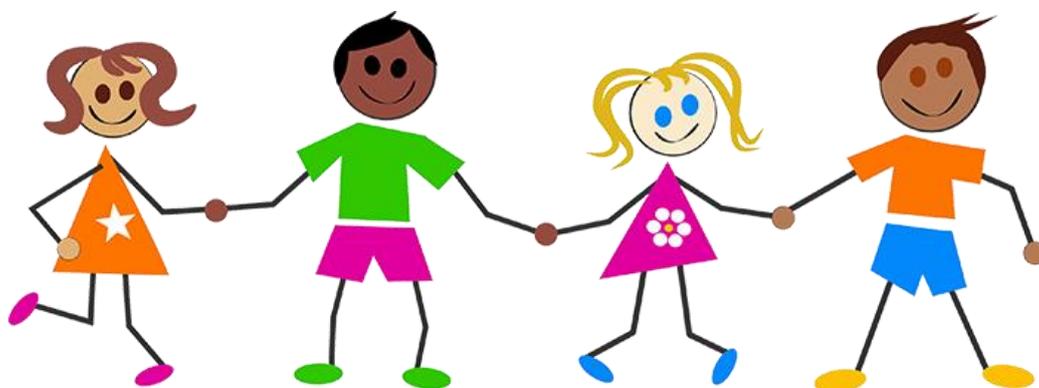


# STRANDTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Strandtown  
Primary School

## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Reviewed October 2022

Safeguarding is more than child protection, Safeguarding begins with preventative education and activities which enable children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is promoted. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection, which refers to specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual or young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer harm.

The purpose of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in Strandtown Primary School is to ensure the welfare of all our pupils. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy incorporates the following individual policies:

- Positive Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Educational Visits
- Residential Trips
- Emergency Evacuation
- Critical Incident
- Drugs
- Administration of Medicines
- Reasonable Force and Safe Handling
- Use of the Internet and Mobile Technologies
- Attendance Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- E Safety Policy
- Intimate Care policy
- Relationships & Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs

At Strandtown PS we acknowledge that it is the responsibility of all staff, children and community members to **respect the rights of each other** in and around school.

Strandtown promote the message to be '**Ready, Respectful & Safe**' to our children. This means we teach our children about what rights they have. We also model rights and respect in all relationships around school including between teachers/adults and students, between adults and between children.

To help facilitate this, there are five rules we feel should be integral to the way the school works, and to the way in which we all behave to one another. These are;

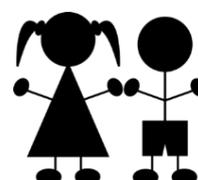
**To Speak Respectfully** – To staff / To children /To all

**To Behave Respectfully** - To staff / To children /To all

**To Respect the school environment** - To children

**To have Respect for your own learning** ...To children

**To have respect for other childrens' learning** . . .To children



## ROLES

### GOVERNORS

The BOG should be aware of safeguarding child protection issues and the implications for schools. They should approve and monitor child protection policy and practice. They should be satisfied that a personal safety programme is in place within the school and that it is acceptable to parents. They should ensure that parents are kept informed.

### SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION TEAM

The Child Protection Team in Strandtown consists of:

<b>Chairperson of BOG -</b>	<b>Mrs Natalie Gilbert</b>
<b>Designated Governor -</b>	<b>Mrs Bhavani Conaghan</b>
<b>Principal -</b>	<b>Mrs Victoria Hutchinson</b>
<b>Vice Principal -</b>	<b>Miss Wendy Bailie</b>
<b>Designated Teacher -</b>	<b>Mr Colin Devine</b>
<b>Deputy Designated Teachers -</b>	<b>Miss Paula Courtenay</b>
<b>ICT E Safety -</b>	<b>Mr Matthew Craig</b>

The Principal will call a meeting of the team when relevant issues arise.

The Designated Teacher will meet at least once per year with the Chairperson of the BOG to discuss the breakdown of information relating to Child Protection and to view the "Complaints against Staff" book. The chairperson will then sign both these documents. This book is stored in a locked safe, access to it is limited to **Mr Devine** and **Miss Courtenay**.

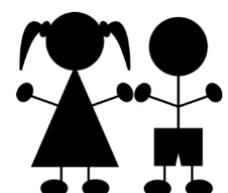
### SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Principal and SLT should appoint a designated teacher and a deputy and ensure that their identity is known to all staff. They should inform the BOG of the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures and the implementation of a personal safety programme. They should ensure appropriate training for teaching and non-teaching staff and monitor implementation throughout the school. Training is provided for staff during a staff development day annually.

### DESIGNATED TEACHER AND DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER

The designated teacher is delegated responsibilities through the principal from the BOG. It is the duty of the designated teacher to take on such responsibilities and initiate such enquiries as are necessary to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Child Protection Policy are integrated into good practice.

In the absence of the designated teacher, the deputy-designated teacher will assume these responsibilities.



## TEACHERS

Teachers should know how to implement the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and procedures and feel confident that they understand the principles inherent in the personal safety programmes.

## NON-TEACHING STAFF

It is important that all non-teaching staff are aware of the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, know how to react if a pupil should make a disclosure and the procedure to be followed.

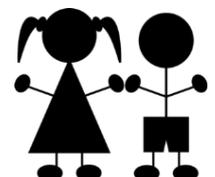
## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents should be well informed of the school's responsibilities and roles in the Safeguarding/Child Protection and Personal Safety Programmes. A successful partnership between parents and school will be promoted, as will the creation of an atmosphere of trust and co-operation.

