

# St Dallan's Primary School

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

(updated January 2021)



Clonallon Road  
Warrenpoint  
Co. Down  
BT34 3RP

Principal: Mrs U Farrell

Chair of Board of Governors: Mr B Reilly

Date Ratified by Board of Governors:

## **1. Safeguarding and Child Protection Ethos**

We in St Dallan's Primary School have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

By safeguarding we are enabling children to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes supporting families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

## **2. Principles**

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance "Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools" (DENI Circular 2017/04) and the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland Cores Policy and Procedures (2017).

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy.

- The child's welfare must always be paramount, this over-rides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interest must always come first.
- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions, which may affect their lives.
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.

### 3. School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher, Mrs K McDonald
- Deputy Designated Teacher, Mrs F McGreevy
- Principal, Mrs U Farrell
- Designated Governor for Child Protection, Patricia McCourt
- Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr Bill Reilly

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

#### **4.1 The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher**

Every school is required to have a Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher with responsibility for child protection. These are highly skilled roles developed and supported through a structured training programme, requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues. The role involves:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff
- Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate
- Using the 'Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland' (UNOCINI) assessment framework to help identify the needs of a child at an early stage
- Making an **urgent** referral to children's social services through the local Gateway Service/PSNI if necessary (if urgent the Duty Social Worker will advise you that you will be required to confirm your referral in writing on a UNOCINI within 24 hours)
- Liaising with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keeping the school Principal informed
- Taking the lead for the development of the school's child protection policy
- Promoting a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
- Compiling written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection

**The role of the Deputy Designated Teacher is to work co-operatively with the Designated Teacher in fulfilling her responsibilities**

## **4.2 The Principal**

The Principal must ensure that: -

- DENI 2017/04 guidance is implemented within the school
- She attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- A designated teacher and deputy designated teacher are appointed
- All staff receive child protection training
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed
- Child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates & an annual report (overview of ETI proforma) is provided
- The school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and parents receive a copy/summary of this policy each year
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.

## **4.3 Designated Governor for Child Protection**

The Board of Governors will delegate a specific member of the governing body to take the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues in order to be able to advise the governors on:

- The role of the designated teachers
- The content of child protection policies
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school
- The content of the termly updates and overview of the annual Designated Teacher's Report
- Recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

**4.4 The Chairperson of the Board of Governors** plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment.

He should:

- Ensure they have received appropriate Education Authority training
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- Ensure that the school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment & selection training provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools {CPSS} and the Governor Support and Human Resource departments.
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against staff members.
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity.



## 4.5 School Staff

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

They should remember the 5 Rs: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer

The member of staff must:

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- Act promptly
- Make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (Appendix 1 Note of Concern)
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children
- Not give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- Not investigate
- Not ask leading questions

### The 5 Rs

#### Receive

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Take notes - retain notes.

#### Reassure

- Reassure the child or young person, but only so far as is honest and reliable, for example, don't make promises you may not be able to keep, like:  
*'I'll stay with you'*  
*'Everything will be all right now'*
- Don't promise confidentiality; you have a duty to refer. Explain to the child or young person that you will need some help to deal with what he/she has told you.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child or young person refers to it. For example, you should say:  
*'You're not to blame'*  
*'You did the right thing to talk about this'*

#### Respond

- React to the child or young person 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 that he/she did it) or 'Did he/she touch your private parts?' Such questions may invalidate our evidence and the child or young person in any later prosecution court.
  - **Do ask** open questions, like 'Anything else you would like to tell me?' 'Yes' 'and?'.
  - **Do not** criticise the perpetrator, the child or young person may love him/her and reconciliation may be possible.
  - **Do** explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.
- Ensure that if the Social Services interview is to follow, that the child or young person has a 'support person' present if the child or young person wishes it (possibly yourself)

### **Record**

- Make notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible see **Appendix 1 - Note of Concern**.
- Do not destroy these original notes.
- Record the date, time, and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour, words used by the child or young person.
- If the child or young person uses sexual 'pet' words, record the actual words used, rather than translating them into 'proper' words. Any injuries or bruises noticed may be recorded on diagram showing position and extent.
- Record statements the observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions.
- These records should be placed in the pupil's file.
- Remember to follow the EA guidelines as appropriate.

### **Refer**

- To the designated/deputy designated teacher.

