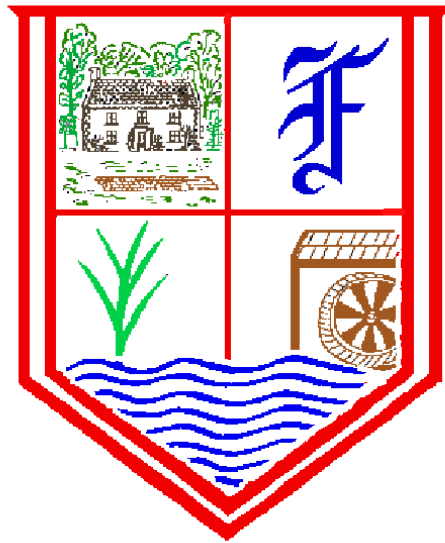


# Fairview Primary School



## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

**August 2021**

**Review: August 2022**

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding Ethos**

The Governors and staff of Fairview Primary School recognise the responsibility we have for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care. We will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our children can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors and are consistent with those of the Safeguarding Board for NI (SBNI).

## **Principles**

The general principles, which underpin our work are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection (DENI Circular 99/10), the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005) and more recently Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools. DE 2017.

Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously
- Safer children make more successful learners
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is promoted and safeguarded and their safety is preserved
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount, this overrides all other considerations
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict, the child's interest must always come first
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support
- Policies will be reviewed at least annually unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an interim review.

## **Aims**

At Fairview, we aim to:

- To provide all staff with the necessary information to enable them to meet their child protection responsibilities
- To ensure consistent good practice
- To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to child protection to pupils, parents / carers and other partners.

## **Terminology**

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**DT** refers to the Designated Teacher for child protection.

**Child** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

## **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 but not exclusively:

- Alcohol and Drug Misuse
- Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour and Behaviour at Clubs
- Drugs Education
- Educational Trips
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use of Internet
- First Aid and Medical Needs
- Health and Well-being
- Intimate Care
- Managing Attendance
- Pastoral Care
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Safe Handling
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing

These policies are available to parents/carers and anyone requiring a copy should contact the Principal, Mrs Matthews.

## **School Safeguarding Team**

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

- Designated Teacher, Miss EJ Earls
- Deputy Designated Teachers, Mrs F Norris and Miss H Bennett
- Principal, Mrs P Matthews
- Designated Governor for Child Protection, Mrs V Woodside
- Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr S Lewis

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Fairview operates a team approach to Safeguarding and Child Protection. The Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers alongside the Principal work to ensure the safety of all pupils.

### **The Designated Teacher (DT) will:**

- Avail of training so that they are aware of their duties, responsibilities and role
- Organise induction and training for all staff in Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Help ensure that other adults working in school are issued with a Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy prior to any direct involvement with children
- Ensure that the child protection policy and procedures are reviewed and updated annually
- Liaise with the nominated governor and Principal when required
- Attend and/or contribute to child protection conferences
- Develop effective links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents, acting as a source of support and expertise to school community
- Make the child protection policy available publicly, on the school's website or by other means
- Make referrals to Social Services Gateway team or PSNI where appropriate
- Liaise with the Education Authority's Designated Officers for Child Protection when a concern arises
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns, ensuring that such records are stored securely and kept separate from the pupil's general file
- Ensure that when a pupil leaves the school, their child protection file is passed to the new school (separately from the main pupil file and ensuring secure transit) and confirmation of receipt is obtained
- Have a working knowledge of SBNI procedures and makes staff aware of SBNI latest policies on safeguarding
- Ensure all necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- Ensure the Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed and that Child Protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings
- Provide a written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding activities

### **The Deputy Designated Teacher(s)**

The Deputy Designated Teachers are trained to the same level as the Designated Teacher and, in the absence of the Designated Teacher, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the Designated Teacher, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

### **The Principal**

The Principal must ensure that:

- Safeguarding and child protection procedures are kept up to date
- She attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- A Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed
- All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training
- All adults working in school are issued with a Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy prior to any direct involvement with children
- Termly updates & annual report are provided

- The school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this policy at least once every 2 years
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to members of the Board of Governors on a need to know basis

### **Board of Governors**

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

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

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

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

- The role of the Designated Teachers
- The content of child protection policies
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school
- The content of the termly updates and full Annual Designated Teacher's Report
- Participate in annual audit and review of Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures (DE checklist)
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff

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

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- Ensure that he/she has received appropriate Education Authority training
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- Ensure that the school has a Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment & selection training provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools and the Governor Support and Human Resource departments.
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the School Principal
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity

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

Staff in school see children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse. They should remember the 5 'Rs': *Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record* and *Refer*.

