



# COLERAINE COLLEGE

## SAFE GUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### Introduction

We in Coleraine College have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the children in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy, which aims to provide a caring supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our pupils can learn and develop to their full potential.

We are committed to adopting planned procedures, with involvement of outside agencies as necessary, so their appropriate intervention and support may be offered to children and their families in the event of suspected or alleged abuse.

### Principles on which the Policy is based

- (a) Children have a right to be protected from all forms of violence, to be kept safe from harm and to be given proper care.
- (b) Children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously.
- (c) The child's needs must always be paramount and this overrides all other considerations.
- (d) We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children and young people in our charge and should take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.
- (e) Staff in Coleraine College, teaching and non-teaching, have a collective responsibility to be aware of the signs of possible abuse, to be alert to these, to know the procedures to be followed in cases of suspected or alleged abuse and to implement these as required.
- (f) We have a responsibility to co-operate fully with other agencies involved in child protection and to follow agreed procedures.

## Definition and Recognition of Child Abuse

Children may be abused by a parent, a 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 the parent or carer to provide proper care, or both.

**The four main categories of abuse are as follows.**

- (a) **Neglect** which includes failing to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of a child's health or development.
- (b) **Physical injury** which is deliberately inflicted (e.g. by beating, biting, scalding, burning) or is the result of wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury to a child.
- (c) **Sexual abuse** - the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents by involving them in sexual activities which they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or which violate the social taboos of family roles.
- (d) **Emotional abuse** includes any form of emotional ill treatment or rejection, which results in adverse effects on the emotional, physical and / or behavioural development of the child. This includes constant criticism, scape-goating, continuous withholding of approval and affection, severe discipline or a total lack of appropriate control.

Appendix 1 lists physical and behavioural indicators of each of the above types of abuse.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. All staff are vigilant 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.

Further guidance for staff and parents is set out in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse.

### **Designated Officers for Child Protection**

**In Coleraine College, the designated teachers are  
Mme S-J Skobel &  
Deputy - Mrs A Best**

### **Role of designated teacher and, in her absence, the deputy**

- (a) In all cases where abuse is suspected, or where an allegation has been made by a pupil or a third party that abuse has taken place, or where serious concerns exist about the welfare of a child, teachers and other members of staff must report the information to the designated teacher, or in her absence to her deputy, or in her absence the Principal.
- (b) On receiving a referral, the designated teacher will:-
  - (i) Inform the Principal immediately.
  - (ii) After discussion with the Principal, seek advice from Social Services and, if appropriate, make a formal referral to Social Services and agree on how the police will be notified.
  - (iii) Notify the EA designated officer/s.

- (iv) Ensure that she is informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between the statutory agencies which will decide whether and how to investigate.
  - (v) Attend the strategy discussion or submit a report by telephone or in writing (The Principal and/or other relevant teacher may also attend the discussion or contribute to the report).
  - (vi) Agree with the investigating agencies when, how and by whom the parents and child will be notified of the referral.
  - (vii) Liaise with the investigating agencies as appropriate.
  - (viii) Maintain appropriate records.
- Note:** At all stages the designated teacher will consult with the Principal and keep him informed.

(c) In order to effectively carry out her role the designated teacher should:-

- (i) Attend training as and when appropriate.
- (ii) Establish good working relationships with support agencies and be aware of their role in child protection. (These agencies include Social Services, NSPCC, PSNI Child Care Team, Clinical Medical Officer, School Nurse, EA designated officer, Education Welfare Officer and Educational Psychologist).
- (iii) In consultation with the Principal ensure that staff (teaching and non-teaching) receive appropriate guidance and training in relation to their roles in child protection.

## **The Role of Staff**

All members of staff should:-

- a. Be familiar with the main types of abuse and the associated signs and symptoms (appendix 1).
- b. Be alert to signs of abuse.

- c. Be aware of how to respond if he / she is informed of alleged abuse.
- d. Be aware of reporting procedures, where he / she suspects abuse or is informed of alleged abuse.

Teachers should report immediately to the designated teacher -

- a. Any case where he / she suspects a pupil has been abused.
- b. Any case where a pupil confides to a teacher that he / she has been abused.
- c. Any case where a third party (pupil or adult) alleges that a pupil has been abused.
- d. Any serious concern about the welfare of the child.