### **In addition, the class teacher should:**

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

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

The Designated/Deputy Designated teacher will immediately follow the school's child protection procedures.

## 4.6 Parents

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- Telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school
- Letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home
- Familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Online Safety and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school
- Raising concerns, they have in relation to their child with the school.

## 4.7 The Board of Governors

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

- Having a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually
- Having a staff code of conduct for all adults working in the school
- Attendance at relevant training by governors and that up-to-date training records are maintained
- The vetting of all staff and volunteers.

## 5. What Is Child Abuse?

### 5.1 Definition of Abuse

Child abuse 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. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards a child.

### 5.2 Types of Abuse

**Physical Abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of forms, including, hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities 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.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision, shelter or attention to medical needs that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often suffer from other types of abuse.

**Sexual Abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse {including via online technology}. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**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, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking.

### 5.3 Specific Types of Abuse:

#### **Sexual Exploitation of Children and Young People**

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.

## **Children Who Display Sexually Harmful Behaviour**

When abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child, it is important to distinguish between behaviours which are experimental in nature and those that are exploitative and harmful.

Advice and support will be sought in such circumstances from the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection and where appropriate a referral made to the statutory agencies. In all such cases a risk assessment will be undertaken and an individual support and safety plan identified. Appropriate services will also be provided for the children involved. The above guidance follows DE Circular 2016/05 subject 'Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour'.

## **Domestic Violence**

There is increasing evidence that violence between couples within the home is a feature in families where children may be at risk. It is also clearly the case that children seeing or hearing such violence taking place must suffer emotionally to some extent and in terms of their social development. Staff must therefore consider evidence that domestic violence is occurring as a reason to have concerns about the welfare of children within a family.

Domestic violence is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Symptoms which young people may display and which are indicators only include:

- Nervousness
- Low self-worth
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Nightmares / flashbacks
- Physiological - stress / nerves
- Stomach pain
- Bed wetting
- Immature / needy behaviour
- Temper tantrums
- Aggression
- Internalising distress or withdrawal
- Truancy
- Bullying

These symptoms can lead to a child/ young person being misdiagnosed as having an illness, learning difficulties, or being naughty or disruptive.

If it comes to the attention of school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a child/young person this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information to Social Services and if necessary PSNI.

### **Female Genital Mutilation {FGM}**

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. 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 criminal offence in Northern Ireland. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM a report should be made to the PSNI without delay. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, a referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Services.

### **Grooming**

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 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.

**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. See further information on Signs and Symptoms of Abuse - Appendix 5**

## **6. Dealing with Children with Increased Vulnerabilities**

### **6.1 Children with Special Educational Needs**

Children with a Special Educational Need (i.e. any child who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse and staff working with these children are fully aware of their vulnerability and risk of harm. They understand that communication difficulties can be hidden and making a disclosure is more difficult. All staff working with these children have received training and are able to identify and refer concerns early to allow preventative action



to be taken. Children with Special Needs are always given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff with appropriate language and communication. In many cases they have their own classroom assistant whom they have a close relationship and where possible remain with them throughout their time in the school.

Physical contact may be a necessary part of teaching some pupils with special educational needs, for example visually impaired children, or those with multiple learning difficulties. Our staff code of conduct is very clear about the necessary balance between providing support and preventing abuse or potential perceptions of abuse. (Please refer the Intimate Care Policy)

## **6.2 Children with English as an Additional Language**

Children whose first language is not English/Newcomer pupils are given the opportunity to express themselves to a member of staff. Our Classroom Assistant Mrs Burke is a point of contact for these children in her small groups sessions which she regularly takes.

Designated Teachers and school staff can seek advice and support from the Intercultural Education Service. We strive to create an ethos in school which allows our 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.

## **6.3 Gender Identity Issues/Sexual Orientation**

In school we strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation. (Refer to our RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) policy).

## **7. Procedures for Making Complaints in Relation to Child Abuse**

### **7.1 How a Parent can make a Complaint**

We aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or any member of the school's safeguarding team: The Principal, the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. If they are still further concerned they may contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman. At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit.

Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 2**.

## **7.2 Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers**

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate as this is the responsibility of Social Services and/or PSNI. Staff should report these concerns immediately to the Designated/Deputy Teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher on the Note of Concern, **see Appendix 1**. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parent will be informed immediately.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher may consult with members of the school's safeguarding team, the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the EA Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team and a copy will be kept in the school's Child Protection File.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 3**.