### **The member of staff must:**

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- Act promptly
- Make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (**Appendix 2**)
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children
- **Not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- **Not** investigate
- **Not** ask leading questions

### **In addition, the Class Teacher should:**

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

We will take seriously any concerns which are raised about a pupil in our school who has self-harmed and/or has expressed suicidal thoughts. The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will immediately follow the school's child protection procedures.

### **Parents**

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- Telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as that the school is reassured as to the child's situation. If no contact has been made by the third day of absence, the school will seek to contact the child's parents/carer to ascertain the reason for absence
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school (Primary 1 to Primary 4 pupils)
- 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

### **Good Practice Guidelines and Staff Code of Conduct**

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the child 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 children in their charge must be above reproach. The school's code of conduct is available on request.

At Fairview we aim to promote our good practice through:

- Treating all pupils with respect
- Setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately
- Involving pupils in decisions that affect them
- Encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among pupils
- Being a good listener
- Being alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse
- Reading and understanding the school's child protection policy, staff behaviour policy and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues
- Being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some pupils lead to an increased risk of abuse
- Referring all concerns about a pupil's safety and welfare to the Designated Teacher, or, if necessary directly to police or children's social care

All staff follow our staff code of conduct and are issued this at the start of every new school year.

### **Abuse of Position of Trust**

All school staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards pupils is unacceptable and that their conduct towards pupils must be beyond reproach.

Staff understand that under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2003 it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the school staff and a pupil under 18 may be a criminal offence.

### **Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all of our pupils receive equal protection,

we will give special consideration to children who are:

- Disabled or have special educational needs
- Young carers
- Affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- At risk of sexual exploitation
- Do not have English as a first language
- At risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)
- At risk of forced marriage
- At risk of being drawn into extremism.

This list provides examples of additionally vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive. We will avail of resources in an additional language if required as well as sourcing support for communication, if needed.

### **Children Missing Education**

At Fairview, attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The Principal monitors unauthorised absence and takes appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff are aware of the need to be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

### **Whistleblowing procedures**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a pupil are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and they will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career. All staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. Fairview's Whistleblowing policy enables staff to raise concerns or allegations, initially in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place.

All concerns of poor practice or possible child abuse by colleagues should be reported to the Principal. Complaints about the Principal should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Staff may also report their concerns directly to social services or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

### **Allegations against staff**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, our set procedures must be followed. The full procedures for dealing with allegations against staff can be found in DE Circular 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a member of Staff.

Allegations concerning staff who no longer work at the school, or historical allegations will be reported to the police.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers will undergo Access NI checks commensurate with their work in the school, their contact with pupils and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

## **Contractors**

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and where possible, they are accompanied by the Building Supervisor, Mr S Jefferson.

## **Site security**

Visitors to the school, including contractors, are asked to sign in and are given a badge, which confirms they have permission to be on site. Parents who are simply delivering or collecting their children do not need to sign in. All visitors are expected to observe the school's safeguarding and health and safety regulations. The Principal will exercise professional judgement in determining whether any visitor should be escorted or supervised while on site.

## **Extended school and off-site arrangements**

All extended and off site activities are subject to a risk assessment to satisfy health and safety and safeguarding requirements. If other organisations provide services or activities on our site on behalf of our school we will check that they have appropriate procedures in place.

When our pupils attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work related activities, we will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

## **Staff/pupil online relationships**

The school provides advice to staff regarding their personal online activity and has strict rules regarding online contact and electronic communication with pupils. Staff found to be in breach of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action or child protection investigation. (Detailed in our staff code of conduct).

## **What Is Child Abuse?**

### **Definition of Abuse**

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

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

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

### **Five types of abuse**

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
- 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 – by a child's peers.

