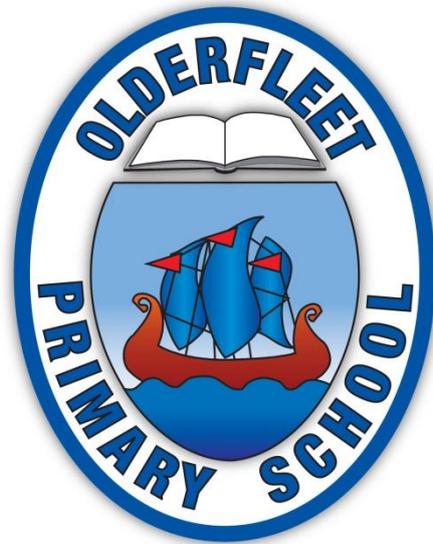


*Updated & Reviewed 2023*

# **OLDERFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **SAFEGUARDING and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Mission Statement**

At Olderfleet Primary School we value, nurture and develop all of our pupils to reach their individual potential and provide a welcoming atmosphere which creates a sense of belonging amongst families.

We encourage challenges and opportunities to equip our children with resilience and determination in a safe environment of respect, tolerance and inclusivity.

### **Vision Statement**

To enable every individual regardless of ability to achieve their full potential, to prepare for future life and to become lifelong learners, developing a thirst for learning and to become good citizens.

We believe that every child should enjoy their education and be happy, healthy and safe at school. We will value our children for their individuality, culture and diversity.

We are committed to providing a place of high quality learning experiences and maintaining educational standards.

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

We in Olderfleet Primary School have a responsibility for the pastoral care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care. 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. 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 – A Guide for Schools" (DENI Circular 2017/04) and the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

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

- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
- 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.
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount. This overrides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families. Where there is conflict the child's interest must always come first.

### **3. Other Relevant Policies**

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy
- Pastoral Care
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Intimate Care
- E-Safety Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy

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

### **4. School Safeguarding Team**

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team:

Safeguarding Team:

- DT Emma Brownlees [ebrownlees871@c2kni.net](mailto:ebrownlees871@c2kni.net) Tel 02828276524
- DT Tanya Godfrey [tgodfrey256@c2kni.net](mailto:tgodfrey256@c2kni.net) Tel028282676524
- Principal (Mr Ben Harvey Tel: 028 28276524 Email: [bharvey488@c2kni.net](mailto:bharvey488@c2kni.net))
- Designated Governor for Child Protection (Rev. Colin McClure)
- Chair of the Board of Governors (Mr Andrew Wilson)

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **5.1 The School Safeguarding Team**

The responsibilities of the team should include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Support for the Designated Teacher in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training – including refresher training – in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.
- Review of their child protection/safeguarding practices annually using the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) pro-forma 'Guidance for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding.

#### **5.2 The Designated Teachers (DT)**

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.
- Liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection.
- Keeping the school principal informed.
- Lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy.
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.
- Compiling 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 his/her responsibilities.

It is important that the DDT works in partnership with the DT so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when required. DDT are also provided with the same specialised training by Child Protection Support Services for Schools (CPSSS) to help them in their role.



***Mrs E Brownlees and Mrs T Godfrey – Safeguarding Team***

### **5.3 The Principal**

The principal, as Secretary to the Board of Governors (BoG) will:

- Assist the BoG to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties.
- Attend training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection,
- Keep the BoG informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed.
- Ensure any circulars and guidance from the Department of Education is shared promptly.
- Termly inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.
- Take the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.
- Ensure the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this policy at least once every 2 years.
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner.

The principal has delegated responsibility for:

- Establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school.

- The appointment and management of suitable staff to the key roles of DTs.
- Ensuring that new staff and volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions as part of an induction programme.

It is essential that there is protected time and support to allow the Designated Teachers (DTs) to carry out their role effectively and that DTs are selected based on knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role.

#### **5.4 The Designated Governor for Child Protection**

The Designated Governor should avail of child protection awareness training delivered by CPSS and will take the lead in child protection issues in order to advise the Governors on:

- The role of the DTs.
- 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 full Annual Designated Teachers Report.
- Recruitment, selection and vetting and induction of staff

#### **5.5 The Chair of the Board of Governors**

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- Ensure that he/ she has received appropriate Education Authority training.
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is created and 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 the BoG undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection and recruitment and selection training provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools {CPSSS} 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 the School Principal.
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity.
- Ensure child protection records are kept and signing and dating the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries.

