

# **BELLAGHY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Child Protection Policy**

**Designated Teacher: Mrs J Torrens**

**Deputy Designated Teacher: Mrs ML Richmond**

## **SECTION 1**

### **RATIONALE**

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.

## **SECTION 2**

### **SCHOOL ETHOS**

Bellaghy Primary School – where ‘CHILDREN COME FIRST’ is the ethos statement of our school. This is displayed on our school sign and within the school foyer.

The mission of our school is to provide, in partnership with parents, a broad, quality education so that all pupils can reach their full potential within a **caring, secure environment** which promotes self-discipline, motivation and individuality.

We believe that:

- A working partnership and purposeful relationship between all staff, parents, pupils and the community is essential to provide the optimal learning experiences for everyone.

- Everyone learns best in a stimulating, attractive, supportive environment where individuals are acknowledged, accepted, and respected for their uniqueness.
- Every individual needs success to grow.
- Children should have an active role in the learning process.
- Through realistic expectations of each individual pupil, we can achieve a good standard of work.
- Co-operation, relationships and respect shown at all levels reflect our positive approach to discipline.
- It is our moral purpose to make a difference in the lives of our pupils and to help produce citizens who can live and work productively in an ever-changing society.

***"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")***

***The ethos of our school reflects the strong sense of pastoral care within our setting. Our pupils are at the heart of everything we do and we truly believe that our children do indeed come first.***

The safety and welfare of our children must 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 any school activity.

Furthermore, we have a duty to prevent situations arising, 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.

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

- Children are taught in a secure, supportive, respectful and caring environment at all times. By establishing this environment, where every child is valued, we believe will lead to the development of a positive self-image and high self-esteem within our children.

- We plan a variety of opportunities for class and group discussion about thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance.
- Through teaching in the curricular area, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), the children are taught about many issues which reflect the core values of keeping themselves safe and protected eg stranger danger, good touch, bad touch etc. These are taught in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner and often outside agencies are used eg NSPCC. We believe that a well-balanced PDMU curriculum will develop awareness and skills for personal safety and encourage the confidence to make good decisions. Many topics/ themes taught throughout the school lend to the teaching of child protection eg R U Wise? (KS2) - deals with bullying and keeping safe online.
- The school displays posters promoting responsible and safe online behaviour. This issue is also taught through the curriculum. Safer Internet Day is 'celebrated' annually. Parents' meetings 'Keeping your Child Safe Online' are held frequently.
- The school only uses the C2K filtered computer service.
- We constantly monitor children's welfare and physical, emotional, social, intellectual and behavioural development. If we have a concern about a child's welfare, for example, a child experiencing a trauma, a bereavement, having issues at home (eg divorce) etc., we maintain a separate record on that child. This record is kept with the Child Protection Records. Relevant staff working with this child are kept abreast of this information, so that we can monitor the child closely and support him/her within our resources and capabilities. The school (with parental consent) may request support from an outside agency to assist with this child's welfare.
- We inform parents of the school's Child Protection Policy. New families receive a paper copy of the Safeguarding file which contains all policies relevant to Child Protection. Policies related to

safeguarding are available on the school's website. Parents have to sign annually that they have access to these on-line policies and if a paper copy is requested, these copies are dully issued. A 'Summary Document' is distributed every other year at October parent interviews.

- The school aims to maintain contact with appropriate agencies in order to promote co-operation to protect our children.
- All teaching and learning activities including school trips and outside play are supervised to the highest standard.
- The building is secured from 9a.m. to 3p.m. (in the event of after school activities 4.15pm) and visitors only gain access by ringing the doorbell and speaking to a member of staff.
- Visitors to the school must sign the Visitor's Book upon arrival and wear a lanyard for the duration of their visit. Visitors spending time in the school for a particular reason eg completing a survey must be accompanied by a member of staff if at all possible.
- All volunteer parents and other facilitators working with children on an unsupervised capacity eg after school clubs have been vetted through the appropriate channels.
- All visitors to the school who are engaged in curriculum issues eg presenters or speakers are supervised by a member of staff at all times.
- Music tutors are vetted through the appropriate channels.
- Written procedures are maintained, discussed and agreed by the Board of Governors and these will be followed if the school is alerted to possible abuse. (See Record Keeping Section of this Policy)