When staff suspect physical abuse, they should carefully note what they have observed and when, e.g. details and possible sketch of bruising and lacerations. ***Under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed.*** Any comments made by the child as to how any injury occurred should also be noted, using if possible the child's actual words. While there may be the opportunity to tactfully enquire about injuries, **staff should not enquire too deeply.**

Where a child discloses to a teacher that he / she has been abused (at times this may be done obliquely or through another pupil), the teacher should listen sympathetically, try to reassure the pupil that he / she is not to blame and try to retain his / her trust, while explaining that if help is to be obtained, a small number of other adults will have to be informed. Again, details of the allegations should be written down as soon afterwards as possible, including the pupil's actual words, along with the date, time, place and names of other people present. (Appendix 2 Child Protection Record Note of Concern.)

Staff should never agree to receive information regarding abuse 'in confidence'. In order to protect children from harm, confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to involve others in the child's best interests. Where a child seeks a promise of confidentiality, the teacher should sensitively explain that the information will have to be shared

with a small number of people, if help is to be obtained, but that this will be confined to people who need to know.

When talking to a child about suspected or alleged abuse, staff must take great care not to prejudice subsequent enquiries by Social Services or police, or to compromise evidence which may be put forward in subsequent criminal proceedings.

Specifically -

- a. The chief task is to listen to the child, not to interrupt if he / she is freely recalling events and to accurately record the discussion.
- b. The teacher should not
  - (i) Ask leading questions which could later be interpreted as putting ideas in the child's mind.
  - (ii) Ask questions which encourage the child to change his / her version of events or impose the adult's own assumptions, e.g. staff should say "Tell me what happened" rather than "Did they do X to you?"

**It is not the responsibility of staff to question pupils too deeply** or to undertake investigations into cases of suspected or alleged abuse or make enquiries of parents or guardians. This can be counter productive, jeopardise the work of other professionals and goes beyond a teacher's jurisdiction. It is for Social Services or the Police to investigate suspected or alleged abuse and determine the action to be taken.

**Where a child alleges that he / she has been abused** staff should always take the allegations seriously and report them to the designated teacher, who will refer them to Social Services. Even if an allegation is found to be false, it may indicate that the child needs help in other ways.

**Even if a teacher is unsure whether his / her suspicions are well founded** or whether information is true, he / she should refer the matter to the designated teacher. Delay in making a referral or being tempted to give parents or others 'the benefit of the doubt', may result in serious

injury or harm to the child. Action by Social Services is likely to be more effective if taken sooner rather than later.

**Staff have a professional responsibility** to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals and where physical or sexual abuse is suspected, there is a legal obligation to report it.

Note: Any member of staff who follows school procedures in making a report of suspected child abuse by any person (whether or not connected with the school) is acting within the course of his / her employment. In such circumstances, where the member of staff has acted in good faith, he / she will receive the full support of the employing authority and will not be legally or financially liable should any consequential action be brought against him / her.

### **School Procedures for Dealing with Suspected Reported Abuse**

Procedure where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff. \*See Figure 1.

#### **Additional Notes**

- a. If the Principal / Designated Teacher decide not to make a referral to Social Services or PSNI, the person making the complaint and the parents (if different) will be informed of the decision as soon as possible and advised that if they still have concerns they should contact Social Services directly.
- b. If the person making the complaint is a pupil (whether or not the pupil is the subject of the alleged abuse) the procedures in the flow diagram apply, except that the parents of the pupil giving the information should be informed as soon as possible (unless they are the alleged abusers) and should be present, if possible, while the school is seeking any preliminary clarification from the child.

- c. The Principal must ensure that written records, dated and signed, are kept of all complaints and information received and all concerns about possible abuse are noted. As soon as possible, The Principal will obtain from the member of staff who receives the information, or has concerns about possible abuse, a written record setting out:
- The nature of the information
  - Who gave it
  - Time, date and circumstances
  - Where the concern relates to signs or symptoms of possible abuse, a description of these.

