



CGS Safeguarding Policy

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mr TA Hamilton

The Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection are Mr J Frew, Miss L Magee and Mrs S Taggart

The Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance is Mrs H Hamilton

The Deputy Designated Governor is Mr C Rea

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

We aim to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, which values individuals for their unique talents and abilities and in which all of our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe. Under our duty of care we will listen to the pupils and take any necessary steps to ensure their safety and well-being, including UNOCINI referral to Social Services if the child is in need of protection from potential harm or to protect the child from an imminent risk. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active role to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Governors, Headmaster, Senior Management Team and Staff of Coleraine Grammar School acknowledge their responsibilities under the Children (N.I.) Order 1995 and the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils in their care and to take whatever steps are necessary to protect them from all forms of abuse. This school document has been written in accordance with the advice contained in the DENI circular 2017/04 "Safeguarding and Child Protection – A Guide for Schools" which provides guidance to schools and others on their responsibilities in relation to child protection, including the action to be taken to enable cases of suspected abuse to be properly considered and pursued along with guidance on how complaints against school staff should be handled. It is expected and required that all teaching and Non-Teaching staff will have familiarised themselves with the advice and guidance given in this policy. This policy is a working document which is designed to ensure that the difficult and sensitive issues of child protection are dealt with properly, consistently and effectively by all staff. The guidance contained in this policy is designed to protect the pupils of our school and to enable staff to discharge their legal obligations to look after the safety and welfare of the children in their care.
- 1.2. The school follows the guidance provided by the Safeguarding board for Northern Ireland (SBNI). Their role is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland through a coordinated approach and sharing of information between agencies.

2. Legislation

2.1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC lists a number of statements, setting out the rights which all children and young people up to the age of 18 should have, no matter where they live or whatever their circumstances are. In the context of this guidance, the most important of these are in three articles:

- Article 19 provides that children have *the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them.*
- Article 12 further provides that *a child who is capable of forming his own views should be assured the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, those views being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*
- Finally, and most fundamentally, Article 3 provides that *when organisations make decisions which affect children, the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.*

2.2. Other Legislation

In addition to legislation mentioned above, this Policy is set within the context of:

The Children Northern Ireland Order 1995
The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
Sexual Offences Act 2003
Safeguarding vulnerable groups (NI Order) 2007
Sexual Offences Order (NI) 2008
Safe Guarding Board Act (NI) 2011
This Policy takes account of additional guidance within the following documents:
1999/17 Parental responsibility
Promotion of Positive Behaviour (2001) DENI
Section 73 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 amended the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 to include FGM protection orders (FGMPOs).
Children's Services Cooperation Act (NI) 2015
The Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016
The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 (came into operation on 01 September 2021)
The Domestic Abuse Information-sharing with Schools etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022
Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

Government Policies and Strategies

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016)
Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy 2013-2020 and subsequent action plans
Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Prevention in Partnership
The Children and Young People Strategy 2020-2030 is a requirement of the Children's Services Cooperation Act (NI) 2015. It is the overarching strategic framework for government to improve health and wellbeing of all children in Northern Ireland

Public Service Ombudsman

The Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016 gives a power to investigate and report on complaints about maladministration in all grant aided schools in Northern Ireland.

If having escalated a safeguarding and/or child protection concern and you are not satisfied with how your concerns have been addressed, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy may culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

Each school is responsible for setting its own complaints policy and procedures which is available on the school's website, or by contacting the school directly. Please note that this complaints process, although similar, is separate from the escalation of safeguarding and child protection concerns, and is in relation to the way in which your concerns were dealt with.

Details of how to make a complaint to NIPSO may be found on their website at: www.nipso.org.uk or, by telephone on 0800 34 34 24. However, please bear in mind that usually, before you complain to the Ombudsman, you will be expected to have exhausted the school's internal complaints procedure. For further information, see: www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/4/part/2/crossheading/procedure-for-making-complaint-to-the-ombudsman

3. Basic Principle

- 3.1. Enshrined in the Children [Northern Ireland] Order 1995 is the fundamental principle that ***it is the welfare of the child which must be the paramount consideration.***

This principle then underpins our response to the challenge of ensuring child protection and is the cornerstone of this policy document i.e. when decisions are taken as to the appropriate course of action in a given set of circumstances then it is the welfare of the child that should guide the decision-making process.

4. Definition of a child

- 4.1. For the purpose of this guidance a child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order.

5. The Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team consists of
The President of The Board of Governors: Mr W Oliver
The Vice-President of The Board of Governors: Mr G Montgomery
The Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance: Mrs H Hamilton

The Deputy Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance: Mr C Rea
Headmaster: Dr D Carruthers (Chair of Safeguarding Team)
The Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Mr TA Hamilton
The Deputy Designated Teacher(s) for Child Protection: Mr J Frew / Miss L Magee / Mrs. S Taggart

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Support for the Designated Teachers in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.

The Safeguarding Team review the child protection/ safeguarding practices annually using the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) pro-forma entitled 'Guidance for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding'. ETI expects the pro-forma to be completed and provide them as a permanent record during school inspections.

The team attend Child Protection Training delivered by CPSS, as required.

Designated Teachers

- 5.1. Every school is required to designate a teacher to have specific responsibility for child protection matters. If, for some reason, the designated teacher is unavailable then the Deputy Designated Teacher will fulfil the role.
- 5.2. The Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mr. T A Hamilton
- 5.3. The Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection are Mr J Frew / Miss L Magee / Mrs. S Taggart

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1. *Role of the Designated Teacher*

- a) The Designated Teacher will assume primary responsibility for all matters pertaining to the Children Order and *lead the planning, implementation and development of procedures for Safeguarding in Coleraine Grammar School*
- b) All staff are made aware who the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers are and understand their role as the first point of contact when abuse is suspected. *The DT and DDTs will be available to discuss concerns with staff and receive reports from staff on possible or actual instances of Child Abuse.*
- c) The Designated Teacher, after consultation with the Headmaster and Board Officers (Child Protection Support Services - CPSS), will refer all reported allegations to Social Services/PSNI using the UNOCINI process and proceeding through Single Point of Entry (SPOE) if this is felt to be necessary (see procedures in Appendices 1 and 2) and liaise with parents concerned as appropriate. If a referral is sent electronically this will be password protected.
- d) The President of the Board of Governors will then be notified as soon as possible.
- e) The Designated Teacher will ensure that appropriate reporting forms (See Appendix 3) are available and will keep copies of these in a secure place. The Designated Teacher will also maintain a Child Protection Record where initial concerns will be recorded in chronological order.
- f) *The Designated Teacher will provide support for the pupil(s) concerned*
- g) The Designated Teacher will advise the person who has reported the concern of follow-up procedures.
- h) In the event of the absence of the Designated Teacher the Deputy Designated Teachers will act in his / her place.
- i) The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers will receive Child Protection training as required by DENI and will provide consultation and advice on contacting the Child Protection Agencies when necessary.

- j) *The Designated Teacher is responsible for induction and training of teaching and Non-Teaching staff and promote a safeguarding ethos in school*
- k) *The Designated Teacher has responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns.*
- l) *The Designated Teacher will liaise with outside agencies*
- m) *The Designated Teacher will liaise with all parents re Child Protection Policy every two years*
- n) *The Designated Teacher will review the Child Protection Policy annually*
- o) *The Designated Teacher will provide a written Child Protection report at least annually to Board of Governors*

6.2. *Role of Deputy Designated Teacher*

The role of the Deputy Designated Teachers is to work co-operatively with the Designated Teacher in fulfilling his/her responsibilities. The Deputy Designated Teachers will support the Designated Teacher and undertake duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required. It is important that the Deputy Designated Teacher works in partnership with the Designated Teacher so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher when required.

6.3 *Role of the Headmaster*

The Headmaster will assist the Board of Governors to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring any circulars and guidance from the Department of Education is shared promptly, and termly inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. The Headmaster takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

The Headmaster has delegated responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school. This includes the appointment and management of suitable staff to the key roles of Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher posts and ensuring that new staff and volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions as part of an induction programme.

The Headmaster must ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy, or summary, of the Child Protection Policy at intake and, at a minimum, every two years.

In the event of an allegation, suspicion or instance of Child Abuse, the Headmaster will:

- a) *consider the report received from the Designated Teacher*
- b) *ensure that appropriate procedures are implemented, including the immediate safeguarding of a pupil considered at risk*
- c) *in conjunction with the safeguarding team, decide on the need for a referral, either informal or formal, to Social Services, to the Designated Officer of EA (Northern Area) and to other agencies, as appropriate*
- d) *maintain records of disclosures of abuse, suspicions of abuse and complaints against staff (Guidelines for record keeping are available in appendix 10))*
- e) *inform parents, as and when appropriate*
- f) *initiate vetting procedures for all new staff and volunteers*
- g) *respond to concerns under the School's Complaints Procedure*

6.4 *Role of Board of Governors*

The President of the Board of Governors plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment. In the event of a safeguarding and child protection complaint being made against the Principal, the President will assume lead responsibility for managing the complaint/allegation in keeping with guidance issued by the Department, employing authorities, and the school's own policies and procedures.

The President is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the appropriate Child Protection Policy and procedures are in place rests with the Board of Governors. Mrs H Hamilton is the Governor with responsibility for Child Protection, Mr C Rea is the Deputy Designated Governor with responsibility for Child Protection. The Designated Governor will keep other governors informed about Child Protection matters.

6.5 Role of Staff

- a) know who is the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers
- b) be familiar with the School's Child Protection Policy
- c) take steps to ensure that pupils in their care are protected from harm
- d) be alert for signs and symptoms of possible Child Abuse
- e) be familiar with the School's Anti Bullying Policy
- f) report disclosures or concerns re possible abuse to Designated Teacher or Deputy in the first instance
- g) keep a brief written record of details
- h) ensure that their own professional conduct is prudent
- i) alert the DT if they have any concerns

7 Definition of Child Abuse

7.1

Taken from the ACPC English Policy and Procedures Chapter 2.

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...