The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.

Do:	Do not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Listen to what the child says</li> <li>❖ Assure the child they are not at fault</li> <li>❖ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret</li> <li>❖ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words</li> <li>❖ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality</li> <li>❖ Stay calm</li> <li>❖ Listen</li> <li>❖ Accept</li> <li>❖ Reassure</li> <li>❖ Explain what you are going to do</li> <li>❖ Record accurately</li> <li>❖ Seek support for yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ask leading questions.</li> <li>❖ Put words into the child's mouth.</li> <li>❖ Ignore the child's behaviour.</li> <li>❖ Remove any clothing.</li> <li>❖ Panic</li> <li>❖ Promise to keep secrets</li> <li>❖ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</li> <li>❖ Delay</li> <li>❖ Start to investigate</li> <li>❖ <b>Do Nothing</b></li> </ul>

### 7.3 Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher if the Principal is not available) **must be informed immediately**. The procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal/Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher).

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils or may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the appropriate authorities. The Chair of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Child protection procedures will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 4**

## **8. Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings**

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust. They will provide a written report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. Every effort will be made to have a representative from St. Dallan's attend Social Service's case conferences. In the event of this not being possible written reports etc. will be submitted to Social Services. Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis. Children whose names are on the Child Protection register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the child protection plan.

## **9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies.

In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

Class teachers will be made aware of individual children's circumstances, e.g. if a child is known to Social Services and/or is a Looked after Child, using the Pastoral Concerns record - handed on with end of year information.

Should a child transfer to another school whilst there are current child protection concerns we will share these concerns with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

## **10. Record Keeping**

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked drawer. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by members of the safeguarding team.

All documentation relating to children already on the child protection register are maintained in the Child Protection filing cabinet - accessible by Safeguarding Team members only.

## **11. Vetting Procedures**

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in the school are vetted / supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance

## **12. Code of Conduct for all Staff**

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

All members of staff are required to sign a Code of Conduct. Any students or volunteers in the school are required to sign a Code of Conduct.

The school's code of conduct is available on request.

## **13. Staff Training**

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

**When new staff or students start at the school they are briefed on the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of these policies.**

## **14. Other Relevant Policies**

To ensure our children's safety and well-being is paramount we implement a range of related policies. Please refer to:

- Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- ICT and Online Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Staff Code of Conduct

**And all Health and Safety policies:**

- Intimate Care Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Exiting Procedures
- Critical Incident Policy

**These policies are available to parents and guardians - any parent requiring a copy should contact the School Principal.**

## **15. The Preventative Curriculum**

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed in the classroom and at school assemblies. There is a permanent child protection notice board on the main corridor and relevant information around the school, which provides advice for children and displays child helpline numbers. A flow diagram of how a parent may make a complaint is also on display. An enlarged flow diagram for a teacher allegation is in staff room.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues include:

- Circle Time
- Love for Life Programme P7
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding within the curriculum
- Road Safety within the curriculum
- Work with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
- Work with the Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Work with the Fire Service
- Support from Pupil Personal Development Services
- Support from the Education Welfare Officer
- Work with Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
- Work with Women's Aid

## **16. Children in Need**

Within school, we have children who need to be monitored. These children may not as yet need to be children 'in need of protection' but have come to the attention of staff for various reasons. These may be children who:

- are considered to be failing in school
- are experiencing behavioural difficulties
- are experiencing ill health, either physical or psychological
- are carers
- are suffering from family breakdown etc.

They may be the children who come into school very unkempt, maybe never have homework done, have poor hygiene, have toileting issues or may just present as being very unhappy etc. We need to be aware of these children and our responsibilities in safeguarding them. If something in a household is impacting on a child in school, then we have a duty of care to this child.

If a member of staff has a concern about a child, they should speak to the class teacher or a member of the Safeguarding Team. The class teacher will then clarify what is going on by making contact with the parents. If there are still on-going concerns these need to be passed on to a member of the Safeguarding Team and a decision will be made as to the best way forward using the already agreed procedures.

We need to monitor children in need. We must log our concerns in case this moves into child protection, **see Appendix 1 – Note of Concern.**

### **17. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Safeguarding Team in St Dallan's Primary School will update this Policy and Procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually.