#### **5.6 Other Members of 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**

- Listen to what a child says but do not ask leading questions
- Accept what is said

##### **Reassure**

- Ensure the child is reassured that he/she will be safe and their interests come first

##### **React**

- React to the child only to ensure that he/she is safe and secure
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk

**Record**

- Make notes at the time or as soon as possible
- Record the date, time, any noticeable behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Record statements and facts – not your interpretations

**Refer**

- Report to the Designated Teacher

**The member of staff must:**

- Refer concerns to the Designated 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 (Note of Concern) of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (Appendix 1).
- 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

**In addition the Class Teacher should:**

- Keep the Designated Teacher and Principal 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.

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 safeguarding and child protection procedures.

**5.7 Parents**

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and child protection of children rests with parents/carers who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child. As part of the ongoing work of fostering trust and good relationships with parents/carers, the school seeks to help parents to understand its responsibility for the welfare of all children and young people in its charge.

All policies, including safeguarding and child protection, pastoral care, anti-bullying, positive behaviour, online safety, and complaints will be issued to parents at intake. The safeguarding and child protection policy will be reviewed and reissued, at a minimum, every two years.

*(Issue of a summary of the full policy is sufficient provided it contains clear details of how to access the full policy, including hard copy if required.)*

The school will always protect the best interests of the child and, in the case of suspected abuse, may refer cases directly to investigative agencies.

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by informing the school:

- If your child has a medical condition or educational need.
- If there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- If there is any change in your child's circumstances e.g. change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- Contact the school on the morning of your child's absence and sending in a note on your child's return to school, so that the school is reassured as to the child's situation.
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to bring your child to and from 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, Internet 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.

### **5.7 The Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors must ensure that:

- A Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- A Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed.
- They have a full understanding of the roles of the DTs for Child Protection.
- Safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training.
- The school has a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually, and parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying.
- The school ensures that other safeguarding policies are reviewed at least every three years, or as specified in relevant guidance.
- There is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school.
- All staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circular 2012/19.
- They receive a termly report and a full annual report on all child protection matters. *(This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff)*
- The school maintains the following child protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools:
  - Safeguarding and child protection concerns.
  - Disclosures of abuse.
  - Complaints against staff.
  - Staff induction and training.

## **6. What Is Child Abuse?**

## 6.1 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.

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from 'Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016'.

## 6.2 Types of Abuse

**Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter 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.

**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.

**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 e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**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-by a child's peers.

**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. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature

## 6.3 Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for

money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

#### **6.4 Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse as follows:

Domestic Violence and Abuse:

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

Sexual Violence and Abuse:

*'any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).'*

Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent.

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.

#### **6.5 Female Genital Mutilation**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate authorities, through agreed and established school procedures.

#### **6.6 Forced Marriage**

A Forced Marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced Marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and where an agency, organisation or practitioner has knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person, they should contact the PSNI Immediately.

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the

marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses. In forced marriages, one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with support needs, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

### **6.7 Signs and symptoms of abuse - Possible Indicators**

#### **Neglect**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
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.

#### **Physical Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
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 (glove like); 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 or cowed 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

#### **Sexual Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
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;	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;

<p>frequent urinary infections; avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers; unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating.</p>	<p>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.</p>
--	--

### Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>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; signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).</p>	<p>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.</p>

### Child Sexual Exploitation – potential indicators:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc without plausible explanation.
- Truancy/leaving school without permission.
- Persistently going missing or returning late.
- Receiving lots of texts/phone calls prior to leaving.
- Change in mood – agitated/stressed.
- Appearing distraught/dishevelled or under the influence of substances.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age.
- Physical symptoms e.g. bruising; bite marks
- Collected from school by unknown adults or taxis.
- New peer groups.
- Significantly older boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours.
- Low self-esteem.
- Change in personal hygiene (greater attention or less).
- Self-harm and other expressions of despair.

- Evidence or suspicion of substance abuse.

While these indicators can be useful in identifying potential risk, their presence does not necessarily mean CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence mean it is not.