- The teaching and non-teaching staff are made aware of the school's child protection procedures and also the signs of possible abuse, through training. (See Training Schedule - APPENDIX 7)
- The school has appointed a designated teacher (DT) and a deputy designated teacher (DTT) for Child Protection.  
     Designated teacher (DT) - Mrs J Torrens  
     Deputy designated teacher (DTT) - Mrs ML Richmond
- There are posters on display in each classroom and in other significant places around the school for the benefit of the children. These posters explain in child friendly language who to speak to if you, as a child, have a worry or a concern. The DT and DDT are photographed on these posters. These are frequently referred to during curriculum time. The most recent posters on display were created by P7 children and they decided to change the language according to the location of the poster.
- Children also have access to a 'Worry Bag' (beside staffroom door) where they can place a confidential note to a member of staff.
- The school has a Safeguarding Sub-Committee on the Board of Governors comprising the Chair, one additional governor (Designated governor), the DT and DDT. Governors on this sub-committee have received the appropriate training from the Education Authority (EA). Child Protection is a standing item on the Agenda at each BOG meeting.
- Details of the BOG Sub-committee for Child Protection are on the Governors' Notice Board. Other details include who the Designated Governor is and how she and the Chair can be contacted.
- Governors sitting on the Appointments Committee have received the relevant training in Recruitment.
- There is a flow chart on the Parents' Information Board explaining how a parent can make report if concerned about a child's protection.

- All members of the Board of Governors receive in-school training from the DT once every four years ie once during their term of office. All members of BOG have received a copy of this policy and the relevant documentation from DE - DE Circular 1999/10 Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection, Governors' Handbook on Child Protection (updated version - March 2017). Governors have access to other DE Circulars on Child Protection which are filed in the school office. Recently issued circulars are presented to governors at BOG meetings.
- A report on Attendance is a standing item on each BOG meeting. Attendance data is reported annually and this data is also included in Annual Report.
- Members of the PTA Committee receive training in Child Protection once during their term of office. This training is led by the DT. The PTA has a Child Protection policy which is on display on PTA Notice Board in school.
- Staff carry out Risk Assessments prior to any school event or school trip. The school also retains a Risk Assessment for activities that potentially present a risk eg Outdoor Playtime, P.E., Golden Time at Bellaghy Play Park, Swimming, Shared Education Activities. A risk assessment may also be in place for a child whose behaviour might put him/herself or other children / adults at risk.
- There is a governor with responsibility for Health and Safety. The governors have an annual walk through the school and a list is compiled of any potential hazards. These are reported to the Maintenance Department by the Principal. Likewise if the school caretaker notices any potential safety concern, this is reported to the Principal. The Caretaker checks the school grounds on a regular basis to ensure that nothing dangerous has been thrown over the fence.
- Students who are doing their 'placement' at our school receive induction training which includes information on safeguarding. They are given a 'Students' Handbook' which also refers to Child Protection

issues. Copies of this policy are also issued to students and they are signposted to all other policies online.

- Substitute teachers working in our school are issued with an Information Booklet which contains references to safeguarding. All sub teachers are employed through the NI Substitute Teacher Register. This procedure ensures that they have gone through the appropriate vetting channels.
- The school will review and monitor the system for recording information about, and action taken in cases of suspected or alleged abuse. A review generally takes place annually but in reality, much more often and usually when there has been an incident.
- The Child Protection Log and Register are held securely in the school office.
- This Child Protection Policy is linked closely to other policies which together form the 'Safeguarding Policy.'

### **SECTION 3**

#### **THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AND THEIR ROLES**

The safeguarding team in our school includes:

- The Principal
- The Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher
- Chairperson of the Board of Governors
- Designated Governor for Child Protection

#### **THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

- To ensure there is a Safeguarding Policy within the school which includes a Child Protection Policy.
- To promote a safe guarding ethos.
- To promote safeguarding within the curriculum.
- To understand the roles and responsibilities in the child protection process.



- To ensure safe recruitment and selection practices, including induction of all adults before coming into contact with children eg substitute teacher.
- To appoint designated teacher and deputy designated teacher and ensure their training is up to date.
- To ensure all staff have regular awareness training in child protection issues.
- To ensure the Board of Governors is kept fully informed about safeguarding issues.
- To ensure a robust Code of Conduct for adults is in place.

### **THE ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

- To ensure a designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- To ensure that Governors have taken the appropriate training in Child Protection.
- To ensure that the governors receive a termly Child Protection report.
- To ensure that the Record of Child Abuse Complaints (concerning a member of staff) is presented and signed off annually
- To handle complaints or allegations against the Principal.

### **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED GOVERNOR**

- To provide advice to the governors about the role of the Designated teacher, the content of the Safeguarding Policy, the Code of Conduct, the content of the termly updates and/or the annual DT's report.
- To provide advice and support to other governors on the recruitment, selection and vetting of staff.