The Principal must add to the record:

- details of advice sought, from whom and when
- decision reached re. referral to social Services
- if referral is made, when and by whom this was done
- otherwise, reasons for non-referral to social Services
- how the person who made the complaint or supplied the information is informed whether a referral to Social Services / Police has been made.

- d. Complaint against a member of the Board of Governors

Procedures are as above but in addition Chairman of Board of Governors must be informed unless he / she is the subject of the complaint, in which case, Vice-Chairman is informed.

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

See Figure 2.

### **Additional Notes**

- a. Every allegation of misconduct must be treated seriously and the above procedures followed.



- b. In dealing with an allegation, the need to protect children must be paramount but the need to protect members of staff against unfounded but potentially damaging allegations must also be considered.
- c. All complaints or allegations about the possible abuse of pupils by a member of staff must be made to the Principal unless he is the subject of the complaint, in which case the referral should be made to the Designated Teacher.
- d. i. In deciding whether a complaint merits no action, or referral to Social Services or Police or internal disciplinary action, the Principal will consult with the EA Designated Officer, the chairman of the Board of Governors and Social Services.
- e. No further action would be taken where it would have been impossible for the subject of the complaint to have committed the offence, e.g. by being absent on a course or in hospital at the date and time in question.
- f. An immediate referral is warranted where it was possible for the offence to have occurred and where the allegation is detailed and possibly substantiated by a third party or physical evidence. Clear, detailed allegations, whether corroborated or not must always be referred.
- g. Complaints not meriting a referral but requiring action under internal disciplinary procedures include inappropriate teaching content and certain types of bullying behaviour.
- h. The Board of Governors must be informed of a formal referral as soon as possible.
- i. Allegations of child abuse by the Principal will be dealt with using the above procedures, except that the Principal's role will be carried out by the chairman of the Board of Governors. In such a case the EA Designated Officer must be consulted immediately.
- j. Depending on the nature and severity of the allegation and the potential risk to children, it may be necessary, as a precautionary means, to suspend with pay a member of staff who is the subject of a complaint. However, suspension is not automatic and some preliminary investigations by Social Services or Police may be necessary before a decision is taken. Nevertheless, in all cases where the Principal decides a formal referral is warranted the member of staff should be

removed from direct contact with pupils and allocated non-contact duties.

- k. Once a decision is taken to make a formal referral and that the member of staff is to be suspended, he / she will be advised in writing of the nature of the allegations and the reason for the suspension and advised to seek professional advice before making a response. The person making the complaint (and the pupil's parents, if different) must be informed in writing of the referral and suspension and kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

## **Prevention of Abuse**

### Contribution of the curriculum

The School, through aspects of its Personal Development, Relationships and Sexuality Education and P.E. programmes, seeks to help pupils acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to show respect and concern for others and increase their capacity for self protection.

## **Conduct of Staff**

- a. The conduct of school staff towards pupils should be above reproach.
- b. Staff should adhere to guidance contained in the Code of Conduct 2017/04 (Appendix 3) and the DENI circular 1999/9 "Guidance on the use of reasonable force".
- c. Children have the right to be treated with respect and members of staff should be alert to the risk of emotional abuse, such as persistent and vindictive sarcasm, verbal bullying or severe and persistent negative comment actions, particularly when directed consistently at a single pupil or a small number of pupils in a class. Such bullying behaviour is unacceptable. Members of staff should reflect on every aspect of their contact with children which may give rise to perception or allegation of abuse.

## **Recruitment of Volunteer Staff**

In accordance with DENI guidelines, the school will arrange for a Criminal Records check to be carried out on any volunteers, sports coaches, etc., who will have access to pupils. All staff and volunteers, must have Access NI Clearance before working with pupils.

## **Training of Staff**

All teaching staff will be provided with a copy of the school's Child Protection Policy and training will be provided as appropriate. Non-teaching staff will be provided with guidelines based on the whole school policy and given training as appropriate. The Designated Teachers will attend appropriate training, as required.

## **Transport**

- a. By private car
  - i. Staff should ensure they have adequate passenger liability cover if transporting pupils by car.
  - ii. Seat belts should be worn at all times. One seat belt per person.
  - iii. Staff should avoid transporting a pupil on their own. They should ensure that another adult or pupil is with them.
  - iv. If a situation occurs when a child has to be transported alone, staff should ensure that another member of staff knows that this is happening, and that the pupil sits in the rear seat.
  
