

Londonderry Primary School



Safeguarding Policy

Approved by Board of Governors – March 2022

Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child) The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration for all actions concerning children taken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies.

Article 4 (Protection of rights) Governments have a responsibility to take all available measures to make sure children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Article 12 (Voice of the Child) A child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters which affect them, those views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

Article 19 (Protection from all forms of violence) Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and their right to be protected from harm and mistreatment is upheld.

Article 20 (Children deprived of family environment) Children who cannot be looked after by their own family have a right to be looked after properly by people who respect their ethnic group, religion, culture and language.

Articles 34 and 36 (Exploitation) Governments should protect children from all forms of exploitation.

Article 39 (Rehabilitation of child victims) Children who have been harmed should receive help to recover and reintegrate into society.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools (September 2019)

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Key Contacts within Londonderry Primary School

For Child Protection Issues

Principal

Mr D McGarrigle

028 9181 4325

Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs C. Hamilton

028 9181 4325

Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection

Mrs L. Hutton

028 9181 4325

Nominated Governor for Child Protection

028 9181 4325

Key Contacts within The Local Authority

Child Protection Support Service (Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 5:00pm)

028 9598 5590

Duty Social Worker Gateway Team – South Eastern

0300 1000 300 James ST Gateway: 02891 818518

Central Referral Unit (CRU)

028 9025 9299 (or 101 extension 30299)

EA Education Welfare Officer

029 9056 6412

Duty Social Worker Out of Hours

028 9504 9999

'Because of their day to day contact with individual children during the school terms, teachers and other school staff are particularly well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop.'

(Working Together Under the Children Act 1989)

Purpose

An effective whole-school child protection policy is one which provides clear direction to staff and others about expected behaviour when dealing with child protection issues. An effective policy also makes explicit the school's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. This ensures that child protection concerns, referrals and monitoring may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child.

Safe Guarding Ethos

In Londonderry Primary School the welfare of our pupils is of paramount importance. We continually endeavour to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential academically, spiritually and emotionally.

This policy aims to safeguard and promote the welfare, safety and health of everyone within our school community by fostering an honest, open, caring and supporting climate.

Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support our pupils in all aspects of their lives.

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, feeling safe and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps all children, especially those at risk or, or suffering from, abuse.

There are 4 main elements to our policy which aim to ensure that child protection concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which support the needs of the child. The 4 elements are:

1. Partnership
2. Prevention
3. Protection
4. Parental Responsibility

This policy applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff, Board of Governors, ancillary staff, volunteers, students and any other adult who may come in contact with pupils in Londonderry Primary School.

Schools do not operate in isolation and the welfare of children is a responsibility of many agencies working in partnership. All action is taken in line with following guidance;

- a) *Area Child Protection Committees' – Regional Policy and Procedures (2005)*
- b) *Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection (DENI 1999)*
- c) *Co-operating to Safeguard (DHSSPS 2003)*
- d) *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)*
- e) *The Children (NI) Order (1995)*
- f) *The Sexual Offences (NI) Order (2008)*
- g) *Education & Libraries Order – Welfare and Protection of Pupils (2003)*
- h) *Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Annual Report 2013/1014*

Safeguarding Definition

'Safeguarding encompasses both prevention and protection activity. It is the process of preventing impairment of children's health and development and of ensuring they grow up safely and securely and provided with effective care, all of which collectively enables them to attain greater success in adulthood. Safeguarding also extends to protecting children from abuse or neglect, when it occurs, including the promotion and protection of children's rights.'

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Annual Report 2013/1014

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. There are, however, key people within our school who have specific responsibility under Child Protection procedures. In Londonderry Primary School these people are;

- Principal – Mr McGarrigle (Lead of Safeguarding Team)
- Designated Teacher - Mrs C.Hamilton
- Deputy Designated Teacher – Mrs Hutton
- Designated Governor – M Tweedie

Together these adults comprise the Safeguarding Team for Londonderry Primary School.

Responsibilities of the Board of Governors Designated Member

The best interests of the children within the school are the primary consideration of the Board of Governors. It is the role of the designated members to ensure that the necessary safeguarding measures are in place to make all pupils feel safe and protected in our school.

The designated member will ensure that the policy and training is updated regularly, that parents are kept informed of safeguarding procedures and that all adults within the school have been vetted and recruitment procedures followed.

At times the designated member maybe involved directly in child protection cases (see figure 2) and may sit on the regular meetings of the Safeguarding Team. Governors will be updated by principal at each Governors meeting, regarding recent Safeguarding developments.

If a complaint is made about the Principal, this complaint will be dealt with by the Board of Governors directly.

Responsibilities of the Principal

As the lead in the Safeguarding Team it is the Principal's duty to ensure that ensure that the designated teachers are trained adequately and that they in turn have trained all staff in child protection procedures.

As secretary of the Board of Governors the principal must ensure that child protection is on the agenda at meetings and should keep the governors informed of any changes in guidance, procedures and legislation.

If a complaint is made against a member of staff the Principal must take the lead in following the appropriate procedures.

Principals must also ensure a copy of the Safeguarding Policy is distributed to parents and pupils every 2 years.