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

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

### **Possible Indicators of Abuse**

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. Our staff are aware of the importance of sharing any concerns they have related to either physical signs of abuse or behavioural indicators of abuse to the Designated Teacher.

**It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns. It is not their responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.**

(See appendix 1)

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

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

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse.

## **Domestic Violence**

It is now recognised that children who live in an atmosphere of domestic violence may be at risk. Domestic violence is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

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

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

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

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

## **Bullying**

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause anxiety and distress. All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying should be reported and will be managed through our anti bullying policy procedures.

## **Peer on peer abuse**

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the school's anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including:

- **physical abuse** such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
- **harmful sexualised behaviour/sexual abuse** such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault
- **sexting**, including pressuring another person to send a sexual imagery or video content
- **teenage relationship abuse** - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner

- **initiation/hazing** - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or school groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them
- **prejudiced behaviour** - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.

At our school, we take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of peer on peer abuse:

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them
- PDMU, RE and RSE are used to reinforce the message through stories, role play, current affairs and other suitable activities
- Staff will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease in school
- We will ensure that the school is well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable
- We operate a buddy system at break and lunch time
- Worry boxes are available for children to share concerns
- Our peer ambassadors are trained to support their peers and report any concerns they may have regarding their peers

All allegations of peer on peer abuse should be passed to the Designated Teacher and will be dealt with in line with our safeguarding procedures.

### **Sexting**

Professionals agree that sexting refers to the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs of a person under 18 years of age, via mobiles or over the internet. All incidents involving youth produced sexual imagery will be responded to in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

In some instances, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the police. Once a report is made to the police, the report must be recorded and the police will investigate. This may include seizure of devices and interviews with the young people involved.

### **Honour-Based Violence**

'Honour-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of HBV are abuse.

### **Private fostering arrangements**

A private fostering arrangement occurs when someone other than a parent or a close relative cares for a child for a period of 28 days or more, with the agreement of the child's parents. It applies to children under the age of 16, or aged under 18 if the child is disabled. By law, a parent, private foster carer or other persons involved in making a private fostering arrangement must notify children's services as soon as possible. Where a member of staff becomes aware that a pupil may be in a private fostering arrangement they will raise this with the DT and the school should notify the local Trust of the circumstances, if unaware.

### **Looked after children**

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse or neglect. The school ensures that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to keep looked after children safe. Appropriate staff have information about a child's looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of

authority delegated to the carer by the Trust looking after the child. The DT has details of the child's social worker.

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

### **Procedures for making complaints in relation to child abuse**

#### **How a Parent can make a Complaint**

We aim to work closely with parents/carers in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or any member of the school's safeguarding team: the Principal, the Designated or Deputy Designated Teachers 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 3**.

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

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

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teachers will decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services after seeking advice from the EA Child Protection Team or Social Services Gateway Team. 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. Advice in terms of contact with parents will be taken from the EA Child Protection Team or Social Services, this advice will be recorded and followed by the school's Child Protection Team.

During consultation with the Education Authority's Designated Officer, the child's details will be shared. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the Designated/Deputy Designated Teachers will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. He/she will also notify the EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team with a copy sent to the EA Designated Officer for Child Protection and a copy will be kept in the school's child protection file.

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

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 3**.

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

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

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated/Deputy Designated Teachers will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

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

Child protection procedures as outlined in the Appendix will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance. These procedures along with names and contact numbers are shown in **Appendix 4**

### **If a pupil discloses to you**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual; their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell; they may have lost all trust in adults; or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault. Sometimes they may not be aware that what is happening is abusive.

If a pupil talks to a member of staff about any risks to their safety or wellbeing, **the staff member will, at the appropriate time, let the pupil know that in order to help them they must pass the information on to the safeguarding lead in the school – Designated Teacher.** The point at which they tell the pupil this is a matter for professional judgement. During their conversations with the pupils staff will:

- allow them to speak freely
- remain calm and not overreact
- give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’
- not be afraid of silences
- **under no circumstances** ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings, or what does the pupil’s mother think about it
- at an appropriate time tell the pupil that in order to help them, the member of staff must pass the information on and explain to whom and why
- not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort
- avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying things such as ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ may be interpreted by the child to mean that they have done something wrong
- tell the pupil what will happen next
- complete the **incident form (appendix 2)** and hand it to the Designated Teacher as soon as possible
- seek support if they feel distressed

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

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

### **Notifying parents**

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents unless advised otherwise by the EA Child Protection Team or Social Services. This must be handled sensitively and the Designated Teacher will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure, when advised to by the EA Child Protection Team or local Gateway.

Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil. Therefore, if the school believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted.

### **Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings**

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teachers 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/verbal report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff.

Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis.

Children whose names are on the Child Protection register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the child protection plan.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

All staff will understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality, not only out of respect for the pupil and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence.

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

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

### **Record Keeping**

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

### **Vetting Procedures/Safe Recruitment Measures**

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in the School are vetted/supervised in accordance with the requirements of *Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools (DE 2017)* and the SBNI by carrying out the required checks and verifying the applicant's identity, qualifications and work history.

Each member of the recruitment panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

### **Staff Training**

Fairview Primary School is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on Policy and procedures. This will include child protection awareness training and annual refresher training on safeguarding and responding to child protection concerns. Some members of staff will receive more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities.

The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teachers, 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 are given copies of these documents as part of their induction.

All staff will also receive safeguarding and child protection updates via email, e-bulletins, website access and staff meetings throughout the year.

### **The Preventative Curriculum**

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there are permanent pupil-friendly child protection notices visible throughout the school, which provide advice and also displays of child helpline numbers.

A flow diagram of how a parent may make a complaint is also on display on the public noticeboard at the school's main entrance (front gate). An enlarged flow diagram for a teacher allegation is clearly displayed on the staff room noticeboard.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- Pastoral ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to
- Ensuring that all children know there are key adults in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Inclusion of curriculum opportunities for personal and social development to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to help them identify to whom they should turn for help if the need arises. Our pupils' emotional health and mental well being is a priority for all our staff
- NSPCC PANTS talk delivered annually with permanent visual displays in each classroom
- Visits by NSPCC and other agencies e.g. Women's Aid
- Development of Peer Ambassadors
- Worry boxes in the KS2 and some KS1 classrooms, worry puppets in the KS1 and FS classrooms

- Safeguarding display boards signposting pupils to staff in school who can support them as well as external agencies who can offer them advice e.g. Childline posters
- Pastoral support team for pupils / parents to seek support and advice when required

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Safeguarding Team in Fairview Primary 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 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 2021

Signed:

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

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

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



## Appendix 1

### Physical Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
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	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; Comes 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

### Emotional Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
Well below average in height and weight; “failing to thrive”; Poor hair and skin; alopecia; Swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; Recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; Sudden speech disorders; Signs of self-mutilation; Signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); Extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).	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

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
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.	Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); Steals food; compulsive eating; Begging from class friends; Withdrawn; lacks concentration; Misses school medicals; Reports that no carer is at home; Low self-esteem; Persistent non-attendance at school; Exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.

## **Sexual Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs;            Bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas;            Torn, stained or bloody underclothes;            Chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches;            Difficulty in walking or sitting;            Frequent urinary infections;            Avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers;            Unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague;            Anorexia/gross over-eating.</p>	<p>What the child tells you;            Withdrawn; chronic depression;            Excessive sexual precociousness; Seductiveness;            Children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; Parent/child role reversal;            Over concerned for siblings;            Poor self-esteem; self-devaluation;            Lack of confidence; peer problems;            Lack of involvement;            Massive weight change;            Suicide attempts (especially adolescents);            Hysterical/angry outbursts;            Lack of emotional control;            Sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour;            Inappropriate sex play;            Repeated attempts to run away from home;            Unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories;            Vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation;            Promiscuity;            Exposure to pornographic material.</p>

**Appendix 2  
Fairview Primary School  
Child Protection Incident Report**

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class** \_\_\_\_\_

Details of Incident/Disclosure\*

Name of Person completing the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