## OTHER AGENCIES

The school has well-established links with the following outside agencies and our aim is to maintain these:

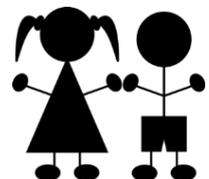
-Child Protection Support Service (CPSS)	028 95985590
-Childline	0800 1111
-NSPCC	08088005000
-Barnardos	02890672366
-EWO's	02890564317
-Child Psychiatry and Psychology Services	02037334826
-PSNI – Sexual Referral Unit	
*Numbers checked 19/10/22	



## WHAT ALL STAFF NEED TO KNOW

All staff who work in the school during the hours in which pupils are on the premises, including ancillary staff, and any volunteers accepted to work in the school, need to know:

-  How to identify the signs and symptoms of possible abuse
-  What the relevant child protection procedures are, including the school's own internal procedures, where they are held in the school and how they can be referred to if necessary; and, in particular, what the reporting procedures are
-  How to talk to children about whom there are concerns in an appropriate way, and how to record the information they have acquired
-  Who the designated teacher is and who will carry out her responsibilities if she is unavailable or is the subject of the complaint
-  The roles played by the designated teacher, the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors respectively, and the school's internal arrangements should enable each member of staff to carry out the duties of their role effectively and with appropriate support and training
-  As a school staff member, it is critical to be able to recognise the physical or behavioural signs of child abuse. If physical and/or behavioural indicators lead you to suspect that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, regardless of the type of abuse, you must respond as soon as practicable
-  All school staff have a moral and legal obligation and duty of care to protect any child under their care from foreseeable harm.



## STRANDTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOLCHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

The care, safety and welfare of each child must be the paramount consideration of all members of staff. Everyone who works in our school will be alert to the problems of child abuse. The conduct of school staff towards pupils must be above reproach.

### AIMS

To offer the best possible protection to the pupils of our school.

To ensure that the staff of our school - both teaching and non-teaching - have clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected.

To ensure that all members of staff are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse.

**PROCEDURE** - (where a child raises a concern with a teacher)



**RECEIVE** - listen to what a child says but do not ask leading questions.



**REASSURE** - reassure the child that he/she will be safe and that their interests will come first.



**REACT** - only to ensure that the child is safe and secure.



**RECORD** - record what you have seen and heard and the date and time.



**REPORT** - report your concerns immediately to the designated teacher, **Mr Devine** or in his absence, to the deputy-designated teacher, **Miss Courtenay**.

**PROCEDURE** - (where a teacher or other member of staff has a concern about a pupil's welfare)



**DISCUSS** your concerns with the designated teacher, **Mr Devine** or in his absence, to the deputy-designated teacher, **Miss Courtenay**.

### **This should be done before you speak to the child**



**SEEK FURTHER ADVICE** from the designated teacher if concerns persist. They may suggest that you speak to the child.



**CHAT INFORMALLY** with the child. This should be done discreetly. Avoid being alone with the child.

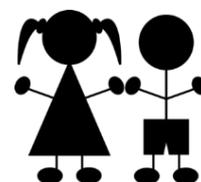


**RECORD** what you have heard following, discussion with the child and the date and time so that this can be passed on to the designated teacher. This information must not be photocopied.

In all cases where a child shares information of a concerning nature with you, it must be made clear to the child that it may not be possible to keep this confidential. To protect children from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action by informing and involving others.

This Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy has been drawn up in consultation with members of the Child Protection Team within Strandtown Primary School.

The policy will be reviewed in **2023/2024** or when regulations are amended.



## CHILD ABUSE

### Definitions

The main concern of every caring adult must be the safety of the child. The problem of child abuse is everyone's business and is never "not the concern" of a professional. Child abuse may be a criminal offence; therefore, we are not free of our obligations.

*'Child protection occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those 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'*

### What is Child Abuse?

#### Types of abuse:

- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Forced Marriage
- Domestic & Sexual Violence & Abuse
- FGM
- Grooming
- E-Safety/Internet

### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

*'Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the needs of another person. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse. 'Emotional abuse may take the form of under-protection, and/or over-protection, of the child, which has a significant negative impact on a child's development.*

#### Possible signs of emotional abuse

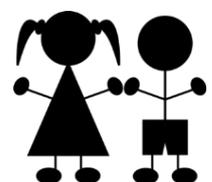
- Physical, mental and emotional development, delay or disturbance
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to stressful situations
- Neurotic behaviour - rocking, hair-twisting, thumb sucking
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted. It is important to be aware of the implications for a child who may be living with domestic violence. If we know a child is living at home with domestic violence we would be obliged to report it or check that Social Services are involved.
  - Extremes of passivity or aggression
  - Compulsive stealing
  - Enuresis / encopresis - wetting,
  - drug / solvent abuse
  - scavenging for food

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

*'Is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful 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.'*

### Possible signs of physical abuse:

- Unexplained injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses given to injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appear excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Withdrawal of physical contact
- Flinching at sudden movements
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away



## SEXUAL ABUSE

*'Sexual abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. It can involve 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.'* Sexual abuse is not safely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### Index of suspicions of sexual abuse

Key:            **Red**     =        high probability of sexual abuse occurring

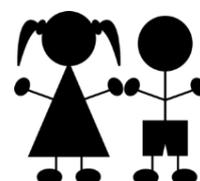
**Green** =        a sexual abuse possibly occurring

**Blue**  =        one hypothesis amongst many

- Disclosure, genital injuries, vivid descriptions of sexual activities, compulsive masturbation, sexual drawing, explicit sexual behaviour
- Disclosure, genital injuries, exposing themselves, promiscuity, suicide attempts, running away
- Specific person fear, nightmares, urinary-infections, fear of specific situations: Being bathed, being changed, being put to bed
- Arson, soreness of genitals, urinary-infections, depression, bed wetting, anorexia, truanting, glue sniffing, obsessive washing, unexplained large sums of money
- Development regression, hostile or aggressive behaviour, psychosomatic conditions
- Abdominal pains, hostile or aggressive behaviour, peer problems
- 

In addition to the above there may be other behaviours especially noticeable in school:

-  Poor peer group relationships and inability to make friends
-  Inability to concentrate, learning difficulties or a sudden drop in school performance
-  Reluctance to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for physical education, games or swimming
-  Unusual or bizarre sexual themes in child's art work or stories
-  Frequent absences from school that are justified by one parent only, apparently without regard for its implications for the child's school performance
-  Unusual reluctance or fear of going home after school.



