

**Donaghadee Primary School & Nursery Unit
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**

**DONAGHADEE PRIMARY SCHOOL
& NURSERY UNIT**



Create, Discover, Achieve

**SAFEGUARDING &
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

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Following consultation with EANI (SE area) Child Protection Officers, the Governors, Principal and Staff of Donaghadee Primary School & Nursery Unit have adopted the DE Circular 2017/04 (Update September 2019).

Child protection statement

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

It is important to note that due to N I Child Care Legislation, we are duty bound to comply with specific child protection requirements. Consequently, we may contact external agencies and / or make referral to external agencies without consulting parents, as required in the Safeguarding Board Act of 2011. We recognise and accept that our first responsibility is, at all times, towards the children in our care and we will endeavour to protect their welfare and preserve their safety.

To this end, we have designated Mrs Gillian Kinkaid to have specific responsibility for child protection. Mrs Kinkaid has been identified as the Designated Teacher to all members of staff – paid, unpaid, non-teaching and volunteers. All staff receive a Code of Conduct before working with children and are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate. In Mrs Kinkaid's absence, Mrs Karen Bell, as Deputy Designated Teacher, will assume this responsibility or Mrs Laura Russell, as Deputy Designated Teacher for Nursery.

As best practice, in the best interests of the children, and as a support for the Designated Teachers, the school Safeguarding Team also includes Mrs Scott (Principal), Mrs Conn (Acting eSafety Coordinator), Mrs Gordon (Chair of Board of Governors), Mrs Wright (Designated Governor for Child Protection) and Mr Lennox (Designated Governor for eSafety). Together, they will regularly review relevant policies and procedures.

All staff are fully aware of their pastoral responsibilities and are alerted, through this policy and through relevant training opportunities, to the possible signs of abuse. These signs and indicators are detailed later in this policy. They are well informed of the procedures to be followed. All staff, Board of Governors and School Volunteers have been subject to the appropriate background checks as required by the Department of Education, most recently through DE Circular 2012/19.

A summary of this policy is provided yearly to parents and copies of the full Policy on Child Protection can be found in

- the School Office
- the Nursery Office
- the Designated Teacher's Child Protection File
- the School's Website

Policy principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support

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Policy aims

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

Terminology

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

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

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

DT refers to the designated teacher for child protection

Child includes everyone under the age of 18.

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

Policy objectives

The child protection dimension of the school involves all pupils and all adults. The school will contribute by:

1. Ensuring pupils have sufficient knowledge about themselves to be able to understand what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact;
2. Enabling children to become aware of strategies which they may use to protect themselves from possible abusive situations;
3. Developing an on-going programme of personal and social education e.g. PDMU activities and Circle Time;
4. Ensuring that all new staff are made aware of Child Protection Procedures on appointment;
5. Ensuring that all staff and regular voluntary helpers will have undergone security clearance by the police;
6. Ensuring that designated teachers avail themselves of all opportunities to update their knowledge of child protection procedures;
7. Providing regular in-service training to maintain a working awareness among staff of child protection issues and procedures;

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8. Ensuring that, if a child currently on the Child Protection Register or involved with Social Services, changes school, all relevant records and information is passed to the new school, as set out by DE circular 16/20

9. Ensuring that all relevant records are retained for the duration of time set out in DE circular 16/20 (birth date + 30 years)

Child in Need

child shall be considered to be 'in need' if:

- ✓ unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services;
- ✓ health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or
- ✓ disabled.

'Family', in relation to such a child in need, includes any person who has parental responsibility for the child and any other person with whom he has been living.

The Concepts of Harm and Significant Harm

The Children Order defines 'harm' as ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development. The Order states that 'ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse, forms of ill-treatment which are physical and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical; 'health' means physical and / or mental health; and 'development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

There is no absolute definition of 'significant harm', as this will be assessed on a case by case basis. Article 50(3) of the Children Order states that "where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child".

Child in Need of Protection

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer, significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm as defined in Article 50 of the Children Order

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

1. The Board of Governors should be aware of the school's Pastoral Care Policy and Child Protection Procedures.

2. The Board of Governors should be aware of the role of the Designated Teacher and should enable them to carry out the duties of that role effectively and with appropriate support and training.

3. The Board of Governors should be kept informed of allegations of abuse against a member of staff, either through the Chairman or a named member of the board who will liaise with the Designated Teacher.

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4. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Board of Governors to ensure that a complaint made against the principal is thoroughly investigated, by instigation of the required procedures. The Chairperson should inform the complainants, if necessary on a regular basis, of the investigations which have been, or are being, made and their outcome.
5. School authorities, which may mean the Board of Governors, must notify the Department of any instance where a teacher is dismissed on grounds of gross misconduct, so that his/her continued recognition as a teacher can be considered.
6. It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to ensure that all staff are clear about the standards of behaviour expected of them.
7. The Board of Governors should provide, in conjunction with EANI, induction training for all new members of the Board and encourage existing members to avail of such training and guidance necessary to ensure the effective discharge of their roles and responsibilities.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

EANI considers that the ultimate responsibility lies with the Board of Governors and the Principal to ensure that all ancillary staff are aware of the EANI's Procedures.

A Teacher shall be designated in each school with responsibility for:-

1. Ensuring that all teaching and ancillary staff whether full-time or part-time, or temporary, are aware of the Board's procedures.
2. Co-ordinating action by staff in cases of suspected child abuse and reporting to the appropriate Social Services and the Board's Designated Officer.
3. Ensuring that the Principal, Teachers and the school's Education Welfare Officer are kept aware of 'Looked After' children and those on the Child Protection Register.

The name of the Designated Teacher should be forwarded to the EANI's Designated Officer.

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Dealing with Concerns of a Child Protection Nature.

What is 'Child Abuse'?

'Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them....' (ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures, 2005)

The 5 types of child abuse – definitions and indicators. (Definitions taken from 'Cooperating to Safeguard Children' (DHSSPS 2016))

1. NEGLECT.

Definition:

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

Indicators:

Physical Indicators

Constant hunger
Exposed to danger
Lack of supervision
Inadequate/inappropriate clothing
Poor hygiene
Untreated illness
Persistent tiredness

Behavioural Indicators

Listlessness
Lack of peer relationships
Low self- esteem
Compulsive stealing/begging

2. EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Definition:

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Indicators:

Physical Indicators

Sudden speech disorders
Wetting and soiling
Signs of mutilation
Frequent vomiting

Behavioural Indicators

Rocking, thumb sucking
Fear of change
Chronic runaway
Poor peer relationships
Attention seeking behaviour

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3. PHYSICAL ABUSE.

Definition:

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

Indicators

Physical Indicators

Scratches
Bite marks or welts
Bruises in places difficult to mark
(Behind ears/groin)
Burns
Untreated injuries

Behavioural Indicators

Self mutilation tendencies
Chronic runaway
Aggressive or withdrawn
Fear of returning home
Undue fear of adults
Fearful watchfulness

4. SEXUAL ABUSE

Definition:

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

Indicators:

Physical Indicators

Soreness, bleeding in genital/anal areas
Itching in genital areas
Stained or bloody underwear
Stomach pains/headaches
Pain on urination

Difficulty in walking or sitting
Bruises on inner thighs or buttocks
Anorexic/bulimic

Behavioural Indicators

Chronic depression
Inappropriate sexual language
Making sexual advances to others
Low self esteem
Afraid of the dark

Wariness of being approached
Evidence of substance misuse
Unexplained acquisition of money, mobile phones etc
Association with older people, particularly men, outside the normal range of contacts

5. EXPLOITATION

Definition:

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child

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trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

If a pupil discloses to you

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

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

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

Notifying parents

The school will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a pupil with their parents. This must be handled sensitively and the DT will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure.

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

Confidentiality and sharing information

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

Staff should only discuss concerns with the DT, principal or chair of governors (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.

Any member of staff or member of the public can contact children’s social services if they are concerned about a child.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Information sharing is guided by the following principles. The information is:

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- necessary and proportionate
- relevant
- adequate
- accurate
- timely
- secure.

Information sharing decisions will be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in the locked filing cabinet in the Vice Principal's Office and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Child protection information will be stored separately from the pupil's school file and the school file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held.

The DT will normally obtain consent from the pupil and/or parents to share sensitive information within the school or with outside agencies. Where there is good reason to do so, the DT may share information *without* consent, and will record the reason for not obtaining consent.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent school staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Referral to children's social care

The DT will make a referral to children's social care if it is believed that a pupil is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The pupil (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Any member of staff may make a direct referral to children's social care if they genuinely believe independent action is necessary to protect a child.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

Staff should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy. However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police if:

- the situation is an emergency and the designated teacher, their deputy, the principal and the chair of governors are all unavailable
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the pupil's safety
- for any other reason they make a judgement that direct referral is in the best interests of the child.

Reporting suspected abuse

When a concern is voiced the following course of action is required:

- Concerns reported to Designated Teacher.
- Designated Teacher meets with Principal to plan course of action and ensure a written record** is made.
- If necessary, Principal or Designated Teacher makes a referral to Social Services.
- Copy of Referral to EANI Designated Officer.
- Designated Teacher keeps records of all contacts.

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**Records should contain ONLY factual information:

- What was observed and when.
- Signs of physical injury described in detail or sketched.
- Any comments made by the child, parents, guardians or the adult who may be the abuser. (Actual words should be written down.)
- Notes should be taken on any subsequent contacts or conversations.

What to record:

- Issues discussed or concerns raised.
- Options suggested.
- What was agreed.
- What remains in dispute or unresolved.
- Future action each party is to take.
- Referral to other Agencies.

NOTE: The child's clothing should NOT, in any circumstances, be removed.

NOTES:

- An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and the person chosen for the disclosure may be the only adult the child is prepared to talk to or trust.
- When information is offered in confidence the person concerned will need tact and sensitivity to respond to the disclosure.
- Once a disclosure has been made the person concerned is required to act. He / She will need to:
 - assure the child that (s)he is not to blame.
 - avoid making promises to the child, regarding confidentiality that he/she will not be able to keep.
 - seek to retain the child's trust while explaining there is a need for action.
 - explain that other adults must be informed.

REMEMBER: The welfare of the child is paramount. Confidentiality is subordinate to the need to protect the child

Concerns about possible abuse within the school

Incidents where teaching and non-teaching staff have committed abuse are rare. However:

- Suspicions about a member of staff should be reported to the Designated Teacher or Principal.
- The EAs Designated Officer and Chairperson of School Board of Governors should be consulted as a matter of urgency.

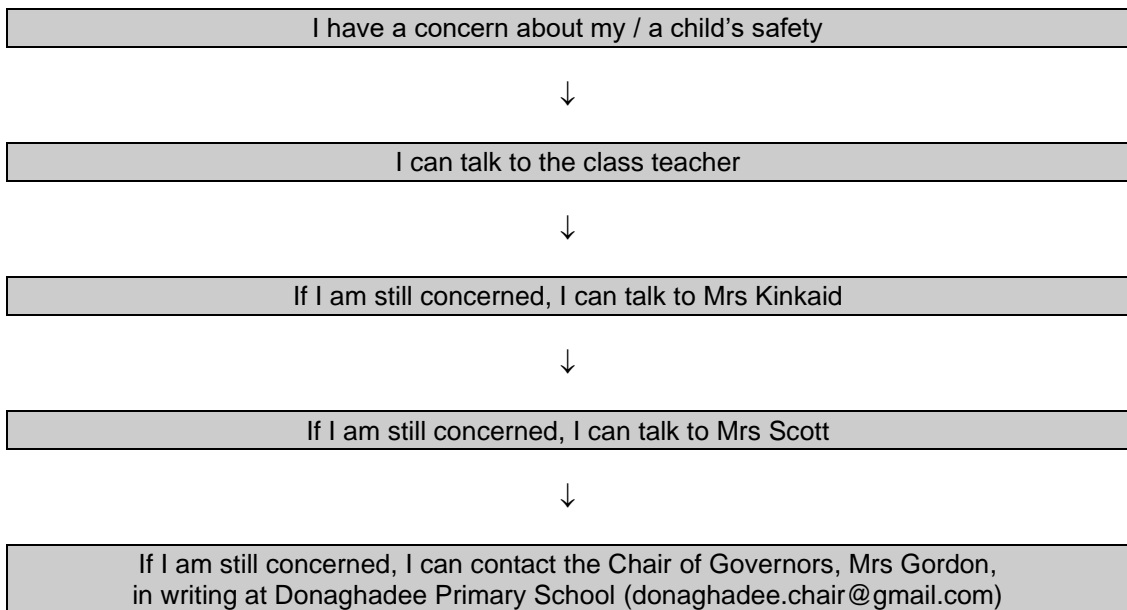
In exceptional cases where the Principal is suspected:

- The role set out above for the Principal should be exercised by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

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How can a parent make a complaint about possible child abuse?

- Parents may make known their concerns about their (or another) child's safety by speaking to the class teacher, the Designated Teacher or directly to the Principal.
- Procedure followed as in *Reporting suspected abuse*.
- Once a concern has been voiced the Designated Teacher will agree to keep the parent informed, within 10 days, on the progress and outcome of their complaint.
- Should the parents be dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may speak directly to the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.
- The following flow chart, adapted from DENI circular 1999/10, outlines the stages of the process involved in making a child abuse complaint.



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Bullying Behaviour

- Experiencing bullying behaviour is highly distressing and a damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school.
- All staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying behaviour occurring and will take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the person experiencing the bullying behaviour and to discipline the person displaying the bullying behaviour.

When allegations of bullying behaviour are substantiated.....

- Parents of both children will be contacted immediately by the Principal.
- Any complaint by a parent will be fully investigated by the Designated Teacher.
- Once a complaint has been made the Designated Teacher will agree to keep the parent informed on the progress and outcome of their complaint.
- Sanctions taken against a pupil displaying bullying behaviour will depend on the seriousness of the case. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

Procedures for Investigating Bullying Behaviour at DPS

Initial concern form to be completed as soon as an incident of bullying behaviour is witnessed / reported / alleged. All relevant details and dates to be noted. This form is returned to the Principal / Designated Teacher. If a case of bullying behaviour is suspected, the following procedure will be initiated (the 3-2-1 procedure).

- Week One - For the first week this form will be updated on 3 occasions by the teacher involved and signed by the Principal / Designated Teacher. Those involved will be observed, reassured and supported as necessary.
- Week Two - As above - twice in the week.
- Week Three - As above - once in the week.
- If the problem is still unresolved, a subsequent course of action will be implemented – as per Donaghadee Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy.
- If problem appears resolved the Designated Teacher will file the report and parents will be informed.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES.

This policy should be read in conjunction with, and in the context of, the following other policies:

- ✓ Online Safety Policy
- ✓ Health Education Policy
- ✓ PDMU Policy – (the preventative curriculum)
- ✓ Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy
- ✓ Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy
- ✓ Anti-bullying Policy

Principal _____

Chair of Governors _____

Date _____