- b. By minibus
  - i. The school minibus should be pre-booked, including estimated departure and return times.
  - ii. Seat belts should be worn at all times. One seat belt per person.
  - iii. The carrying capacity of the minibus must not be exceeded.
  - iv. A mobile phone must be taken on all journeys.
  - v. For school visits, parental consent forms should be completed.

## **Residentials**

Staff organising residentials must adhere to the DENI and EA guidelines for all schools. A detailed risk assessment must be completed in advance of the residential, and copies left with the Principal and Chairman of the BOG.

## **Links with Parents**

### Information

Parents will be informed of the school policy on child protection through the school prospectus, website, Facebook, parents' evenings, appointments and information booklets.

**How a parent can raise a concern about possible child abuse.**

See Figure 3

If parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of their referral to the school Principal, they may complain to the chairman of the Board of Governors and to the NI Public Services Ombudsman.

Details of the above arrangements will be circulated to parents at least once in two years.

Figures 1, 2, 3.

Appendix 1	Signs and symptoms of Child Abuse Physical Abuse Neglect Sexual Abuse Emotional Abuse
Appendix 2	Note of concern.
Appendix 3	Code of conduct

## APPENDIX 1. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unexplained bruises particularly if they are of a regular shape which may indicate use of an implement such as a strap, or the mark of a hand.</li><li>• Human bite marks, or bald spots.</li><li>• Unexplained lacerations, burns, fractures or abrasions.</li><li>• Untreated injuries.</li><li>• Frequently repeated injuries.</li><li>• Bruises of different ages on the child at any one time.</li><li>• Facial bruising especially around the mouth, eyes or ears.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self destructive tendencies.</li><li>• Improbable excuses given to explain injuries.</li><li>• Chronic runaway.</li><li>• Aggressive or withdrawn.</li><li>• Fear of returning home.</li><li>• Reluctant to have physical contact.</li><li>• Clothing inappropriate to weather - worn to hide part of the body.</li></ul>

## CHILD PROTECTION

### Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behaviour indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Constant hunger.</li><li>• Poor state of personal hygiene.</li><li>• Inadequate or inappropriate clothing.</li><li>• Untreated medical problems.</li><li>• Emaciation / distended stomach.</li><li>• Constant tiredness.</li><li>• Withdrawn / lack of concentration.</li><li>• Failure to thrive / poor growth.</li><li>• Lack of appetite and feeding difficulties.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tiredness, listlessness.</li><li>• Poor social relationships with peers.</li><li>• Compulsive stealing, begging or scavenging.</li><li>• Attention seeking with adults.</li><li>• Frequently absent or late.</li><li>• Disinterested.</li><li>• Low self-esteem</li><li>• Failure to seek or follow medical advice.</li><li>• Inadequate supervision.</li><li>• Poor academic attainment.</li><li>• Poor school attendance.</li></ul>

Note: State of housing and physical environment should also be borne in mind.

## SEXUAL ABUSE

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soreness or bleeding in genital or anal areas or in the throat.</li> <li>• Torn, stained or bloody underclothes.</li> <li>• Chronic ailments such as stomach pains or headaches.</li> <li>• Difficulty in walking or sitting.</li> <li>• Frequent urinary infections, or discharge / soiling.</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections.</li> <li>• Unexplained pregnancies.</li> <li>• Anorexic / gross overeating.</li> <li>• Recurrent unexplained abdominal pain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fearful of undressing for games / showers, etc.</li> <li>• Chronically depressed / suicidal.</li> <li>• Inappropriately seductive or precocious.</li> <li>• Poor self-esteem, self-devaluation, lack of confidence.</li> <li>• Having recurring nightmares / afraid of dark.</li> <li>• Role reversal, overly concerned for siblings.</li> <li>• Outbursts of anger / hysteria.</li> <li>• Poor relationship problems.</li> <li>• Jealousy.</li> <li>• Drawings or play activity which are specifically sexual.</li> <li>• Self mutilation.</li> <li>• Running away.</li> <li>• Truancy / school refusal.</li> <li>• Drug and alcohol abuse.</li> </ul>

### Notes:

1. A sudden change in behaviour or sexual knowledge and awareness in advance of what would be expected at the child's level of development may indicate sexual abuse.
2. Children who are being sexually abused do not necessarily display any behavioural disturbance.
3. For many children some of the above symptoms will be present and are not always associated with abuse.