## NEGLECT

*'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, failure 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).'*

There are a number of types of neglect that can occur separately or together, for example:

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

### Possible signs of neglect

-  Constant hunger
-  Poor personal hygiene
-  Constant tiredness
-  Poor clothing
-  Emaciation
-  Frequent lateness or non-attendance
-  Untreated medical conditions
-  Destructive tendencies
-  Low self-esteem
-  Neurotic behaviour - rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking
-  Poor social relationships
-  Chronic running away
-  Compulsive stealing
-  Scavenging for food or clothes

**N.B. THE ABOVE INDICATORS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN IN ISOLATION.**

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Schools are in a privileged position to identify those who may be experiencing domestic violence/abuse, both at home and within their own relationships. They are key to raising the issue of domestic abuse in a safe and structured environment.

### The Impact of domestic violence on the child

Children often see school as a safe retreat from problems at home or alternatively feel the need to not attend school through a perceived need for them to be at home to protect abused parents or siblings.

Domestic violence can have a damaging effect on a child's health, educational attainment, emotional well-being and development. It is widely accepted that there are dramatic and serious effects of children witnessing domestic violence that often results in behavioural issues, absenteeism, ill health, bullying, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, self-harm, eating disorders and psychosocial impacts.

Children and young people may not only be affected by Domestic Violence between their parents, but as they begin to develop their own intimate relationships they may also perpetrate or become victims of Domestic Violence themselves.

### Child Protection and Domestic Violence

The needs of the child can be overlooked in cases of Domestic Violence, as the primary target of the abuse is an adult. However, it is not uncommon for a perpetrator to mistreat the child as part of the abuse against the mother. There is increasing evidence to show that children living with Domestic Violence are at risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Prolonged and regular exposure to Domestic Violence can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional wellbeing, despite the best efforts of the victim-parent to protect the child.

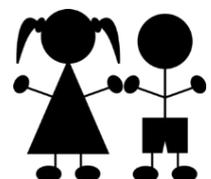
## Children Witnessing Domestic Violence

Witnessing violence may have a detrimental impact on the child concerned. Children are not merely passive bystanders to Domestic Violence but will act and make choices in order to cope with and improve their situation. A child may be drawn into colluding with both of the adults in order to keep the violence secret as far as possible, thereby serving to deny the harm that is being done and the fear the child is experiencing as well as protecting the violent partner and isolating and confusing the child. The experience of domestic violence can have long lasting effects on self-esteem, ability to form satisfying relationships and general mental health.

## Signs to look out for in children between the ages of 5-16

School aged children (5-16) may:

-  Be engaging in risk-taking behaviours
-  Be withdrawn
-  Have increased impulsive & aggressive behaviours
-  Be exhausted and having sleep difficulties
-  Be experiencing sadness, depression and mood swings
-  Have a decline in school performance
-  Have high non-attendance
-  Not be doing their homework
-  Have problems with concentration & attention
-  Be anxious to leave parent at home
-  Be being bullied or bullying
-  Have low self-esteem & therefore risk associated with this (self-harm, substance misuse etc.)
-  Have no hopes or ambitions
-  Be isolated; not many friends
-  Be throwing themselves into school work as an escape from home life
-  Not be allowed to attend clubs or local groups
-  Be unable to have school friends visit them at home
-  Have limited money for food/school items



## Specific Types of Abuse

**Grooming** of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

**If the staff in Strandtown Primary School become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the school's child protection policies and procedures.**

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/ or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. **(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. DHSSPS version 2.0 2017)**

The key factor that distinguishes cases of CSE from other forms of child sexual abuse is the concept of exchange – the fact that someone coerces or manipulates a child into engaging in sexual activity **in return for something** they need or desire and/or for the gain of those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. The something received by the child or young person can include both tangible items and/or more intangible 'rewards' OR 'benefits' such as perceived affection, protection or a sense of value or belonging.

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE, including those who can legally consent to have sex. The abuse most frequently impacts upon those of a post-primary age and can be perpetrated by adults or peers, on an individual or group basis.

**CSE is a form of child abuse and, as such, any member of staff suspecting that CSE is occurring will follow the school's child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.**

**Domestic and Sexual violence and abuse** can have a profoundly negative effect on a child's emotional, psychological and social well-being. A child does not have to witness domestic violence to be adversely affected by it. Living in a violent or abusive domestic environment is harmful to children.

Domestic violence and abuse is defined as 'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.' Sexual Violence and Abuse is defined as 'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual /online perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).' **(Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland a Seven Year Strategy: March 2016).**

**If it comes to the attention of school staff that Domestic Abuse, is or may be, affecting a child this will be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.**

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed established procedures set out in our school policy.

**Forced Marriage** A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in Strandtown Primary School we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

### **Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour**

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. As a school we support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as 'healthy', 'problematic' or 'sexually harmful'. Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention, however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting. Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the EA CPSS may be required. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2016/05 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

### **What is Harmful Sexualised Behaviour?**

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when:

- There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or
- the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim
- Harmful sexualised behaviour can include: Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed through the school's positive behaviour policy but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and in our school we will refer to our child protection policy and, seek the support that is available from the CPSS.

## E safety/Internet abuse

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social environments and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in schools and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report 'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland' which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content risks:** the child or young person is exposed to harmful material.
- **Contact risks:** the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- **Conduct risks:** the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.
- **Commercial risks:** the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

We in Strandtown Primary School have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like.

The school's actions and governance of online safety are reflected clearly in our safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

## Sexting

Is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile or over the internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

**Sexting between individuals in a relationship** schools should look at this individually. Whilst their procedures should be the same as below they may want to include something specific here re what their preventative curriculum approach will be.

Pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the **Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008**, to take, possess or share 'indecent images' of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship) and in these cases we will contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance. We may also seek advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service.

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

## sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 ([www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted)) to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent.

If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared further whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures of the school will be followed.

## **Children with Increased Vulnerabilities**

### **Children with a disability**

Children and young people with disabilities (i.e. any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse and those working with children with disabilities should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues.

Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult. Staff and volunteers working with children with disabilities will receive training to enable them to identify and refer concerns early in order to allow preventative action to be taken.

### **Children with limited fluency in English**

As with children with a special educational need, children who are not fluent in English should be given the chance 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.