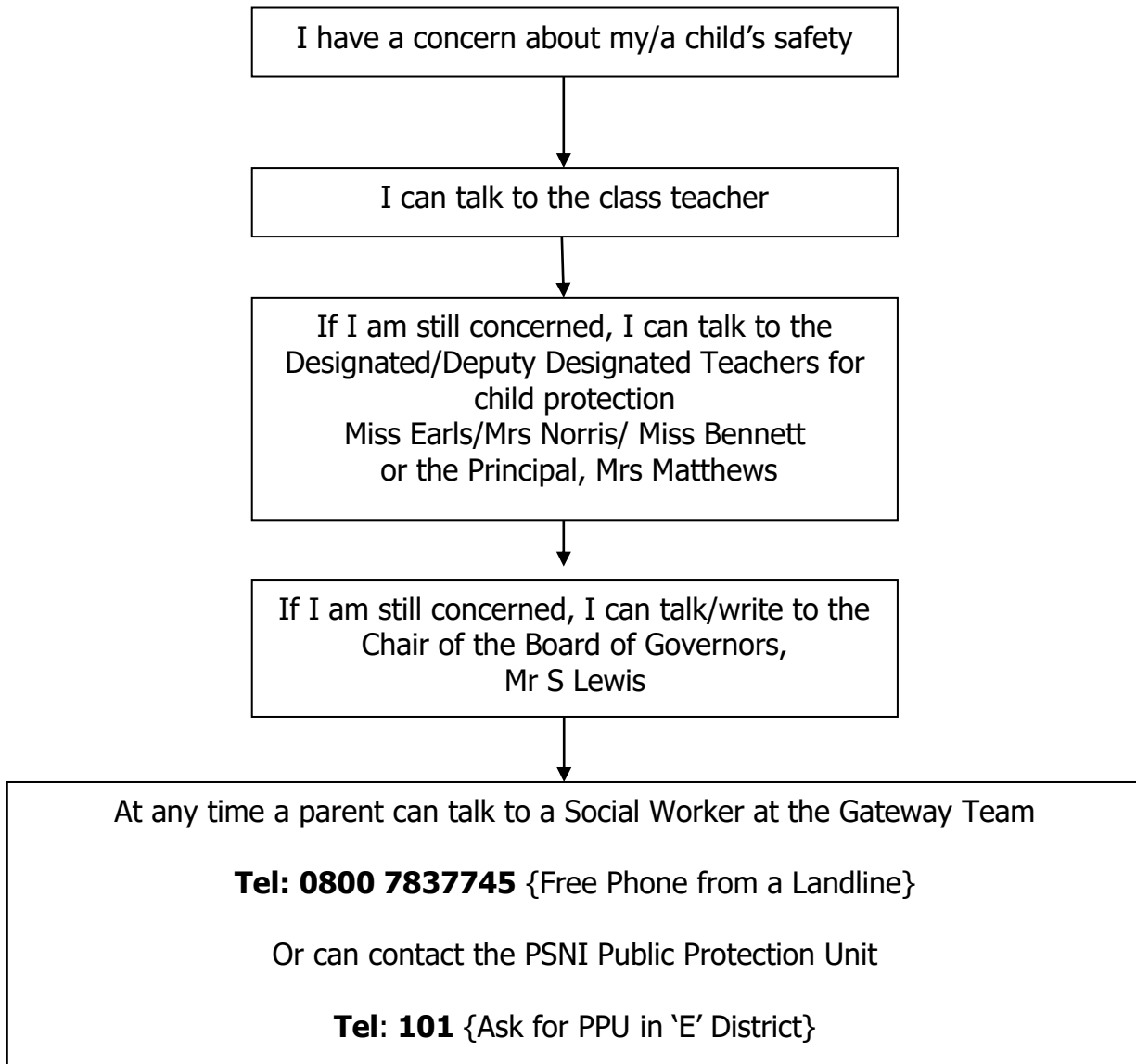
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**\* Record actual words used by the child/young person**