### **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

- To promote a child protection ethos within the school
- To induct all adults in safeguarding and child protection before meeting with children
- To disseminate child protection training to all school staff

- To ensure all staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of the different types of child abuse and are aware of the procedures for reporting suspected cases of abuse.
- To seek advice from Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS)
- To discuss Child Protection concerns with staff and maintain records.
- To co-ordinate action by staff in cases of suspected abuse and reporting to Social Services or PSNI.
- To take the lead in the development of the Safeguarding Policy.
- To provide information on Child Protection issues to the Board of Governors
- To keep the Principal informed.
- To notify the Chair of the Board of Governors in the event of an allegation against the Principal.
- To participate in all necessary training led by CPSSS.

## **SECTION 4**

### **WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?**

The overriding concern of every caring adult must be the safety of the child. The welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration. Abuse may take many forms, including:

#### **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.

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

**SEXUAL ABUSE:** Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children in sexual activities of any kind (including exposure to pornography) which they do not truly comprehend and to which they are not able to give informed consent or that violate normal family roles.

**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.

### **GRAVE CONCERN**

While strictly not a form of abuse (but a category of registration of abuse), this term covers children whose situation does not currently fit any of the four categories above but where social and medical assessment indicates that a child is at significant risk of the above. For example, situations where another child in the household has been harmed or the household contains a known abuser.

**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 AND CYBER BULLYING:** Violence, which can be physical, verbal or psychological. It is the REPEATED exercising of power over another who is powerless to defend him/herself. It can be for a short or long duration. Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and will not be tolerated in our school. All reported incidents of bullying must be dealt with promptly and thoroughly. (See Anti-Bullying Policy). Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones is called cyber bullying. A child can feel that there is no escape from this type of bullying as it can happen wherever they are, at any time, day or night.

**DOMESTIC ABUSE:** Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. Domestic abuse can seriously harm children. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse.

**ONLINE ABUSE:** Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children may experience cyber bullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers.

**CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION:** Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something eg gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.

**FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION:** Female genital mutilation (FMG) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM is child abuse and can cause severe and long lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

**CHILD TRAFFICKING:** Child trafficking is a type of abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.

**GROOMING:** Grooming is when someone build an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Children can be groomed online or in the real world.

**HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR:** harmful sexual behaviour includes using sexually explicit words and phrases, inappropriate touching, using sexual violence or threats or full penetrative sex with other children or adults. Children who develop harmful sexual behaviour harm themselves and others.

## **SECTION 5**

### **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 teacher. 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. The following table 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.**

## SECTION 6 - INDICATORS

<p><b><u>PHYSICAL ABUSE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p><b><u>NEGLECT</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p><b><u>EMOTIONAL ABUSE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>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)</p> <p><b><u>SEXUAL ABUSE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>Bruises, scratches, bite marks, recurrent abdominal pains or headaches, difficulty in walking or sitting, frequent urinary infections, avoidance of</p>	<p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b></p> <p>Withdrawn, depression, excessive sexual precociousness, seductiveness, children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference,</p>
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<p>lessons especially P.E.</p>	<p>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.</p>
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<p><b><u>BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Belongings getting lost or damaged, unexplained injuries, asking for or stealing money, problems eating and sleeping, excessive or no use of internet, mobile phone, gaming etc</p> <p><b><u>DOMESTIC ABUSE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening because it usually takes place in the family home and abusers can act very differently when other people are around.          May have school books etc missing due to moving to and from refuges</p> <p><b><u>ON LINE ABUSE</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Spends much more or much less time online, texting, gaming or using social media          Have lots of new phone numbers, texts or e mails addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet</p> <p><b><u>CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Have older boyfriends, girlfriends, go missing from home, get involved in gangs, hang out at places of concern eg hotels, be involved in petty crime, have unexplained physical injuries, have an unexplained physical appearance eg lost weight</p> <p><b><u>FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION</u></b></p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Has difficulty walking, standing or sitting, pain, bleeding, spends longer in the bathroom, reluctant</p>	<p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Afraid to go to school, being ill in the mornings, not doing as well at school, being nervous, loss of confidence, becoming distressed or withdrawn, bullying others, secretive about who they are talking to on line or what they are doing online.</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Become aggressive, display anti-social behaviour, suffer from depression or anxiety, not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Withdrawn, upset or outraged after using the Internet, gaming or texting, are secretive about who they are talking to or what they are doing online or on their mobile phone</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Not know where they are because they have been moved around a lot, intimidated or fearful of certain people or situations</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Withdrawn, anxious, depressed, have unusual behaviour after an absence from school.</p>
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<p>to undergo normal medical examinations</p> <p><b><u>CHILD TRAFFICKING</u></b>  <b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Spends a lot of time doing household chores, rarely leaves the house, lives apart from family, not registered with GP or school, has no documents eg BC, is seen in inappropriate places, has unexplained injuries, possesses unaccounted for money or goods</p> <p><b><u>GROOMING</u></b>  <b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Have older boyfriends, girlfriends, go to unusual places to meet friends, have new things such as clothes, mobile phone which they can not explain, have access to drugs and alcohol.</p> <p><b><u>HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR</u></b>  <b><u>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Seeking out the company of younger children, taking younger children to secret places, insisting on hugging or kissing when a child does not want to, using sexual language, showing sexual materials to younger children,</p>	<p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Is not sure where they are, reluctant to give personal details, gives a prepared story</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Act secretly, refuse to talk about what they are doing online, get agitated about discussing texting, gaming etc</p> <p><b><u>BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS</u></b>          Becoming anxious when another child comes to visit, exposing genitals to other children, withdrawn, anxious.</p>
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**SECTION 7**  
**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 a member of staff suspects abuse, the following procedures must be followed:

- Act promptly
- Never investigate or ask the child leading questions. Do not promise the child that this can be kept a secret. Make brief notes if the child is making a disclosure.
- Report immediately to the designated teacher for child protection or the deputy designated teacher, discuss the matter with her and make full notes.
- The Designated Teacher will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency and a course of action will be planned. A written record will be made.
- The Principal, in consultation with the DT will decide if the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. Advice may be sought from CPSSS or Social Services. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice.
- 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 parents will be informed immediately.
- **THE SAFETY OF THE CHILD IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY.**

## OTHER POINTS FOR STAFF TO CONSIDER

### IT IS IMPORTANT TO SAY:

- I am glad you told me this
- We are going to do something about this together
- I will have to speak to someone about this, I can not keep it our secret

### IT IS IMPORTANT TO:

- Stay calm
- Listen and say you will take a few notes (very important as a safeguard to you)
- DO NOT interrogate
- Record the detail later eg time, place, date, behaviour of child, place the abuse occurred and any other relevant information - (FACTS)
- Follow the guidelines immediately ie Report to the DT

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 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.

## **SECTION 8**

### **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.

### **ALLEGATION AGAINST THE PRINCIPAL**

If an allegation is made against the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. She will then inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together, they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

### **ALLEGATION AGAINST THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

If an allegation is made against the DT, the Principal must be informed immediately, who may discuss the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

### **ALLEGATION AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNOR**

If an allegation is made against a member of the Board of Governor, the DT and the Principal must be contacted immediately. The Chairperson must also be informed unless he/she is the subject of the allegation. The Designated Officer within CPSSS must be informed immediately.

### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Suspension from duty - Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with children. He / she may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure, pending investigation by Social Services.

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

## **SECTION 9** **RECORDS**

A Concern Log is securely kept in the office. This lists children who, for whatever reason need to be monitored eg a child who has recently suffered trauma eg a bereavement, family separation etc. A record of concern about the child is maintained and updated when required. Staff are kept informed of any child in their class who is on the list.

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 acknowledgement of receipt of 'Safeguarding File' by new families
- Record that parents have access to online policies
- Record of contacts with other agencies.
- Record of policy review dates.

### **False Allegations**

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. Another adult should witness the allegation if possible.

If a child touches a member of staff in a sexually inappropriate way or place, this needs to be recorded the DT notified.

## **SECTION 10** **TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

- Newly appointed DT or DTT - as soon as possible
- DT or DTT - Every four years - refresher training
- Principal - Safeguarding role - every four years
- Teaching staff - Every two years
- Non-teaching staff - Every two years
- Governors - Once every four years (once in their term as a governor)
- Chair of Governors - Strand 2 of CP training offered by CPSSS
- Designated Governor - Strand 2 of CP training, offered by CPSSS

## **SECTION 11** **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF**

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**

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

## **SECTION 12**

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS**

- As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with the pupils.
- 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.
- 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)
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.

- 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.*
- Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or another casual observer should be avoided.
- Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the DT.
- 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.
- The Principal must ensure that there is the correct adult/child ratio for all school trips. If members of staff are on a residential trip, rooms should be checked with the support of another adult. Under no circumstances should a member of staff take a child or children into his / her room.
- Staff should 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. Staff should not go into the toilet alone with children. In an emergency, there should be another child or adult present.
- Staff should never take photographs with their mobile phone or personal tablet.

### **SECTION 13**

#### **CHOICE AND USE OF TEACHING MATERIALS**

- Teachers should avoid teaching materials which might be

misinterpreted.

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

## **SECTION 14** **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.

## **SECTION 15** **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. The school retains a record of all potential people who may pick up a child.

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.

New families to the school receive a copy of the Safeguarding File / Policy. The Policy is also available on the school website. Parents sign off annually that they have access to all policies online. If parents request a paper copy of policies these are dully distributed. Parents receive a summary document every other year at Parent Teacher Interviews in October.