- 7.1.1 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.
- 7.1.2 Emotional or psychological 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. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones.
- 7.1.3 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. Child abuse includes children who display harmful sexualised behaviour.
- 7.1.4 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).
- 7.1.5 Harm** is defined in the Children Order as "ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development", including domestic and sexual violence or female genital mutilation. Harm may also include honour-based violence/forced marriage. The Children Order definition of ill-treatment includes:
 - a) Sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical
 - b) Health means physical or mental health
 - c) Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Whether the harm is significant is determined by the health and development of the child as compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

- 7.1.6 Exploitation (including sexual)** 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 trafficking. It extends to

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

7.2 Identifying signs of possible abuse

Teaching and Non-Teaching staffs alike are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. Such changes may be the result of abuse, but it should always be remembered that there might be other explanations. The following may be noticeable:

- 7.2.1 Bruises, particularly bruises of a regular shape which may indicate the use of an implement such as a strap, or the mark of a hand, lacerations, bite marks or burns, particularly when children change their clothes for physical education, swimming and other sports activities;
- 7.2.2 Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition;
- 7.2.3 Possible indicators of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence, or attention seeking;
- 7.2.4 Sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs' or lead to a substantial behavioural change including precocity, withdrawal or inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- 7.2.5 Any or any combination of the above may be accompanied by or solely manifested in marked deterioration in performance and/or increased absenteeism.

Signs such as those described above and others can do no more than give rise to concern – they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. Teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are regularly repeated. Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he /s he must report it immediately to the designated teacher. The existence of a designated teacher should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed.

8 Procedures

8.1 What to do when you have cause for concern:

Coleraine Grammar School recognizes that it takes courage and determination for a pupil to tell an adult that s/he is being abused and issues around disclosures are usually complex and very sensitive.

Staff can find a summary of these guidelines set out in the staff planner and must pass on all information to:

*The Designated Teacher for Child Protection: **Mr TA Hamilton**, or in his absence*

*The Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection: are **Mr J Frew / Miss L Magee / Mrs. S Taggart***

If no one is available, the Headmaster should be informed.

If the DTCP/DDTCP has a concern that a young person is engaging in high-risk behaviour, parents will be contacted in addition to accessing further support if necessary through the UNOCINI process.

Staff should use the following guidelines along with the advice provided in Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools 2017 when dealing with potential safeguarding issues.

It is essential that the member of staff acts promptly.

NO member of staff should investigate the incident. This is a matter for Social Services.

The teacher in whom the child chooses to confide should:

- **not promise confidentiality**
- **never attempt to cross-examine the pupil or press for evidence** as this may jeopardise future investigations
- ensure that the pupil is safe from risk
- **listen** carefully and quietly; ask questions for clarification only
- be sympathetic and supportive, reassuring the pupil that it is not their fault and that it is right to tell
- believe what the pupil is saying
- remain calm and reassuring
- try not to show revulsion or pass judgement
- try to control feelings about the perpetrator

When the disclosure has been made, the teacher in question must:

check out understanding of what has happened with the pupil

Staff should not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.

Staff should not, therefore, ask questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events in any way, or which impose the adult's own assumptions. For example, staff should say, "Tell me what has happened", rather than, "Did they do X to you?"

The priority at this stage is to actively listen to the child, and not to interrupt or try to interpret if he/she is freely recalling significant events (the child must not be asked to unnecessarily recount the experience of abuse), and as soon as possible afterwards to make a record of the discussion, using the appropriate form in Appendix 3 to pass on to the Designated Teacher. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, but under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed, nor a photograph taken.

refrain from discussing concerns and fears with parents or anyone else. If the allegations prove to be untrue, reporting them to someone who is not concerned may be deemed defamatory

Be available to support pupil as appropriate after the disclosure

Get support for self

Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred, should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used.

Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should, of course, reassure that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.

Staff should also be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings. Guidance on record keeping is available in "Safeguarding and Child Protection – A Guide for Schools" 2017, 'Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools' circular 2016/20 (updated 2019/08, Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools update')

It should be emphasised that lack of proper records will not, of itself, exempt the school from any subsequent requirement to give evidence in court. It is therefore essential that accurate contemporaneous records are maintained.

Staff should not ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record.

Children whose first language is not English/Newcomer pupils should be given the opportunity to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred. DTs and other relevant school staff should seek advice and support from the EA's Intercultural Education Service if necessary. All schools should create an atmosphere in which pupils with special educational needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.

In summary:

- 8.1.1 RECEIVE** - *listen* to what a child says but do not ask leading questions. You may clarify that you have understood what the pupil has told you but under no circumstances should you investigate as this may prejudice an official investigation at a later date.
- 8.1.2 REASSURE** - ensure the child is reassured that he will be safe and his interests come first e.g. "I'm glad you've told me about this", "I'm sorry this has happened to you", "This is not your fault". **You cannot, however, promise confidentiality as you have a responsibility to refer the case to the designated teacher in the best interests of the child.** See Appendix 4 for further guidance on confidentiality.
- 8.1.3 REACT** - only to ensure that the child is safe and secure.
- 8.1.4 RECORD** - make a note of what you have seen or heard and the date and time.
- 8.1.5 REPORT** - report to the designated teacher, using the official report form (See Appendix 3) as soon as you have **any** concern for a child.

8.2 Child displaying symptoms of, or school alerted to, possible abuse

- 8.2.1** In all cases where symptoms displayed by a child give rise to concerns about possible abuse, or about the welfare of the child the person receiving the complaint (or information), or noticing signs of possible abuse, must notify the designated teacher for child protection;
- 8.2.2** The designated teacher should consult with the Headmaster or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required, advice may be sought from a CPSS officer. The designated teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/parents/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required to the Social Services and/or PSNI.

8.3 When an adult (not a school employee) makes a disclosure to the school concerning a pupil

- 8.3.1** A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff of the school which gives rise to concern about possible child abuse by someone outside the school, or by a person working in the school in a volunteer capacity. The person making the complaint should be advised of their responsibility to refer to the local Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team.
- 8.3.2** The staff member should also inform the designated teacher responsible for child protection matters in the school who will refer, if necessary to the appropriate statutory authorities.
- 8.3.3** In order to form a view on whether a child or children may indeed be being abused, or at risk of possible abuse, the Principal/DT/DDT may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information, or from others who may have relevant information.
- 8.3.4** While such clarification will often help to confirm or allay concerns, it is not the responsibility of teachers and other education staff to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse, or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers.
- 8.3.5** The EA Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) can offer advice on all child protection issues.

8.3.1 Person receiving the complaint or report should

- *follow recommended guidelines for "listening to a disclosure"*
- *write a record of the disclosure for the Designated Teacher*
- *report details to Designated Teacher (or Deputy) as soon as possible*

8.3.2 The Designated Teacher (or Deputies) should

- *consider need for immediate safeguarding of pupil at risk*
- *inform the Headmaster*
- *place a detailed report in the Child Protection File*
- *place a brief note in the pupil file*

Headmaster and Designated Teacher then decide if additional information is required. If this is the case then discreetly consult with Form Teacher, informally contact Social Services and contact EA Designated Officer (CPSS). Parents should be consulted as soon as possible (unless parent is implicated in the abuse) Headmaster /Designated Teacher makes a decision:

EITHER a referral is necessary

- *Inform Social Services or PSNI (UNOCINI proforma)*
- *Inform parents/carers (unless implicated)*

OR no referral is necessary

- *Inform person making complaint or providing information*
- *Inform parents or carer (unless implicated)*
- *Record details, including reasons for no referral, in Child Protection File*
- *Place a note in the pupil file*

Designated Teacher ensures that a detailed record is retained.

8.4 Complaint against a Volunteer

Any complaint about the conduct of a person working in the school in a voluntary capacity will be treated in the same manner as complaints against a person who is not on the school's staff, and the above procedures followed.

- 8.5** A summary of the procedures in the above instances can be seen in Appendix 5 of this policy.

8.6 Complaint against a member of the school staff (See Appendix 2)

- 8.6.1** Where a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of staff of the school, the procedures in DE Circular 2015/13 should be followed.
- 8.6.2** In all decisions the child's welfare is the paramount consideration and the child should be listened to and his/her concerns taken seriously. The possible risk of harm to children posed by a member of staff must be evaluated and managed.
- 8.6.3** Any complaint regarding a member of staff should be made directly to the Headmaster who will carry out a discrete preliminary clarification of the grounds for the complaint. The Headmaster will not investigate the allegations.
- 8.6.4** Having been satisfied that a complaint has indeed been made, the Headmaster should immediately:
- inform the designated teacher (if they are not the subject of the complaint) who will initiate the record of the complaint;
 - consult as a matter of urgency and in confidence with the designated child protection officer from the EA (NE region) to form an initial assessment as to whether or not the allegation warrants further action; and
 - consult the President of the Board of Governors
- 8.6.5** In deciding what to do the Headmaster and the President will remember that the need to protect the child is paramount, but the need to protect members of staff against unfounded, but nonetheless potentially damaging, allegations is also important.
- 8.6.6** In the light of any advice taken, the Headmaster (where he / she is not the subject of the complaint), in consultation with the President of the Board of Governors, will decide that:
- a) the allegation is apparently without substance, and no further action is necessary; or
 - b) an immediate referral to the Social Services or PSNI is warranted; or
 - c) the allegation concerns inappropriate behaviour which needs to be considered under the disciplinary procedures.

If outcome a) - the member of staff should be advised about the nature of the complaint and that no further action is being taken. The Board Officer should be similarly informed. The Complainant should be informed about the decision in writing. A brief record should be appended to the pupil's file.

If outcome b) - the Social services, Police, Board Officer and President of the Board of Governors should be notified immediately. There should **either** be a precautionary suspension with pay **or** immediate removal from pupil contact. The alleged offender should be advised to seek legal or professional advice after being informed in writing of the allegation. The Complainant should be informed as soon as possible of the action. A detailed written record of the complaint should be signed and dated by the Headmaster and countersigned by the Designated Teacher.

If outcome c) - this would result if the teacher's conduct was not deemed to warrant a formal referral. Appropriate procedures as agreed by the Disciplinary Committee of the Board of Governors should be taken. The complaint and action taken should be noted on the file of the member of staff and pupil and kept for five years.

In the interests of all involved the issue should be dealt with as a priority and unnecessary delays should be avoided. Every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity must be made. Allegations should not be shared with other staff or children.

