



Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Chairperson of the Board of Governors	- Mr Donal McEvoy
Acting Principal	- Mrs Sarah McDowell
Designated Teacher	- Mrs Eilish Duffy
Deputy Designated Teacher	- Miss N Annett
Designated Governor	- Mrs C Burke

OUR MOTTO

Be Friendly

Always Share

Join In

Take Care

Reviewed & Amended September 2014 and September 2015-due to change of Principal, Child Protection Officer and Deputy Child Protection Officer.

(This policy supersedes the prior Child Protection Policy dated September 2011)

Firstly Reviewed & Amended February 2013

(This policy supersedes the prior Child Protection Policy dated September 2011)

This policy was firstly reviewed and amended after the designated Teacher for Child Protection attended Designated Teacher Refresher Training held in January 2013 by the SEELB Child Protection Team. The policy has been updated twice, due to change of principal and child protection officers.

Amendments included:

- The introduction of the definition and use of the term 'Safeguarding' as an umbrella term for all areas relating to the safety of children in our care in St Patrick's PS, Legamaddy.
- The introduction of 'Domestic Violence' into our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The introduction of 'Sexual Exploitation of children and young people' into our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Mrs C Burke is now the Board of Governor responsible for Safeguarding & Child Protection Issues within St Patrick's PS, Legamaddy.
- Mrs S McDowell is now acting principal until a replacement is appointed.
- Mrs E Duffy is the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Miss N Annett is the Deputy Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Mission Statement of St Patrick's Primary School, Legamaddy

As a Catholic School, we at St Patrick's, Legamaddy, seek to provide a caring, secure and happy environment in which all children are treated as unique individuals who are given the opportunity to grow in independence and develop self-confidence.

We believe this will enable our children to be better prepared personally, academically, spiritually and socially for the challenges of young adult life.

We aim to:

- Develop the young person as an individual and help them become a positive contributor to society.
- Enable children to reach their full potential by providing a broad and balanced curriculum with a varied range of extra-curricular activities.
- Work closely with home, community & church to create an environment in which we promote learning.
- Develop spiritual awareness through a strong Catholic Ethos which encourages the values of trust, honesty, respect, tolerance and a sense of fair play.
- Utilize emerging technologies to develop the child's ability to become effective learners and provide them with the life skills for modern society.

Our School Motto

- **Be friendly**
- **Always Share**
 - **Join in**
 - **Take Care**

Safeguarding & Promoting Welfare

In St. Patrick's Primary School, Legamaddy, the care, welfare and safety of the children in our care is paramount.

'Safeguarding' 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; and
- Arrangements to take all appropriate actions to address concerns about 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, Dfes/0027/2004)

We recognise that we have a pastoral responsibility towards our pupils who have a fundamental right to be protected from harm i.e. all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatments, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse from those looking after them.

THE DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

We use the following definition as defined in Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection, DENI 1999.

Neglect - the persistent or significant neglect of a child, or the failure 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 the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical - physical injury to a child, whether deliberately inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Sexual - the sexual exploitation of a child or young person for an adult's or another young person's own sexual gratification; the involvement of children or young people in sexual activities of any kind (including exposure to pornography) which they do not understand, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate normal family roles.

Emotional – The actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This is where it is the main or only form of abuse.

Bullying - also constitutes a form of abuse. It can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself.

There are three main types of bullying:-

-Physical e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting, theft or damage to belongings.

-Verbal e.g., threats or name calling.

-Indirect e.g., spreading rumours, or excluding someone from social groups.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Core Team

- In St. Patrick's the designated teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection and safeguarding is Mrs Eilish Duffy.
- The second designated teacher is Miss Nicola Annett who will assume responsibility in the absence of Mrs Duffy but will also work closely with Mrs Duffy with safeguarding issues.
- Mrs Cathy Burke is the Board of Governor Child Protection Officer.
- Mrs McDowell (Acting Principal) is the Chair of the Safeguarding Core Team.

In St Patrick's Primary School

- ❖ We will alert teaching and auxiliary staff to be mindful of any sign of possible abuse.
- ❖ When child abuse is suspected, it is the responsibility of the member of staff who is aware of the circumstances or suspected circumstances, to notify the designated teachers and core safeguarding team.
- ❖ The designated teachers and safeguarding core team will ensure that the appropriate reporting and recording procedures are set in motion as quickly as possible.
- ❖ Any clarification should be carried out carefully and sensitively – it is not the responsibility of staff to undertake any investigation or to make extensive enquiries of family or carers.
- ❖ Ancillary staff should report any suspicions or concerns to the designated teachers and safeguarding core team.
- ❖ Parents will be informed of procedures on a regular basis – annually.
- ❖ Children will be advised what to do in school if they have any concerns about such matters. (A notice outlining procedures for children is displayed in each class.)
- ❖ At all times we will strive to protect children, while respecting the rights of parents, families, carers and members of the public.