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delayed language development.</li> <li>• Sudden speech disorders.</li> <li>• Signs of self-mutilation (self-harm).</li> <li>• Signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness).</li> <li>• Extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).</li> <li>• Wetting and soiling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired ability for enjoyment or play</li> <li>• Neurotic behaviour (e.g. rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking).</li> <li>• Reluctance for parental liaison.</li> <li>• Fear of new situation.</li> <li>• Chronic runaway.</li> <li>• Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations.</li> <li>• Attention seeking behaviour.</li> <li>• Poor peer relationship.</li> <li>• Low self esteem and feeling of worthlessness.</li> </ul>



**CONFIDENTIAL  
NOTE OF CONCERN  
CHILD PROTECTION RECORD**

Name of Pupil:	
Year Group:	
Date, time of incident / disclosure:	
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:	
Nature and description of concern:	
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:	
Action taken at the time:	
Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:	
Any further action taken:	
Written report passed to Designated Teacher: If 'No' state reason:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:	
Written note from staff member placed on pupil's child Protection file. If 'No' state reason:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3



### Code of Conduct for Staff and

### Volunteers in Coleraine College

#### **Objective, Scope and Principles**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff and volunteers are expected to observe. School staff and volunteers are role models and are in a unique position of influence and trust and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school. As a member of a school community, each person has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours. This Code of Conduct applies to all staff and volunteers of the school. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employees' contract of employment.

#### **1. Setting an Example**

1.1 All staff and volunteers who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

1.2 All staff and volunteers must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.

1.3 All staff and volunteers must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

1.4 This Code helps all staff and volunteers to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable and regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out by the employing authority.

1.5 All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

#### **2. Safeguarding Pupils/Students**

2.1 All staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student or colleague to a member of the school's Safeguarding team (Designated Teacher (DT)/Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection or the Principal).

2.3 The school's DT is Madame Skobel and the DDT is Mrs Best.

2.4 All staff and volunteers are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and must be familiar with these documents and other relevant school policies e.g. e-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.

2.5 All staff and volunteers should treat children with respect and dignity. They

must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents, carers or colleagues.

2.6 All staff and volunteers should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.

2.7 All staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff should also complete risk assessments where appropriate in accordance with school policies.

### **3. Relationships with Students**

3.1 All staff and volunteers must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils/students outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections.

3.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, sexual relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to an abuse of trust and criminal conviction.

### **4. Pupil/Student Development**

4.1 All staff and volunteers must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.

4.2 All staff and volunteers must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.

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

5.1 All staff and volunteers must maintain high 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 must be declared to the Principal with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff or volunteers to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

### **6. Conduct Outside of Work**

6.1 All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/volunteers own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

6.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are to be regarded as unacceptable.

6.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. It should not contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Staff should seek advice from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

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

7.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the schools' E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.

7.2 Staff and volunteers must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff and volunteers should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

7.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.

7.4 Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students. If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Principal immediately.

7.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be retained and destroyed in accordance with the schools Records Management Policy and Disposal Schedules.

## **8. Confidentiality**

8.1 Members of staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.

8.2 Confidential information about students should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the student's identity does not need to be disclosed the

information should be used anonymously.

8.3 There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

8.4 If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior leadership.

8.5 Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support students, they must not promise confidentiality or request students to do the same under any circumstances.

8.6 Additionally concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to a senior leader without delay.

## **9. Dress and Appearance**

9.1 All staff and volunteers must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.

9.2 Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

9.3 Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

## **10. Disciplinary Action**

Staff and volunteers should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

## **Compliance**

All staff and volunteers must confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct.



**Confirmation of Compliance with the School Code of Conduct**

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Post Held \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.