8.7 A summary of the procedures in the above instances can be seen in Appendix 2 of this policy.

8.8 Complaint against a member of the Board of Governors

Where a member of staff receives a complaint concerning possible child abuse by a member of the Board of Governors, all aspects of the above procedures should be followed. The Headmaster should immediately inform the President, unless he / she is the subject of the complaint, in which case the President's role should be carried out by the Vice- President.

8.9 Procedures for Parents

If a parent has a concern about the safety of their own, or another, child they can raise those concerns using the procedure outlined in Appendix 6.

8.10 Reporting Form

The reporting form to be used by staff to record any concerns is shown in Appendix 3. This form is available in the staff folder on the computer system and should be completed and passed to the Designated Teacher.

9. Recruitment, Vetting and Induction of Staff and Volunteers

The responsibilities and processes to be followed are clearly set out in:

DE Circular 2013/01 'Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for Paid Staff working in or Providing a Service in Schools':

www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201301-guidance-schools-and-employing-authorities-pre-employment-safer

DE Circular 2012/19 'Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Changes to Pre-Employment Vetting Checks for Volunteers Working in Schools from 10 September 2012:

www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201219-changes-pre-employment-vetting-checks-volunteers-working-schools

Schools must ensure that volunteers, e.g. coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc, who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place and a record of these should be maintained by the Principal.

Appointment of a new teacher

DE Circular 2013/01 (updated September 2015) sets out vetting requirements for schools. Recruitment procedures will include an Access NI check of the possible criminal background of an applicant who will have substantial unsupervised access to children. Teachers, examination invigilators and Private contracted transport providers (named drivers) must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from Access NI before taking up post. With the applicant's knowledge and approval, a standardised form may be forwarded through the Department of Education for Northern Ireland for police processing. In addition, when appropriate, an unofficial enquiry may be made with the applicant's referees.

Vetting of persons who are not members of staff who will be working with pupils

All such individuals involved in extra-curricular school activities or involved in any other way must be informed that school policy requires checks on their suitability:

- (a) The school will obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Check for those working without supervision.
- (b) The school may decide to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Check for those working with supervision.
- (c) Using a suitable pro forma, references will be sought from at least two sources.
- (d) The individual may not undertake any school activity until advised by the Headmaster.

10.1 Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in supporting the work of the school. It is essential however, that appropriate steps are taken to ensure children are not placed at risk through allowing unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school.

Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, Schools will determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard –as set out in DE Circular 2012/19. The school may canvass for volunteers to come forward and offer assistance and many will already be known to the school. Others may come from the local community. Engagement of volunteers is undertaken with the agreement of the Board of Governors. The code of conduct in Appendix 8 should be followed as good practice.

10.1.1 A volunteer is an individual who

- Assumes unpaid duties in school on more than 2 occasions
- Is engaged by the school to accompany or assist with a school trip, residential activity or sporting activity.

10.1.2 Volunteers may be involved

- during school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- outside school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- during school hours not involving direct contact with pupils

10.1.3 Before beginning volunteer work, all volunteers are asked to provide the following information:

- personal details
- qualifications and previous work with children

- a declaration that they have never been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or of a Bound over Order
- a declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for Child Protection
- agreement to a criminal record check being carried out through Access NI (via EA (Northern Area)). It is important that the boxes H7 and H8 on the Access NI form are completed correctly to take account of the guidance in circular 2012/19
- names of two referees who are not family members or members of the school staff
- proof of identity

10.1.4 When the procedures have been followed and the school is satisfied that:

- the person is suitable to work with children and support the work of the school
- well defined and worthwhile activities have been identified for the person to undertake and the person is capable of carrying these out

The school will notify the individual that they have been accepted for voluntary duties in the school.

10.2 Volunteers are covered by the following principles:

Volunteers

- support the work of staff. They are not substitutes for staff or used to cover duties normally carried out by paid staff who are absent or to release staff to carry out other duties.
- work under the supervision of paid staff and these arrangements minimise opportunities for unsupervised direct contact with children
- are not placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, equipment or premises
- should understand the tasks they are to undertake and be properly trained to carry these out
- are allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the staff members with which they will be most closely involved. Teachers or other staff are not under pressure to accept a volunteer to help in their work
- are not given access to records of other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception may be made if a child has a medical condition and the information is shared with those working with the pupil and agreement from the parent is sought

10.3 Volunteers are owed a duty of care under Health and Safety legislation. Coleraine Grammar School ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees.

A time limit may be placed on a volunteer's period of service. If this is likely to be long term, then the volunteer is informed that this will be subject to a trial period during which the Headmaster will monitor the volunteer's effectiveness in contributing to the life and work of the school.

Volunteers are given information, guidance and training to allow them to carry out their duties effectively.

As a minimum that will receive training on

- Child Protection and Pastoral care, including access to related policies and procedures.
- Health and Safety policy

Arrangements will be made to have a formal line of communication to the VP Pastoral to report any concerns relating to the welfare of children.

Volunteers will be expected to sign in at the school's security system each time they are on the premises.

10.4 Visitors to Schools

Visitors to schools, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors should be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors should be:

Met/directed by school staff/representatives.

Signed in and out of the school-by-school staff.

If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.

Where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative.

Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.

Access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.

If delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

11 Staff Code of Conduct

The staff code of conduct is available to all staff and is set out in Appendix 8

- 11.1** Members of staff (including volunteers involved in extra-curricular activities) must be exceptionally careful in today's climate not to put themselves in any situation where an allegation of abuse could be made. They must always err on the side of caution. However, an excessively negative emphasis could lead to a loss of vital contact and helpful relationships.
- 11.2** In extreme cases a teacher might have to restrain a pupil physically. Guidance on the circumstances where this is permissible is included in the school's Policy on the Use of Reasonable Force which is summarised in Appendix 7
- 11.3** To help avoid placing themselves in a difficult situation the Staff Code of Conduct shown in Appendix 8 has been drawn up.
- 11.4** The coaching of sports can produce a different set of circumstances for staff and volunteers in terms of the potential for allegations to be made. To provide additional guidance in this area the Coaching Code of Conduct shown in Appendix 9 has been drawn up and will be provided to all staff and volunteers undertaking coaching activities.

12 Hosting of pupils on educational or sports trips

It is not reasonable to expect that all parents who act as hosts are vetted but risk management measures should be put in place as follows:

- 12.1** Prospective hosts must be informed that school policy requires checks on their suitability:
- 12.2** The Headmaster should run a list of prospective hosts past social services (duty social worker) to ascertain if there are any concerns
- 12.3** The host school should enquire from prospective hosting families as to the accommodation on offer to the visiting child/children. The school should state its preference that the child has a bedroom to himself or with another visiting child of the same gender from the same trip
- 12.4** The school should ensure that all children have the name and phone number of someone in the host area who speaks their language and is available by phone at all times to a child in distress
- 12.5** The school should ensure that all children have the name and phone number of someone from their own school
- 12.6** Supervising teachers should have daily contact with the children and should be vigilant to any distress
- 12.7** All children should be taught self-protection/personal safety measures
- 12.8** When Northern Irish children are going to another jurisdiction, the home school should ask the host school about its risk management measures

13 Bullying and young abusers

- 13.1** Bullying constitutes a form of abuse by another child or young person although in most cases it will not lead to the implementation of the child protection procedures.
- 13.2** Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where *there is an imbalance of power* and it is difficult for the victim to defend himself.
- 13.3** The three main types of bullying are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, spitting, theft or damage to belongings), verbal (e.g. threats or name-calling) or indirect (e.g. spreading rumours, or excluding someone from social groups).
- 13.4** CGS recognises its responsibility to keep its pupils safe from harm and to provide a secure learning environment. To this end CGS has an anti-bullying policy which is communicated to all pupils, staff and parents.
- 13.5** Guidance encouraging pupils who have problems with bullying to share their concerns with staff is widely displayed throughout the school.
- 13.6** Where child abuse carried out by another child is suspected, the appropriate child protection procedures will be followed for both the victim and the alleged abuser. Where any conflict of interest arises between the welfare of the suspected abuser and that of the victim, the victim's welfare must take paramount importance.

14 E-media and Child protection

Our policy on the internet and digital technologies is set out in a separate document, which is informed by DENI and C2K guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks involved in using these technologies. It specifically addresses safeguarding issues that may arise from the use of the internet. This policy also covers the taking and storage of images.

- 14.1** The school will follow the advice given by the EA (NE Region) regarding the taking and use of images of pupils.
- 14.2** The school will follow the advice given in the Department of Education Circular 2007/1 "Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools".
- 14.3** Signed consent will be sought from parents at the beginning of a pupil's time at CGS for the use of their image. When a parent does not agree to their child being photographed, the Headmaster will inform staff and make every effort to comply with the request.
- 14.4** Parents will be given the opportunity each year to withdraw their consent for the use of images of their child.
- 14.5** The use of inappropriate images should be reported to the Designated Teacher in the same way that you would report any other child protection issue.
- 14.6** The school's Social Networking Policy will be used to prevent the abuse of pupils or staff via social networks.

15 Female Genital Mutilation

FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985. In 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to take their child abroad to have female genital mutilation. This is a serious offence and anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison.

An FGM protection order is a civil measure which can be applied for through a family court. The FGM protection order offers the means of protecting actual or potential victims from FGM under the civil law.

Applications for an order can be made by:

- *the person who is to be protected by the order*
- *a relevant third party (such as the local authority)*
- *any other person with the permission of the court (for example, teachers, health care professionals, police, family member).*

Anyone who suspects a child is at risk should report the matter immediately to the DT.

16 Use of the Preventative Curriculum

16.1 Children need to learn how to recognise abusive behaviour and understand that abusive and manipulative relationships are never right or acceptable. They also need to have the skills to challenge such relationships, and know how best to access appropriate help and support.

Through the personal development aspect of Learning for Life and Work, which is delivered to all pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4, the school will provide opportunities for pupils to consider how to safeguard themselves and others.

CCEA has established an RSE Hub (Relationships Sexuality Education) which includes resources and guidance information for teachers, parents/carers and children and young people.

<https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/relationships-and-sexuality-education-rse>

17 School Trips and Visits

Schools will also be concerned to ensure the welfare of their pupils on work experience and on residential trips.