Identifying abuse

All school staff, teaching and non-teaching, are aware of their legal responsibility to inform the designated teachers and core safe-guarding team of any suspicion they may have regarding the abuse of a child.

Procedures to be followed where a complaint is made about possible abuse against a member of staff.

If a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of staff, it should be referred directly to the Principal by the person to whom it was made.

The Principal may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information or from others who may have relevant information.

If a complaint has definitely been made, the Principal will:

- Inform the designated teacher who will initiate the record of complaint
- Consult CCMS to form an initial assessment as to whether or not there is sufficient substance in the allegation to warrant further action
- Consult with the chairperson of the Board of Governors and decide on one of the following:-
 - (a) the allegation is apparently without substance and no further action is necessary
 - (b) an immediate referral to Social Services or Police is warranted
 - (c) the allegation concerns inappropriate behaviour which needs to be considered under disciplinary procedures.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the designated teacher, if she is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the designated teacher). Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Complaint against the Principal

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the designated teacher (or her deputy, if she is not available) must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken. Clarity may be sought by asking the Designated teacher but the investigation is the responsibility of the Board of Governors at this stage. If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the designated teacher.

It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be told.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND SPORTS COACHES

In accordance with the procedures for checking on possible criminal backgrounds of Persons with Access to Children (Appendix 12 DENI Child Protection Document), St Patrick's PS, Legamaddy, has agreed that all persons working in close proximity with children, in either paid or unpaid capacity will have to agree to the vetting procedures as employed by the South Eastern Education & Library Board. As well as school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, and board staff such as Peripatetic teachers, Curriculum Advisory and Support Staff, EWOs and Educational Psychologists, this will include, for example, school bus drivers, staff working in training schemes

or educational provision. Applications for courses of initial teacher education must be vetted by the institution to which they have applied before they can be admitted to the course (these new arrangements have been instituted since the issue of Circular 1990/28). Social Workers and Health professionals working in schools, such as speech therapists or physiotherapists, are vetted by the Department of Health and Social Services. All such staff and others such as sports coaches and volunteer parents must provide evidence to the school of having completed criminal background checks.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

The school maintains a record of visitors in its Approved Visitor Registration Book which is kept in the main school office. Visitors must sign in upon arrival and will be issued with a visitor's pass. This pass must be worn visibly during the whole duration of the school visit and returned when the person signs out upon departure.

All parents coming into school to help out in a voluntary capacity over a reasonably longer period will be required to complete an application form, consenting to an Access NI criminal records check to be carried out. CCMS will be forwarded completed forms and will request criminal records checks on our behalf.

CODE OF PRACTICE

Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. The Code of Conduct is not intended to discourage the positive interaction between staff and pupils but to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on appropriate conduct.

Use of information technology

With regard to relationships, staff should not attempt to establish an inappropriate relationship which might include:

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

All staff should be extremely careful in corresponding with others on social networking sites. Staff relationships with children should at all times must remain professional and they should not correspond with children through such sites or add them as 'friends'. It is worth bearing in mind that on such sites an inappropriate or even misconstrued communication may have the potential to impact upon careers or even result in criminal investigation.

In addition staff should bear in mind *who* may access their profiles on such websites and should therefore take care as to the information they display about themselves and their personal lives. They should also ensure that they have installed and are using the appropriate privacy settings.

All staff should not make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children. Staff working with children 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.

Private meetings with pupils

It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place, but staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils.

When such interviews are taking place, staff should:

- Conduct the interview in a room with visual access or with the door open
- Ensure another adult knows the meeting is taking place if above conditions cannot apply.
- Have another pupil or preferably another adult nearby
- Not use a sign prohibiting entry to the interview room
- Not make unnecessary physical contact with the pupil **
- Never touch a child who has made it clear that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. (DENI 1999/9 reasonable force)

**There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Staff should use discretion and not feel inhibited from providing this.

- When administering first aid to a pupil, ensure as far as possible that this is done in the presence of other adults or children. *However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.*
- Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint. (Article 4 of Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.
- Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- Following an incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted to the Principal.
- Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff's proximity to pupils may be very different from the normal school environment.
- Staff should avoid any occasion where they would find themselves alone with a child in a closed room.

Choice and use of teaching materials

Teachers should avoid teaching materials which might be misinterpreted.

When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature, teachers should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or teacher, might after the event be criticised.

If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching aid, always consult with the Principal before its use.

Relationships and attitudes

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of the school and the employing authority, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and gender of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.

Use of mobile phones

It is preferred that children do not bring mobile phones to school or school related activities. However, should a parent/ guardian feel that it is necessary for their child to carry a mobile phone they should inform the class teacher / Principal. Should a child bring a phone into school it should be switched off entering school grounds and not turned on again until leaving, unless something has been arranged with the school.

Use of mobile phones by staff for calls or text messaging is restricted to use within the confines of the staffroom, staff office or outside of school property. Staff mobile phones, camcorders or any other recording device must not be used to photograph or video children either in school or during a school related activity.

The school holds a school mobile phone and this should be taken on any educational visit by the teacher leading the activity in case of emergency. Staff may need to use their own mobile phone for school related calls in the case of an emergency where the school phone is being used by another teacher on a different trip or with a different group on the same trip.

Use of images of children

On occasions the school will use photographs of children or their work on the school website or in other publications. It is policy to ensure that **photographs will not be accompanied by pupil names. Names can however be published, without photographs.**

Intimate Care of Children

In the event of a child having a toileting accident whilst in school, staff should reassure the child that they will be sorted out as soon as possible. Staff are required to contact the first name on the child's contact list.

If there is no answer, staff should try each number until they make contact with a relative of the child. If the child has a change of clothing with them and are able to change themselves, then they may do so in a private area such as the toilets.

However, staff are not permitted to give assistance or supervise this. Staff will not be responsible for changing/cleaning the child. This is ultimately the role of the parent, who will be asked to come to the school immediately to sort out their child. Parents may give permission in extenuating circumstances. (Unable to contact relative or attend school within an appropriate period of time.)

Please note: There is a separate 'Intimate Care Policy' which all staff should be familiar with.

Domestic Violence

If a member of staff is notified through a disclosure from a child or parent, the member of staff must make an immediate referral of this disclosure of domestic violence to Social Services in line with the Northern Ireland Office's Publication titled '*Tackling Violence at home, A Strategy for addressing domestic violence and abuse in Northern Ireland*'

Definition

Domestic abuse is:

"Threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where that are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation."

(DHSSP / NIO Tackling Violence at Home, 2005, p10)

Sexual Exploitation of children and young people

Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It is an umbrella term that covers a number of different possible scenarios in which children or young people are exploited, coerced and/or manipulated into engaging in some form of sexual activity, in return for something they need or desire and / or for the gain of a third person.

Barnardos (2011) offer a checklist, which is not intended to be exhaustive, as advice for parents and carers and staff in schools should also be aware of:

- *Associating with other children who have been exploited*
- *Having older boyfriends or girlfriends*
- *Suffering from STDs*
- *Mood swings or changes in emotional well-being*
- *Drug and alcohol misuse*
- *Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour*
- *Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late*
- *Regularly missing school or not taking part in education*
- *Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions*
 - *(often new mobile phones or two mobile phones)*

It is important to recognise that many young people will often display one or more of these behaviours without being a victim at all.

PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP WITH ST PATRICK'S PS, LEGAMADDY

It is most important that parents communicate with the school any concerns they have regarding their child's welfare. At all times these issues will be handled sensitively and as far as possible with confidentiality. Issues may include separation, divorce, bereavement or any loss which affects the child's emotional or physical well being.

IF A PARENT HAS A CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD'S WELFARE THEY MAY FOLLOW THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE -

Stage 1- I have a concern about my/a child's safety

Stage 2- I can talk to the class teacher

Stage 3- If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection – Mrs Eilish Duffy or the Deputy Designated Teacher: Miss Nicola Annett

Stage 4- If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Acting Principal Mrs McDowell

Stage 5- If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Designated Governor, Mrs C Burke or Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Mr Donal McEvoy c/o St Patrick's PS, Legamaddy
(You can also write to the CCMS at 160 High Street, Hollywood, Co. Down)

***At any time I can talk to the social worker (Tel 02844 613511)
or the Police (Tel No of Local CARE Unit 02890 650222)***

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NSPCC 028 9035 1135	CONTACT YOUTH ETC 028 9045 7848
NI CHILDLINE 028 9032 7773	YOUTHLINE 028 9045 6654
CHILD CARE NI 028 9065 2713	CHILDREN'S LAW 028 9024 5704
YOUTHNET 028 9033 1880	ADVICE LINE 028 9043 4242
BARNARDOS 028 9067 2366	BARNARDOS FAX 028 9067 2399
SAVE THE CHILDREN 028 9043 1123	SAVE THE CHILDREN FAX 028 9043 1314
CHILD PROTECTION 028 9065 0222	MARKET STREET SOCIAL SERVICES 028 4461 3511

**Policy Revised February 2013
Policy Revised August 2015**

- Mrs E Duffy (Designated Teacher) - Miss N Annett (Deputy Designated Teacher)
- Mrs S McDowell (Acting Principal / Chair of Safeguarding Core Team)
- Mr D McEvoy (Chairperson of Governors) - Mrs C Burke (Designated Governor)

Signed off by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Principal & Designated Teacher for child Protection:

Chairperson: Mr D McEvoy (Acting) Principal: Mrs Sarah McDowell Designated Teacher: Mrs Eilish Duffy

Signed: _____ Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____ Date: _____