**Confirmation of Compliance with the School Code of Conduct**

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

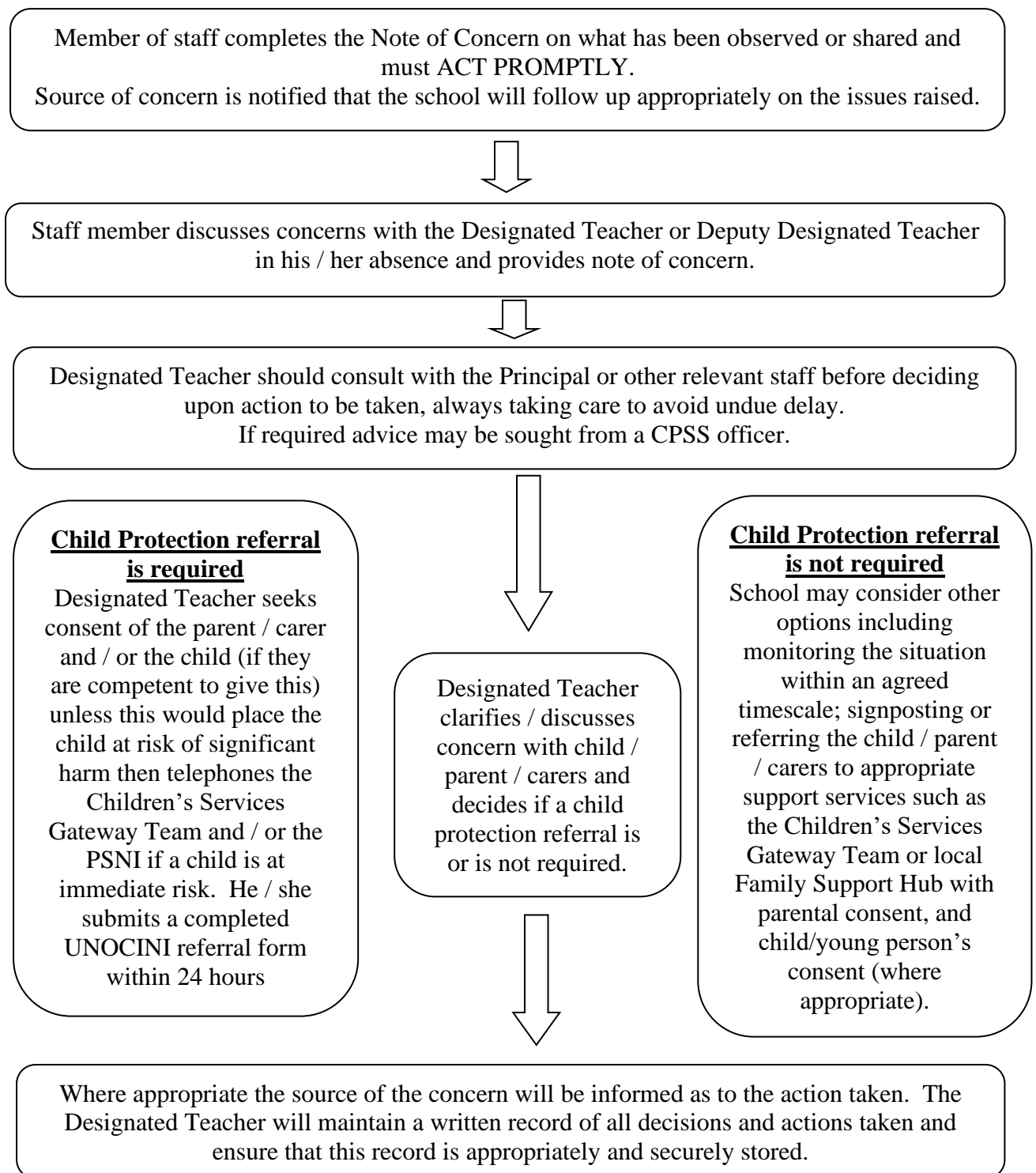
Position/Post Held \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