Guidance on organising work experience is available from the EA and from the Health and Safety Executive.

www.eani.org.uk/school-management/educational-visits

For guidance on vetting of supervisors/volunteers see DE Circulars 2013/01 and 2012/19.

The School Educational Visits/Trips/Tours Policy is based on the guidelines produced by the Education Authority, "EA Educational Visits Interim Guidance for Schools 2017" <https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/ea-educational-visits-interim-guidance-2017> and "EA Educational Visits During Covid-19 Guidance for Schools October 2021" <https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/policies-and-guidance/educational-visits>

18 CALP

The CALP coordinator liaises with other schools to ensure the safety of pupils when in CALP schools other than their own.

19 Vetting Procedures

The School's vetting procedures are compliant with the practice advised in DE circulars 2006/07; 2006/08; 2006/09; 2008/03; 2012/19 and 2013/01 (updated September 2015). Copies are available on the DENI website.

20 Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Policy reflects the consideration we give to the protection of the pupils both while within the school environment and when undertaking school trips and visits.

21 Physical Restraint

The policy on Use of Reasonable Force to restrain a child is set out in a separate policy. Staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that there are times when it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to the pupil or another person. See appendix 7.

22 Intimate Care

EA (Northern Area) and DENI guideline will be sought and adhered to if a pupil requires intimate care.

23 School Security

Personal safety in school, as with all other aspects of school management, is maximised by examining customs and practices which may in the past have unconsciously, or otherwise, exposed staff to behaviours by either parents, pupils or visitors which have, at the very least, been distressing, or more seriously, resulted in them being verbally abused, or even assaulted. It is preferable that pupils are protected from witnessing such events.

The Department of Education has posted a relevant document on its website "The Security and Personal Safety in Schools". Their site address is: www.deni.gov.uk. Part 2 gives specific advice on Personal Safety.

24 Security Arrangements

There are various systems and arrangements in place to safeguard employees and pupils. These systems and arrangements are regularly reviewed. They include:

- *all exterior Fire Doors should be kept closed at all times (except during emergency use);*
- *visitors are required to sign in at the Front Office, and wear the identity badge issued by school staff. Badges should be surrendered at the end of the day. Visitors without badges will be challenged;*
- *CCTV coverage of the school is regularly viewed;*
- *teaching staff supervisors and prefects are watchful for intruders, or incidents or events that give rise to concerns;*
- *pupils and staff on trips and visits are watchful for the safety of pupils and employees*

25 Definition of A Child In Need

25.1 The Children (NI) Order 1995 (Article17) states that a child shall be taken to be in need if:

- He is 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 by an authority under this Part;
- His health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired without the provision for him of such services; or
- He is disabled,
- and 'family', in relation to such a child, includes any person who has parental responsibility for the child and any other person with whom he has been living

24.2 Children in need are children who:

- are considered to be failing at school;
- have offended
- are experiencing behavioural difficulties
- are in need of protection
- are experiencing ill-health, either physical or psychological
- are having difficulty accessing services
- are homeless
- are unaccompanied and seeking asylum
- are suffering family breakdown
- are exposed to domestic violence
- are LGBTQ+
- are misusing substances
- are teenage parents
- are carers
- are disabled
- may also include

- non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

EA has published guidance on how schools can support transgender young people: www.eani.org.uk/school-management/policies-and-guidance/supporting-transgender-young-people

25. Participation and consultation

25.1 Stakeholders will have the opportunity to participate in the review of this policy. After initial review, all major changes will be subject to participation and consultation by stakeholders.

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) enshrines the right of all children and young people to say what they think should happen and to have their opinions taken into account when adults are making decisions that affect them.

Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement (ESaGS), School Development Planning, Together Towards Improvement and the 10-year Strategy for Children and Young People offer advice on how to facilitate this.

CGS recognises the value of all forms of pupil participation and the important contribution these can make in supporting pupils as key stakeholders and decision-makers within their school. The school is committed to encouraging all pupils to have a voice which is listened to and respected and taken into account.

The views of all staff and pupils are taken into consideration regularly to promote engagement among staff, pupils, parents, families and the wider community.

School Council is one aspect of participation. All pupils need to have the opportunity to be involved and know they are listened to and that their views are valued. Consequently, all stakeholders will have greater understanding and ownership of this policy.

The concept of participation builds upon existing engagement in a positive and pro-active way so that children and young people are given the opportunity to voice their opinions and have a real say in decisions that affect their lives in schools and within their local community. CGS endeavours to create an ethos of participation within the school.

Effective participation requires the provision of structures that will ensure children and young people's opinions are encouraged, listened to, respected and valued when taking decisions that impact upon them.

25.2 Principles of Participation

- It has to be meaningful and ongoing;
- Pupils, Parents and Teachers need to talk to each other to make participation work;
- It is a process which includes respect for all those involved;
- The language used must be clear and appropriate to the age of the pupils;
- Pupils should have an understanding of the type of decisions their views can change (i.e. it is not a wish list);
- Engagement must be responsive and relevant to pupils' age and interest;
- Pupils need trained, supported and encouraged to help them make positive contributions to issues that relate not just to them both in the schools and the wider community;
- Pupils' opinions need to be encouraged, listened to, respected and valued when taking decisions that impact upon them.

In practice, this means schools providing ways to communicate with pupils as part of the on-going decision making process and engaging with them as stakeholders in issues that impact on the school and the wider school community. By adopting this approach pupils will see that they have a valuable contribution to make in ensuring the effectiveness of their school.

25.3 WHAT DOES SUCCESSFUL PUPIL PARTICIPATION LOOK LIKE?

For successful pupil participation, it is important that the school has an ethos where pupil participation is valued highly in all realms of its work. The school, therefore, needs to demonstrate consistently its core values of cooperation with pupils, mutual respect and a commitment to inclusion, diversity and equity. The success of pupil participation will also depend on how well the structures put in place ensure that they capture the opinions and concerns of the wider school population and on how well the outcomes of any consultations are communicated to those participants. It is therefore important that schools have in place effective evaluation methods to assess the impact that participation structures have had across the school community.

Of course, whilst pupils have the right to have their voice heard, it is also important to recognise that participation is a two-way process. Pupils need to be aware that there are certain responsibilities placed on them to ensure that participation is effective. Appropriate support should be put in place to ensure that pupils develop an understanding

of the extent to which they are personally responsible for their own learning as well as the impact their behaviour and general conduct can have on themselves and those around them including their peers, teachers and other adults who form part of the school community.

Channels of communication may include:

- Assemblies;
- Evaluation of learning;
- Suggestion/comment boxes placed at regular intervals throughout the school;
- Use of imagery such as 'This is a listening school' to demonstrate to pupils that their views are listened to;
- Email box and/or a dedicated school webpage;
- Questionnaires/surveys to pupils or specific year group pupils;
- A notice board(s);
- Form classes to hear pupils' views on specific school development issues;
- Pupil elections of Prefects/School Council;
- Recognition for pupils who engage in participation activities such as a letter of thanks to recognise their contribution; and
- Pastoral Google Classroom(s).

26 JUSTICE (SEXUAL OFFENCES AND TRAFFICKING VICTIMS) ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2022

The Act which became law in April 2022 gives effect to the Justice Minister's desire to improve the operation and effectiveness of the justice system. At its core are two key aims, which are:

- a) to enhance public safety by implementing certain elements of the Report of the Gillen review of serious sexual offence cases and from a review of the law on child sexual exploitation and sexual offences against children; and,
- b) to improve services for victims of trafficking and exploitation.

The Act created several new offences, including non-fatal strangulation, up-skirting and down-blousing, cyber-flashing, and masquerading as a child online, and implements certain elements of the Gillen report on serious sexual offence cases. The Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 legislation may be viewed at the following link <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2022/19/contents/enacted>

The Domestic Abuse Information-sharing with Schools etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022

Section 26 of the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 enables the Department of Justice to bring forward regulations to provide for an Operation Encompass model for Northern Ireland.

27 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, the police 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.

For further information see, *The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022*. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2022/146/contents/made>

CONCLUSION

The safeguarding and protection of children and young people is an essential part of the pastoral care of the school.

The experiences that children gain from School depend upon relationships of trust between teachers and pupils and from a feeling of security within School's environment. The area of Child Abuse can be difficult and sensitive, and this Policy offers clear procedures for action; draws attention to areas of potential risk and provides guidance to staff in respecting the rights of children in their care whilst also keeping themselves safe.

In making a report on suspected child abuse, a teacher, who is acting within the course of his/her employment and following the correct procedure, will receive full support from the Board of Governors.

Addendum to Coleraine Grammar School Child Protection Policy re.Covid-19 Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

1. CONTEXT

From 20 March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of key workers and children who are vulnerable.

The current national health concerns relating to Covid-19 creates uncertainty in the lives of children and young people. Daily routines, family life, friendship groups and the safe space that schools provide have been disrupted. For many children, the need to spend some or most of their day at home will bring an additional challenge, and for some this will be an additional safeguarding risk factor. It is important that the adults responsible for safeguarding children are sensitive to their physical, social and emotional needs in these most unusual circumstances. It is critically important that children who are or may be at risk are identified so that that a proportionate, compassionate and sensitive response can be taken.

2. PROCEDURES

Staff will continue to follow the procedures outlined in our school's Child Protection Policy which is available on our school website.

In addition, the following arrangements have been put in place to support families and monitor pupil safety during periods of lockdown/blended learning:

- The school email info address info@colerainegrammar.com main school phone number 02870344331 and an emergency Child Protection mobile number (07544500306) have been made available to all parents. Parents have been informed that any CP concern may be disclosed on this emergency mobile number during school hours (08.55-3.25pm), and at any time a pupil or parent-carer with a safeguarding concern may talk to Children's Services Gateway Team 0300 1234 333 or PSNI Central Referral Unit 02890259299 / 101 / cru@psni.police.uk , or 18+ Adult Safeguarding Team - Northern Area 02894413659, email: adultsafeguarding@northerntrust.hscni.net
- Teachers provide online learning via the school email/C2k platform with procedures in place to minimise risk.
- The school website provides parents with updates and a range of resources and links to additional online learning, support and guidance, including Guidance from DE, Headmaster's notices, Learning and Teaching and Pastoral Care, Safeguarding and Wellbeing C-19 updates.
- We would remind everyone to stay safe when using online resources and to report any concerns to a member of the safeguarding team.
- The Familyworks Independent School Counsellor (ISC) remains available for phone consultation and parents are made aware of this via the website and updates on the school Facebook page.
- In line with the information previously provided to schools by the EA CPSS, teachers may make phone calls to parents. These will be pastoral in nature and a record will be kept of any issues reported by parents. Any concerns around pupil well-being will be shared without delay with a member of the Safeguarding team.
- If a member of staff is using their personal telephone their number will be withheld to ensure the protection of private information of staff

3. ONLINE SAFETY

In order to ensure the safety of all involved the following guidance should be followed if staff and pupils are engaging in online teaching/communication using video conferencing or platforms recommended by and available via C2K.