The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher.

## Appendix 1

### St. Dallan's P.S. Note of Concern (Confidential)



#### CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature and description of concern:
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:	
Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:	
Any further action taken:	
Written report passed to Designated Teacher: If 'No' state reason:	Yes: <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> No: <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:	
Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file <input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/> If 'No' state reason:	

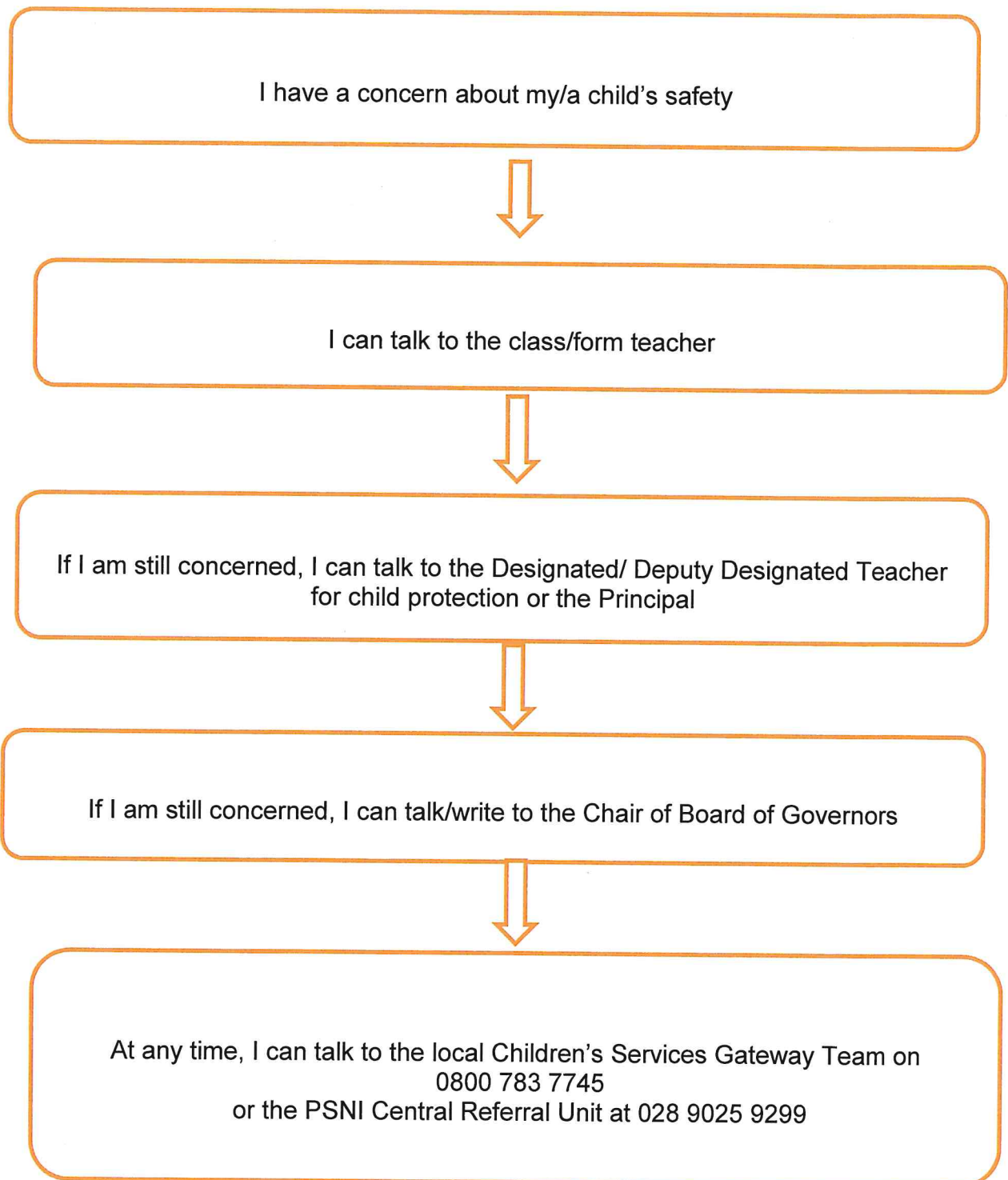
Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### **If a parent has a potential child protection concern**



If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are in the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaint policy. This policy culminates in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.