## **SECTION 16**

### **LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES**

(which together form the SAFEGUARDING FILE)

- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Positive Behaviour
- SEN
- The Use of Reasonable Force
- Health and Safety (includes First Aid and Critical Incident)
- Administering of Medication
- Intimate Care
- Trips
- Supervision of Pupils
- Photography
- E Safety
- A guide for students
- A guide for substitute teachers
- Staff Guide - Use of Social Media

## **SECTION 17**

### **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 are adhered to in line with Education Authority policy. In following these procedures Governors and staff are doing their utmost to protect all children in their care from potential harm.

Parent volunteers and other adults working with children in an unsupervised capacity complete a vetting form on line. These applications are screened by Access N.I.

All members of the Board of Governors are also vetted.

Music tutors are all vetted by Access NI. Anyone visiting the school to speak to the children eg in Assembly or to enhance learning in a particular curricular area are supervised at all times by a member of staff.

## **SECTION 18** **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.

## LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - Record of Concern

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 to make a complaint

APPENDIX 5 - Procedure for reporting an incident of child abuse

APPENDIX 6 - What happens after a referral is made

APPENDIX 7 - Record of staff training in Child Protection

APPENDIX 8 - Record of Safeguarding Information given to parents

APPENDIX 9 - Record of contact with other agencies

APPENDIX 10 - Record of Policy Review

APPENDIX 11 - Important contact numbers and web addresses

**APPENDIX 1- CHILD PROTECTION -NOTE OF CONCERN**  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Date, time of incident / disclosure:

Circumstances of incident / disclosure:

Nature and description of concern:

Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher: YES / NO  
If NO state reason:

Date and time of report to Designated Teacher:

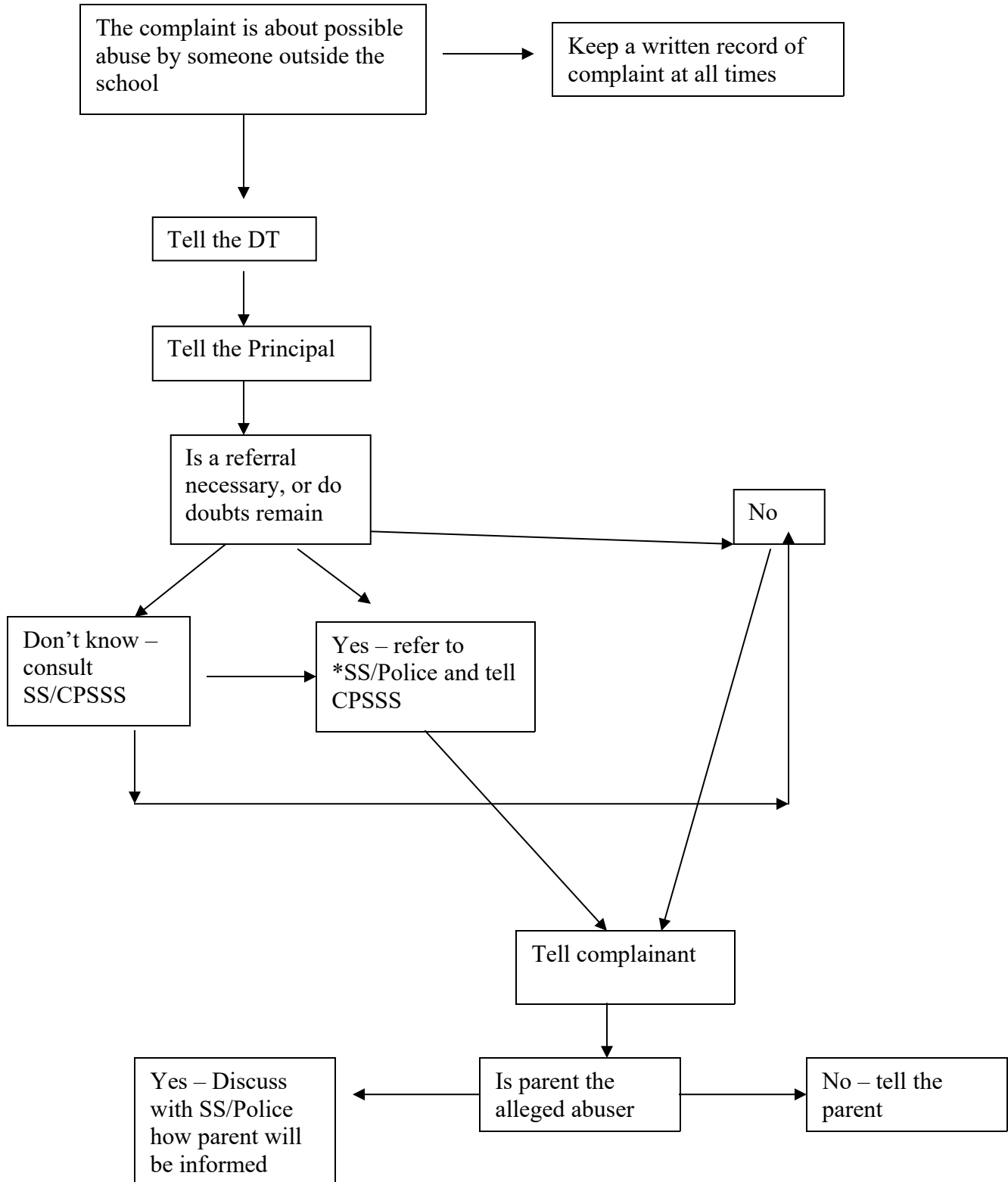
Written note from staff member placed on child's Child Protection file: YES / NO  
If NO state reason:

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

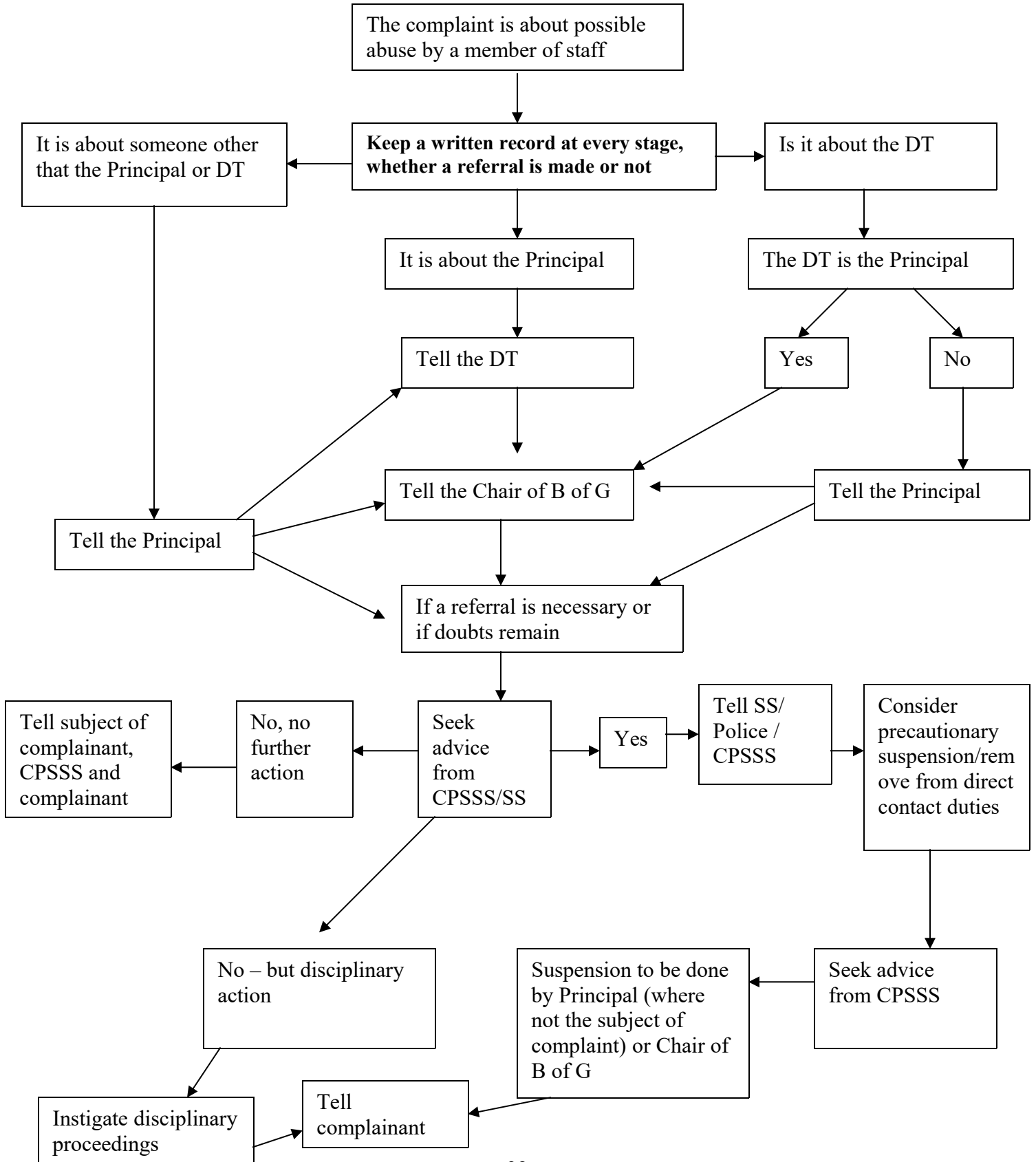
Signed by staff member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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 to make a complaint.**

**How a parent can make a complaint**

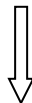
I have a concern about my/ child's safety.



