



St Joseph's PS Slate Street
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

We in St Joseph's P.S. have a responsibility for the pastoral care, general welfare and safety of the pupils in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each pupil is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our pupils can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff and visitors should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a pupil is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

Principles

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children Order (NI) 1995, the Department of Education (NI) guidance "Pastoral Care in Schools- Child Protection" (DENI Circular 99/10) and the Area child protection committee's Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). **The definition of 'Harm' in the Children (NI) Order 1995 is now broadened and aligned with the new domestic abuse legislation in NI. This means that 'impairment of health' in the definition of harm includes impairment to a child as a result of ill treatment of another person or abusive behaviour directed at another person, regardless of whether the child has seen, heard or been present during the ill-treatment or behaviour.

Protection Policy.

Other Relevant Policies

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Positive Behaviour
- Pastoral Care
- Anti-bullying
- Attendance
- Visitors and volunteers
- Code of conduct for visitors and volunteers
- Special Educational Needs
- Intimate Care
- Administration of Medicines
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
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All policies are available for parents

Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher/Vice Principal/SENCO- Mr J McCann
- Deputy Designated Teacher/Nurture lead – Ms L McAllister
- Principal – Miss M Weir
- Parent Support Officer – Mrs C Morelli
- Designated Governor for Child Protection – Mrs Brenda McCann
- Miss N Starrs
- Mrs O Dawson
- Mr D Fryers

In addition, Miss N Starrs, ICT leader may be called to give advice or find support for advice about Internet safety.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher

The DT and DDT must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and roles
- Organise training for all staff (whole school training)
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents/carers
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents/carers
- Make referrals to social services Gateway team or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate
- Liaise with the EA's Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns
- Provide a written Annual Report to the Board of Governors regarding Child Protection

The Principal

The principal must ensure that:

- DENI 1999/10 guidance is implemented within the school
- She attends training on managing safeguarding and child protection
- A Designated teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed
- All staff receive Child Protection Training
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed
- Child Protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates and an Annual report are provided
- The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a summary copy of this policy at least once every 2 years Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis

The Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Designated Governor will avail of child protection awareness training delivered by the EA's Child Protection support Service for schools and will take the lead in child protection issues in order to advise the governors on:

- The role of the Designated Teachers
- The content of child protection policies
- The content of a Code of Conduct for adults within the school
- The content of the termly updates and the Annual Designated Teachers' Report
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff
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The Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- Ensure that he/she has received appropriate EA training
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- Ensure that the school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place and that staff/visitors implement the policy
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate Child Protection and recruitment and selection training provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools and the Governor Support and Human Resource departments
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed

- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the school principal
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive regular updates and a full written Annual Report in relation to child protection activity

Other Members of School Staff

Staff in school see pupils over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse.

They should remember the 5 RS: RECEIVE, REASSURE, RESPOND, RECORD and REFER

The member of staff must:

1. Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy teacher for Child Protection
2. Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
3. Act promptly
4. Make a concise written record of a pupil's disclosure using the actual words of the pupil
5. Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding pupils
6. Not give pupils a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
7. Not investigate
8. Not ask leading questions

In addition the class teacher should:

Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents/carers about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

We will take seriously any concerns which are raised about a pupil in our school who has self-harmed and/or has expressed suicidal thoughts.

The Designated/Deputy Designated teacher will immediately follow the school's Child Protection procedures

Parents/carers

Parents/carers should play their part in safeguarding by:

Telephoning/informing the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the pupil's return to school so as the school is reassured as to the pupil's situation

- Informing the school whenever anyone other than themselves, intends to pick up the pupil after school
- Letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home
- Familiarising themselves with the school's Pastoral Care, Anti bullying, Positive Behaviour, internet and Child Protection Policies
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school
- Raising any potential concerns they have in relation to their child or a pupil or a member of staff/visitor within the school
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The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors must ensure that the school fulfils its responsibilities in keeping with current legislation and DE guidance including

- Having a safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually
- Having a staff Code of Conduct for all adults working in the school

- Attendance at relevant Governor training and that up-to-date training records are maintained
- The vetting of all staff and volunteers

Staff Training

St Joseph's P.S is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on policy and procedures with some members of staff receiving more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic Child Protection awareness training and annual refresher training. The Principal/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will endeavour to attend relevant Child Protection training courses provided by the child Protection Support Service for schools.

When new staff or volunteers start at the school they are briefed and given a copy of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Preventative Curriculum

Throughout the school year Child Protection issues are addressed through assemblies and well-being lessons. Childline Helpline posters are displayed on the corridors. An ongoing annual programme of age appropriate safeguarding lessons is delivered through RSE lessons and PD&MU curriculum and support from outside agencies. Parents/carers will be notified for their consent, prior to lessons/workshops which might contain sensitive language or issues. A flow diagram of how a parent/carers may make a complaint is on display on our school website.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in St Joseph's P.S. will update this policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance/legislation or serious incident and review annually.

The Board of Governors will also monitor Child Protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on an annual basis through the provision of a report from the Designated Teacher. Our on-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the policy

Date of review Oct 2025