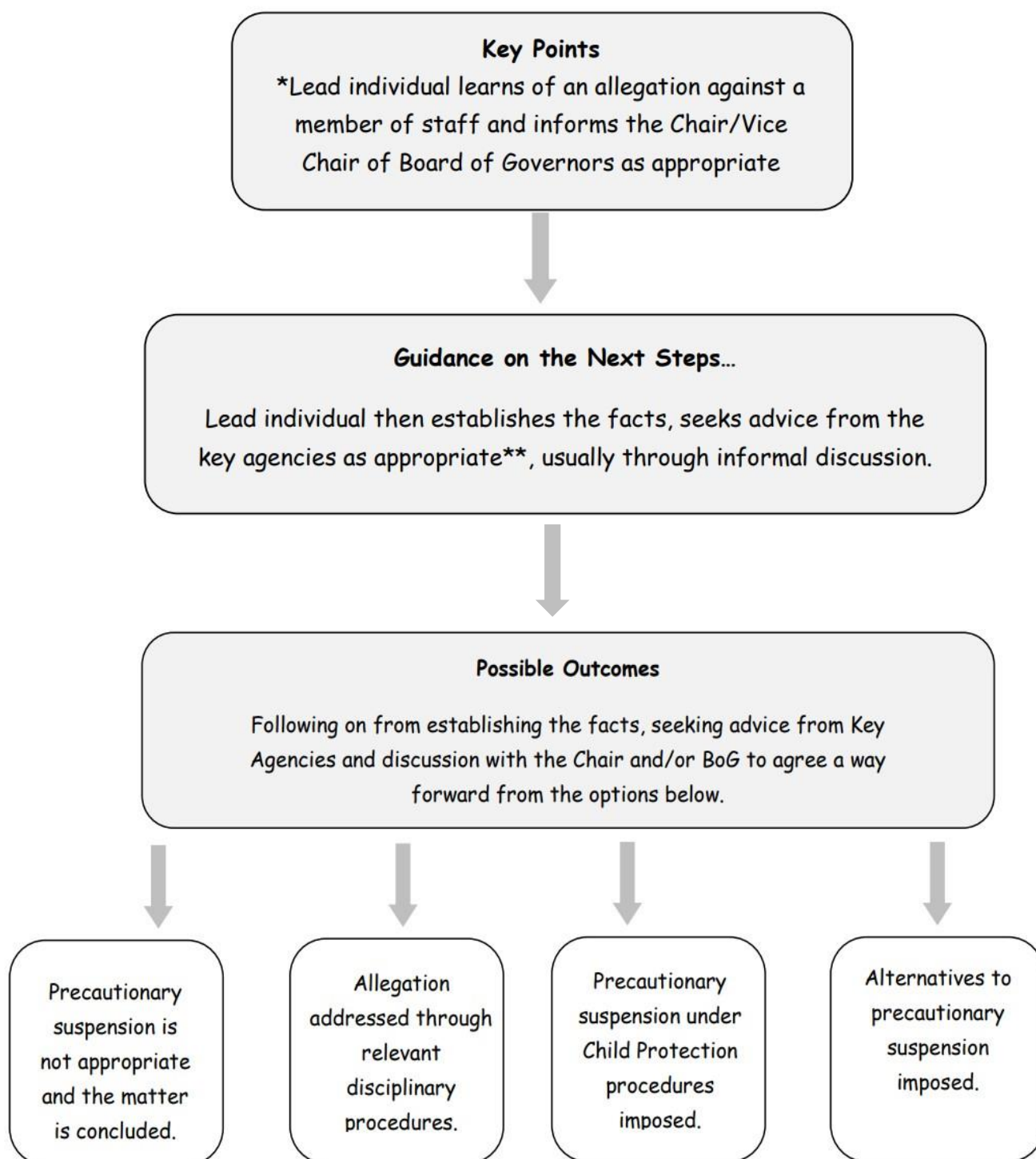
### **Complaints made against a member of staff**

If a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the designated teacher if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately and manages the response. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the designated teacher). Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately. Decision-making will be made jointly between the Principal and Chair of Governors.