I can talk to the class teacher.



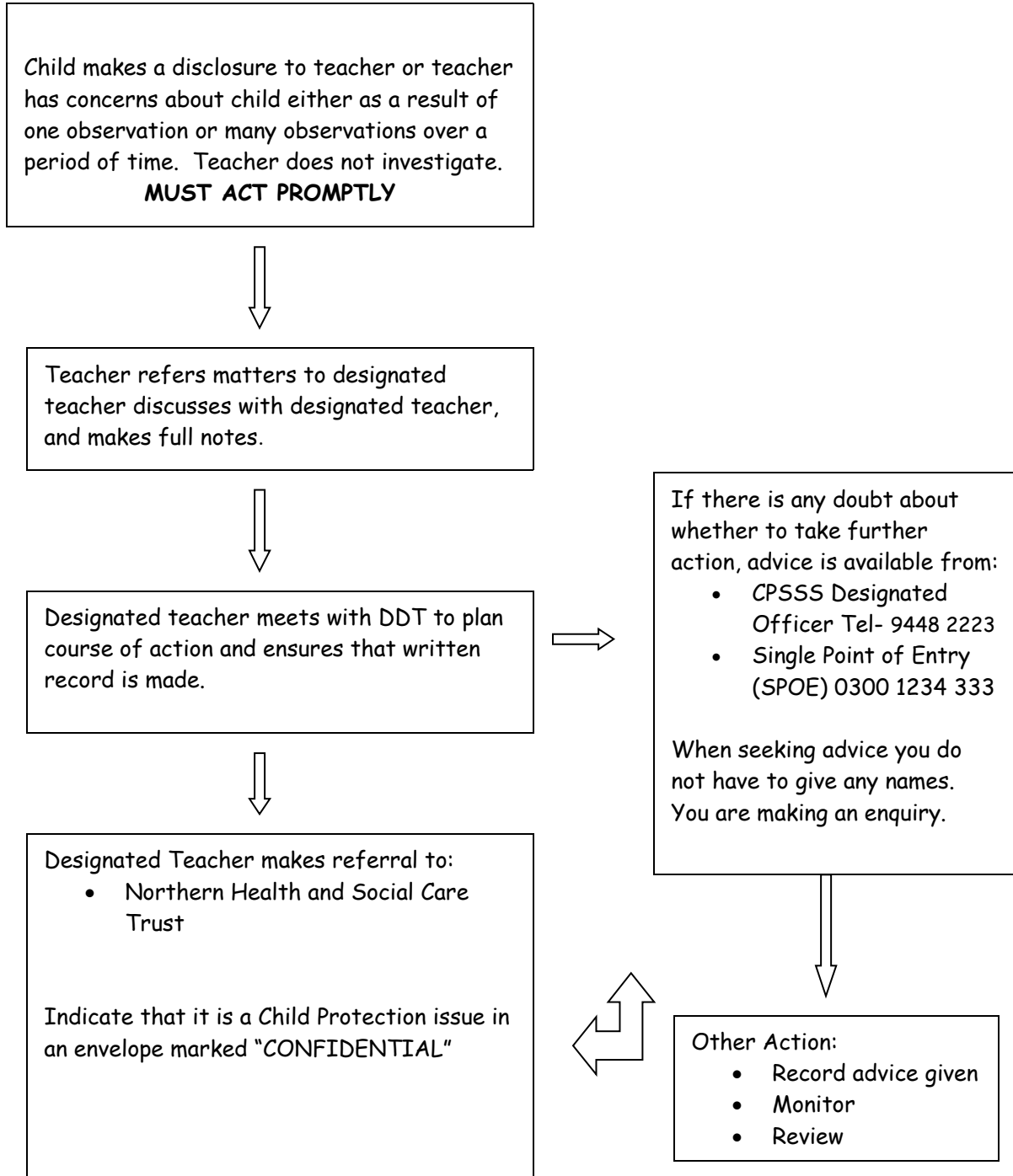
If I am still concerned, I can talk to one of the Designated Teachers for Child Protection Mrs Torrens or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs Richmond



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

**At any time I can talk to the -  
Single Point of Entry (SPOE) Tel: 0300 1234 333  
Or the P.S.N.I. Care Unit, Tel: 028 7963 3701**

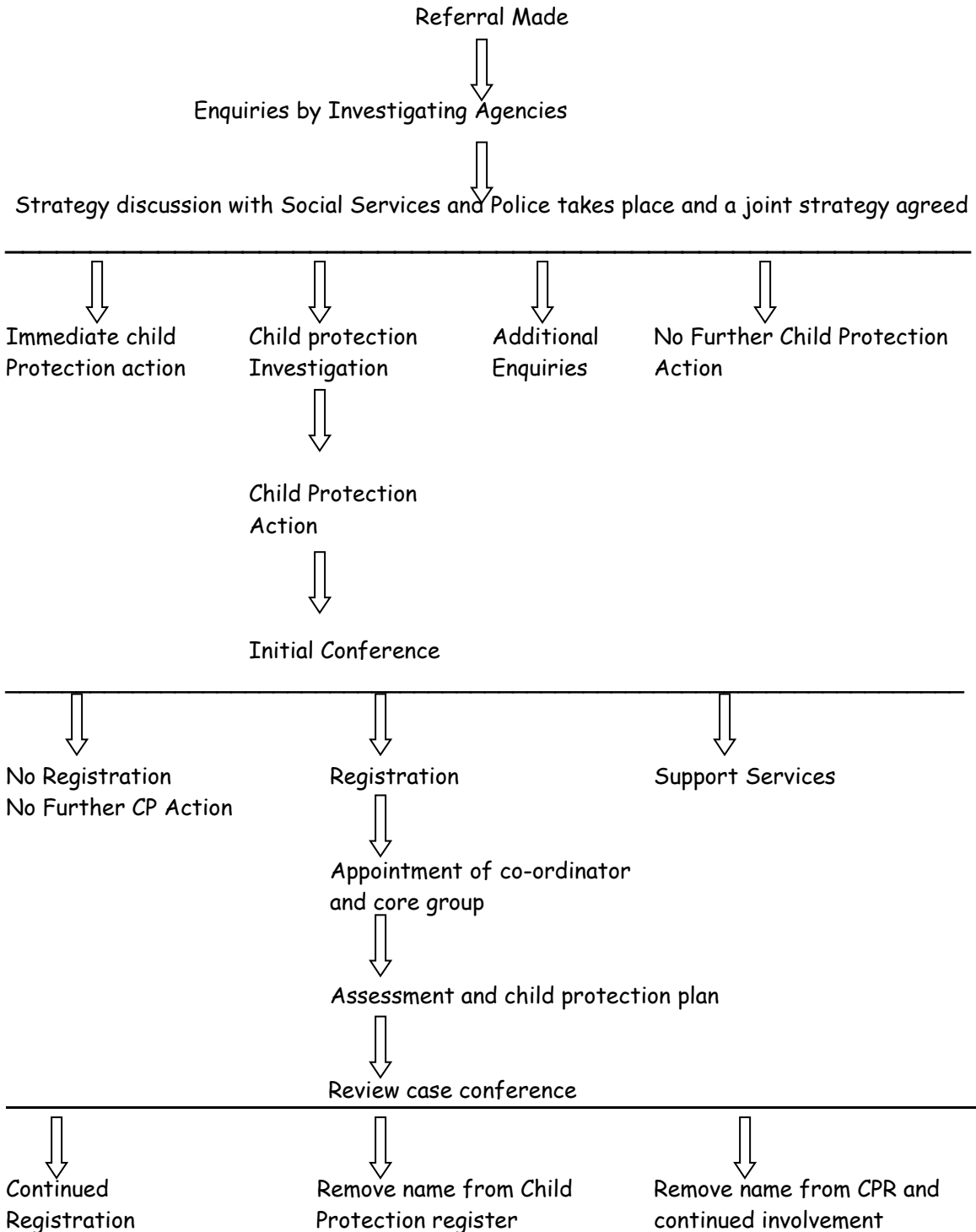
## APPENDIX 5 - PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE



## 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 STAFF TRAINING IN CHILD PROTECTION**

DATE	WHO WAS TRAINED?	WHO WAS THE TRAINER?	NATURE OF TRAINING



**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**

<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>Adopted By Governors</b>

## **APPENDIX 11**

### **IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS AND WEB ADDRESSES**

**Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS)** - Tel 02894482223

#### **CPSSS Designated Officers**

heather.grimason@eani.org.uk

margaret.brady@eani.org.uk

[colleen.ellison@ea.org.uk](mailto:colleen.ellison@ea.org.uk)

[paula.mccreesh@ea.org.uk](mailto:paula.mccreesh@ea.org.uk)

#### **CPSSS Clerical Support Officer**

[anna.mitchell@ea.org.uk](mailto:anna.mitchell@ea.org.uk)

**Single Point of Entry (SPOE)** - Gateway Referrals - Tel 0300 1234 333

**School Age Mothers and Looked After Children** - Senior EWO - Tel 028 90862568

#### **Vetting and Barring Queries**

Volunteers - Contact Claims and Legal Admin - Karen Mawhinney - Tel 028 25662310

Paid Staff - Human Resources - Tel 028 25662417

*Policy - Updated - March 2017 MLR*