Designated Teachers should work with their LSC (Learning Support co-ordinators) along with school staff with responsibility for newcomer pupils, seeking advice from the EA's Inclusion and Diversity Service to identify and respond to any particular communication needs that a child may have. All schools should try to 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.

### **Looked After Children**

In consultation with other agencies and professionals, a Health and Social Care Trust may determine that a child or young person's welfare cannot be safeguarded if they remain at home. In these circumstances, a child may be accommodated through a voluntary arrangement with the persons with parental responsibility for the child or the HSCT may make an application to the Court for a Care Order to place the child or young person in an alternative placement provided by the Trust. The HSCT will then make arrangements for the child to be looked after, either permanently or temporarily. It is important that the views of children, young people and their parents and/or others with parental responsibility for the looked child are taken into account when decisions are made.

A member of school staff will attend LAC meetings and will provide a written report. Where necessary, school support will be put in place for the child/young person. Information will be shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

### **Children / young people who go missing**

Children and young people who go missing come from all backgrounds and communities and are known to be at greater risk of harm. This includes risks of being sexually abused or exploited although children and young people may also become homeless or a victim or perpetrator of crime. Those who go missing from their family home may have no involvement with services as not all children and young people who run away or go missing from their family home have underlying issues within the family, or are reported to the police as missing.

The patterns of going missing may include overnight absences or those who have infrequent unauthorised absences of short time duration. When a child or young person returns, having been missing for a period, we should be alert to the possibility that they may have been harmed and to any behaviours or relationships or other indicators that children and young people may have been abused.

School staff will work in partnership with those who look after the child or young person who goes missing and, if appropriate, will complete a risk assessment. Current school policies will apply e.g. attendance, safeguarding, relationships and sexuality education.

### **Child Trafficking**

Is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child or young person, whether by force or not, by a third person or group, for the purpose of different types of exploitation.

**If we become aware of a child or young person who may be separated, unaccompanied or a victim of human trafficking we in Strandtown Primary School will immediately follow our safeguarding and child protection procedures**

### **Children of parents with additional support needs**

Children and young people can be affected by the disability of those caring for them. Parents, carers or siblings with disabilities may have additional support needs which impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the family, possibly affecting their education or physical and emotional development. It is important that any action school staff take to safeguard children and young people at risk of harm in these circumstances encompasses joint working between specialist disability and children's social workers and other professionals and agencies involved in providing services to adult family members. This will assist us in ensuring the welfare of the children and young people in the family is promoted and they are safeguarded as effectively as possible.

Where it is known or suspected that parents or carers have impaired ability to care for a child, the safeguarding team will give consideration to the need for a child protection response in addition to the provision of family support and intervention.

### **Gender identity issues and sexual orientation**

Young people from the LGBTQ community may face particular difficulties which could make them more vulnerable to harm. These difficulties could range from intolerance and homophobic bullying from others to difficulties for the young person themselves in exploring and understanding their sexuality. At such times young people may be more vulnerable to predatory advances from adults seeking to exploit or abuse them. This could impede a young person's ability or willingness to raise concerns if they feel they are at risk or leave young people exposed to contact with people who would exploit them.

As a staff working with young people from the LGBT community we will support them to appropriately access information and support on healthy relationships and to report any concerns or risks of abuse or exploitation.

**Residential settings** Children in the above settings are particularly vulnerable to abuse. We will ensure that staff are appropriately vetted and trained in accordance with EA guidance.

**School trips and educational visits** Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people also includes periods when they are in our care outside of the school setting. We will follow EA guidance on educational visits, school trips and work experience to ensure our current safeguarding policies are adhered to and that appropriate staffing levels are in place.

### **Children/young people's behaviours**

#### **Peer Abuse**

Children and young people may be at risk of physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. Such abuse should always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. Where a child or young person has been harmed by another, all school staff should be aware of their responsibilities in relation to both children and young people who perpetrate the abuse as well as those who are victims of it and, where necessary, should contribute to an inter-disciplinary and multi-agency response.

## Self-Harm

Self-harm encompasses a wide range of behaviours and things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way, which are damaging. It may indicate a temporary period of emotional pain or distress, or deeper mental health issues which may result in the development of a progressive pattern of worsening self-harm that may ultimately result in death by misadventure or suicide. Self-harm may involve abuse of substances such as alcohol or drugs, including both illegal and/or prescribed drugs.

Self-harming behaviours may indicate that a child or young person has suffered abuse; however this is not always the case. School staff should share concerns about a child or young person who is self-harming with a member of the safeguarding team who will seek advice from appropriately qualified and experienced professionals including those in the non-statutory sector to make informed assessments of risk in relation to self-harming behaviours.

## Suicidal Ideation

Staff must act without delay if they have concerns about a child or young person who presents as being suicidal as it is important that children and young people who communicate thoughts of suicide or engage in para-suicidal behaviours are seen urgently by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, including those in the non-statutory sector, to ensure they are taken seriously, treated with empathy, kindness and understanding and informed assessments of risk and needs can be completed as a matter of priority.

## PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

The designated teacher for child protection is Mr Devine. In his absence the deputy designated teacher for child protection Miss Courtenay will assume responsibility for child protection. On the rare occasion that neither DT or DDT is in the school the Principal, Mrs Hutchinson will assume responsibility for child protection.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff MUST act promptly.**

**They should not investigate** – this is a matter for social services – but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with him, make full notes (signing & dating them), and hand the note to the DT.

The DT will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

The DT, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to social services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to social services.** Unless there are concerns that a parent/guardian may be the possible abuser, the parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with The Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS) – Designated Officer for Child Protection at EA, or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse of a child, the DT will inform:

- Social Services – using the regional UNOCINI framework
- EAs/CCM'Ss Designated Officer for Child Protection

\*The UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral will be made within 24 hours of the initial telephone referral to social services Gateway Team.

**(This will be done in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL – CHILD PROTECTION')**

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, they should talk with the DT.

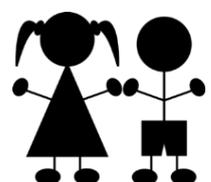
It should be noted that the information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'.

### **Confidentiality**

Where a child confides in a member of staff or a volunteer and requests that the information is kept a secret it is important that the child is told sensitively that it may be necessary to share the information with those who need to know about it and explain that this is important to ensure the child's safekeeping.

All staff and volunteers who receive sensitive information about children or parents in the course of their professional duties should be aware that such information is confidential and is not to be made the subject of general conversation, or disclosed to others outside the school other than statutory officials as required by this policy.

All records of safeguarding / child protection nature are held securely within the school. Access to such records is restricted to the Principal and the Designated Teacher (DT) / Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection.



**STRANDTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Child Welfare/Protection Form 1**



**CAUSE OF CONCERN**

**Class**

**Pupil's Name**

**Dates**

**Teacher's Name**

**Place**

**Area of Concern**

**Signature**

**Teacher**

**Signature**

**Designated**

**Signature**

**Teacher Principal**

**STRANDTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Child Welfare/Protection Form 2**



**CAUSE OF CONCERN**

**Pupil's Name:**

**Class:**

**Teacher's Name:**

**Dates:**

**Place:**

**Advice given by designated teacher to class teacher:**

**Action taken**

**Outcome**

**Signature**

**Signature**

**Signature**

**Teacher**

**Designated**

**Teacher Principal**

## Child, Young Person or Adult's Details

<b>Family Last Name:</b>	<b>Alternate Last Name:</b>
<b>Family Home Address:</b>	<b>Previous Home Address:</b>
<b>Post code:</b>	<b>Post code:</b>
<b>Telephone No:</b>	
<b>GP Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Tel. No:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	<b>Number Of Children: 1</b>

<b>First Name:</b>	<b>ID Number:</b>
<b>Aliases:</b>	<b>DOB:</b>
<b>Probation Officer:</b>	<b>Referral Code: (if relevant)</b>
<b>Reason for Involvement:</b>	

<b>Name:</b>			<b>ID Number:</b>		
<b>Known As:</b>			<b>EDD/DoB:</b>		
<b>Gender:</b>			<b>Referral Code: (if relevant)</b>		
<b>Mobile Number:</b>			<b>School:</b>		
<b>Previously Known:</b>	Yes / No	<b>On CP Register:</b>	Yes /No	<b>Presenting Need:</b>	
<b>Does the Child have a Disability?</b>	Yes / No	<b>If Yes, What Disability: (&amp; source of diagnosis)</b>		<b>Other Special Needs:</b>	
<b>Nationality:</b>		<b>Ethnic Origin:</b>		<b>Religion:</b>	

Last Name & Alt. Last Names(s)	First Name	Phone Number <small>(inc mobiles)</small>	ID Number	Date of Birth	Relationship to Child/YP	Nationality
		Address <small>(leave blank if family address)</small>	Ref Code <small>(if applicable)</small>		Parental Responsibility	
					P.R: Y/N	
					P.R: Y/N	
					P.R: Y/N	
					P.R: Y/N	
					P.R: Y/N	

<b>Language(s) Spoken:</b>	
<b>Requirement for Interpreter, Signer or Document Translation:</b> (Please specify)	

<b>Other Household Members (including non-family members):</b>					
Last Name & Alt. Last Names(s)	First Name	Phone Number	ID Number	Date of Birth	Relationship to child/YP

<b>Significant others, (including family members, who are not members of the child or young person's household)</b>						
Last Name & Alt. Last Names(s)	First Name	Address	Phone Number	ID Number	Date of Birth	Relationship to child / YP

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Email and Telephone</b>
School Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:
G.P. Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:
Health Professional Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:
Police Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:
Other - specify Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:
Other - specify Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:
Other - specify Address:	Name: Role:	Tel.: Email:

NB: When considering this section, please refer to the UNOC1N1 Guidance to assist you

History of previous contacts

Are immediate actions necessary to safeguard the child or young person?

YES/NO

If Yes, please provide details and indicate your view regarding who should take responsibility for these actions.

If UNOCINI is being used as a referral

Awareness of referral Child/Young Person Yes  No  Parent/Carer Yes  No

Has consent been given: Child/Young Person Yes  No  Parent/Carer Yes  No

If you have answered No to any of the above, please explain: - Signature of Referrer Date

Name and Contact Information

To be completed by receiving agency

REASON FOR REFERRAL (and/or code if relevant)

REFERRING AGENCY (and/or code if relevant)

Does the referrer wish to remain anonymous?

YES/NO

RECEIVED BY

TIME RECEIVED

DATE RECEIVED

ACTIONS TAKEN

*Is a Child Protection Investigation under Joint Protocol being undertaken*

YES/NO

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISING MANAGER

DATE

<p align="center"><b>AGENCY &amp; CONTACT DETAILS</b></p>	<p>Date: Information Shared (if direct contact made with agency)</p>
<p>School: Name: Role:</p>	<p>Date: Info shared:</p>
<p>G.P: Name: Role:</p>	<p>Date: Info shared:</p>
<p>Health Professional: Name: Role:</p>	<p>Date: Info shared:</p>
<p>Police: Name: Role:</p>	<p>Date: Info shared:</p>
<p>Other – specify Name: Role:</p>	<p>Date: Info shared:</p>
<p>Other – specify Name: Role:</p>	<p>Date: Info shared:</p>

## **OVERVIEW**

Please comment on strengths needs and risks (this includes any child protection concerns), providing supporting evidence throughout. It is not necessary to comment on all factors if they are not relevant, or if they fall outside your area of expertise and/or knowledge of the child and family. For definitions, see the UNOCINI Guide.

## **HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

## **EDUCATION AND LEARNING**

## **IDENTITY, SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF - CARE**

## **FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

**Parents or Carers Capacity to Meet the Child or Young Person's Needs**

**Basic Care & Ensuring Safety**

**Emotional Warmth**

**Guidance, Boundaries and Stimulation**

**Stability**

**Family History, Functioning and Well Being**

**Extended Family & Social & Community Resources**

**Housing**

**Employment & Income**

## SUMMARY

Was the child/young person spoken to /engaged with for the purpose of completing the Initial assessment. YES/NO

If no please give reasons:

Dates child / young person and family / carers were seen.

NAME

DATE

What strengths have you identified?

What needs have you identified?

What existing and/or potential risks have you identified?

What resilience or protective factors have you identified?

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Record your conclusions and recommendations. It will be helpful to work with the child or young person and their parents and carers to take account of their ideas, solutions and goals.

**What are your conclusions?**

**What are your recommendations?**

e.g. no further action, referral to HSS or other agency, multi-agency meeting, work with the child/young person or their parents/carers.

:

**Record the child or young person's views of your comments and recommendations**

**Record the parents\* or carers\* views of your comments and recommendations**

## Consents to Assessment

### CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

1. Is the child or young person aware that you have undertaken this UNOCINI? YES/NO

If no, please explain:

Has the child/young person been given a copy of the leaflet covering information sharing and confidentiality? YES/NO

2. Has the child or young person given you consent to share this UNOCINI? YES/NO

If yes, which agencies have they given you consent to share the UNOCINI with?

If no, please explain:

3. Child or young person's consent to share information as above:

**Signature:**

**Date:**

(of child/young person or professional)

1. Is parents or carer aware that you have undertaken this UNOCINI? YES/NO

If no please explain:

Has the parent or care been given a copy of the leaflet covering information sharing and confidentiality? YES/NO

2. Has the parent or carer given you consent to share this UNOCINI? YES/NO

If yes, which agencies have they given you consent to share this UNOCINI with?

If no, please explain:

3. Parent or carer's signature of consent to share information as above:

**Signature:**

**Date:**

(of parent/carer or professional)

Has the completed UNOCINI been shared with the appropriate family members? YES/NO

Has the completed UNOCINI been sent to the appropriate family members? YES/NO

Has a copy of the complaints leaflet been given to the appropriate family members?  
YES/NO

## About the Person Completing the UNOCINI Assessment

<b>Name:</b>			
<b>Agency:</b>			
<b>Position:</b>			
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

### Actions Taken by Receiving Agency

<b>Referral Acknowledgement</b>			
<b>Referral Level of Priority</b>			
<b>UNOCINI Closed at Point of Referral</b> <small>(i.e. without allocation)</small>			
<b>Presenting Category</b> <small>(include codc if relevant)</small>			
<b>SOSCARE Entry Complete</b> <small>(irrelevant)</small>			
<b>Allocated To</b> <small>(name)</small>			
<b>Has Family Group Conference been Considered?</b>			
<b>UNOCINI Level of Need</b>			
<b>Outcome Acknowledgement</b> <small>(to professional referrer)</small>			
<b>Further Action Agreed</b>			
<b>Transfer to:</b>			
<b>Recommended Pathway:</b> <small>(please specify: CP, FS, LAC)</small>			
<b>Closure</b> <small>(specify reason &amp; include codc if relevant)</small>			

## TALKING TO CHILDREN WHERE THERE ARE CONCERNS

 Care should be taken in asking questions and interpreting answers

 The extent of questioning should be minimal

 Leading questions should not be asked: -

***“Did they do X to you?”***

***Rather.... “Tell me what has happened”***

 Listen rather than talk

 Do not interrupt or try to interpret

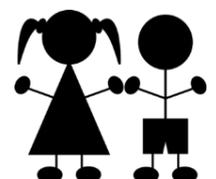
 Note afterwards what has been said

 Pass this information to the designated teacher with date, time, place and those present Record visible signs of physical injury in detail without having removed any clothing. Do not take photographs

 Any comments about injury made by parent or carer about the injury/injuries should be recorded

 No guarantee of confidentiality should be given to the child

 Staff should know that written notes may be used in legal proceedings as evidence



## CONDUCT OF STAFF

### Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct, which applies to all staff and volunteers, is designed to give guidance on the standards of behaviour which should be observed. School staff and volunteers are role models, in a unique position of influence and trust and their behaviour should set a good example to all the pupils within Strandtown Primary School. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It is merely for guidance and specific breaches of the Code must not be viewed as a disciplinary offence. The Code includes sections on:

- Setting an Example
- Relationships and Attitudes
- Private Meetings with Pupils
- Physical Contact with Pupils
- Honesty and Integrity
- Conduct Outside of Work
- E-Safety and Internet Use
- Confidentiality

### 1. Setting an Example

- 1.1** All staff and volunteers in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff and volunteers should therefore, for example, avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times, and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. All staff and volunteers should be familiar with all school policies and procedures and to comply with these so as to set a good example to pupils.
- 1.2** Staff and volunteers must always comply with statutory requirements in relation to such issues as discrimination, health and safety and data protection.

### 2. Relationships and Attitudes

- 2.1** All staff and volunteers should treat pupils with respect and dignity and not in a manner which demeans or undermines them, their parents or carers, or colleagues. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and maturity of their pupils. They should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require thought to ensure that conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times.
- 2.2** Staff and volunteers may have less formal contact with pupils outside of school; perhaps through mutual membership of social groups, sporting organisations, or family connections. Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school would be aware of any such relationship and should therefore consider whether the school should be made aware of the connection.
- 2.3** Staff and volunteers should always behave in a professional manner, which within the context of this Code of Conduct includes such aspects as:
- acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and other stakeholders.
  - co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service.
  - respect for school property.
  - taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises.
  - being familiar with communication channels and school procedures applicable to both pupils and staff and volunteers.
  - respect for the rights and opinions of others.

### **3. Private Meetings with Pupils**

**3.1** It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews with individual pupils must take place. As far as possible, staff and volunteers should conduct interviews in a room with visual access or with an open door and ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. Where possible, another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview.

### **4. Physical Contact with Pupils**

**4.1** To avoid misinterpretations, and so far as is practicable, staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with a pupil.

**4.2** Staff and volunteers should therefore be cognisant of the guidance issued by the Department on the use of reasonable force (Circular 1999/09 and guidance document 'Towards a Model Policy in Schools on Use of Reasonable Force).

**4.3** Staff who have to administer first aid to a pupil should ensure that it is done in the presence of other children or an adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.

**4.4** Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities. Staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

### **5. Honesty and Integrity**

**5.1** All staff and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

**5.2** Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school (eg a supplier of materials) must be declared to the Principal. A record should be kept of all such gifts received. This requirement does not apply to "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents eg at Christmas or the end of the school year. Staff and volunteers should be mindful that gifts to individual pupils may be considered inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

### **6. Conduct outside of Work**

**6.1** Staff and volunteers should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of Strandtown Primary School or the staff/volunteer's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

**6.2** Staff and volunteers may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary and should ensure it does not affect their work performance in the school. Advice should be sought from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

### **7. E-Safety and Internet Use**

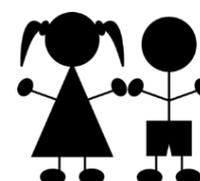
**7.1** A staff member or volunteer's off duty hours are their personal concern but all staff and volunteers should exercise caution when using information technology and be fully aware of the risks to themselves and others. For school-based activities, advice is contained in the school's Online Safety Policy.

**7.2** Staff and volunteers should exercise particular caution in relation to making online associations/friendships with current pupils via social media and using texting/email facilities to communicate with them. It is preferable that any contact with pupils is made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when necessary.

### **8. Confidentiality**

**8.1** Staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about pupils including highly sensitive or private information. It should not be shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

- 8.2** There are some circumstances in which a member of staff or volunteer may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals should pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities: Mr. C Devine (Designed Teacher), Miss P Courtenay (Deputy Designated Teacher) or Mrs. V Hutchinson (Principal).
- 8.3** If a member of staff or volunteer is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential they should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior leadership.
- 8.4** Staff and volunteers need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same under any circumstances. Additionally concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Principal or a member of the safeguarding team without delay.



## COMPLAINTS AGAINST SCHOOL STAFF

Where a complaint is made about possible abuse by a member of staff of the school, the following procedures should be followed.

1. If the complaint has not been made directly to the Principal (Mrs Hutchinson) and she is not the subject of the complaint, it should be referred directly to her by the person to whom it was made.
2. To form a clearer view on the complaint, the Principal may need to seek clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information, or from others who have relevant information.
3. Having satisfied herself that a complaint has been made, the Principal should immediately:

-  Inform the designated teacher who will initiate the record of the complaint
-  Consult, as a matter of urgency, with the designated officer of the EA to form an initial assessment as to whether or not there is sufficient substance in the allegation to warrant further action
-  Consult the Chairperson of the BOG

In the light of the advice taken, the Principal, in consultation with the Chairperson of the BOG, will decide:

-  That the allegation is apparently without substance, and no further action is necessary or
-  That an immediate referral to the Social Services or the Police is warranted or
-  That the allegation concerns inappropriate behaviour which needs to be considered under the disciplinary procedures

**Where it is decided that no further action is necessary,** it is the Principal's responsibility to:

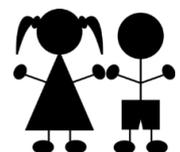
-  Advise the member of staff concerned that a complaint has been made and the nature of it; also of the fact that it is considered to be without substance and no further action is being taken
-  Advise the designated officer in the EA of the decision taken
-  Advise the complainant, in writing, of the action taken, including information on other means of pursuing their complaint if they remain dissatisfied

In these circumstances, the Principal should consider whether the child may have been abused by someone else, and if necessary report the matter to the Social Services. He should also consider counselling for the child and for the member of staff.

The Principal should place a brief record of the complaint in the file of the pupil concerned, indicating the nature of the complaint, when, by whom and to whom it was made, and a short explanation why it was considered that no further action should be taken, together with copies of any correspondence on the complaint.

**Where the Principal decided that a formal referral is necessary,** it is their responsibility to ensure that the following are notified immediately:

-  Social Services or the Police
-  The designated officer of the EA
-  The chairperson of the BOG who should bring the matter to the attention of the BOG as soon as possible



## Where the Principal decided that disciplinary proceedings should be Initiated,

The following procedures should be followed:

-  The Teacher's negotiating machinery should be followed
-  The Principal should ensure that details of all written and spoken communications are kept for a period of 5 years
-  A summary should be kept in the 'Record of Child Complaints\*' (NB only records of disciplinary matters raised in the context of child protection should be recorded here)
-  The complainant should be notified as soon as possible that the complaint is being pursued under disciplinary procedures and kept informed of progress including sanctions taken.

## COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE PRINCIPAL

When a complaint is made against the Principal, the procedure is the same as for 'Complaints Against a Member of Staff, except that the Principal's role will be taken by the chairperson of the BOG. The power to suspend will be invested in them. The EA should be consulted immediately.

## PRECAUTIONARY SUSPENSIONS

An immediate decision will be necessary as to whether this is necessary or not.

A member of staff may only be suspended by the Principal or chair of Board of Governors. The employing authority must be consulted before a suspension or as soon as possible thereafter.

**Precautionary suspension should not be automatic** and depending on the circumstances of the case some preliminary investigation by Social Services and/or police may be necessary before a decision is taken to suspend even as a precautionary measure.

In all cases where the principal has decided that a formal referral is warranted, the member of staff should be immediately removed from direct contact duties.

Depending on the **nature and severity** of the allegations and the potential risk to children, **immediate suspension may be necessary**.

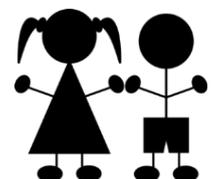
All members of the BOG must be notified as soon as possible.

Where the police or Social Services have been notified directly, they may advise suspension as a precaution.

When a decision has been taken to make a formal referral and a suspension is to take place, **the teacher must be advised in writing** of the allegations and the reasons for precautionary suspension. The teacher should be advised to seek professional advice before making any form of response. The right to consult with a trade union rep should be respected.

The complainant should be advised in writing of the decision to make a referral and to suspend the member of staff.

The principal should take steps to keep up to date on any ongoing investigation. Advice can be taken from Social Services and police.



## RECORD KEEPING

The principal must keep a detailed record of all details of the complaint.