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the designated teacher or her deputy (if she is not available) must be informed immediately. she will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

In an event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint being made against the Principal, the chairperson is responsible for ensuring records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries

## DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

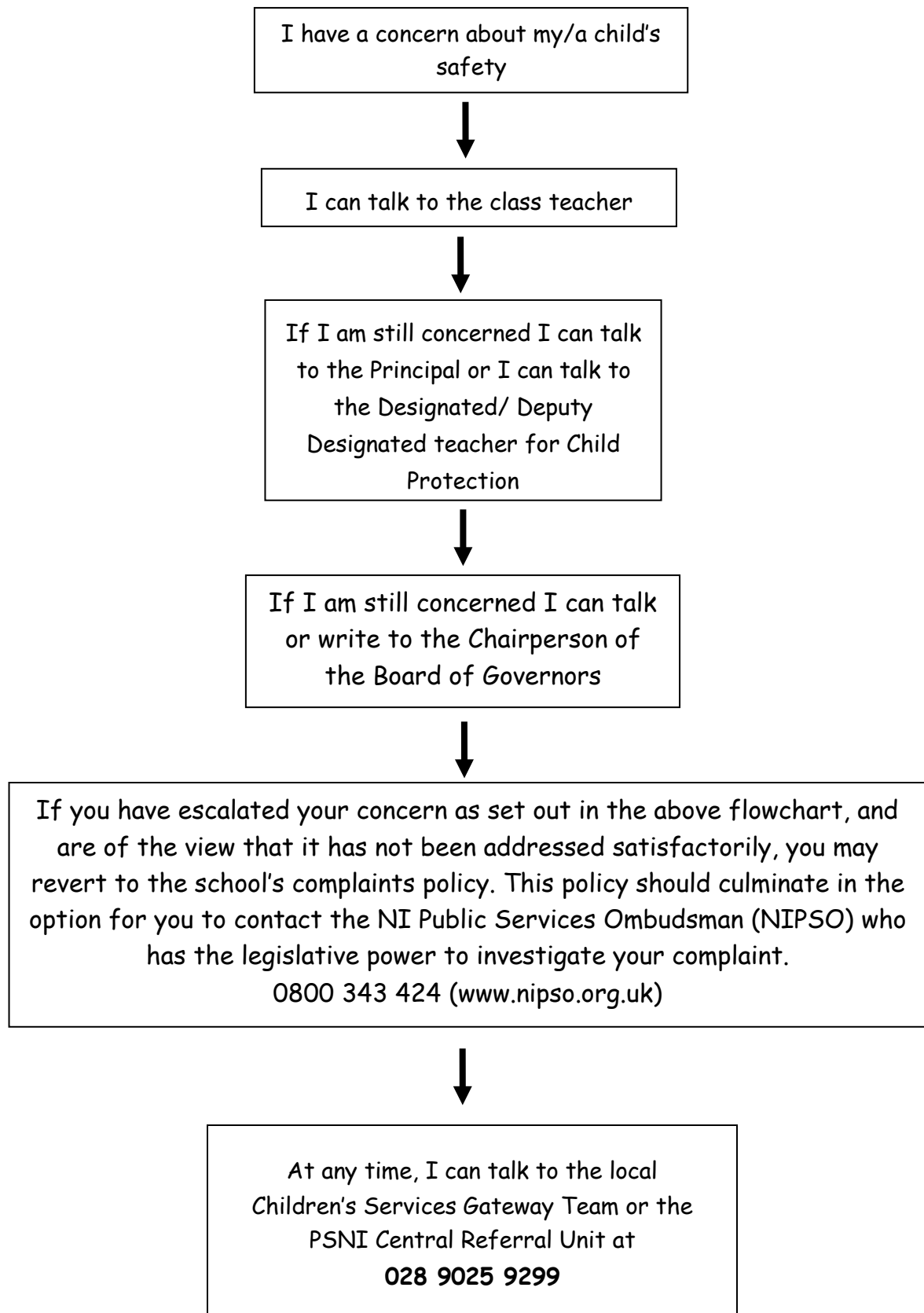


\* The Lead Individual should be identified at the outset, normally the Principal or designated senior member of staff.

\* We will always consult with the Child Protection Schools Support Service before making a referral.

## HOW A PARENT CAN MAKE/RAISE A CONCERN

If a parent has a child protection concern they can follow the guidance below:



## **Confidentiality**

Where a child confides in a member of staff or a volunteer, and requests that the information is kept secret it is important that the child is told sensitively that it may be necessary to share the information with those who need to know about it, and explain that this is important to ensure the child's safekeeping.

All staff and volunteers who receive sensitive information about children or parents in the course of their professional duties should be aware that such information is confidential, and is not to be made the subject of general conversation, or disclosed to others outside the school other than statutory officials, as required by this policy.

All records of a safeguarding/child protection nature are held securely in a locked filing cabinet within the school. Access to such records are restricted to the Principal and the Designated teacher (DT) /Deputy Designated Teachers (DDTs) for Child Protection.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly. The guidance below details the immediate steps all staff should follow.