- Parental consent will be sought before their child attends online sessions.
- A disclosure or concern over any online forum will be followed up as it would be in school.
- Online sessions should be time limited for the benefit of both children and teachers.

Live Video Streamed Lessons. Guidelines for pupils and parents:

- The usual school pastoral and positive behaviour policies apply.
- Where possible find a quiet place but with easy access for parents, leave the door slightly open. Parents should not sit in on the lesson but can discreetly keep an eye from time to time.
- You should not be your bedroom – unless you are sitting at a desk.
- Dress appropriately – no pyjamas or sleepwear.
- You will need to be able to concentrate on what is going on in the lesson and have pens, paper, textbooks, resources with you.
- Pupils must never share a link to a meeting, a meeting ID or a password with someone not in their class for the subject.
- Teacher guidance on use of chat function etc. must be followed at all times.
- Pranks, disruption or ‘hacking’ of the lesson will result in its immediate termination by the teacher. This is for everyone’s safety and benefit.

Staff are expected to use a model of “*Triangulation*” when contacting individual pupils via C2k email e.g. always cc’ing another applicable member of staff, e.g. a Curriculum Leader, to avoid 1-1 direct email contact with individual pupil(s). When using platforms such as Google Classroom, staff should include a colleague such as a Curriculum Leader as a “Teacher” in the Google classroom, to triangulate correspondence/feedback with pupil(s).

Staff are reminded to make use of the usual safeguarding protocols and principles when making contact with pupils at home. Staff should consider the following steps when making use of online tools. Irrespective of which platform is used for communication with pupils/parents, the central focus is supporting pupils.

- Online teaching is an extension of the classroom and should be covered by the school Acceptable Use Policy. All principles outlined by the Acceptable Use Policy will apply to all online teaching activity.
- Staff should avoid the use of personal mobile phones. If a member of staff is using their personal telephone their number will be withheld to ensure the protection of private information of staff.
- Staff should use only their school email accounts such as C2k and should avoid using personal accounts if contacting children or their parents.
- Staff should be aware that in the interaction with young people all conventional professional teaching norms and standards will apply to online learning with children. Consider using camera-free conferencing, where the focus is on the content rather than the webcam images. Using the C2K platforms, teachers are able to maintain full control of the audio and video content and what is shared on the platform.
- Staff are advised not to add pupils as friends on Social Network Sites.
- Should staff have any concerns about what they see or hear online, this should be brought to the attention of the Designated Teacher in school, in line with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

4. HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE AN ISSUE OR EXPRESS A CONCERN

We would welcome parents asking for advice and help if they have concerns about their child's well-being or safety. Asking for help is a protective factor and parental concerns and requests for help will always be taken seriously.

Any member of staff will listen carefully to parental concerns and ensure that the request for help, if necessary, is brought to the attention of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. In this case a decision can be made as to how best to provide help.

5. IF SCHOOL IS OPEN DURING COVID-19 CLOSURES

If school is open for vulnerable pupils and key worker children the school will adhere to any EA guidance.

If our school is part of a cluster of schools which are open, we will share relevant safeguarding information with the Designated Teacher and/or Principal. In accordance with our Child Protection procedures this information will be shared on a need-to-know basis.

In any event, we will follow current Department of Education and Department of Health guidelines regarding social distancing, hygiene and personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff.

6. HOW A CHILD CAN RAISE A CONCERN?

We know that while many children may enjoy their time at home and remain almost unaffected by the unusual situation of not being in school during term time, there may be others who feel scared, lonely and those who miss school. Our safeguarding responsibility to all our children continues and we will seek to maintain contact with our children and young people as well as signpost them to other agencies.

We will use the following means to connect with our children and young people:

- Year Group Pastoral Classroom(s)
- Respond to emails via C2k email addresses only.
- Respond to any concerning comments our young people post through the Google Classroom or other online similar platforms.
- When contacting parents via phone we may also ask to speak to their child or young person.
- All our children have a C2k email address as one way to connect with school.
- Other Agencies (see signposting via school website: <http://www.colerainegrammar.com/about-covid-19/pastoral-care-and-wellbeing>)
 - NSPCC 0808 800 500 help@nspcc.org.uk
 - Childline 08001111 www.childline.org.uk
 - Lifeline 0808 808 8000 www.lifelinehelpline.info
 - Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
 - Safer Schools App <https://oursaferschools.co.uk/your-app/>
 - The Samaritans Freephone 116 123

7. SOME USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS: –

If pupils or parent-carers have any child protection concerns when school is closed, they may contact Mr Hamilton (Designated Teacher for Child Protection) on the pupil welfare mobile phone [07544 500 306] during school hours 0855-3.25pm. At any time, a pupil or parent-carer with a safeguarding concern may talk

to Children's Services Gateway Team 0300 1234 333 or PSNI Central Referral Unit 02890259299 / 101 / cru@psni.police.uk , or 18+ Adult Safeguarding Team - Northern Area 02894413659, email: adultsafeguarding@northerntrust.hscni.net

Two further useful contact groups are the NSPCC (0800 800 5000) and The Samaritans (free phone 116 123).

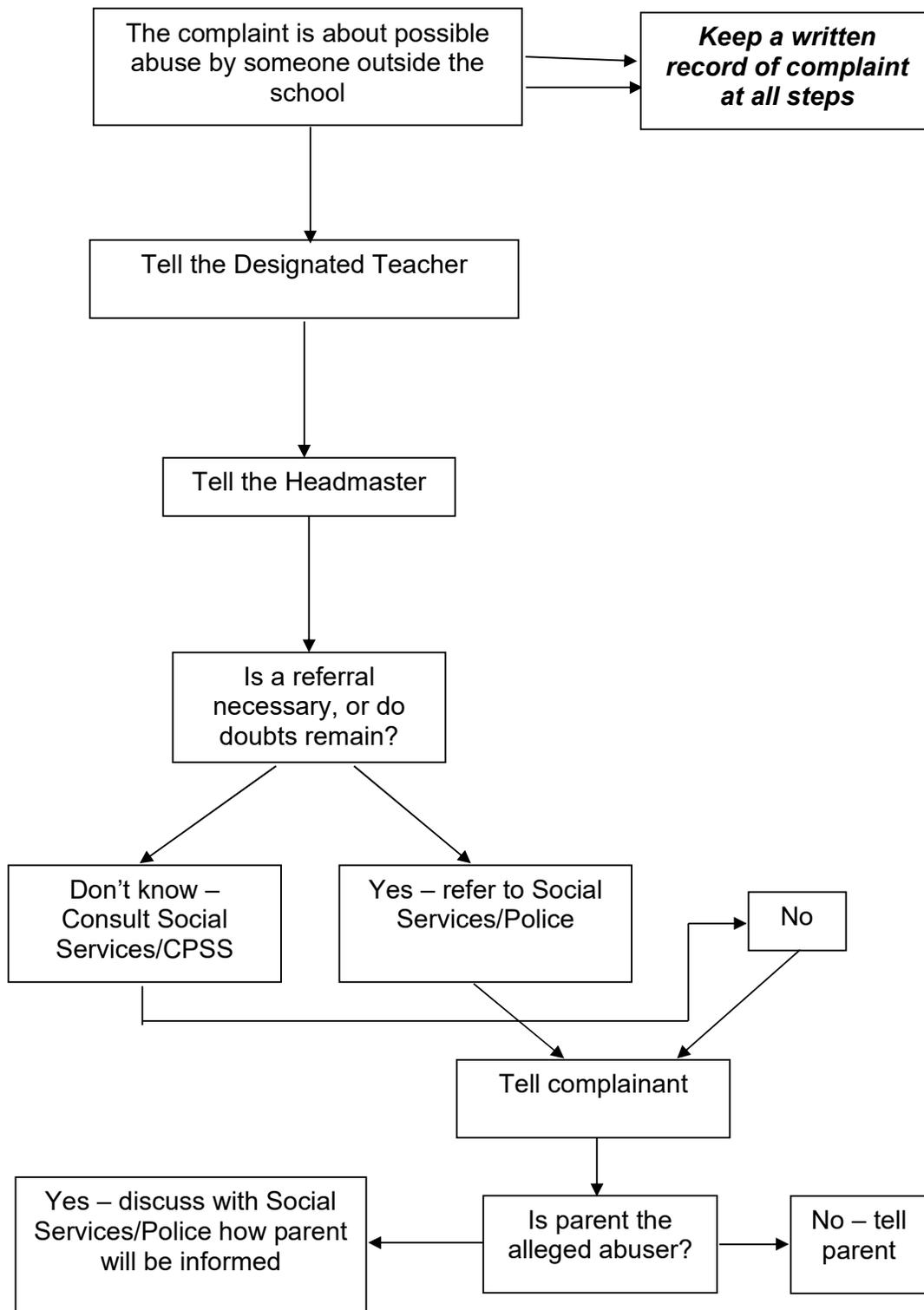
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/coronavirus>
- <https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk>
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>
- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/report-harmful-content>
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

