

## **Children Protection and Safeguarding**

**A Guide for Parents**

## **Child Protection**

One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

All our staff and regular volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks. The staff have also adopted a Code of Practice which governs our behaviour towards pupils.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school, teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers have clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. It is consistent with the aims and objectives of Catholic Education that all teachers have a duty to help protect children from abuse or the risk of abuse.

The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

### **In St Joseph's Primary School:**

- we will alert all staff to the signs of possible abuse**
- when child abuse is suspected, it is the responsibility of the member of staff who is aware of the circumstances or suspected circumstances, to notify the Designated Teacher**
- the Designated Teacher will ensure that the appropriate reporting and recording procedures are set in motion as quickly as possible**
- where the school has been made aware that there are incidents of domestic abuse in the home, we will make a referral to Social Services**
- any clarification should be done carefully and sensitively – it is not the responsibility of school staff to undertake any investigations or to make extensive enquiries of family members or carers**

- **ancillary staff should report any suspicions or concerns to the Designated Teacher**
- **parents will be notified about procedures on a regular basis**
- **children will be advised what to do in school if they have any concerns about such matters**
- **at all times we will strive to protect children, while respecting the rights of parents, families, carers and members of staff**

**The Designated Teacher for Child protection is Mrs Farry and the Deputy Designated Teachers are Mrs Rogan and Miss Donnelly. Mrs Downard will act as Designated Teacher if these staff members are unavailable.**

#### **Identifying Abuse:**

All school staff, teaching and non-teaching are aware of their legal responsibility to inform the Designated Teacher of any suspicion they may have regarding abuse of a child.

#### **Confidentiality**

Our staff appreciate that in the interests of a child's welfare we may need to share information particularly with other professionals, and that we are legally obliged to share information if we suspect physical or sexual abuse. However, the right to confidentiality for parents, carers, teachers and children will be respected and information will only be shared to protect the child.

No promise of confidentiality can or should be made to a child or anyone else giving information about abuse.

#### **Arrangements for Toileting/Changing Clothes**

##### **Nursery:**

Parents are asked to give consent for Nursery staff to change their child's clothes if he/she has an accident. The changing of clothes will take place behind an unclosed door. Another member of staff will remain adjacent to the

changing area and will retain visual contact with their colleague whilst they are changing the child.

P1-P7:

Toilets are situated off all classrooms. A step is available for children who have difficulty reaching the toilet. Toilet roll is easily accessible and children are encouraged to use toilets independently. The children are encouraged to wash their hands using anti-bacterial liquid soap.

If a child has a toileting accident the changing of clothes will take place in the toileting area behind closed doors. Other children are asked to vacate the toilets. A member of staff will encourage the child to independently clean themselves and put on clean clothing. A staff member will give assistance to the very young children if required and another member of staff will be in close proximity. We have spare sets of clothing in school.

On occasions, children need to change for sporting activities for example: cross country, drama or dance. Children will be separated according to gender groups. They will change separately in the adjacent cloakroom. A staff member will discretely supervise from a distance eg. the classroom.

### **Voluntary action within the school**

All volunteers, coaches and tutors who work in the school will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure Check.

## **How a parent can make a complaint**

If a parent has a potential child protection concern:

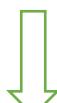
I have a concern about my/a child's safety



I can talk to the class teacher



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs Farry or one of the Deputy Designated Teachers Mrs Rogan or Miss Donnelly or to the Principal Mrs Downard



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Designated Governor Mrs M Doherty or to the Chairperson of Board of Governors Mrs P Neeson



If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman  
Tel: 0800 343 424



At any time, I can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team [028 90507000] or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 028 9025 9299