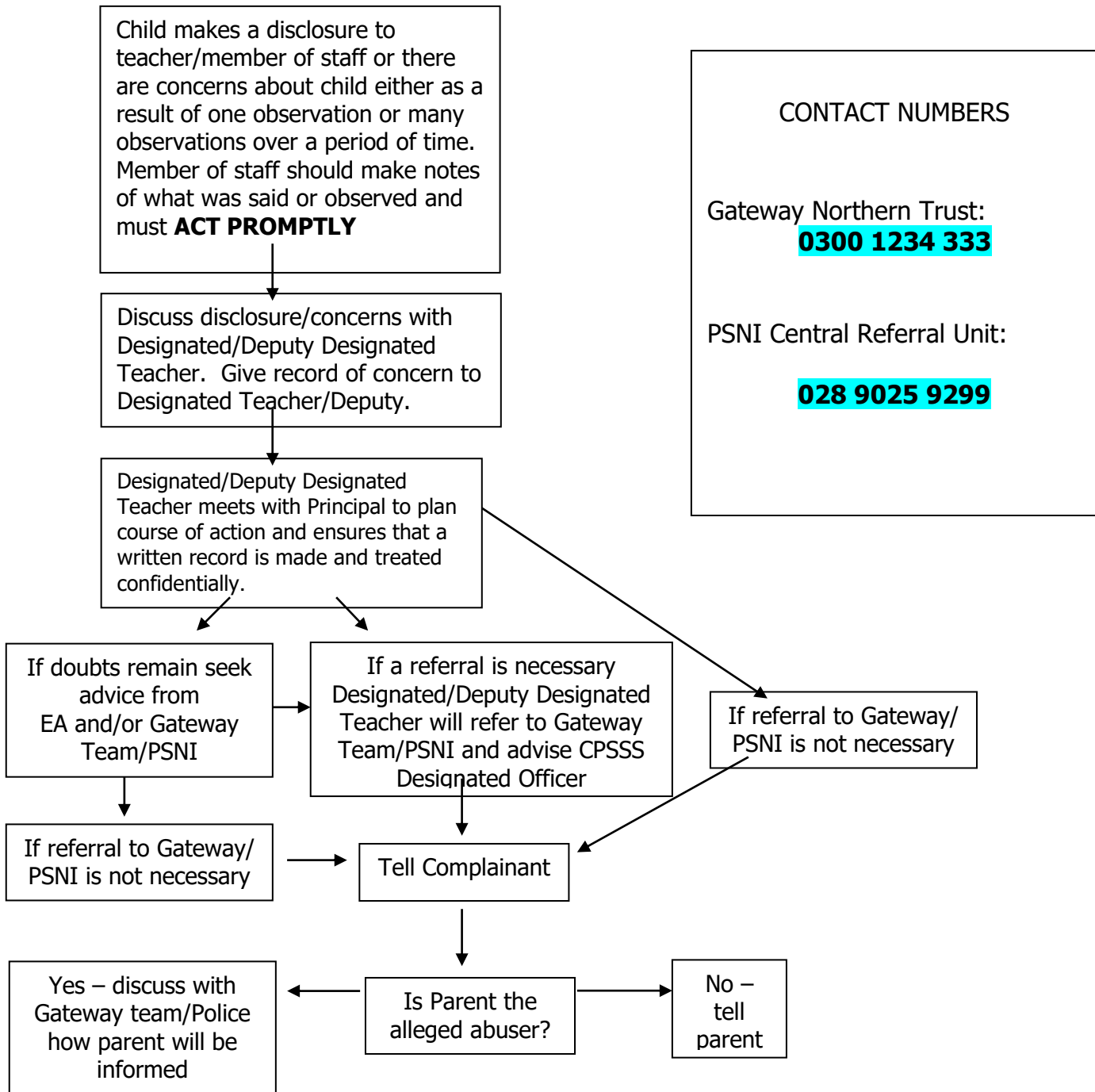
### Appendix 3

#### How a Parent can make a Complaint



### Appendix 3

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



**CONTACT NUMBERS**

Gateway Northern Trust:  
**0300 1234 333**

PSNI Central Referral Unit:  
**028 9025 9299**

## Appendix 4

### Dealing With Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

#### **Key Points**

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

#### **Guidance on next steps**

Lead Individual then:  
Establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion

#### **Possible Outcomes**

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or the BoG to agree way forward from the options below  
CPSS (NE) 028 94482223

Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded

Allegation addressed through relevant Disciplinary Procedures

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection Procedures imposed

Alternatives to Precautionary Suspension imposed