## Appendix 3

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

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY.

Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.



Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.



Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required advice may be sought from a CPSS officer.



#### **Child Protection referral is required**

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk. He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.



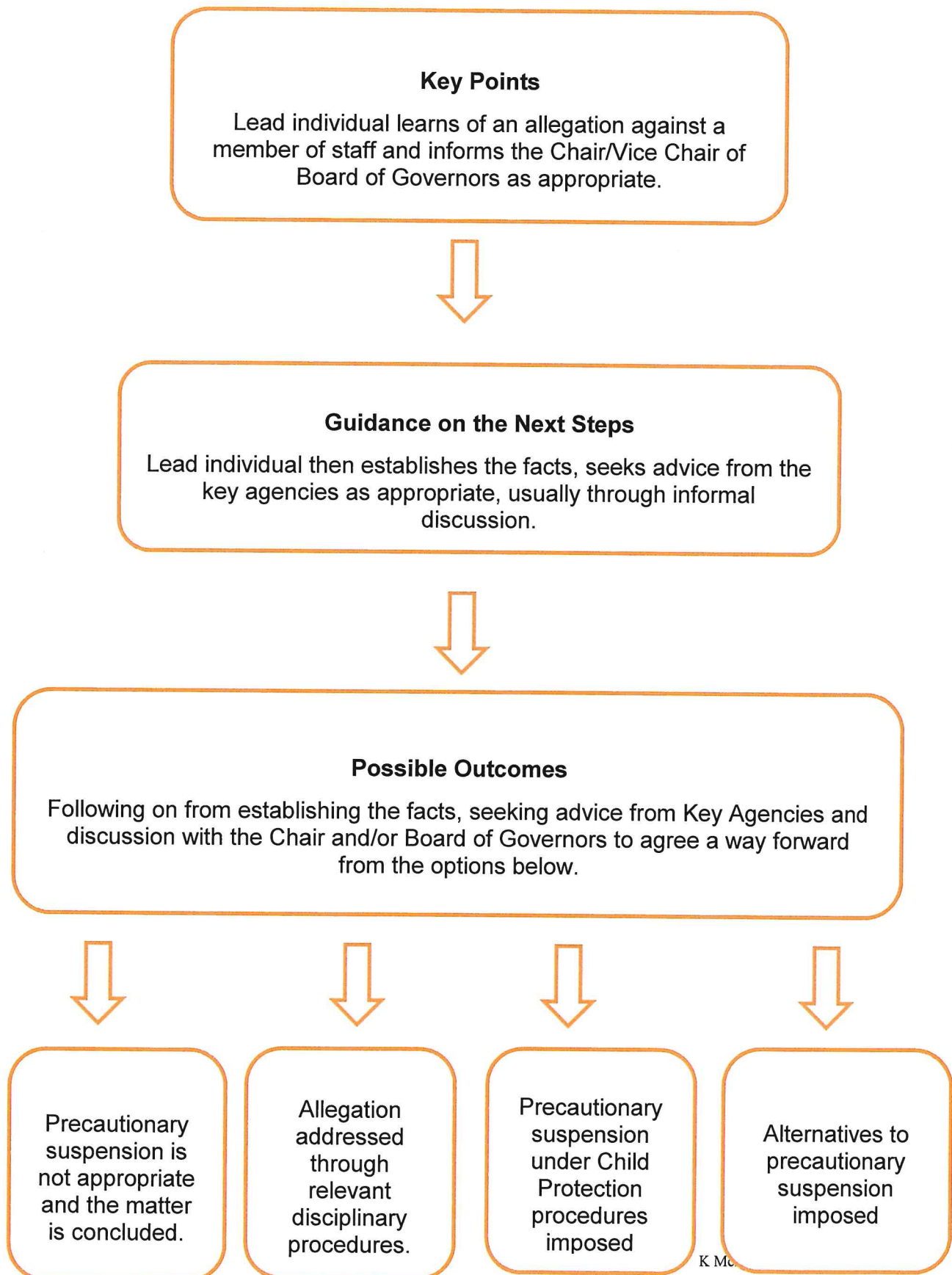
#### **Child Protection referral is not required**

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate).

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored.