## FIGURE 1

Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff <sup>7,8</sup>

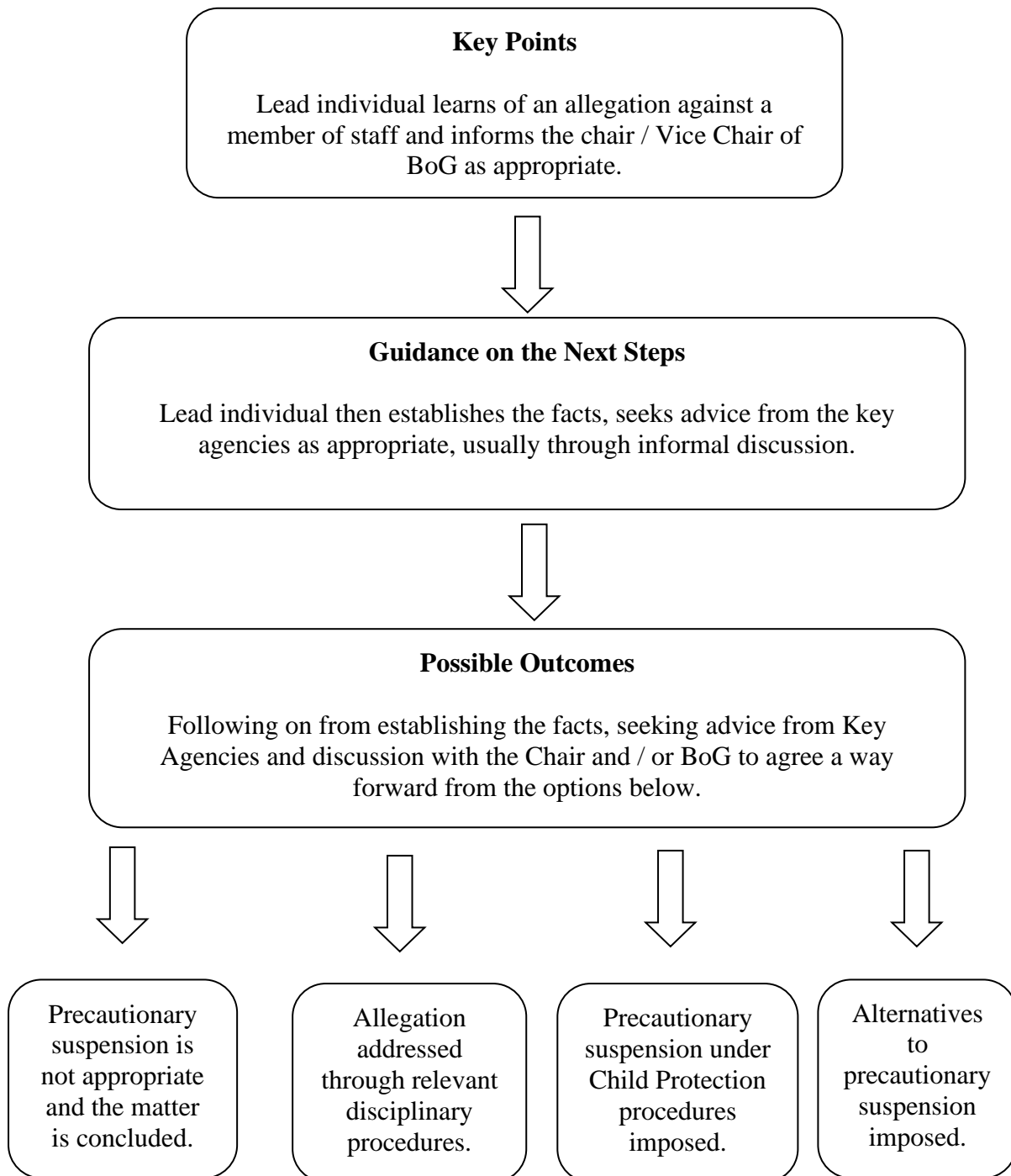


7 It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home. Contact details for the PSNI Central Referral Unit and duty social workers can be found in the Contacts Section.

8 DE Circular 2016 / 20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools.

**FIGURE 2**

**Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff** <sup>9, 10</sup>



9 DE Circular 2016/20 child Protection Record Keeping in Schools.

10 As noted previously a Lead Individual to manage the handling of an allegation should be identified from the outset, normally the Principal or a designated senior member of staff.



### FIGURE 3

If a parent has a potential child protection concern:

