

LARGYMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Updated: April 2017

INTRODUCTION

Largymore Primary School is committed to the care of its pupils and doing what is reasonable in all circumstances in order to safeguard and promote pupils safety and welfare, both in school and in school related activities outside the usual classroom environment. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where pupils are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that pupils receive effective support, protection and justice.

The paramount principle as outlined in The Children (NI) Order 1995 states the welfare of the child must come first which underpins the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Our work is also guided by the DENI Circular 1999/10 Pastoral Care in Schools, the Area Child Protection Committees Regional Policy and Procedures 2005, and Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in N Ireland 2016,

It is important to note that due to NI Child Care Legislation, we are duty bound to comply with specific child protection requirements. Consequently, we may contact external agencies and/or make referral to external agencies without consulting parents. We recognise and accept that our first responsibility is, at all times, towards the children in our care.

SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING WELFARE – DEFINITION

There are two aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They are:

- arrangements to take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised;
- arrangements to take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

(Safeguarding Children in Education Sept 2004)

ETHOS

In Largymore we recognize the contribution that ALL staff and volunteers make in helping to make our school a safe environment. We promote a child-centred ethos where children are listened to by adults and taken seriously. We also recognize that everyone in our school community has a role to play and is committed to safeguarding the children in our care by ensuring:

- that all children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language , religion or sexual identity are safe and protected in our school
- that all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, are fully aware of their pastoral responsibilities and are alerted to the possible signs of abuse.
- that all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching have been provided with Child Protection training and are well informed of procedures to be followed.

The school is conscious of children who have special needs that may put them in a particularly vulnerable position.

In Largymore our Safeguarding team includes:

Mrs Gillian Dunlop (Principal/ Deputy Designated Teacher)
Mrs Arlene Poots (Designated Teacher)
Mrs Viola McConnell (Time for Me Counsellor)
Mrs Jill Lester (Chair of Governors)

We have designated Mrs Arlene Poots, to have specific responsibility for child protection. Mrs Arlene Poots has been identified as the Designated Teacher to all members of staff – teaching and non teaching,

pupils, parents and governors. In Mrs Poots's absence, Mrs Gillian Dunlop, Principal, will assume this responsibility.

All Staff, Board of Governors and School Volunteers have been subject to the appropriate vetting procedures as required by the Department of Education. Parent Volunteers who are in regular contact with pupils are vetted by Access NI.

Copies of the DENI Circular and the school's policy on 'Dealing with Concerns about Child Protection Issues' can be found in:

- the school office;
- the designated teacher's 'Child Protection' file.
- the school website.

TRAINING

All teaching and non-teaching staff receive annual Child Protection training from the Designated teacher. Extended School staff are also trained in Child Protection procedures

The Preventative Curriculum

Pupils are taught safeguarding messages through the curriculum in PD &MU, The World Around Us and through Circle Time activities. The school also delivers the NSPCC 'Keeping Safe Programme' throughout the school.

NSPCC KEEPING SAFE PROGRAMME

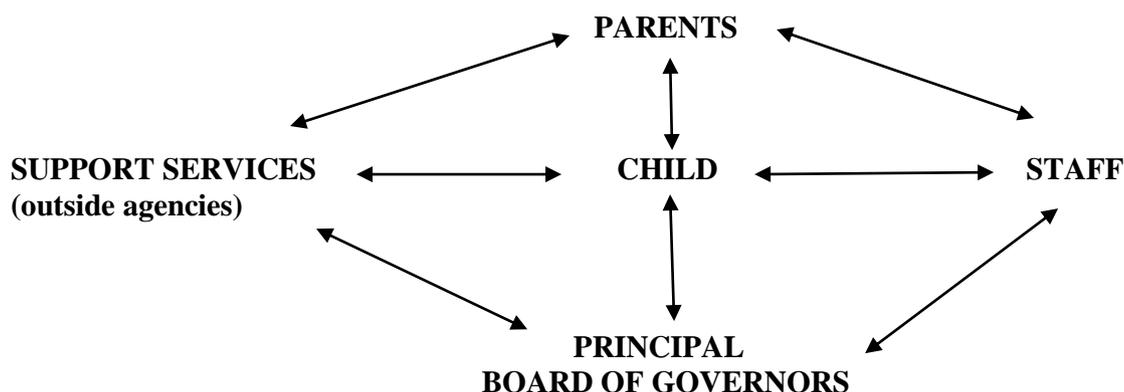
In Largymore Primary School the NSPCC 'Keeping Safe' programme is delivered by staff to all year groups. Pupils are taught safeguarding messages through the themes of 'healthy relationships', 'my body' and 'being safe'. The programme provides pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to recognise and keep themselves safe from abuse and teaches them that they have a right to feel safe at home, in school and online.