## Appendix 4

### Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff



## Appendix 5

### Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

#### Physical Abuse

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
Unexplained bruises - in various stages of healing - grip marks on arms; slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns; unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear - symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday	Self-destructive tendencies; aggressive to other children; behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive); appears frightened in presence of adults; improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway; uncomfortable with physical contact; come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather - to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories

#### Emotional Abuse

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
Well below average in height and weight; "failing to thrive"; poor hair and skin; alopecia; swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders; signs of self-mutilation; extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting).	Apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations; rocking/head banging; inability to play; indifference to separation from family indiscriminate attachment; reluctance for parental liaison; fear of new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships.

## Neglect

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Looks very thin, poorly and sad; constant hunger; lack of energy; untreated medical problems; special needs of child not being met; constant tiredness; inappropriate dress; poor hygiene; repeatedly unwashed; smelly; repeated accidents, especially burns.	Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); steals food; compulsive eating; begging from class friends; withdrawn; lacks concentration; misses school medicals; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at school; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.

## Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs; bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas; torn, stained or bloody underclothes; chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches; difficulty in walking or sitting; frequent urinary infections; avoidance of PE, games	What the child tells you; withdrawn; chronic depression; excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness; children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal; over concerned for siblings; poor self-esteem; self-devaluation; lack of confidence; peer problems; lack of involvement; massive weight change; suicide attempts (especially adolescents); hysterical/angry outbursts; lack of emotional control; sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour; inappropriate sex play; repeated attempts to run away from home; unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories; vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity; exposure to pornographic material.



**Addendum to St. Dallan's Primary School Warrenpoint  
Child Protection Policy  
Covid-19 Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection**

**1. CONTEXT**

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

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

**2. PROCEDURES**

St Dallan's staff will continue to follow the procedures outlined in our school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is available on our school website.

In addition, the following arrangements have been put in place to support families and monitor pupil safety:

- If parents/guardians want to report any concerns, the school email address is [info@stdallans.warrenpoint.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stdallans.warrenpoint.ni.sch.uk), the school telephone number is 028 41752655 and an emergency contact number is 08007837745.
- Teachers continue to provide online learning via the C2k platform Google Classroom and the Seesaw App with strict procedures in place to minimise risk.
- Our school website provides parents/guardians with a range of resources and links to additional online learning, support and guidance.
- Children, parents/guardians will be reminded that when using online resources to stay safe and to report any concerns to their teacher or a member of the Safeguarding Team; Mrs Farrell, Mrs McDonald and Mrs McGreevy.
- In line with the information previously provided to schools by the EA CPSS, teachers may make phone calls to parents. These will be pastoral in nature and a record will be kept of any issues reported by parents. Any concerns around pupil well-being will be shared without delay with a member of the Safeguarding team.

- If a member of staff is using their personal telephone to speak to a parent/guardian their number will be withheld to ensure the protection of private information of staff.

### **3. ONLINE SAFETY**

In order to ensure the safety of all involved the following guidance should be followed if staff and pupils are engaging in online teaching/communication using video conferencing or platforms recommended by and available via C2k.

- Teachers and pupils need to be fully dressed and should not wear pyjamas/sleep wear during the session.
- Pupils cannot participate from a bedroom.
- The teacher arranges the session and password and shares this only with pupils.
- Pupils must agree not to share the password with anyone else.
- Parental consent will be sought before children attend online sessions.
- Any disclosure or concern over any online forum will be followed up as it would be in school.
- Online sessions should be time limited for the benefit of both children and teachers.

**If there is a breach to any of these procedures e.g. pupil gives the password to someone else who joins the group, the teacher should immediately terminate the session and advise the Principal.**

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

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

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

## **5. IF SCHOOL IS OPEN DURING COVID-19 CLOSURES**

As St Dallans is open for vulnerable pupils and key workers' children the school should adhere to the EA guidance.

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

## **6. HOW A CHILD CAN RAISE A CONCERN**

We know that while many children will be enjoying their time at home and remain almost unaffected by this unusual situation, there will be others who feel scared, lonely and even those who miss school. Our safeguarding responsibility to all our children continues and we will seek to maintain contact with our children and young people as well as signpost them to other agencies.