If deemed appropriate by the Principal, a member of the Safeguarding Team may on occasion be present at Parent/ Teacher interviews, alongside the class teacher. This will happen at the Principal's discretion, and as the Safeguarding Team leader; it will be the Principal's duty to ensure this occurs in necessary circumstances.

It is the duty of the principal to liaise with EWO, manage and keep Risk Assessments, and complete the ETI Child Protection Audit (Proforma) each year.

Responsibilities of the Designated Teachers

Every school is required to have a Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection. This is a highly skilled role developed and supported through specialised training requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues. It involves:

- The training of all school staff including support staff
- Being available to discuss child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- Making referral to Social Services or PSNI Care Units
- Liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keeping the school principal informed
- The lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy
- Promotion of a child protection ethos in the school
- Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Passing on information to Designated Teachers of other schools, on a need to know basis.

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection when required.

Safeguarding Team

In the best interests of the children and for support for the Designated Teachers, the school has established a Safeguarding Team. This team will meet monthly to discuss issues that have arisen. This team comprises the chair of the Board of Governors and the delegated governor (when necessary), the Principal, the Designated Teacher and the Deputy Designated Teacher. On occasion the SENCO may be involved in these meetings. Mrs Flaherty, Mrs Hamilton and Mrs Hutton will meet on a monthly basis. Mrs Flaherty, Mrs Hamilton and Mrs Hutton will sign the bottom of all safeguarding/child protection notes generated by the school. This will ensure each member of the team is aware of the latest developments in each safeguarding matter.

Reporting Process for Child Protection Concerns

Child protection concerns can be about parents, carers, members of staff or others. Therefore, the procedures to be followed may differ from case to case. Figures 1 and 2 in the Appendices clearly set out the steps to be taken in various scenarios.

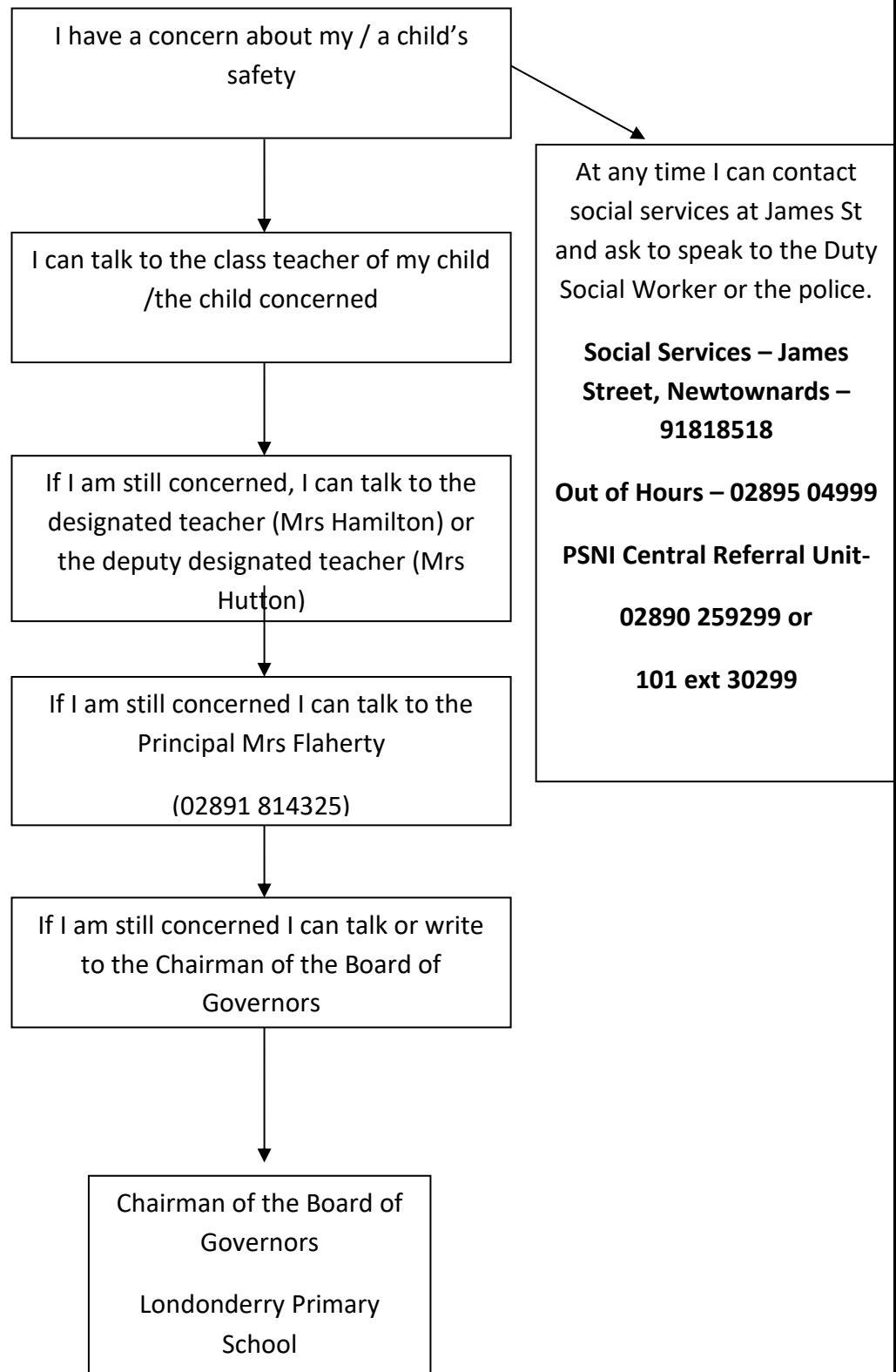
In general, the following procedures should be adhered to:

1. Where there is cause for concern about a child, the teacher or other member of staff should consult the Designated Teacher.
2. The Designated Teacher will consult with the Principal and together they will agree the subsequent action and who will undertake it. This will normally be the Designated Teacher.
3. The Designated Teacher may seek advice from the Designated Officer for Child Protection at the EA and/or Social Services.
4. When the decision to refer is made, the Designated Teacher should make the referral to Social Services in writing, using the UNOCINI form. If any criminality is suspected, DT will also refer the disclosure to the Police Service, using this email link, cru@psni.pnn.police.uk. The Safeguarding team may also refer a family or child to the Family support panel if the disclosure doesn't meet Child Protection threshold. This can be done through the following email link, Familysupportni.gov.uk
5. A parent/carer is told by the School that a referral is to be made to Social Services unless the parent/carer is the subject of the allegation.
6. The Designated Teacher should make a record of all discussions held and actions taken within **24 hours** of a referral.
7. If an acknowledgement of the referral is not received from Social Services within **5 working days**, then the Designated Teacher should follow this up.

These procedures are taken from the Area Child Protection Committee's – *Regional Policy and Procedures* guidance material.

I am a Parent and I have a Concern

If a parent has a concern about the safety of their own child or another child who attends the school, they should follow the steps below



Professional Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a pupil nor should they agree with a pupil to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Designated Teacher and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Staff will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a '**need to know basis**' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

Safe Guarding Children while working with others

Londonderry Primary School realise the importance of using volunteers and adults from outside agencies to enhance the teaching and learning experiences of their pupils.

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

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors and the Principal to ensure that the school follows safe recruitment processes as set out by the Department of Education. They must ensure that all adults have been vetted before being allowed to work with pupils.

The Designated Teacher must ensure that all new staff, volunteers or visitors, are aware of the school's code of conduct when working with children and how to report a possible disclosure.

Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, using the school premises or through the Extended School initiative, the Board of Governors, through the Extended School's Co-ordinator, will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

The Preventative Curriculum

Self-awareness and personal safety are fundamental elements in the education of any child if they are to grow into a confident adult with a high order of interpersonal skill.

Increasingly today's children need to be able to assess situations, make decisions and identify sources of help and support. Underpinning that is the need for positive self-esteem, crucial for a healthy life and healthy relationships.

Prevention programmes alone do not prevent child abuse. Children have a compelling need for love and attachment and are thus vulnerable to the abuse of power by adults, including those in a position of trust with them. Putting too much responsibility on children to protect themselves can induce feelings of guilt if they are unable to do so.

Teaching children about physical safety such as crossing the road is relatively easy, but helping them to deal with abusive situations involving those they may regard as friends and protectors is more complex and sensitive.

Introducing self-awareness and personal safety issues into the school curriculum helps children to think through situations they may find themselves in, to predict possible dangers and to work out strategies for avoiding them or seeking appropriate help.

In Londonderry Primary School this is not seen as a discrete area of work but is integrated into the whole school curriculum through the teaching of PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding).

PDMU is integrated into each year group's topic webs throughout the year. The six key concepts which are dealt with from P1 to P7 are; Feelings, Touch, Trust, Self-esteem and Assertiveness. Lessons incorporate drama, circle time, group activities and individual work.

The NSPCC *Take Care* (1999) pack has been used to develop the scheme of work as well as the CCEA *Living Learning Together* (2007) materials. The Women's Aid Helping Hands programme is also implemented yearly in Primary 5.

(More details are available in our PDMU Policy.)

The preventative curriculum in Londonderry Primary School also consists of internet safety awareness and an Anti-Bullying campaign which is run each year.

(Our Positive Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy contain more details.)

Vetting

In line with current EA recommendations, our current policy regarding regular parent helpers ensures children's safety by vetting all regular volunteers through Access NI. The definition of regular will be taken as four consecutive weeks or more, or a staff member of the school.

E Safety/ Digital Safeguarding

The use of electronic devices in schools continues to rise and it is important that we create a shared culture of responsibility with school, pupils and parents to reduce the possibility of harm.

The internet and computer software materials are very popular with children and offer a range of opportunities for fun, learning and development. But although children are confident with the technology, they are still developing critical evaluation skills and need our help to make wise decisions. We have a 'duty of care' and should ensure that children are protected from exploitation and access to potentially inappropriate material.

At Londonderry Primary School we have launched the Safer Schools app, which has been promoted by EA. Parents have been encouraged to download and log into this app which has been tailored for our school. This app will send notifications to parents to warn them of newly found dangers linked to particular games and social media platforms that would be accessed by school aged children. It gives advice on how to keep their children safe when using screens.

See Digital Safeguarding Policy.

Internet Access/Safety

In Londonderry Primary School access to the internet is through the C2k system, which is a secure system which allows pupils to access the internet through a protected and filtered system. Children have their own e-mail which is monitored by C2k regularly to ensure usage is within guidelines appropriate to the pupil's age and understanding. Parents are asked to give permission for pupils to use the internet in school.

Teachers should only send or receive emails from pupils through their C2k accounts and the nature of the emails should only be related to school work. Teachers should not contact pupils using other email accounts.

Internet safety is taught through our PDMU scheme.

Annually we involve all classes in Internet Safety Awareness Day through the use of resources from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre website

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Individuals, who work with children and young children, should be extremely careful in corresponding with people on social networking sites and should never be in contact with pupils through these sites.

Permission from parents, for their children to use the internet, must be given for each individual pupil. See Figure 3.

Use of Images

Parents are asked to give permission for their child's photographs to be used by the school, either on printed publications, on the school website or an outside agency/media. (Figure 4)

Mobile Phones

We understand that some parents like their child to carry a mobile phone in-case of an emergency. Pupils are permitted to have a phone in their school bag, but it must be switched off during school hours.

Teacher mobile phones must be silent during school hours and only used at break time, lunch time and after school. Teachers should never give their telephone number to pupils for any reason and should not have a child's personal telephone number for any reason.

Photographs or videos should be taken using school approved mobile phones, iPad or digital cameras on school premises or on day trips or school residential. These photos must be deleted from the phone/iPad/camera as soon as they are shared on the school's social media or sharing points. Any photographs taken by members of staff on any device that include semi-naked or naked pupil's, will be seen as sexting, under the 2003 Sexual offences Act. Refer to guide lines outlined in Staff Code of Conduct.

The school has digital cameras and iPads, which are used for educational purposes, and photographs are deleted from these cameras after use.

Supporting Pupils at Risk

All staff at Londonderry Primary School recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place.

School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. Nevertheless, whilst at school their behaviour may still be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn.

School will endeavour to support pupils through:

- The curriculum to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation

- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and which gives all pupils and adults a sense of being respected and valued.
- The implementation of our Positive Behaviour Policy.
- A consistent approach agreed by all staff which will endeavour to ensure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but that they are valued.
- Regular liaison with other professionals and agencies who support the pupils and their families.
- A commitment to develop productive, supportive relationships with parents, whenever it is in the child's best interest to do so.
- The development and support of a responsive and knowledgeable staff group, trained to respond appropriately in child protection situations.
- Recognition that statistically children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse so staff, who work in any capacity with children with profound, and multiple disabilities, sensory impairment and / or emotional and behavioural problems will need to be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.
- Recognition that in a home environment where there is domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, children may also be vulnerable and in need of support or protection.

Record Keeping

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Londonderry Primary School is clear about the need to record any concerns held about children in our care. Records are held under the Data Protection Act 1998 and we follow the Area Child Protection Committee's guidance on *Record Keeping, Confidentiality and Sharing Information (Chapter 11)*.

Our Records Management Policy was updated in accordance with D.E. Circular 2016/20 to comply with current guidance regarding Child Protection and the school's GDPR policy. The Safeguarding team are fully aware of this.

Information on individual pupils is shared on a 'need to know' basis. If a child leaves the school or transfers to post primary the necessary information will be passed on in line with the guidance referred to above.

Definitions of Child Abuse

(ACPC 2005)

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 know to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.

Harm is defined in the Children Order (NI) 1995 as 'ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development'. The Children Order definition of ill-treatment includes:

- Sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical
- Health means physical or mental health
- Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the needs of another person.

It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth)

Recognition of Child Abuse

The recognition and identification of child abuse can be difficult and usually requires information from individual sources including detailed social and medical assessments. The final decision will be made by a range of professionals at a Child Protection Case Conference.

It is the responsibility of professionals, teachers included, to report concerns, not to decide whether it is, or is not, child abuse. No one individual can make the decision that a child has been, or will be harmed.

Professional concerns about 'false allegations' need to be set aside as the need to safeguard the child must be paramount.

All professionals working with children and families need to be aware of the indicators of child abuse.

(Area Child Protection Committees' – Regional Policy & Procedures 2005)

Potential Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

The first indication that a child is being abused may not necessarily be the presence of a severe injury. Concerns may become apparent in a number of ways e.g.

- Bruises or marks
- Remarks made by a child, parent or friend
- Overhearing conversation by the child or parents
- Observing poor relationship/bond with his/her parents
- Child having sexual knowledge or exhibiting sexualised behaviour which is unusual for their age
- Not thriving or developing at a rate expected for their age
- Observations of the child's behaviour or changes in behaviour
- Indications that the family are under stress or need support
- Repeat visits to the GP or hospital

There may be a series of events which in themselves do not necessarily cause concern but are significant, if viewed together. Initially the incident may not seem serious but it should be remembered that prompt help to a family under stress may prevent minor abuse escalating into something more serious.

Recognition of Physical Abuse

- Children receive bumps and bruises as a result of the rough and tumble of normal play. These are accidental and can easily be explained.

- Insignificant but repeated injuries, however minor, can be symptomatic of a family in crisis. All injuries should be noted.
- A small number of children suffer from rare conditions which cause bruising etc and teachers should be aware of children who suffer from these conditions.
- Black eyes can occur from a direct injury, both accidental and non-accidental. Determining how the injury occurred is vital.
- It can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns. Any burn or scald with a clear outline should be regarded with suspicion.
- Bites are always non-accidental in origin.
- Poisoning or ingestion of other damaging substances are usually non-accidental.
- Administration of drugs to children can not be done unless prescribed.

This list is by no means exhaustive but is relevant to day to day occurrences and observations in the primary school setting.

Recognition of Sexual Abuse

The following indicators of sexual abuse may be observed in a child. There may be occasions when no symptoms are present but it is still thought that a child may be, or has been, sexually abused.

- Heightened genital awareness
- Simulated sexual activity with another child
- Simulated sexual activity with dolls, cuddly toys
- Fear of being alone with adults of a specific sex
- Self mutilation e.g. picking sores, head banging etc
- Social isolation – withdraws into own world
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Poor peer group relationships
- Inability to concentrate, learning difficulties
- Unusual or sexual themes in art work
- Reluctance to change in front of others

- Frequent absences from school
- Unusual reluctance or fear of going home

The above list is not exhaustive and should not be used as a checklist

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a child or young person is exploited, coerced and/or manipulated into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something they need or desire and/or for the gain of a third person.

The something received by the child or young person can include both tangible items such as food, somewhere to stay, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or money and more intangible “rewards” such as perceived affection, protection, or a sense of belonging. Fear of what might happen if they do not comply can also be a significant influencing factor.

Common to all these scenarios is an imbalance of power in favour of the abuser and some degree of coercion, intimidation, exploitation, violence and/or enticement of the child or young person (DSCF 2009).

The abuse can be perpetrated by groups or individuals, and by adults or peers.

There are a variety of different forms of child sexual exploitation. These include:

- Internet exploitation
- Exploitation at party houses
- Abuse through prostitution, involving third party gain
- Other abuse through prostitution Inappropriate/ sexually exploitative relationships
- Child abuse images
- Internal trafficking for sexual exploitation

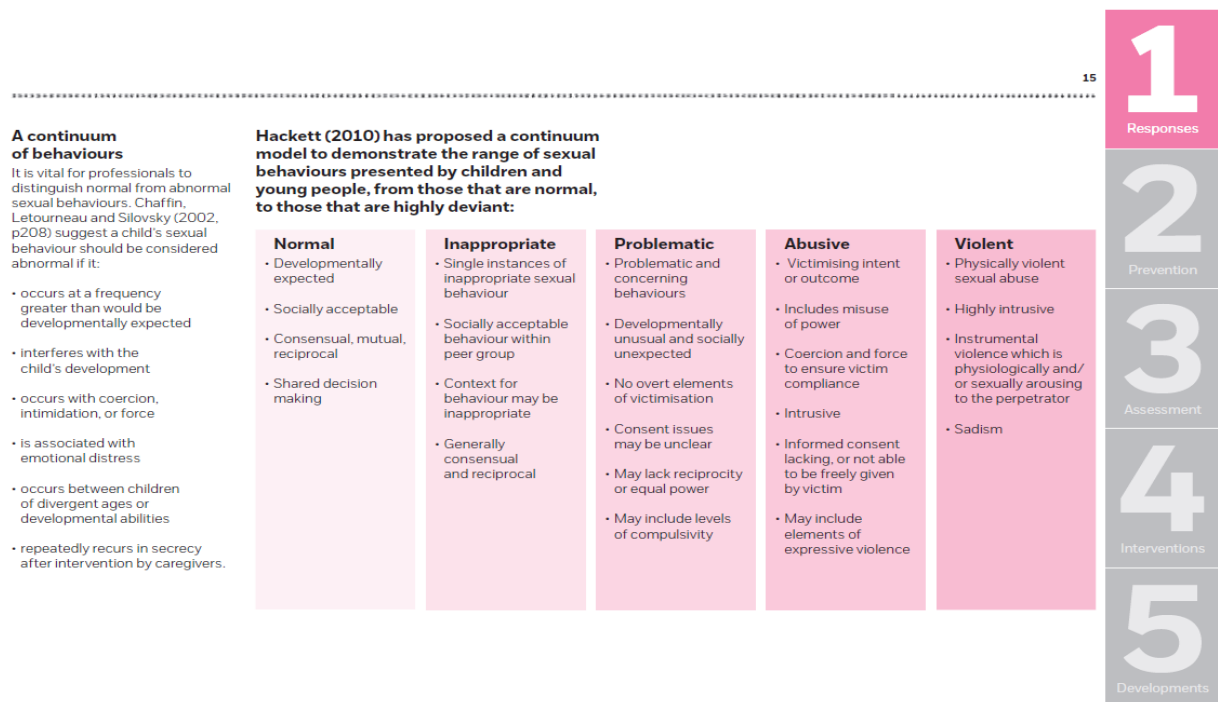
Harmful Sexualised Behaviour DE Circular 2016/05

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child’s development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships.

It must also be borne in mind that sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may be issues that which should be addressed through

the school's positive behaviour policy but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

It is important to distinguish between different sexualised behaviours- these can be defined as normal and developmentally appropriate, inappropriate, problematic to abusive and violent.



What is Harmful Sexualised Behaviour?

This is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when: There is no informed consent by the person who is allegedly harmed, and /or the child or young person who allegedly caused the harm uses threat to coerce, threaten or intimidate the person who is allegedly harmed.

Harmful Sexualised Behaviour can include:

- Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases
- Inappropriate touching
- Using sexual violence or threats
- Sexualised behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older- particularly two years or more, or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.

If a child in our care has engaged in Harmful Sexualised Behaviour, a RAMP needs to be put into place. This is a Risk Assessment Management Plan, and would need

to be written with Principal, DT, KS Leader, class teacher, SENCO and parents. The format for this has been provided by EA.

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation is a collective term for all procedures involving the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for cultural or other nontherapeutic reasons.

In the UK where it is considered to be child abuse, FGM is illegal. It is also illegal to take a child abroad for FGM purposes.

As FGM is a form of child abuse it should be dealt with according to this policy. A safe guarding team member will share any concerns that the school has with social care and not engage with the pupil's family members.

Recognition of Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is as damaging as other, visible, forms of abuse in terms of its impact on the child. It may take the form of under-protection, and/or over protection which has a significant negative impact on a child's development.

Whilst emotional abuse can occur in the absence of other types of abuse, it is important to recognise that it does often co-exist with them, to a greater or lesser extent. It is also important to note that some symptoms can be associated with various other conditions.

Possible behaviours that may indicate emotional abuse include:

- Serious emotional reactions, characterised by withdrawal, anxiety, social and home fears
- Behavioural and conduct difficulties e.g. aggression, opposition, running away, lying
- Relationship difficulties e.g. clingy, intense separation reaction
- Physical problems such as repeated illnesses, severe eating or toileting problems
- Extremes of self-stimulatory behaviours e.g. head banging, comfort seeking, masturbation etc

- Very low self esteem, often unable to accept praise or to trust and lack of self-pride
- Lack of any sense of pleasure in achievement, over-serious or apathetic
- Over anxious to please
- Failure to reach potential in learning, developmental delay

ACE'S

Adverse Childhood Experiences are trauma based situations that children may face when they leave the safe environment of Londonderry Primary School each day. They include being subject to Domestic Violence, alcohol or drug misuse. The three most significant ACE's in NI currently are,

- Neglect
- Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Child and parental Mental Health

This link shows a video which explains ACE'S and our role as a Safeguarding team and class teachers. This has been added to our annual staff training.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHgLYI9KZ-A>

Recognition of Neglect

There is a tendency to associate neglect with poverty and social disadvantage. Persistent neglect over long periods of time is likely to have causes other than poverty, however. There has to be a distinction made between financial poverty and emotional poverty.

There are a number of types of neglect that can occur separately or together e.g.

- Medical neglect
- Educational neglect
- Stimulative neglect
- Environmental neglect
- Failure to provide adequate supervision and a safe environment

Some indicators of neglect include:

- Appears tired, depressed
- Poor health, unmet medical needs

- Untreated head lice/ other infestations
- Poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing and footwear
- Appears under-stimulated, special needs
- Soiling / wetting
- Criticised by family, excluded
- Attachment disorders / seeking comfort from others
- Unattended / care for by other children
- Left to wander after school / at night
- Constantly late to school / not collected
- Poor attendance
- Not wanting to go home
- Hungry / stealing food

Neglect is a chronic, persistent problem. The concerns about the parents not providing 'good enough' care for their child will develop over time. Details should be recorded carefully.

Domestic Violence

UNICEF research released in 2006, showing per capita incidence, indicates that there are up to 32,000 children and young people living with domestic violence in Northern Ireland. Statistics for MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) in Northern Ireland show that between January 2010 and April 2011, 1759 domestic violence cases were discussed. This included a total of 2518 children recorded as part of these households.

Just as every child's experience of domestic violence is different, every child will be affected differently. Domestic Violence can impact upon all areas of children and young people's lives, including, health, education, the development of relationships, recreation and social activities. The effects of domestic violence on children are wide ranging and will differ for each child or young person. Effects can include:

- Feelings of fear, shame, anger etc.
- Underachieving (or overachieving) in school
- Difficulties sleeping and nightmares
- Distracted behaviour
- Outbursts of temper and aggression

- Regressive behaviour such as thumb sucking, bed wetting etc.
- Reluctance to eat
- Complaints of tummy pain or pain in other parts of their body
- Low self esteem and confidence
- Reluctance to engage in social activities, or
- Self-harm.

A wealth of research has identified domestic violence as an underlying theme behind social issues such as school dropout and exclusion, youth homelessness and young people engaging in risk taking behaviour. Children and young people have varying levels of resilience and all agencies that come into contact with children and young people who experience domestic violence have a responsibility to build upon this resilience.

If a disclosure regarding domestic violence is made, the school, following advice from EA Education Welfare Officers, should make referral to the appropriate agency.

Operation Encompass

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

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

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

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the

Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

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

Covid

It has been the practise of the Safe Guarding team to continue to monitor and liaise with social workers over the period of lockdown. We received notification from social workers through letter and phone call format, and replied accordingly. We worked as a team to invite vulnerable children with social work involvement to the hub, and some made use of this.

Figure 1

Current procedure where schools have concerns, or have been given information, about the possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff

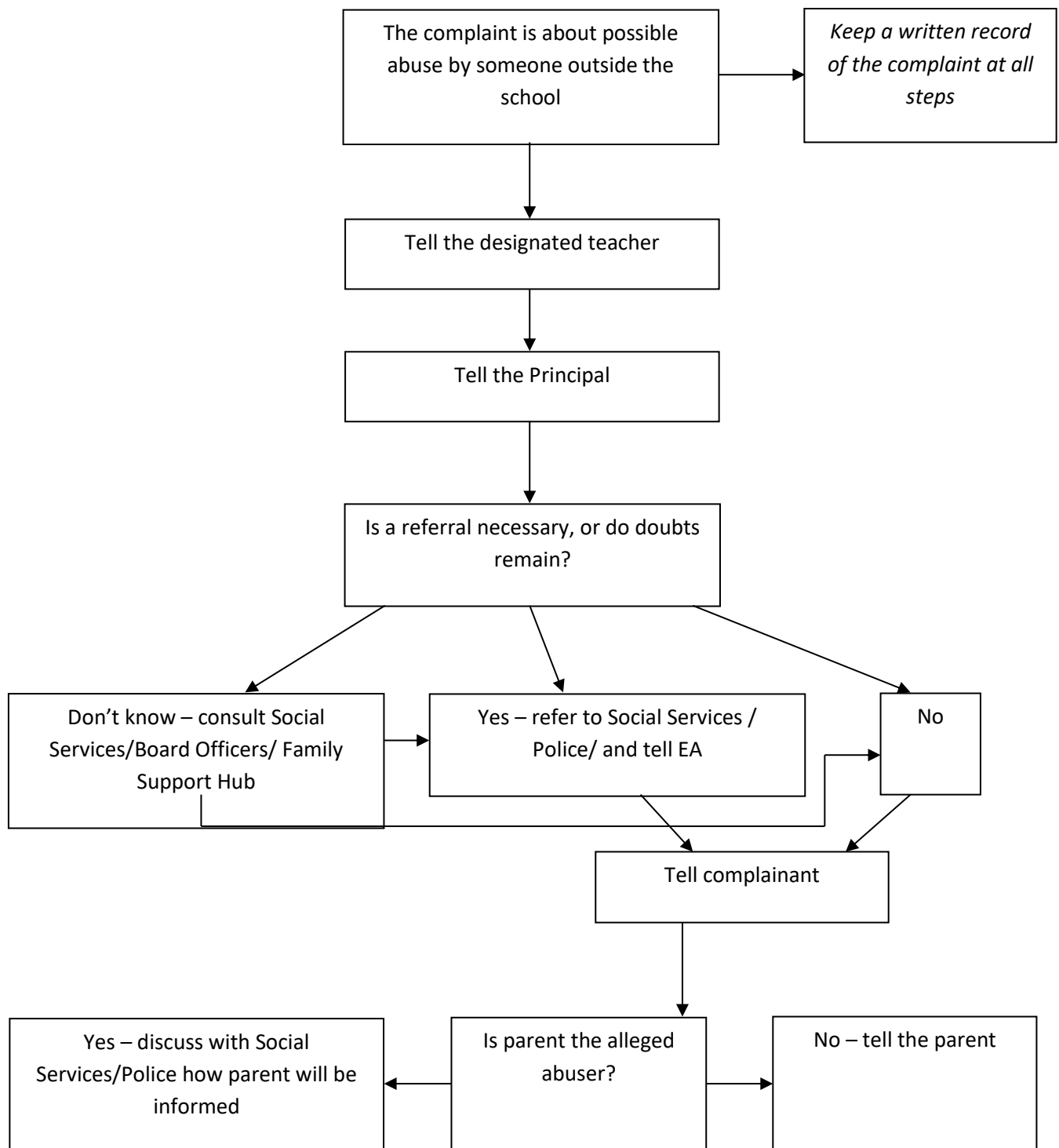


Figure 2

Current procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

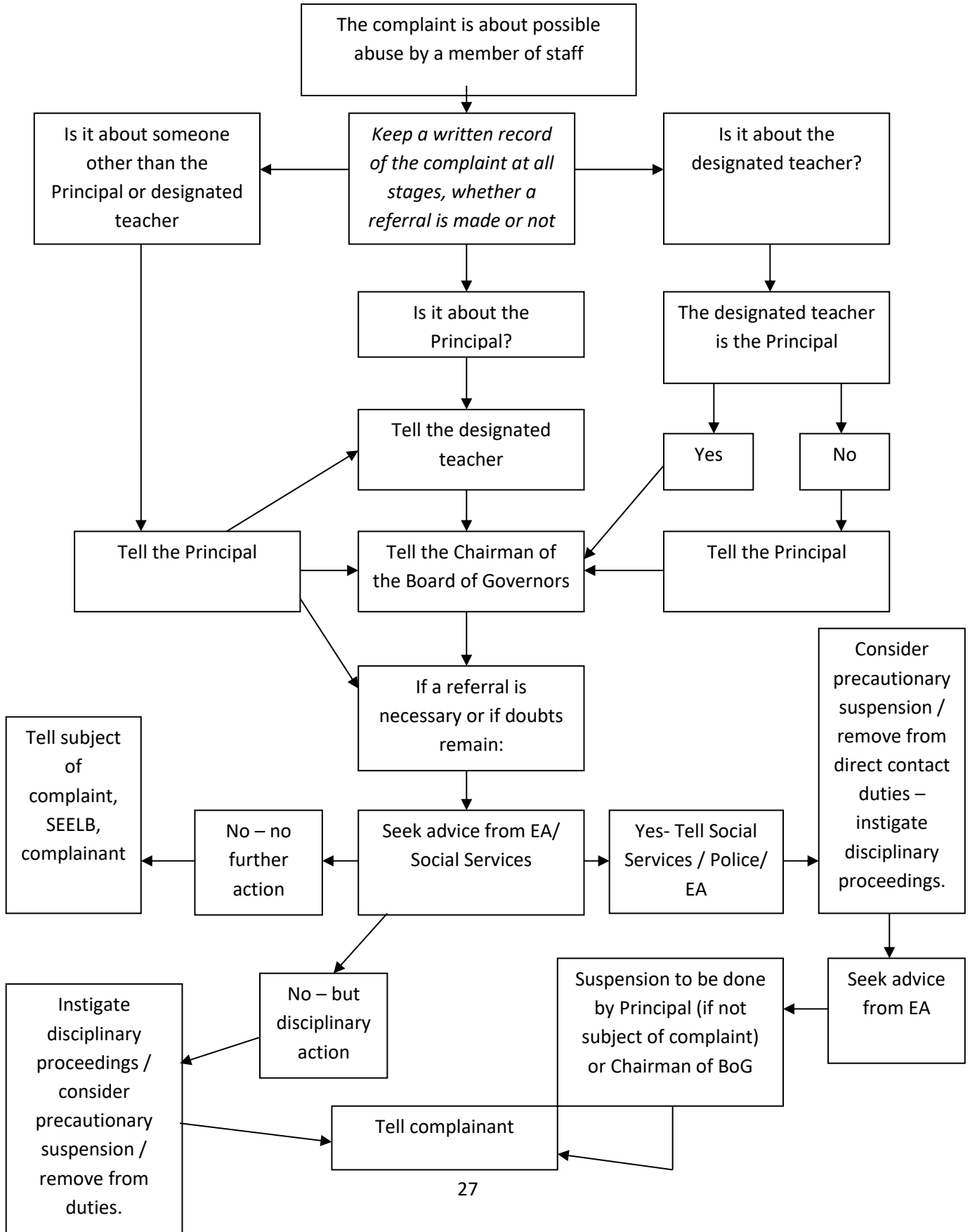


Figure 3.1



Using the Internet in Londonderry Primary School

To: _____

(Name of parent / carer * (person with parental responsibility))

Name of child: _____

Londonderry Primary School would like to gain your permission to allow your child to access the internet, for educational purposes during the school day.

Their access is closely monitored and is done so through LearningNI, a secure learning environment, specifically set up for pupils in the education system in Northern Ireland.

During Key Stage 2 your child will be taught how to use the email facilities available to them through LearningNI. This email is closely monitored and secure.

To allow your child to use the internet and email facilities, when appropriate, we ask you to sign and date this form and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

Your child's safety is paramount to us and any use of the internet and email will be closely supervised at all times.

Parent / Carer Signature : _____

Date : _____

Figure 3.2

Using the Internet in Londonderry Primary School

Key Stage 2 Pupils Only

Pupil Name _____

Please read the rules listed below. These rules are designed to keep you safe and to make sure you know what is expected from you when you are using the computers in class.

Once you have read the rules, sign and date this form.

- I will not change any settings on the computers without my teacher' permission.
- I will not delete anything from the computer without teacher permission.
- I will only bring in CD ROMs and USB sticks from outside school if I have been asked.
- I will not access or change other people's work.
- I will ask permission before using the internet.
- I will only use my school email, while in school.
- The emails I send will be polite and responsible.
- I understand that my teacher can look at my computer files at any time.
- I understand that if I do not follow these rules I will not be allowed to use the internet or any of the school's computers.

Pupil Name (please print): _____

Pupil Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____

Figure 4



Using Pupil Images

To: _____

(Name of parent / carer * (person with parental responsibility))

Name of child: _____

Londonderry Primary School would like to gain your permission to take photographs and or make a video which may include your child. These photographs or videos may be made during school visits or trips and used around the classroom or wide school community.

These images may appear in our printed publications, on our website, or both.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, permission must be granted by the parent / carer before any images of your child / children are taken and used. Please answer questions 1 and 2 below, then sign and date the form where shown.

Please return the completed form to your child's class teacher.

To the Parent: (Delete as appropriate)

1. May we use your child's image within the school community?
2. May we use your child's image in our printed promotional publications?
3. May we use your child's image on our website?

Signed: (parent / adult with parental responsibility) _____

Date: _____

Please note that websites can be seen throughout the world, not just in the United Kingdom, where UK law applies.

I have read and understood the conditions for using these images as detailed below.

Signed (Class Teacher): _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Conditions of Use

1. This form is valid for 1 academic year from the date of signing. Your consent will automatically expire after this time.
2. We will not include details or full names (which means first name and surname) of any person in an image on the website, or in printed publications, without good reason and only with your express consent.
3. We will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses, or telephone numbers on our website or in printed publications.
4. We may use group images with very general labels, such as 'Choir' or 'making Christmas decorations'.
5. We will only use images of pupils who are suitably dressed; to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately e.g. we will not publish material from swimming lessons.