The Keeping Safe programme teaches children prevention, while preserving their sense of the world around them as a basically safe and secure place. This approach allows children to exercise control, to be assertive, and enables them to seek help for any problem they may encounter. The programme teaches strategies for dealing with various potentially dangerous situations and children are given the opportunity to practice these strategies in the classroom. Thus, the concepts are translated into skills which become part of the child's repertoire of self-protective behaviour.

Parents are consulted and involved in homework activities throughout the programme

(see appendix 3 for NSPCC 'Keeping Safe' policy)

Figure 1: Approach to Preventative Curriculum



Our Safeguarding programme is centred on the child and we recognise the role of all stakeholders in promoting the welfare of all children.

CHILD ABUSE - DEFINITION

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care.

The NI Children's Order 1995 ("Co-operating to Protect Children") recognizes that "children may be abused by a parent, sibling or other relative, a carer (i.e. a person who has actual custody of a child, such as a foster parent or staff member in a residential home), an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or of a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both.

The abuse may take a number of forms:

A. CATEGORIES OF ABUSE ('Co-operating to Safeguard Children', May 2003)

1. Physical Abuse

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, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional 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. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. 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 parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional harm.

3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves the actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, and that violate the social taboos of family roles. 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 or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including e-technology).

4. 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, 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).

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time. When domestic violence is reported there is an immediate referral to Social Services and advice sought from the Education Authority.

5. Exploitation

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engaging 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. Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a person(s) exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse.

6. Domestic Violence and abuse is:

‘Threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.’

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

B. POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they ‘tell’. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate. For these reasons it is vital that staff are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the Designated Teacher.

These physical and behavioural indicators of abuse are not exhaustive and it must always be remembered that alternative reasons of a medical, social or psychological nature may exist for these indicators. They do not necessarily denote child abuse.

Physical abuse

Physical Indicators:

- Scratches
- Human bite marks or welts
- Bruises in places difficult to see/mark
- Burns, especially cigarette burns.
- Unexplained fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries

Behavioural Indicators:

- Self-mutilation tendencies
- Chronic runaway
- Bullying
- Aggressive or withdrawn
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Fear of returning home
- Undue fear of adults
- Flinching at sudden movements
- Fearful watchfulness
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.

Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators:

- Sudden speech disorders
- Developmental delay
- Wetting and soiling
- Signs of mutilation
- Frequent vomiting
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Impulsive stealing

Behavioural Indicators:

- Rocking, thumb sucking, hair twisting
- Chronic running away
- Poor peer relationships
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Inappropriate emotional responses to stressful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Low self-esteem/unable to accept praise

Sexual abuse

Physical Indicators:

- Soreness, bleeding in genital or anal area.
- Itching in genital area.
- Stomach pains or headaches
- Pain on urination
- Difficulty sitting or walking
- Frequent infections

Behavioural Indicators:

- Chronic depression
- Low self-esteem, lack confidence
- Self-mutilation
- Inappropriate language, sexual knowledge for age group
- Sexualised play with explicit acts
- Making sexual advances to others
- Obsessive washing
- Truancy/running away
- Unexplained gifts/ money

Neglect

Physical Indicators:

- Constant Hunger
- Poor clothing/hygiene
- Untreated medical problems
- Exposed to danger, lack of supervision
- Inadequate/ inappropriate clothing

Behavioural Indicators:

- Tiredness, listlessness, lack of concentration.
- Low self esteem
- Lack of peer relationships
- Frequent lateness/ non-attendance at school
- Stealing/begging/scavenging

Further guidance on signs and symptoms of child abuse are to be found in Appendix 2 of the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CORE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The School Principal will act as Chair and the team will comprise the Designated Teacher, DDT, Chair of Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection.

The team takes the lead in Child Protection arrangements making sure training is provided and procedures comply with legislation. They may assist with the identification of safeguarding lessons from the curriculum.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER - MRS A POOTS

- Responsible for taking the lead in the development of the school's safeguarding/child protection policy and ensuring that parents receive a copy of this every two years;
- Responsible for making the referrals to Social Services or PSNI Care Team;
- Coordinates the school's contribution to child protection plans;
- Responsible for notifying the EA's Designated Officer when the need arises;
- Responsible for discussing child protection concerns with all staff and keeping all records
- Responsible for promoting a child protection ethos within the school and acting as a source of support and expertise to the school community;
- Ensures the safeguarding team has identified key safeguarding lessons from the curriculum to be delivered at each key stage;
- Responsible for the training of all teaching and non-teaching staff within the school;
- Responsible for liaising with designated teachers from partner schools, if and when the need arises;
- Responsible for informing new school of any concerns.
- Responsible for keeping the school Principal informed;
- Responsible for ensuring that the Chair of the Board of Governors is informed of matters relating to safeguarding and child protection and for liaising with the designated member of the Board of Governors, for safeguarding and child protection.
- Responsible for notifying the Chair of the Board of Governors, if a complaint is received against the Principal.
- Responsible for written report to Governors regarding child protection issues.
- The Deputy Designated Teacher is Mrs G Dunlop (Principal). She is appropriately trained and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of pupils. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- Ensures that there is a Designated Teacher for child protection and safeguarding and that there is a designated member of the Board of Governors with responsibility for safeguarding and child protection who is trained and takes the lead in child protection and governance arrangements, connects with DT and keeps the governors informed;
- Ensures that there is a child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures that are consistent with requirements of the Department of Education, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request;
- Ensures procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the principal, in which case the Chair assumes lead responsibility;
- Ensures compliance with legislation and policy and recruitment procedures that include the requirement for appropriate checks;
- Ensures a training strategy that results in all staff, including the Principal, receiving child protection and safeguarding training, with refresher training as appropriate;
- Ensures arrangements are in place for all temporary staff and volunteers to be made aware of the school's arrangements for child protection and safeguarding.

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL: MRS G DUNLOP

- Ensures that the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff;
- Allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the Designated Teacher to carry out her role effectively, including the assessment of pupils and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings;
- Ensures that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in line with procedures;
- Ensures that pupils' safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

THE ROLE OF TEACHING STAFF

- Ensure that they report all concerns to the Designated Teacher
- Keep a detailed written record of the concern

Before approaching the **Designated Teacher** with his/her concerns a teacher may seek some clarification from the child, remembering to exercise tact and understanding. Great care must be taken in asking and interpreting children's responses to questions about indicators of abuse. Teachers should be aware that, if their concerns lead to a formal referral, the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings. This is also the case if a child makes an allegation of abuse or voluntarily discloses information which amounts to an allegation. (See Appendix 1)

THE ROLE OF NON-TEACHING STAFF

If any member of the non-teaching staff has concerns about a child or staff member they should report these concerns to the **Designated Teacher** who will keep a detailed written record of the concerns and take any further necessary action.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND OTHER AGENCIES

Social Services have a statutory duty to investigate any case where they receive information suggesting that a child may be in need of care, protection or control, unless satisfied that such enquiries are unnecessary.

Their objective is to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. They have a lead role in co-ordinating the work of all the agencies and professionals concerned with the child's family. A joint protocol has been established between the Social Services and the police for investigative purposes. This will involve the police in investigating situations where a crime may have been committed.

Where there is suspicion that a child has been abused, Social Services may convene a multi-disciplinary case conference which may involve the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher, depending upon who is best placed to contribute effectively to the discussion of the child's welfare.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

It is parents' responsibility to update the school regarding any changes in circumstances relating to child protection issues including Court Order etc.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE

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

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

**Records should contain ONLY factual information:

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

What to record:

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

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

(Appendix 1A summarizes the procedures to be followed when reporting an incident in school).

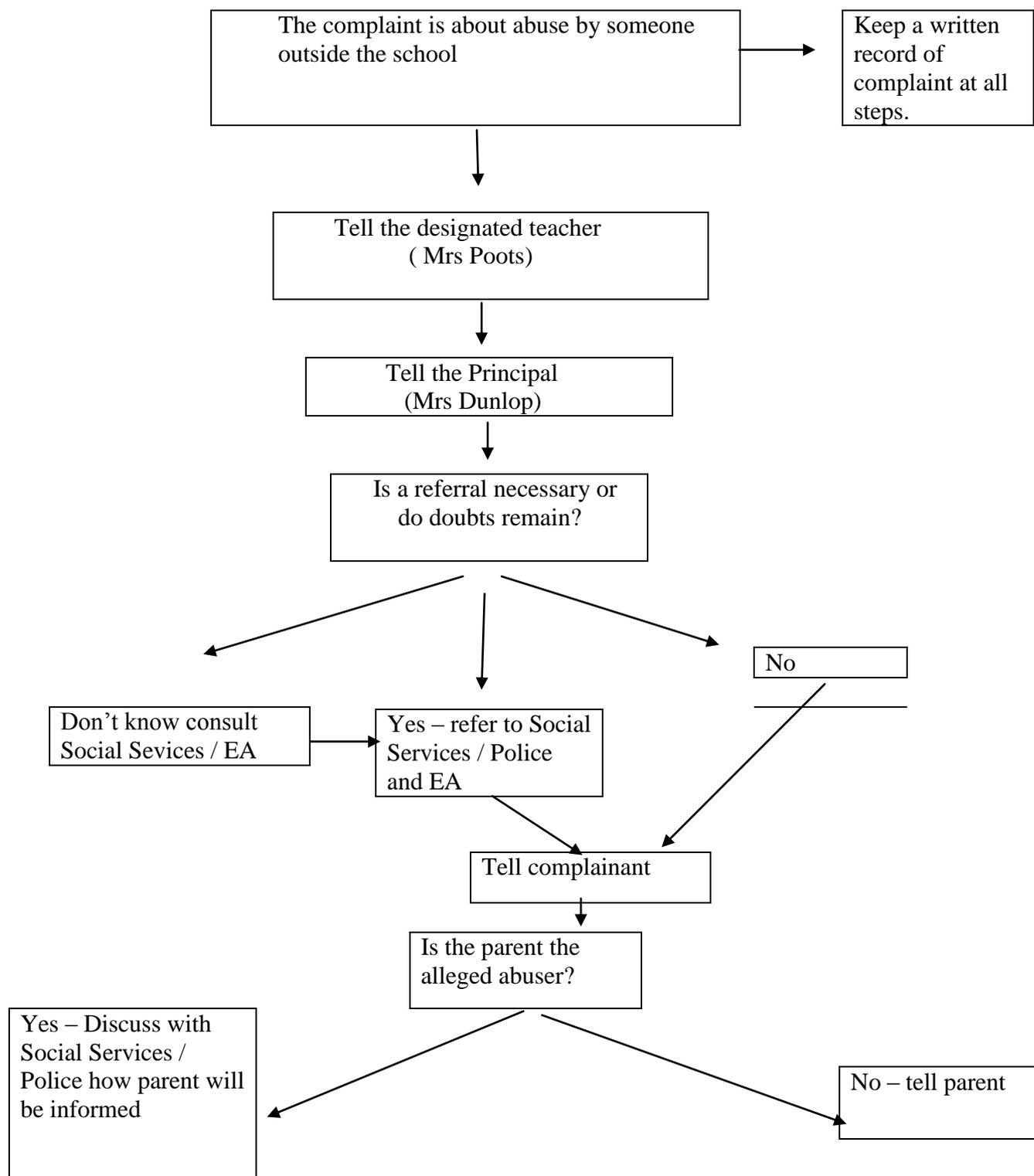
CONFIDENTIALITY

The relationship which teachers and other staff have with the children in their charge is based on trust and often, confidentiality. Such relationships are an integral feature of a secure and caring environment which fosters learning and personal development. Some forms of child abuse are a criminal offence and staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals. All staff should recognise, therefore, that in order to protect children from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action, by involving others, in the child's best interest. **No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be given where abuse is alleged.**

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

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

Figure 2 summarises the procedure to be followed when the school has concerns or has received a report about possible abuse or neglect by anyone other than a member of school staff.



CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE WITHIN THE SCHOOL.

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

- suspicions about a member of staff should be reported to the Designated Teacher (Mrs Arlene Poots) or to the Principal (Mrs Gillian Dunlop).
- The EA's Designated Officer and Chairman of School Board of Governors (Mrs Jill Lester) should be consulted as a matter of urgency.

In exceptional cases where the Principal is suspected:

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

How can a parent raise a concern about a child's safety

- Parents may make known their concerns about their (or another) child's safety by speaking to the class teacher, to Mrs Arlene Poots ~ Designated Teacher or directly to the Principal.
- Procedure followed as in ***Reporting suspected abuse.***
- Once a concern has been voiced the Designated Teacher will agree to keep the parent informed, within one week, on the progress and outcome of their complaint.
- Should the parents be dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may speak directly to the Principal and/or the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

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



I can talk to the class teacher who will inform Mrs Arlene Poots



If I am still concerned I can talk to Mrs Arlene Poots who will investigate and liaise with the Principal, Chair of Governors, Education Authority, Social Services and if necessary, Police.



If I am still concerned I can talk to Mrs Dunlop



If I am still concerned I can contact Mrs Jill Lester, Chair of Governors, via the School Office.

(See Appendix 2 which summarizes the procedure)

CHILD PROTECTION RECORDS

Good record keeping is an essential part of a professional's responsibility and is vital to good child protection practice. It helps to focus child protection work and is important to working across agency and professional bodies.

Staff who receive information about children, about whom there are concerns, and their families, must share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. The appropriate form either incident report or child protection report form must be completed and forwarded to the designated teacher.

Records of all cases of suspected or possible child abuse showing dates, events and action taken, are kept under secure conditions by the principal and will only be destroyed in accordance with the EA's destruction of records policy.

The Principal shall keep, under secure conditions, a 'hard-backed book' in which will be recorded, complaints made against staff or concerns raised regarding staff. This book will be available for inspection by ETI. No reference will be made to the name of the teacher but the TR number will be used for identification. Where a complaint has been found to be without foundation, the entry is scored out.

SHARING INFORMATION

Research, experience and the outcome of inquiries into child abuse have shown that safeguarding children requires professionals and others to share information about:

- a child's health, development and exposure to possible harm
- a parent who may need help, or may not be able to care for a child adequately
- those who may pose a risk of harm to a child
- children who may present a risk to other children.

At all stages of the child protection process professionals must be prepared to share the information necessary to keep a child from harm. They must not disclose information for any other purpose without the permission of the person who provided it, unless the safety of the child requires this.

WORRIES AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Pupils: The school has a visual display showing the pupils who they can talk to when they have a concern

Parents: As part of overall pastoral care provision, parents are encouraged and expected to contact the school if they have any worries about any aspect of their child's experiences or education. This is especially important where parents have a concern about their child's safety. Parents receive annually details of the procedure they should follow to raise a concern or make a complaint. (See Appendix 2).

How complaints and worries can be processed is displayed on a notice board in the school. Each year the designated teacher will inform parents that this notice has been placed on display and that if a concern is reported to the school then the relevant authorities must be informed.

The Designated Teacher will also inform parents/guardians that it is their responsibility to inform the school if there is any change as to who has responsibility for a child.

STAFF TRAINING

The school recognises the need for appropriate in-service training for those implementing Child Protection procedures, by arranging access to multi-agency training for the designated teacher, deputy designated teacher/principal and Board of Governors. In accordance with DE Circular 2006/08, at least one school governor will be trained in child protection, specifically in relation to recruitment and selection.

The school includes coverage of safeguarding/child protection procedures in the induction programme for all new teachers and ancillary staff.

Information is also included in a Staff handbook and 'Child Protection Helpful Hints' leaflet which is made available to all substitute teachers.

The school will consult with EA who have the statutory duty to provide such training and guidance.

The Designated Teacher will arrange in-school refresher training on safeguarding/child protection for all members of staff at the beginning of each school year.

LIABILITY FOR STAFF

Any teacher or other member of staff who complies with procedures in making a report of suspected child abuse is acting within the course of his/her employment and in such circumstances, where he/she has acted in good faith, will receive the support of the school and will not be legally or financially liable.

STAFF PROTECTION IN THE CASE OF A STAFF MEMBER BEING THE SUBJECT OF AN ALLEGATION

An accusation against a member of staff will be investigated immediately and may result, after consultation with the Board of Governors, in precautionary suspension, pending the outcome of criminal or disciplinary investigations.

Appendix 3 sets out guidelines for self-protection for staff to follow in order to minimise the risk of false accusation and a copy of the Code of Conduct for Employees.

APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

All newly appointed staff must be vetted by Access NI prior to taking up the position. Substitute teachers will be employed only if they are on the NI Substitute Teachers' Register.

Volunteers working in school are no longer viewed as in 'Regulated Activity' providing a school can ensure reasonable supervision on a regular basis. Therefore it is no longer mandatory for a school to obtain Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (see DE Circular 2012/19 – Changes to Pre-employment Checking and Safer Recruitment Practices). School will keep a file of photocopied volunteering EDC's in a secure filing cabinet.

RESTRAINING STUDENTS - SAFE HANDLING

On rare occasions, teaching or support staff may have to, in carrying out their responsibilities, use reasonable force to restrain or control a student. Reasonable force can be used to prevent a student from committing an offence, causing personal injury to or damage to the property of any person (including the student himself).

A number of staff have been trained in Team Teach techniques of safe handling.

Guidelines on use of reasonable force:

- Before intervening physically, other strategies should have been used;
- The student should be told to stop his/her behaviour and what is going to happen if he/she does not;
- Staff member should continue to talk to the student throughout and make it clear that physical contact will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary;
- Staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or that they are acting to punish the student;
- Depending on the size of the student, it might not be prudent for a member of staff to intervene (except in an emergency) without the help of a colleague;
- Examples of reasonable force might involve staff physically interposing between students, blocking a student's path, holding, pushing, pulling, leading a student by the arm, placing a hand in the centre of back. (REFER TO REASONABLE FORCE POLICY)

VISITORS TO LARGYMORE

All visitors to Largymore Primary School are required to report to Reception. Visitors passing beyond the Reception area will have their details recorded at Reception and identity badges will be issued.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Individuals who work with children and young people and others with whom they may be in a position of trust, should exercise caution when using social networking sites and avoid inappropriate communication of any kind. People who work with children and young people should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries. They should avoid improper contact or relationships which might include;

- Communication of a personal nature
- Inappropriate dialogue through the internet
- The sending of e-mails or text messages of an inappropriate nature.

LINKS WITH SOCIAL SERVICES

Role of Social Services Departments. Social Services have a statutory duty to investigate any case where they receive information suggesting that a young person may be in need of care, protection or control, unless satisfied that such enquiries are unnecessary. They also have a lead role in coordinating the work of all the agencies and professionals concerned with the child's family.

The Case Conference: When there is a suspicion that a child has been abused, Social Services will convene a multi-disciplinary Case Conference. If requested, the school may send a written report to the Social Services Officer, or have someone attend the Conference itself. Minutes of Case Conferences are kept in a secure location. Teachers will be informed by the Designated Teacher on a need to know basis. If the pupil transfers to another school the designated teacher will inform the new school regarding the pupil's circumstances and alert Social Services of the move. Minutes of case conferences can be destroyed and should be destroyed when the child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register.

Coordination of Action by Education and Social Services: Social Services will inform the school in writing about any child whose name has been included on the Child Protection Register and what information has been made known to the parents about allegations or suspicions of abuse. The school will be aware of such children in respect of their attendance record, development, and any cause for further concern. A social worker will liaise with teachers about the child's progress.

Removal from the Child Protection Register: when a child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register the school will be informed in writing by Social Services.

BULLYING

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

When allegations of Bullying are substantiated –

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

Procedures for Recording Reported Incidents of Bullying: Initial bullying concern form to be completed as soon as an incident of bullying is witnessed/reported/alleged. All relevant details and dates to be noted. This form is returned to the Principal/Designated Teacher. The procedures are set out in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

CONCLUSION

The Anti-Bullying Policy, Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, Use of Information and Computer Technology Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Code of Conduct and The Reasonable Force Policy are part of the school's provision for safeguarding and child protection.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher/Principal and senior management team.

APPENDIX 1

WHAT TO DO IF A STUDENT COMPLAINS OF ABUSE

1. CLASS TEACHER

RECEIVE

- listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief;
- accept what is said;
- take notes.

REASSURANCE

- reassure the student, but only so far as is honest and reliable - don't make promises you may not be able to keep, like, "I'll stay with you" or "Everything will be all right now"; don't promise confidentiality - you have a duty to refer;
- do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the pupil refers to it - you could say: "You're not to blame"; "You're not alone. We have experience of dealing with this."

REACT

- react to the student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter, but don't 'interrogate' for full details;
- do not ask 'leading' questions, for example, "What did he/she do next?" (this assumes he/she did something!). Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and the child's) in any later prosecution in court;
- do ask open questions, like. "Anything else to tell me?". "Yes?", "And?";
- do not criticise the perpetrator: the pupil may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible;
- do not ask the student to repeat it all for another member of staff;
- explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.

RECORD

- make some very brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible, as accurately as possible;
- do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court;
- record the date, time, place, any noticeable non-verbal behavior, and the words used by the student. If the child uses sexual "pet" words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into "proper" words;
- draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising;
- record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

REFER

- follow school guidelines and report immediately to Designated Teacher.

RELAX

- try to get some support for yourself if you need it.

Care Call 0500 127079

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS

Child makes a disclosure to teacher or teacher has concerns about child either as a result of one observation or many observations over a period of time. Teacher does not investigate. **MUST ACT PROMPTLY.**



Teacher refers matter to Designated Teacher (Mrs A Poots), discusses with Designated Teacher, makes full notes.



Designated Teacher(Mrs Poots) meets with Principal (Mrs Dunlop) to plan course of action and ensures that a written record is made.



Principal/Designated Teacher makes referral (UNOCINI) to:

- Social Services. Copy of referral to EA's Designated Officer.

Indicate that it is a Child Protection issue in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL'



If there is any doubt about whether to take further action, advice is available from:

- Schools EA Designated Officer
- Social Services

When seeking advice you do not have to give any names. You are making an enquiry.

Other Action:

- Record advice given
- Monitor
- Review

HOW CAN A PARENT MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Please make an appointment to:

- Speak to the child's teacher.
- Speak to the Designated Teacher, Mrs Poots.
- Speak to Mrs G Dunlop.
- Speak to Mrs Jill Lester, Chair of Governors.

How can a parent raise a concern about his/her child's or another child's safety?

- Parents may make known their concerns about their (or another) child's safety by speaking to the class teacher, to Mrs A Poots ~ Designated Teacher or directly to the Principal.
- Once a concern has been voiced the Designated Teacher will agree to keep the parent informed, within one week, on the progress and outcome of their complaint.
- Should the parent be dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may speak directly to the Principal and/or the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

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



I can talk to the class teacher who will inform Mrs A Poots.



If I am still concerned I can talk to Mrs A Poots who will investigate & liaise with Principal, Chairman of Governors, SEELB, Social Services &, if necessary, Police



If I am still concerned I can talk to Mrs Dunlop



If I am still concerned I can contact Mrs Jill Lester, Chair of Governors, in writing to Largymore Primary School.

**AT ANY TIME YOU CAN TALK TO SOCIAL SERVICES ON 0300 1000 300
OUT OF HOURS 028 9056 5444**

Or the Police Care Unit on 02890650222

APPENDIX 3A