## **Consent**

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

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

Where staff decide not to seek parental consent before making a referral to children's social services in the local Health and Social Care Trust or the police, the reason for this decision must be clearly noted in the child/young person's records and included within the verbal and written/UNOCINI referral. When a referral is deemed to be necessary in the interests of the child/young person, and the parents/carers have been consulted and do not consent, the following action should be taken:

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

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

## **Record Keeping**

Each school has a responsibility to maintain its records and record keeping systems. The Board of Governors (BoG) should ensure that the arrangements operated by the school for the retention, management and release of public records comply with statutory requirements, including data protection legislation, most recently the new Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

GDPR provides a legal framework for keeping everyone's personal data safe by requiring organisations to have robust processes in place for handling and storing personal information based on the following principles:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner;
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary;
- Accurate and where necessary kept up to date;
- Kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which those data are processed; and



- Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of personal data.

Each school should have a Records Management Policy. While there is no specific legislation in respect of child protection records, schools should ensure that the principles of the requirements of the legislation, in particular the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and the Data Protection Act 2018, and guidance in DE Circular 2020/07 is adhered to.

In accordance with DE guidance we must consider and develop clear guidelines for the recording, storage, retention and destruction of both manual and electronic records where they relate to child protection concerns. In order to meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in St. Anthony's P.S. are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child's date of birth plus 30 years. If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.

These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

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

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

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

Child Protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the designated teacher.

The Safeguarding Team in St. Anthony's Primary School will update Policy and Procedures in light of any further guidance and legislation 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.

**Date Policy Reviewed:** August 2020

**Signed:**

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

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

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



CONFIDENTIAL

Appendix 1

St. Anthony's Primary School

Note of Concern

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORT TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, time of incident/disclosure:
Circumstances of incident/disclosure:
Nature & description of concern:
Parties involved, including witnesses to an event and what was said/done and by whom:
Action taken at the time:

<p>Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:</p>          
<p>Any further action taken:</p>          
<p>Written Report passed to Designated Teacher:</p> <p>YES      NO</p> <p>If NO state the reason:</p>          
<p>Date and time of the Report to the Designated Teacher:</p>          
<p>Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file</p> <p>YES      NO</p> <p>If NO state the reason:</p>          

Name of staff making the Report: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of DT: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Safeguarding

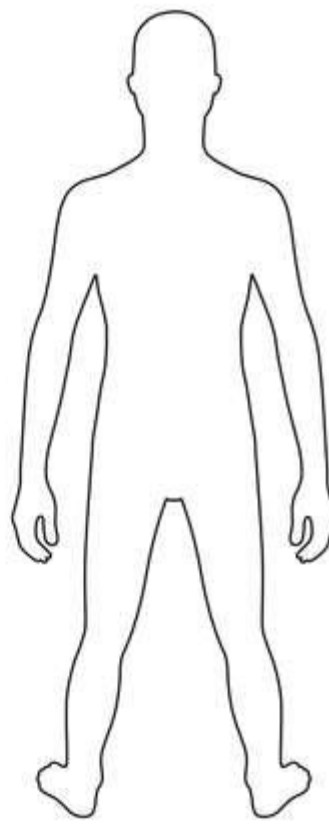
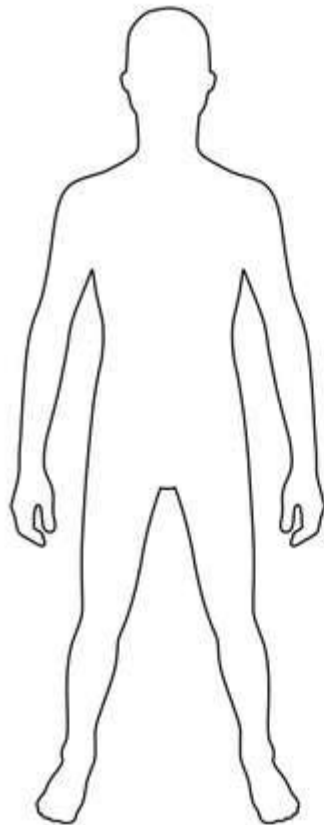
### Record of Physical injury

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

View from front

View from back



Other relevant details:


Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

## St. Anthony's Primary School Safeguarding

### Record of facial injury

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_



Other relevant details:


Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

# Safeguarding Team

Appendix 4



**Is something bothering you or do you just need to talk?**

**In St. Anthony's Primary School**



**Mrs C Tunney**

**is your Designated  
Child Protection Teacher**



**Ms A Fleming**

**is your Deputy  
Child Protection Teacher**

**We are here to help with any problems or worries that you may have.**