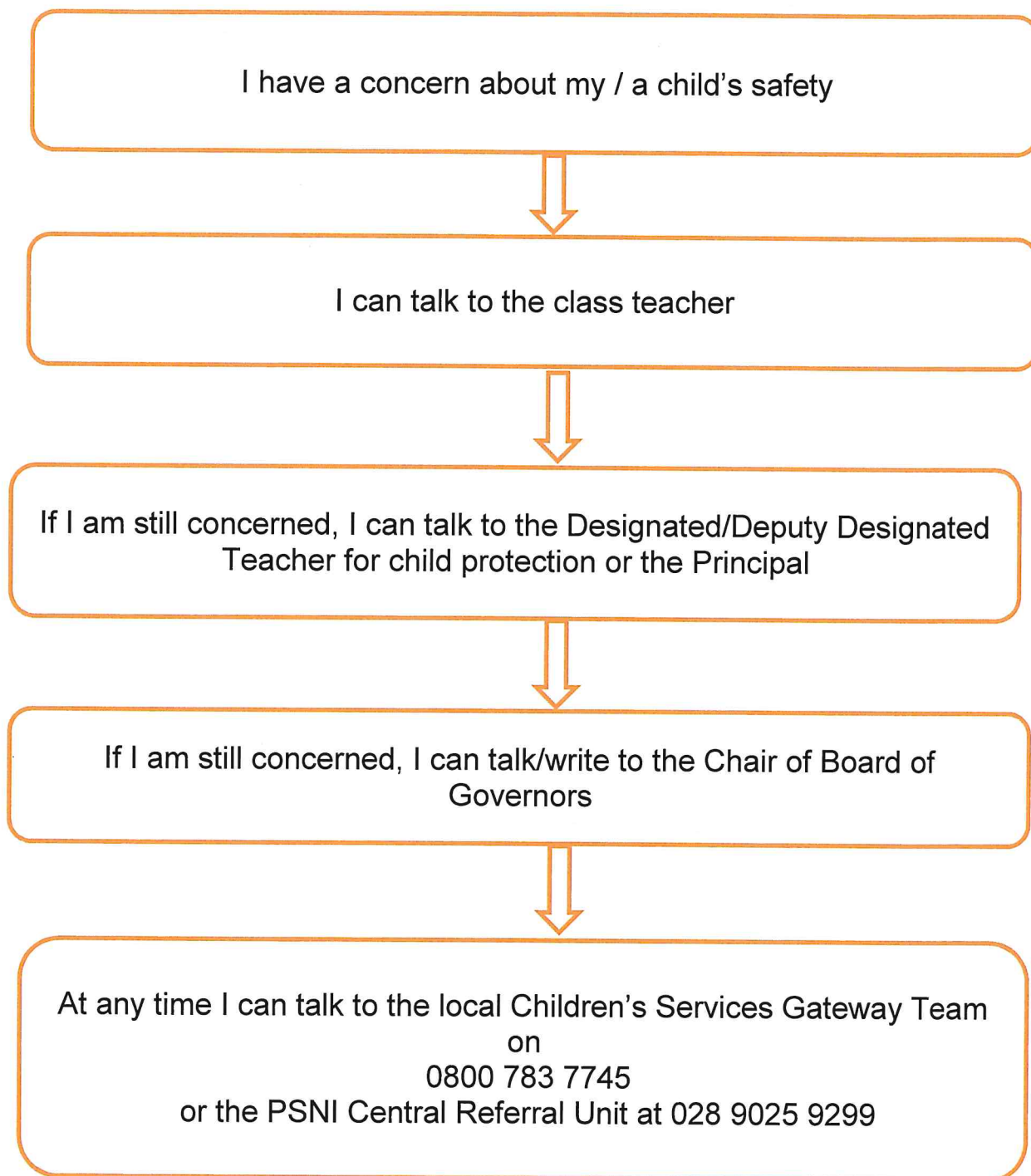
We will use the following means to connect with our children:

- Respond to messages through our online platforms
- When contacting parents/guardians via phone we will always ask to speak to their child or young person.
- Other Agencies
- NSPCC Childline
- CEOP
- Safer Schools App

## **7. SOME USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS: –**

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

**If a parent has a potential child protection concern**



If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are in the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaint policy. This policy culminates in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.



## 8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

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

<b>SIGNED:</b>	<b>Designated Teacher</b>
<b>SIGNED:</b>	<b>Principal</b>
<b>SIGNED:</b>	<b>Chair of Board of Governors</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	