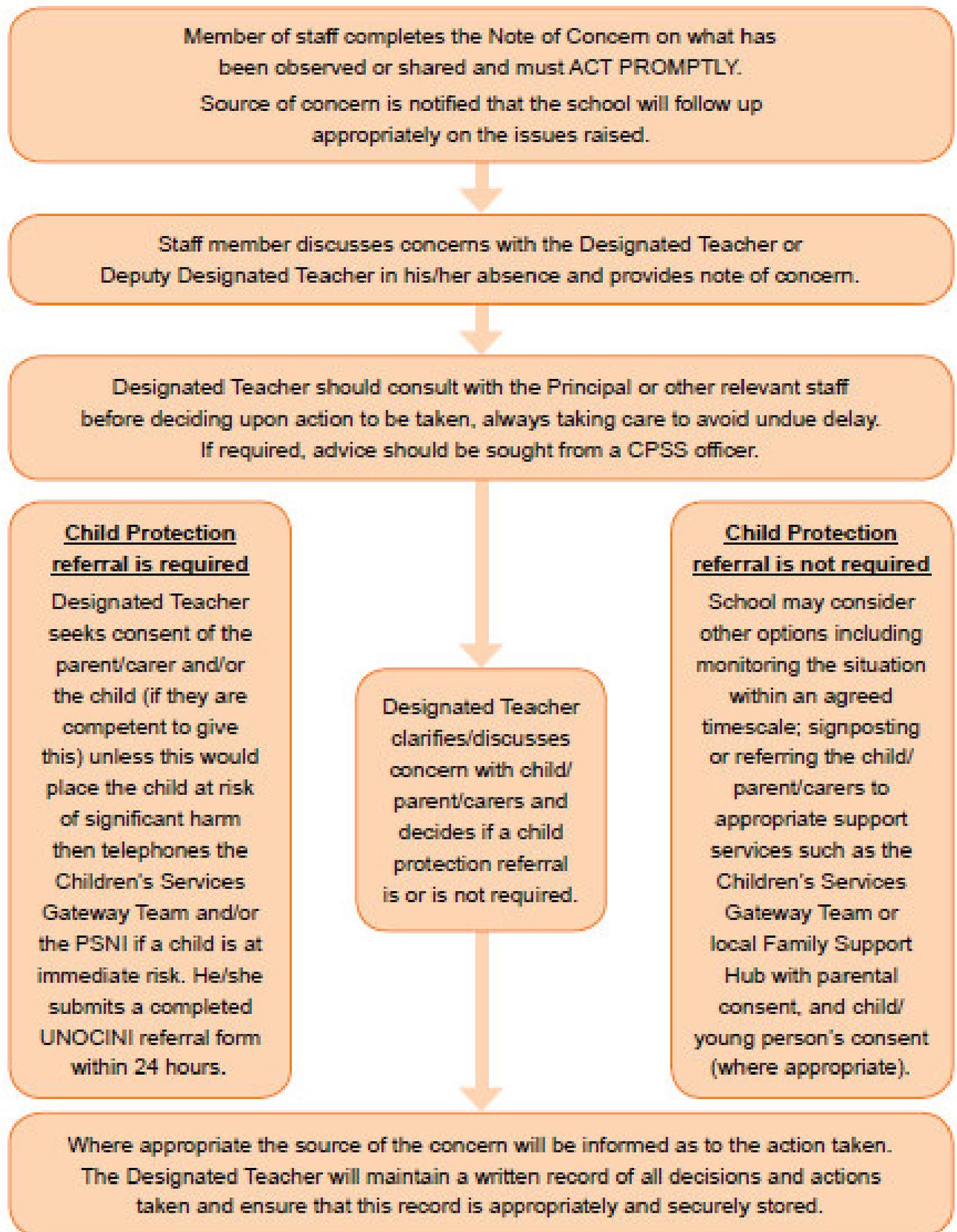
The Safeguarding team will review and amend these arrangements regularly during the period of Covid-19 school closure in line with Departmental guidance and advice.

Appendix 1

Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff

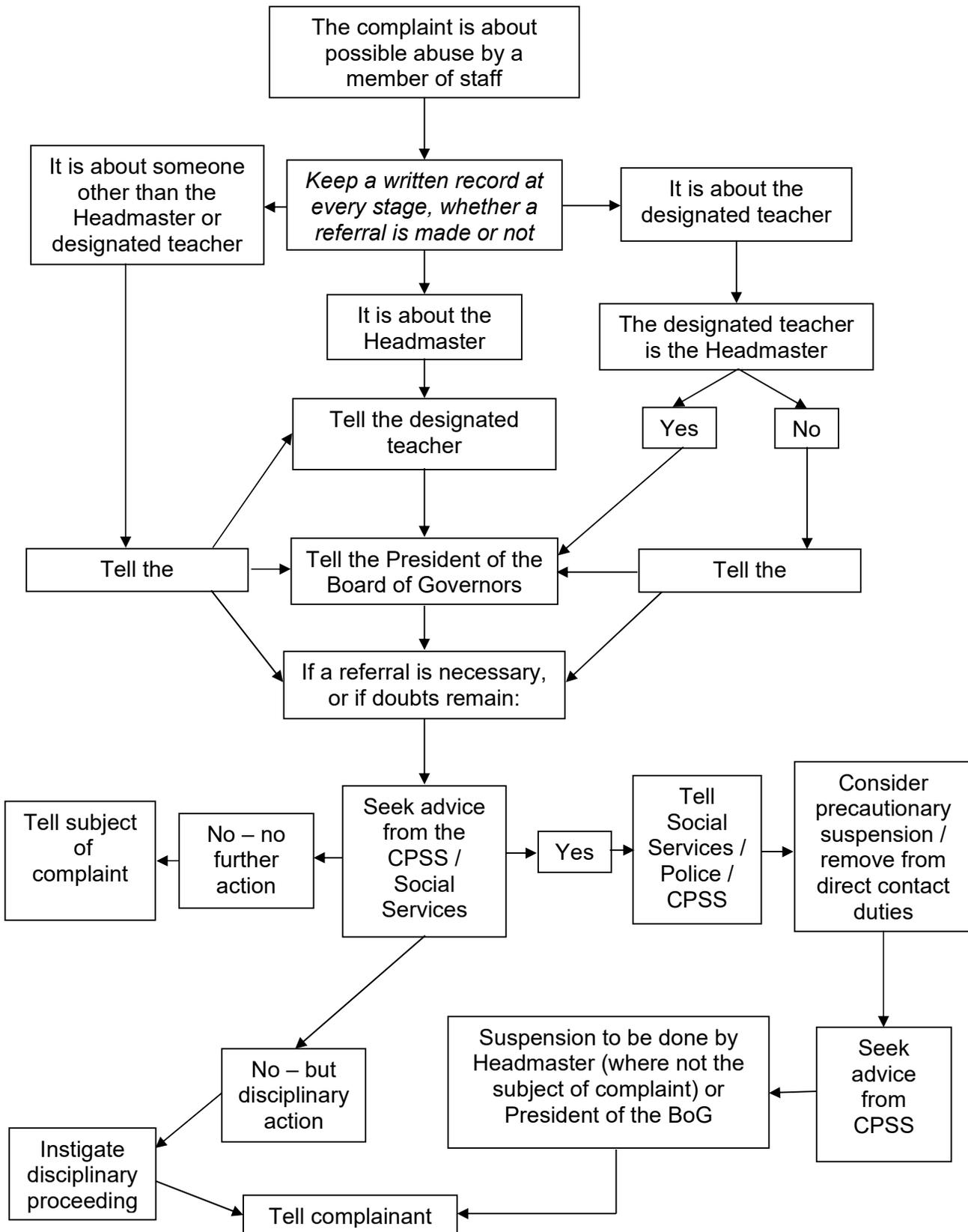


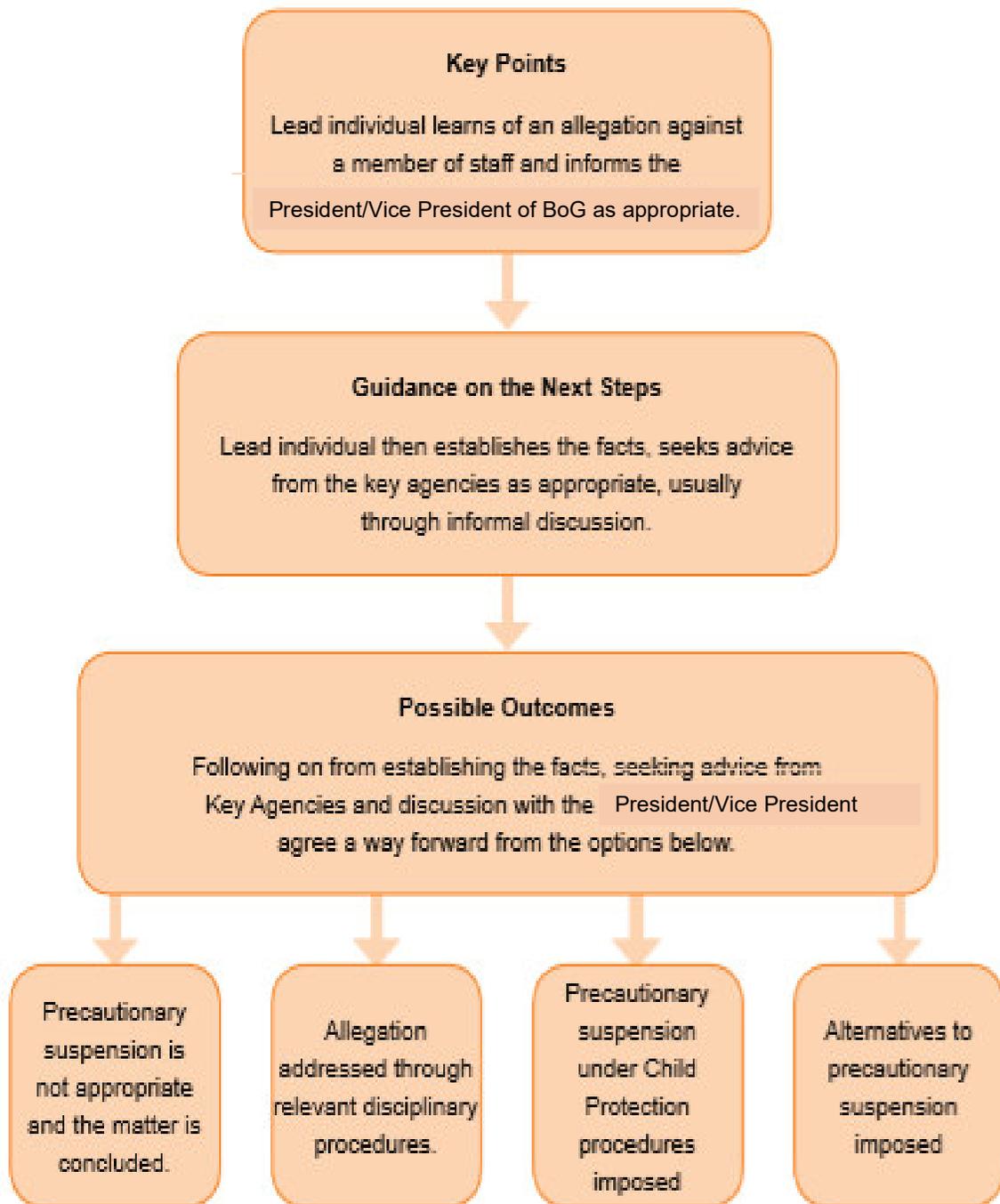
Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff ^{7,8}



Appendix 2

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







Appendix 3

Child Protection Record Form – Note of Concern

(NB It is imperative that only factual and neutral information is recorded.)

Name of Pupil.....

Form..... Form Teacher.....

Name of Pupil:
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 the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file
If 'No' state reason:

[PLEASE NOW FORWARD TO DESIGNATED TEACHER WITHOUT DELAY]

Name of staff member making the report: _____

Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Part 2 – to be completed by the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher

Advice sought/conversation with – Board Officer for CP, Social Services, Police CPSA Unit, date, time, place, advice.

Action as a result of advice – who spoken to, day, date, time, what was said and agreed etc...

Decision not to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how and when.

Decision to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved – how, when.

Signed by Designated/ Deputy Designated Teacher.....

Date.....

Signed by Headmaster..... Date.....

Appendix 4



Child Protection Information Log

Only factual and neutral information should be recorded on this form.

Name of person raising the concern with the designated teacher or deputy designated teacher (please print)

Details

Details of anyone else involved, conversations held with anyone else, potential witnesses

Signed _____
(DTCP/ DDTCP)

Date _____

Appendix 5

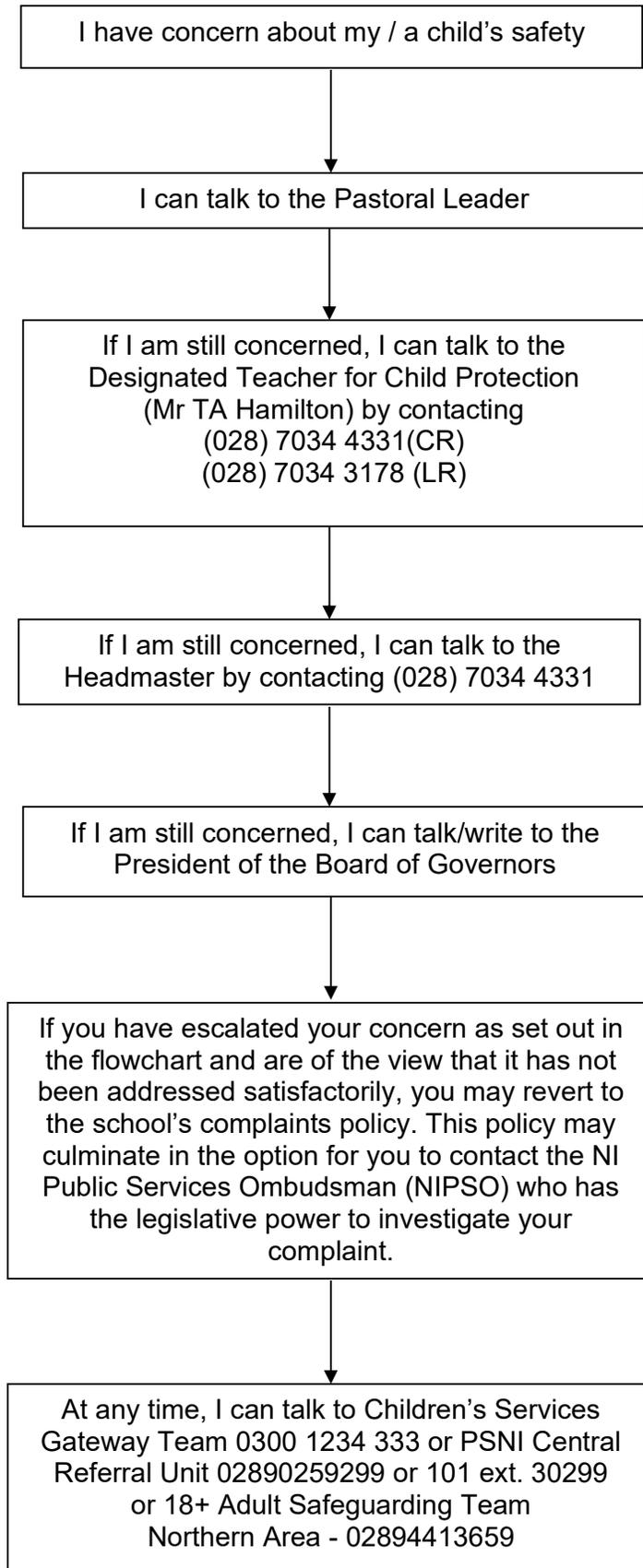
CHILD PROTECTION - CONFIDENTIALITY

CONSIDERATIONS TO BEAR IN MIND

- Precautions should be taken to ensure that information is only given to the appropriate person
- All staff should be aware of the confidential nature of personal information about a child or young person and the means of maintaining that confidentiality
- Personal information about a child's family should be regarded as confidential material
- Any disclosure by a child or young person should be led by them at their pace, without pressure for detail from the adult
- If abuse is suspected, information should be given only to the relevant person, such as the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Teacher.
- Other members of staff or volunteers 'need to know' only enough to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed child or young person. They do not need to know all the details.
- The person to whom the disclosure is made may need to decide on some person from whom they might need support. This can be done without divulging details about the child or young person and even without naming them.
- The child or young person, depending on their age and level of understanding, should be kept informed of who knows, and what they know, at all stages of the procedures.
- If the child is 'looked after' such as a foster home or children's home, all staff and volunteers closely involved with him should know about their circumstances, as it may affect practical matters such as who collects them from school, permission to go on outings or residential, who is contactable in an emergency. Nevertheless, few children want to talk openly with adults or other children about changed circumstances, so there is a need for sensitivity and discretion in handling such matters.

Charis Consultancy Services, 04/04

Appendix 6



Appendix 7

'Power of a member of staff to restrain pupils'

Definition of Reasonable Force

The Education (NI) Order 1998 (part II Article 4 (1)) states:

"A member of the staff of a grant-aided school may use, in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing the pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise."

Based on this legal framework, the working definition of "reasonable force" is the minimum force necessary to prevent a pupil from physically harming himself or others or seriously damaging property, but used in a manner which attempts to preserve the dignity of all concerned. Physical intervention can take a number of forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- holding;
- pushing;
- pulling;
- leading a pupil by the arm;
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back; or
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

Guidance - Limits on the Use of Force

The law strictly prohibits the use of force, which constitutes the giving of corporal punishment. The use of force as a punishment or to intentionally cause pain, injury or humiliation would contravene our Child Protection Policy.

Staff should never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding around the neck;
- any hold that might restrict breathing;
- kicking, slapping or punching or using any implement;
- throwing any object at a pupil;
- forcing limbs against joints;
- tripping;
- holding or pulling by the hair;
- holding the pupil face down on the ground;

Staff should also avoid touching or holding a pupil in any way that might be considered indecent.

The use of reasonable force is only to be employed in exceptional circumstances or an emergency where a pupil appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and whose behaviour is presenting a threat to himself or others. A member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help if there is a risk that he/she may be injured or may endanger his/her life.

Safe handling/ use of reasonable force review

The Department of Education is currently producing new guidance relating to safe handling and the use of reasonable force following a review on the use of restraint and seclusion in educational settings in Northern Ireland. A report on the review was published on 25 March 2022: "*Review of restraint and seclusion in educational settings published*". The recommendations of the report, which have been endorsed by the Minister for Education, include the principles on which the guidance should be based along with definitions which allow for a clear understanding of restrictive practices and supportive practices and when it is appropriate to use these. The report may be accessed through the following link: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/news/review-restraint-and-seclusion-educational-settings-published>

Interim guidance was also issued from DE on 10 May 2021 Circular 2021/13 – “*Interim Guidance on the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings*” <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202113-interim-guidance-use-restraint-and-seclusion-educational-settings>

The underpinning principles of safe handling and the use of reasonable force are that these should be in line with the rights of the child under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and should never be used as a punitive measure, i.e. as a form of punishment.

This is reiterated in the abolishment of corporal punishment, making it illegal for education staff to use physical harm to punish a child under their care.

In relation to seclusion, a child should never be placed involuntarily in any environment in which they are alone and/or physically prevented from leaving as a form of punishment, as this may constitute an act of ‘Deprivation of Liberty’ without the appropriate authority to do so.

Supportive practices in meeting the health and wellbeing needs of pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, should be agreed with the appropriate health care professionals and parents/carers of the pupil.

Appendix 8

Staff Code of Conduct

Introduction

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 and young people 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 within the education sector. 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.

All staff have a responsibility to maintain confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. Integral to this is a clear understanding of standards of behaviour expected and in particular the acceptable boundaries of physical contact with pupils. School staff must accept that all physical contact can be open to scrutiny and that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued.

The Code of Conduct makes it clear that whilst, as a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children and young people, it is also unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that physical contact should only happen in emergencies.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. As a general rule, when physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact in schools may occur most often with younger pupils, for example, physical comforting can give welcome reassurance to a distressed younger child.

1. Private meetings with pupils Staff should:

- conduct private interviews with individual pupils in a room with visual access, or with the door open;
- ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place (a sign may be used to indicate that the room is in use but it is not advisable to use a sign prohibiting entry);
- where possible, arrange that another adult or pupil is present or nearby during the interview (the school should take active measures to facilitate this).

2. Physical Contact with pupils Staff should not:

- make unnecessary physical contact with pupils but a distressed pupil may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide;
- touch a pupil who has clearly indicated that they are uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the pupil, others or property from harm (see guidance on 'Power of a member of staff to restrain pupils' in Appendix 3);
- use any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint;
- use any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer

3. Staff should:

- if required to administer first-aid to a pupil, ensure, wherever possible, that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present;
- following any incident where they feel that their actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, give a written report immediately to a Vice Principal;
- 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/work environment

4. Choice and use of Teaching materials: Staff should:

- avoid using teaching materials which might be misinterpreted and reflect on the motives for the choice;

- when using teaching materials of a sensitive nature, be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might after the event be criticised;
- if in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, consult the Headmaster before using it

5. Relationships and attitudes Staff should:

- ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils;
- take care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation;
- if using social networking sites take care to follow the guidance in the school's Social Networking Policy; Staff are advised not to add pupils as friends on Social Network Sites.
- Staff should 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, particularly when staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.
- A complaint relating to inappropriate conduct on the part of a member of staff will be dealt with under the School procedures. A concern for fairness and for the welfare, dignity and protection of staff and pupils will be paramount.

6. Confidentiality

- Staff should ensure that information regarding pupils is only shared with the appropriate person
- All staff should be aware of the confidential nature of personal information about a child and maintain that confidentiality
- Child Protection information regarding a pupil must be treated on a need-to-know basis only and information should only be shared with relevant personnel
- Staff cannot promise confidentiality regarding information which causes concern that a child has been or may be at risk of harm.

7. Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur. In all circumstances, professional judgement must be exercised, and this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been school practice. From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children/young people and their manner and approach to individual children/young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children/young people or of their parents/guardians.

Source: Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection DENI 1999/10

Appendix 9

CGS Coaches Code of Conduct

- Do not criticise or harass referees, coaches or parents in front of the pupils.
- Do not use language that is unacceptable in a school environment.
- Foul play should never be condoned.
- Under no circumstances should there be any physical contact between adults and pupils (*use 2 adults to demonstrate, or the pupils themselves*).
- Avoid confrontation with pupils, let the member of staff present deal with any incidents.
- Avoid one on one situations with pupils i.e. In changing rooms or lifts home.
- Always change in the staff changing area.
- Remember at all times that you are a representative of the school and that your actions reflect on the school. Lead by example.

Appendix 10

Record Keeping

The guidelines in circular 2020/07, Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools, are the basis for all record keeping.

Accurate records are kept of all cases of potential child abuse, detailing actions taken.

Each school has a responsibility to maintain its records and record keeping systems. The Board of Governors should ensure that the arrangements operated by the school for the retention, management and release of public records comply with statutory requirements, including data protection legislation, most recently the new Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). GDPR provides a legal framework for keeping everyone's personal data safe by requiring organisations to have robust processes in place for handling and storing personal information based on the following principles:

Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner;

- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary;
- Accurate and where necessary kept up to date;
- Kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which those data are processed; and
- Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of personal data.

Each school should have a Records Management Policy. While there is no specific legislation in respect of child protection records, schools should ensure that the principles of the requirements of the legislation, in particular the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and the Data Protection Act 2018, and guidance in DE Circular 2020/07 is adhered to.

Requests for information

- Before providing access to information the Headmaster should consider whether the request is being made in the parent's own interests rather than the child's. Child Protection records may be exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 in cases where disclosure may cause serious physical or emotional harm to the child or any other person. This means that neither pupils nor their parents have an automatic right to access them. However, the exemption only applies to the information that may cause harm and is not a blanket exemption for the file as a whole. In addition, the exemption can only be relied upon if it is endorsed by the opinion of an appropriate health professional. (Data Protection (Subject Access Modification) (Health Order) 2000).
- In addition, if a member of staff requests information in relation to an allegation made against them, then if there is any doubt whether information should be disclosed the EA (Northern Area) should be consulted.

Maintaining Records

complaint received about possible child abuse	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is not referred to Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the school should maintain the record on the child's file• send a confidential copy to any school to which the child subsequently transfers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• or following referral, the Social Services do not place the child's name on the Child Protection Register	

If Social Services inform the school that the child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintain a record of this fact, and place associated documentation from Social Services, on the child's file (in the Child Protection File) while she continues to attend.• ensure that when a child whose name is on the Child Protection Register changes school, the receiving school is informed immediately that her name is on the Register and all Social Services documentation relating to the child is destroyed.• Retain all school-initiated records on the child's file.• The school to which the child is transferring should contact Social Services for relevant information.

<p>If the Social Services inform the school that the child's name has been removed from the Register,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school should destroy any child protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of case conferences and should inform the child's Case Co-ordinator in Social Services. Retain any school-initiated records on the child's file

When a child, whose name is on the Child Protection Register is admitted into school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Services should be contacted for relevant information.

NB Child Protection Records should be **kept indefinitely. They are NO LONGER DESTROYED when the child reaches 21.**

It is recommended that, in general, child protection records should be retained by the school for the following periods:

Record	Retention Period
Pupil Child Protection Case Files	DOB + 30 years
The school's confidential Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely*
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register	Maintain a record of this fact and associated documentation from Social Services on the child's file while he/she continues to attend. On transfer, the school should inform the new school and destroy all social services records. The record on the Child Protection File will remain until D.O.B + 30 years.
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register	On transfer to a new school, the school should destroy any child protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of case conferences. The record on the Child Protection File will remain until D.O.B + 30 years.
Complaint against a member of staff Staff members file* Child's Child Protection File Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely* unless totally exonerated (see para. 3.16) D.O.B + 30 years Indefinitely*
Complaint to be pursued under the school's disciplinary procedures	
Staff members file	7 years
Child's Child Protection File	D.O.B + 30 years
Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely**

* The Department of Education Disposal Schedule recommends that a staff file is retained for 7 years after leaving employment. In the case of child protection concerns the file should be retained for the time periods specified in the school Child Protection Records Retention and Destruction Policy.

** *as a general guide 'indefinitely' should be a minimum of 40 years.*

Child Protection Conferences

When a referral has been made of a case of suspected or alleged abuse, a member of staff, either the Designated Teacher or the member of staff who knows the child best, may be asked to contribute the school's knowledge of the child to the Child Protection Conference convened by Social Services to assess the child's circumstances and decide on further action.

The school may also be asked to prepare a report. This should focus on

- the child's educational progress
- achievements,
- attendance,
- behaviour,
- participation,
- relationships with other children and adults within the school
- where appropriate, the child's appearance.

- if relevant, reports should include what is known (without making specific investigation) about the child's relations with his/her family and the family structure.

Reports should be objective and based on evidence.

They should **contain only fact, observations and reasons for concern.**

They should be prepared on the form provided in the appendices.

Reports will be made available to the child's parents at the Child Protection Conference, and may be used in court.

All reports should be checked and signed by the Designated Teacher or by the Deputy Designated Teacher who has assumed these responsibilities in his/her absence.

Monitoring and supporting pupils on the Child Protection Register

Pupils whose names are on the Child Protection Register will be monitored in line with what has been agreed in each child's protection plan.

This includes alerting the child's Case Co-ordinator from Social Services, or the Education Welfare Officer, when a pupil on the Child Protection Register is absent for more than a few days, or on a regular basis, or to any signs which suggest deterioration in the pupil's home circumstances.

The School's Record of Child Abuse Complaints

Where a complaint is made about a member of staff, and is pursued either as a formal referral or under the school's disciplinary procedures, a short summary of the record should be entered by the Headmaster on a Record of Child Abuse Complaints, maintained for the purpose and kept in a secure place.

In addition, where a formal referral is made, it is particularly important that the Headmaster should ensure that a detailed written record of the complaint, including dates and times, is maintained.

This should include:

The summary should include:

- the date and brief details of the nature of the complaint;
- by whom, to whom and against whom it was made;

If the complaint was formally referred,

- who referred the allegation, to whom and the date of referral;
- what supplementary evidence, if any, was offered, from whom, and its nature;
- details of any physical injury noted;
- from whom advice was sought, and its nature;
- the decision taken and how, when, by whom and to whom it was conveyed, and the reasons for it;
- a copy of any correspondence in relation to the complaint should be attached.

If the complaint was dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedures, a brief note of the outcome.

The record is signed and dated by the Headmaster, countersigned by the Designated Teacher (where neither is the subject of the allegation) and retained in the school, on the files of both the child and the member of staff concerned; an entry should also be made on the school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints. (Hard back book kept in Child Protection file.)

The school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints should be made available to the Board of Governors at least annually. This is provided as a written report. The Education and Training Inspectorate will ask to see the Record during inspections.

If, following subsequent investigation by one of the investigating agencies, the member of staff concerned is totally exonerated, the record on the file of the member of staff concerned must be expunged, and the entry in the school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints deleted or struck through. The record on the child's file should be noted accordingly and should be retained indefinitely in case there should be subsequent complaints. In all other cases, the record on both the child's file and the staff member's file should be maintained indefinitely. The following form should be completed and stuck into a hard back book which is signed by the Headmaster and the President of the Board of Governors.

Appendix 11

Coleraine Grammar School
Record of Child Abuse Complaints against a Member of Staff

Date		
Nature of complaint		
Complaint made by:	Complaint made against :	Complaint made to:
Evidence presented including record of any physical injury:		
Advice and Nature of Advice sought:		
Decision taken:		
Referred to:	Referred by:	Date:
Outcome of any disciplinary measures:		
Signed:	Headmaster	Date:
Signed:	Designated Teacher	Date:
Correspondence attached	Yes	No

Appendix 12 Useful Contacts

Education Authority (Northern Area)
Education Welfare
(Child Protection)
Antrim Board Centre
Tel: 0289448 2223

Mrs Linda O'Hara,
Education Welfare (*CPSS)
(Child Protection)
County Hall
Tel: 0282566 2563
Linda.O'Hara@eani.org.uk

*Child Protection Support Services

Adult Safeguarding team – Northern Area

Telephone: 028 9441 3659

Email: adultsafeguarding@northerntrust.hscni.net

Public Protection Units
Coleraine H District
Coleraine PSNI Station
17 – 19 Lodge Road
Coleraine
BT52 1LY
Tel: 02890650222 ext 83133

Northern Gateway Team
Coleraine Child Care Team
7a Castlerock Road
Coleraine
BT51 3HP
Tel: 0287032 5462 Fax 7035 7614

Single Point of Entry
0300 1234 333 / 02894424459
02895049999 –out of hours