

BELLAGHY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Protection Policy

Designated Teacher: Mrs J Torrens
(Temporary Arrangement) **Mrs E. Overend**

Deputy Designated Teacher: Mrs ML Richmond
(Temporary Arrangement)

MISSION STATEMENT

Children cannot be expected to learn or develop effectively unless they feel secure. This Child Protection Policy reflects both our legal duties and our pastoral responsibilities.

In considering the area of child protection the governors firmly agree with article 19 of the U.N. convention on the Rights of the Child that:

“Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.”

The Children (N.I.) Order 1995 has placed a pastoral responsibility on schools towards the safety of the children in their care and to this end the governors of Bellaghy P.S. have adopted the following Child Protection Policy and will review it on an annual basis.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

***“The curriculum needs to be delivered in a school with an ethos which empowers children; a school which allows them to voice ideas, feelings and make a contribution to the educational process.”
 (“Responding To Child Abuse”)***

It is the policy of Bellaghy Primary School, to protect its pupils from harm and to ensure their continuing safety in the following ways:

- by maintaining written procedures discussed and agreed by the Board of Governors which will be followed if the school is alerted to possible abuse;
- by making the teaching and non-teaching staff aware of the school's child protection procedures and also the signs of possible abuse;
- by designating a teacher and a deputy teacher for Child Protection responsibilities who will be known to all teaching and non-teaching staff;
Designated teachers – Mrs J Torrens and Mrs E Overend

Deputy designated teacher – Mrs ML Richmond
- by continually reviewing and monitoring the system for recording information about, and action taken in cases of suspected or alleged abuse.
- by providing an environment within the school and classroom in which every child is valued, leading to the development of their self-esteem;
- by allowing a variety of opportunities for class and group discussion of thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance;

- by integrating the key concepts of Child Protection with the existing curriculum and by developing awareness and skills for personal safety and encouraging confidence to make good decisions;
- by monitoring children's welfare and physical, emotional, social, intellectual and behavioural development;
- by informing parents of the schools Child Protection Policy;
- by continuing contact with appropriate agencies in order to promote co-operation to protect children;

The **Child Protection Log** and the **Child Protection Register** are both kept securely in the office

CONTENTS

Section 1: Definitions of Abuse and Recognising Abuse

Section 2: Child Protection Procedures

Section 3: Guidelines for staff

Section 4: Guidance for parents

Section 5: Vetting Procedures

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 -RECORD OF CONCERN

Appendix 2 - PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS OR HAS BEEN TOLD ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN SCHOOL STAFF

Appendix 3 - PROCEDURE WHERE A COMPLAINT HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY A MEMBER OF SCHOOL STAFF

Appendix 4 -CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Appendix 5 -PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE

Appendix 6 -WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REFERRAL IS MADE

Appendix 7 -RECORD OF APPROPRIATE TRAINING

Appendix 8 -RECORD OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Appendix 9-RECORD OF CONTACT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Appendix 10 -RECORD OF POLICY REVIEW

SECTION 1: DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

NEGLECT: The actual or likely persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger including cold and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development including non-organic failure to thrive.

The safety and welfare of the children must always be the paramount consideration for the staff. We have a duty to ensure that all children in our care are not put at risk during activities. During the school day it is the duty of all staff to ensure:

1. That all learning activities including school trips are set up and supervised to the highest standard.
2. That the full ratio of adults to children is present during the school day.
3. That the school building is adequately heated and ventilated during the school year.

PHYSICAL ABUSE: Actual or likely perpetrated physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent injury (or suffering) to a child.

We have a duty to prevent situations arising children where our children would be at risk from ill-treatment or injury of any kind. We undertake the responsibility to safeguard the children from any physical danger while in our care. The principle is that children should be safe and should be protected by intervention if they are in danger.

SEXUAL ABUSE: Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend and to which they are not able to give informed consent.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Actual or likely persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of the child.

Emotional abuse occurs when an individual suffers harm as a result of being intimidated, being exposed to constant degradation or verbal attacks.

VERBAL ABUSE: This is the least recognised form of harm done to children, yet the long - term psychological effects may be traumatic to the individual.

BULLYING: Even if no physical harm or injury is suffered, there can be emotional abuse. All reported incidents of bullying must be dealt with promptly and thoroughly. (See Anti-Bullying Policy).

RECOGNISING ABUSE

Detection of abuse is seldom straightforward and rarely clear - cut. It is important therefore, that staff share concerns with the designated teacher or deputy designated teachers. As staff members we see children over long periods and can notice physical and behavioural indicators which may be evidence of abuse. It is important that we recognise these symptoms. This is intended as a guide,

Please remember that the presence of one or more factors does not necessarily give proof that child abuse has occurred. It may however indicate that investigation should take place.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Unexplained bruising in various stages of healing, grip marks on arms, slap marks, human bite marks, welts, bald spots, unexplained/untreated burns, especially cigarette burns or emersion 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.

NEGLECT

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Looks very thin, poorly and sad, constant hunger, lack of energy, untreated medical problems, special needs of child not being met, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene, repeatedly unwashed, smelly, repeated accidents especially burns.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Well below average in height and weight "failing to thrive", poor hair and skin, alopecia, recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling, sudden speech disorders, signs of self mutilation, signs of solvent abuse - (mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness), Extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting)

SEXUAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Bruises, scratches, bite marks, recurrent abdominal pains or headaches, difficulty in walking or sitting, frequent urinary infections, avoidance of lessons especially P.E.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Self destructive tendencies, aggressive to other children, behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive), appears frightened or cowed in the presence of adults, improbable excuses to explain injuries, chronic runaway, uncomfortable with physical contact, comes to school early or stays late as they are afraid to be at home, clothing inappropriate to weather to hide part of the body, violent themes in artwork or stories.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Tired or listless (falls asleep in class), steals food, compulsive stealing, 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.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Apathy and dejection, inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations, rocking, head banging, inability to play/concentrate, reluctance for parental liaison, chronic runaway, attention seeking, poor peer relationships.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Withdrawn, depression, excessive sexual precociousness, seductiveness, children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference, parent/child role reversal, overly concerned for siblings, poor self-esteem, lack of confidence, peer problems, lack of involvement, suicide attempts, angry outbursts, deterioration of school work or behaviour, repeated attempts to run away from home, themes in children's artwork and stories.

SECTION 2 :CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

THE ROLE OF THE STAFF

- Each member of staff has a key responsibility to help promote a safe and secure environment and be vigilant for signs of concern.
- Responding to incidents of alleged or suspected child abuse must be based upon clearly defined procedures. Knowing what to do, whom to contact and who needs to know will make the staff more confident in this area.

At our school, we have a policy of partnership between home and school, however with child abuse, or suspicion of child abuse, our first responsibility is to the child. This may mean that parents are not contacted in some instances.

Staff are in contact with children all day and are in a position to detect possible abuse. The criteria should be that they have "*reasonable suspicion*" and under the Children Act 1989 this definition has been extended to include "*or may suffer in the future*".

If a child discloses abuse or staff suspects abuse, they must follow the guidelines below:

1. Report immediately to the designated teacher for child protection or the deputy designated teacher
2. Never investigate or ask the child leading questions.
3. Record their concern in written form (*Appendix 1: Record Of Concern*) and forward to Designated Teacher.
4. Do not speak to the parents.
5. Do not promise the child that it will be kept a secret.

Staff should be aware that written records may be used in subsequent court proceedings.

The reporting member of staff will be informed of any further action taken, i.e. Social Service referral, monitor etc. If the reported case is taken up and investigated by an external agency, any meetings, case conferences or action taken will be followed through and the member of staff concerned informed.

Staff have an important role in hearing what children have to say. The school can provide a neutral environment where the child feels it is safe to talk. Sensitivity to any disclosure is vital. Staff must listen to what the child is saying.

Fear of the consequences of telling is very common. The child needs to hear the truth about what will happen, together with a commitment to support the child. Our role is to enable the child to speak and then know what to do next. Remember, never investigate or ask leading questions and do not promise to keep it a secret.

ALLEGATION AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, it is the responsibility of the DT or DTT to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated and procedures are followed. If the allegation is made against the DT or DTT, it is the responsibility of the chair of the Board of Governors to ensure that procedures are followed. Records of allegations against a member of staff are filed in a locked cabinet independently of other Child Protection files.

RECORDS

A Concern Log is securely kept in the office. This lists children who, for whatever reason need to be monitored. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on the list.

When a new child joins a class during the year, they are placed on the concern log for six months, to monitor that they are settling into the new environment happily.

The Child Protection Register is securely kept in the office. This contains information about confirmed and suspected cases of child abuse.

Records of allegations against a member of staff are filed in a locked cabinet independently of other Child Protection files.

Additional Records

- Record of concern.
- Record of training dates.
- Record of advice and information to parents.
- Record of confirmation that Policy has been received by all Volunteers
- Record of contacts with other agencies.
- Record of policy review dates.

TRAINING

All members of staff are obliged to undertake Child Protection training as part of their professional development. Such training will be updated annually and led by the DT or the DDT. A representative of the Governors also attends training provided by the N.E.E.L.B. annually. The Designated Teacher and DDT are trained on alternate years. (*See Record of Training Dates*).

SECTION 3: GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

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 children in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH PUPILS

a) Staff should be aware of the dangers which arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.

b) Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.

c) Where possible another pupil or preferably another adult should be present or nearby during the interview and the school will take active measures to facilitate this.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

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

b) It is unrealistic and unnecessary to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel prohibited from providing this.

c) Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.

All staff should be aware of the D.E. guidelines and the school's policy based on the Regional Policy Framework on the Use Of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling May 2004)

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

e) Staff who have to administer first aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of another adult or other children. *However no member of staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.*

f) Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or another casual observer should be avoided.

g) Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the DT.

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

Always ensure that there is the correct adult/child ratio for all school trips. If members of staff are on a residential trip, always check the rooms in pairs. Never under any circumstances take a child or children into your room.

i) Never do anything of a personal nature for a child that they are capable of doing themselves. This includes toileting or any other activity that could be misconstrued.

Do not go into the toilet alone with children. In an emergency make sure there is another child or adult present.

CHOICE AND USE OF TEACHING MATERIALS

a) Teachers should avoid teaching materials which might be misinterpreted. u

b) Teachers should only use materials of a sensitive nature that have been agreed and included in the curriculum for the school. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal before using it.

c) The content of material of all visitors to the school should always be agreed before the presentation to pupils.

RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTITUDES

Staff should always ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

RECORDS

a) Records of any false allegation a child makes against a member of staff should be recorded- including; "You are always picking on me" or "You hit me" or comments such as "Don't touch me". A record of dates and times should be kept.. Get another adult to witness the allegation if possible.

b) If a child touches a member of staff in a sexually inappropriate way or place, record what happened and forward it to the DT.

IN SUMMARY

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff inter-relate with the children in their care, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice.

From time to time, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles and relationships with children, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children or of their parents/guardians.

SECTION 4 : GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

The staff at Bellaghy P.S. continually foster trust and good relationships with parents. Parents are regularly made aware of the school's Child Protection arrangements and the fact that there may be a need for cases to be referred to the investigative agencies in the interest of the child.

As a matter of procedure, all parents should notify the school when someone other than the parent is picking up the child from school.

If a case of suspected abuse being referred to the investigative agencies, the school will continue to inform parents of the educational progress of the child.

The procedures for a parent to make a complaint, concerning the safety of their own child or another child, are outlined in Appendix 2. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection or the Deputy Designated Teacher will report back to the parent within a reasonable timeframe to inform them of the outcome of their complaint.

Parents are made aware of these arrangements at the beginning of each school year.

New families to the school receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy. The Policy is also available on the school website.

SECTION 5: VETTING PROCEDURES

At Bellaghy Primary School, we comply with Statutory Child Protection Procedures and ensure that the staff, volunteers, other agencies and adults working with the children exercise good practice and display common sense in all physical contact with children in their care. Adults working with children will work under the guidance and supervision of a member of staff.

Parental involvement is given high priority in the life of the school. We actively seek to work in partnership with parents. Parents are a valuable resource and can contribute greatly to the life of the school by sharing their time and talents.

D.E. document -1999 "Pastoral care In Schools" states;

"It is essential that appropriate steps are taken through careful screening and selection arrangements to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school".

Anyone working within the school may have the potential to abuse children. Therefore procedures for screening staff (paid or voluntary) are embedded in the schools recruitment procedures. In following these procedures Governors and staff are doing their utmost to protect all children in their care from potential harm.

All adults coming into the school to work with children and all members of the Board of Governors will complete a vetting form which will be forwarded to Head of Human Resources at N.E.E.L.B. and will be screened by Access N.I.

APPENDIX 1- RECORD OF CONCERN

Name of Child_____

Details of incident/concern/disclosure – day, date, time, place, who dealt with it, observations or circumstances, description of physical/behavioural indicators, child’s statements

Details of anyone else involved; conversations held with anyone else; witnesses; day, date, time, place, factual content of conversation

Referral to which DT in school, who, when (date and time), how, place and advice given by the DT

Signed by School Staff Member:_____Date:_____

PART 2 To be completed by the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher

Action as a result of advice – who spoken to, day, date, time, what was said and agreed

Decision not to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how, when

Decision to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how, when

Decision to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how, when

Signed by Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2 - Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of school's staff

Appendix 3 - Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff.

Appendix 4 - CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

How a parent can make a complaint

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



I can talk to the class teacher.



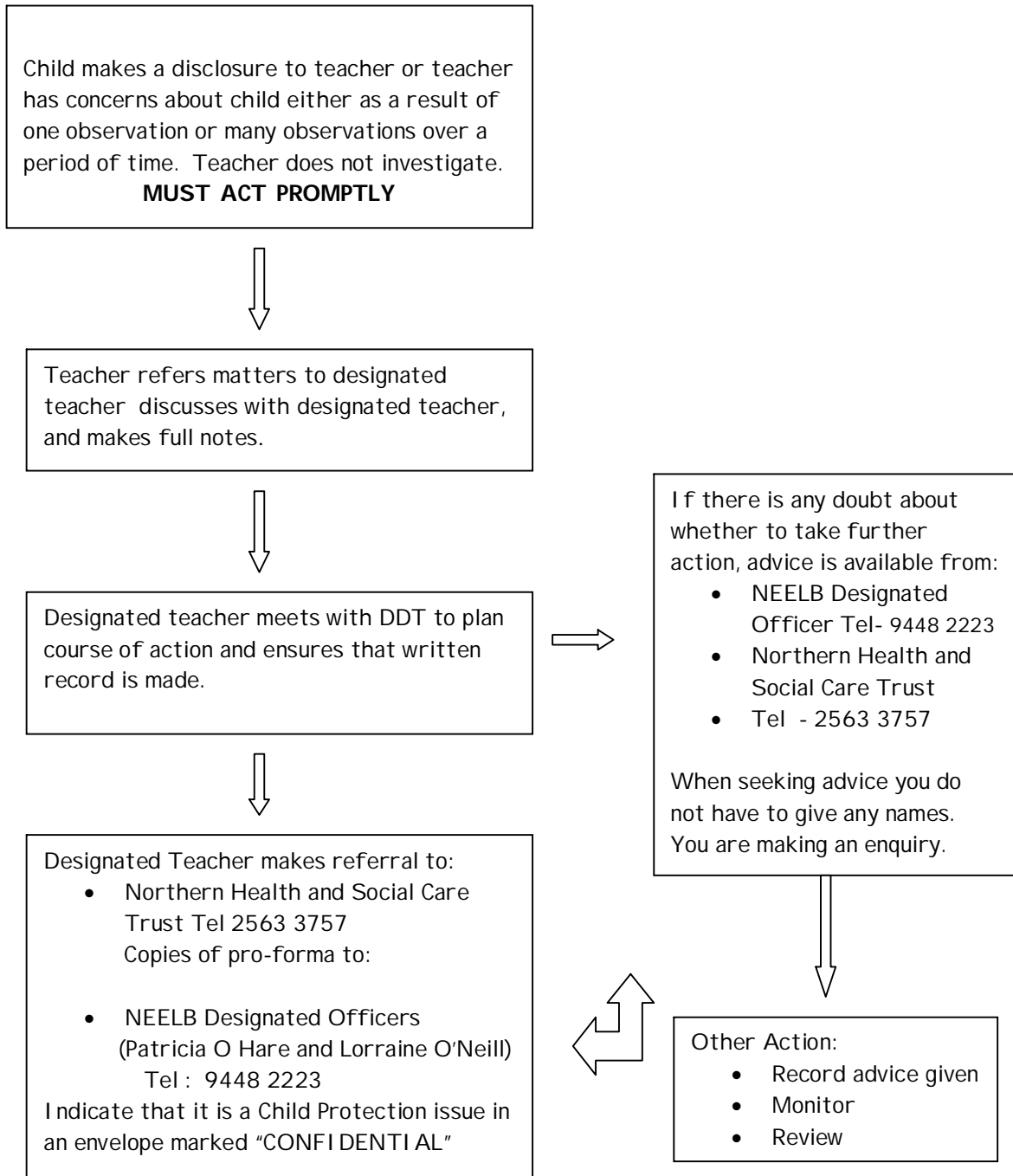
If I am still concerned, I can talk to one of the Designated Teachers for Child Protection Mrs Torrens or Mrs Overend or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs Richmond



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr Robert Overend Tel 02879386287
2, Drumanee Road, Bellaghy, BT45 8LE

**At any time I can talk to the -
Northern Health and Care Trust Tel: 028 2563 3757
Or the P.S.N.I. Care Unit, Tel: 028 7963 3701**