- When
- By Whom
- To whom was the complaint made
- What supplementary evidence ..... from whom .. . its nature
- Details of injury
- From whom was advice sought .. . the nature of this
- The decisions taken .. .how .. . when .. . by whom .. . . conveyed to whom...why
- Referral made by whom .. . to whom .. . and when
- Copy of any correspondence with the complainant
- The record to be signed by principal and countersigned by designated teacher
- Record to be kept in school in the file of the child and member of staff
- Entry to be made in the school 'Record of Child Abuse Complaints'

If, after an investigation, the member of staff is exonerated, the record in the teacher's file should be expunged and the entry in the 'Record of Child Abuse Complaints' deleted or struck through.

The record in the child's file should be noted and should stand until the child's 21st birthday in case there are subsequent complaints.

In all other cases the records should be kept indefinitely.

## COMPLAINTS AGAINST A PERSON NOT ON THE SCHOOL'S STAFF

When a complaint is made against the above, the following procedures should be followed:

The Principal should ensure that proper records, dated and signed, are kept of all complaints or information received, and all concerns about possible abuse noted by staff. As soon as possible, she should obtain a written record from the member of staff who received the information, or otherwise has concerns about possible abuse, setting out:

- The nature of the information who gave it
- The time, date and circumstances
- Where the concern relates to signs or symptoms of possible abuse, a description of these

The Principal or designated teacher should supplement the record with:

- Details of any advice sought, from whom and when
- The decision reached as to whether the case should be referred to Social Services; and, if so,
- How, when and by whom this was done otherwise, reasons for not referring to Social Services

The person who made the complaint, or gave the information, should be advised as soon as possible by the principal or designated teacher about whether or not the complaint has been referred to an investigating agency. How this is done, when and by whom, should also be included in the record.

## COMPLAINTS AGAINST A MEMBER OF THE BOG

When a complaint is made against a member of the BOG, the same procedures should be followed as above. The Principal should immediately inform the chairperson, unless she is the subject of the complaint, in which case the Chairperson's role should be exercised by the Vice-Chairperson. The designated officer of the EA should be informed immediately.

## ANONYMOUS INFORMATION

The Principal must decide if allegations of this nature have any substance. If the Principal believes that there is a risk situation, there should be an immediate referral. If malicious or mischievous intention is suspected, the EA, Social Services and Police can advise.

If a referral is made, follow all procedures as for a named source.

## WHEN MIGHT IT BE APPROPRIATE TO USE REASONABLE FORCE?

In a situation where other behaviour strategies have failed to resolve the problem, or are inappropriate (e.g. in an emergency), there is a wide variety of circumstances in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to restrain or control a pupil. They will fall into three broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline
- 

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are

- A pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil or pupils are fighting
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- A pupil is running in a corridor in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

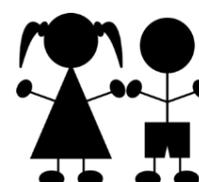
Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

However, some practical considerations also need to be considered.

Before intervening physically, a member of staff should seek to deploy other behaviour strategies. **Where these have failed, the member of staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if they do not. The member of staff should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.** A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.

Sometimes a member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency), for example, when dealing with an older pupil, or a physically large pupil, or more than one pupil or if the teacher believes they may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances the member of staff should remove other pupils who might be at risk and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary telephone the Police. The member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally and try to prevent the incident from escalating.



Situations where a pupil refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom need to be handled carefully as they can be a prelude to a major confrontation. Where a pupil persistently refuses to leave a classroom and the teacher believes that the use of reasonable force will endanger the teacher or other pupils, the school should have an emergency response procedure whereby assistance can be summoned quickly, for example the red 'emergency' triangle is sent or the telephone is used.

If you are aware that a pupil in your class is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, a plan should be devised stating how to respond if the situation arises. This plan should be discussed and agreed with your Head of Year and the principal.

This plan should address the following points:

-  Managing the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
-  Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
-  Briefing other members of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
-  Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate

What might be regarded as constituting reasonable force?

Physical intervention can take a number of forms. It might involve staff:

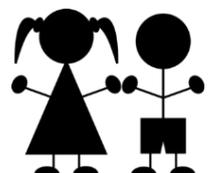
-  Physically interposing between pupils
-  Blocking a pupil's path
-  Holding
-  Pushing
-  Pulling
-  Leading a pupil by the arm
-  Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back or
-  (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of "reasonable force": for example, to prevent a pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something.

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

-  Holding a pupil round the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe
-  Slapping, punching, kicking or using any implement on a pupil
-  Throwing any object at a pupil
-  Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
-  Tripping up a pupil
-  Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
-  Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

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



## RECORDING OF INCIDENTS

There will be a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion (except minor or trivial incidents) where reasonable force is used. This may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful should there be a complaint. The incident should be recorded in an incident book. Immediately following any such incident, the member of staff concerned should tell the Principal or a senior member of staff and provide a short written factual report as soon as possible afterwards. That report should include:

-  The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place
-  The names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident
-  The reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or a member of staff)
-  Briefly, how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long
-  The pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident
-  Details of any obvious or apparent injury suffered by the pupil, or any other person, and of any damage to property

At least annually, the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Principal will review the entries in the incident book. Records of incidents should be **kept for 5 years** after the date they occurred. Staff would be advised to seek advice from a senior colleague (e.g. the Principal or senior member of staff) or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report.

**Parents will be informed of an incident involving their child. They will be given an opportunity to discuss the incident.**

Incidents involving the use of force can cause the parents of the pupil involved great concern. Teachers will be advised to inform parents of an incident involving their child (other than a trivial incident) and give them an opportunity to discuss it. The Principal, or a member of staff to whom the incident is reported, will need to consider whether that should be done straight away or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

The possibility that a complaint might result in a disciplinary hearing, or a criminal prosecution, or in a civil action brought by a pupil or parent, cannot be ruled out in these circumstances it would be for the disciplinary panel or the court to decide whether the use and degree of force was reasonable in all the circumstances. In doing so, the disciplinary panel or court would have regard to the provisions of Article 4. It would also be likely to take account of the school's policy on the use of reasonable force, whether that had been followed, and the need to prevent injury, damage, or disruption, in considering all the circumstances of the case.