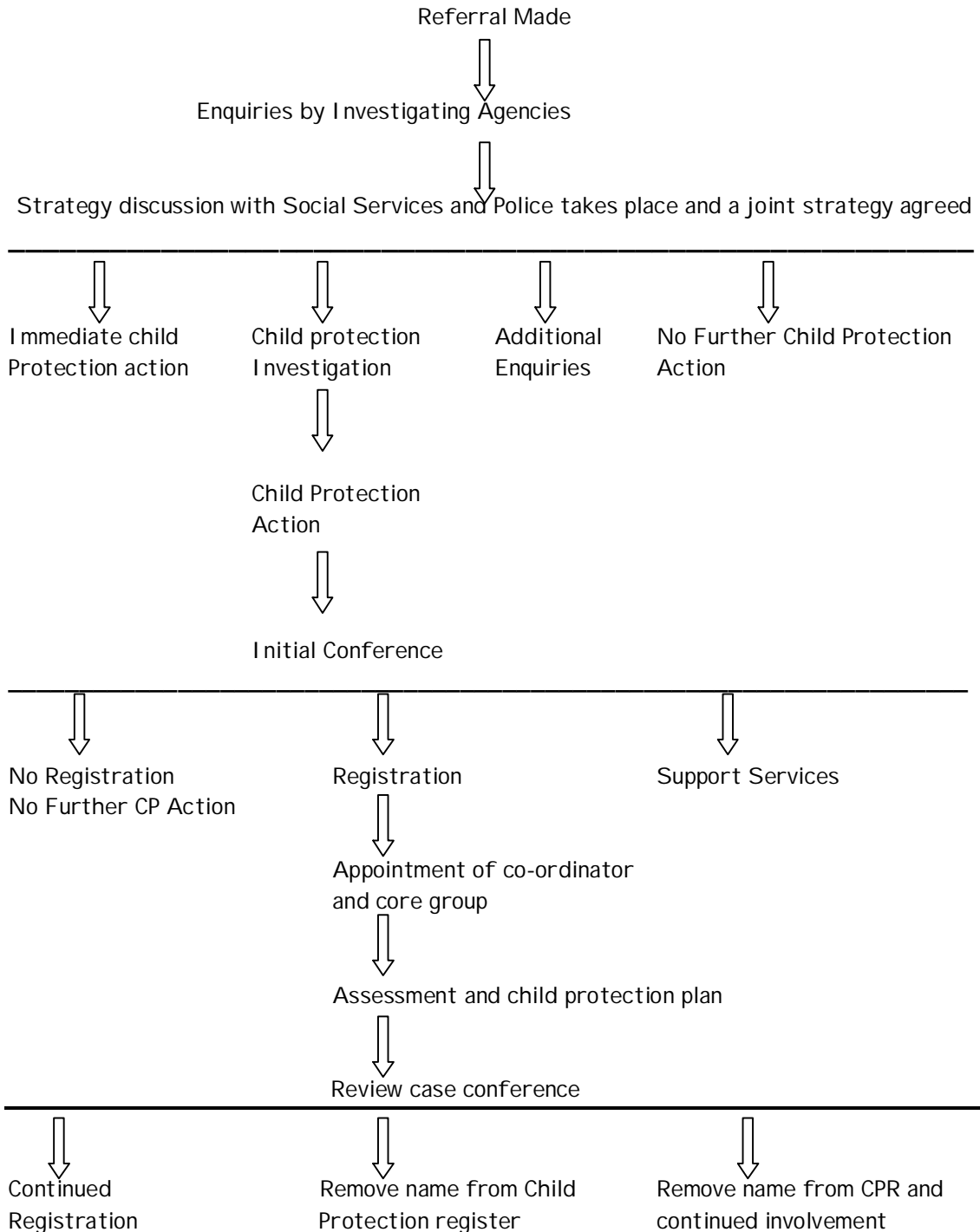
Appendix 5 - PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE



Appendix 6 - WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REFERRAL IS MADE

ROLES OF OTHER AGENCIES

The welfare of the child is paramount and the following interagency procedures are intended to ensure a prompt and co-ordinated response to any referral.



Appendix 7 -RECORD OF APPROPRIATE TRAINING

RECORD OF STAFF TRAINING IN CHILD PROTECTION

DATE	ORGANISING BODY	VENUE	TRAINING	STAFF ATTENDED

Appendix 8 - RECORD OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION TO PARENTS

SCHOOL YEAR	DATE INFORMATION WAS GIVEN	DELIVERY OF INFORMATION

Appendix 9- RECORD OF CONTACT WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Date: _____

Name Of Agency: _____ Tel: _____

Name Of Agency Representative: _____

Advice/Concerns discussed by telephone
visit

Advise/Concerns regarding:

Name of child: _____

Address: _____

D.O.B. _____

Nature Of Concern: _____

Nature Of Advice: _____

Follow Up Procedure: _____

Parents informed: Yes No

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____

Appendix 10 - RECORD OF POLICY REVIEW

Date of Review	Adopted By Governors
October 2009	October 2009