### **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse**

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
- Alcohol and drugs
- Bullying

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

**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.**

### **6.8 Talking to Children where there are Concerns about Possible Abuse**

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

Staff should be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings.

<b>Do:</b>	<b>Do not:</b>
<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 (Note of Concern form to be used)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ask leading questions</li> <li>❖ Put words into the child's mouth</li> <li>❖ Ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record</li> <li>❖ Ignore the child's behaviour</li> <li>❖ Remove any clothing</li> <li>❖ Panic</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>❖ Document any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred, as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used</li> <li>❖ Seek support for yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Promise to keep secrets</li> <li>❖ Ask leading questions</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. 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. 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**

If staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child, they should not investigate. 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 (Note of Concern). 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. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether in 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. The parent will be informed immediately unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser.

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 Education Authority's 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. He/she will also notify the EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team with a copy sent to the EA Designated Officer for Child Protection 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**.

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

Where a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of staff of the school, the procedures in DE Circular 2015/13 should be followed.

All allegations should be reported immediately, normally to the Principal or Designated Teacher for Child Protection/ Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A Lead Individual should be identified to manage the handling of the allegation from the outset. This will normally be the Principal or a designated senior member of staff. If the Principal is the subject of concern the allegation should be reported immediately by the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Deputy Chairperson, Designated Governor for Child Protection and the person about to be the Lead Individual.

In the interests of all involved the issue should be dealt with as a priority and unnecessary delays should be avoided. Every effort to maintain confidentiality and against unwanted publicity must be made. Allegations should not be shared with staff or children.

All allegations of a child abuse nature must be recorded in the hard backed and bound Record of Child Abuse Complaints book, which must be retained securely. A record of this should be placed on the relevant pupil's Child Protection File.

This procedure 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 an 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. 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.

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.

### **11. Recruitment, Vetting and Induction of Staff and Volunteers**

All staff, paid or unpaid, who are appointed to positions in the School are vetted, inducted and supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

#### **11.1 Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff**

- All new paid teaching and non-teaching staff must have an Enhanced Disclosure Check (EDC) from Access NI before taking up post

#### **11.2 Volunteers**

- Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from Access NI.
- Volunteers who work under the supervision are not required to obtain an EDC.
- School must ensure that volunteers e.g. coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc., who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place.

#### **11.3 Visitors to School**

Visitors to school, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance, etc. do not need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors should be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors to school should be:

- Met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Where possible, be escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- Access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.
- If delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

### **11.3 Pupils on Work Experience**

Health and Social Care Programmes will require an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate for pupils on long term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/shadowing placements.

Pupils coming into school on work experience do not require Access NI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal child protection induction processes should apply.

### **12. Code of Conduct for all Paid or Unpaid 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.

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

### **13. Staff Training**

Olderfleet 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 for Schools.

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

### **14. The Preventative Curriculum**

In the classroom, regular Circle Time sessions are used as a means of encouraging children to raise social and emotional concerns in a safe environment and to build self-confidence, respect and sensitivity among classmates.

All pupils engage in PDMU activities throughout each term which seek to address a variety of issues. Pupils are also alerted to the importance of safety when using the Internet and other on-line platforms through CEOP 'Think You Know'.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there is a permanent child protection notice board in the main corridor and relevant information in each resource area, which provides advice 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.

Foundation stage/KS1 children take part in the NSPCC PANTS programme which is a simple, age appropriate conversation to help keep children safe from child abuse.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- Drug abuse
- Alcohol abuse
- Anti-smoking
- Road Safety
- Healthy Eating
- Anti-Bullying
- Home Safety
- Primary 5 – 7 pupils engage in a range of Safety Awareness Programmes, when available, such as the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service talks on Fire Safety, the “Bee Safe” Activity Day and the ‘Social Guardians’ course.

### **15. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Safeguarding Team in Olderfleet 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.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

### **16. Operation Encompass**

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children’s exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, when the police have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school safeguarding team. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the designated teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns.

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

Further information see [The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2022](#)

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Designated Teacher)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of Board of Governors)

Date Policy Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix 1**

**OLDERFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**NOTE OF CONCERN**

**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"/> <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 If 'No' state reason:	<input style="width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>

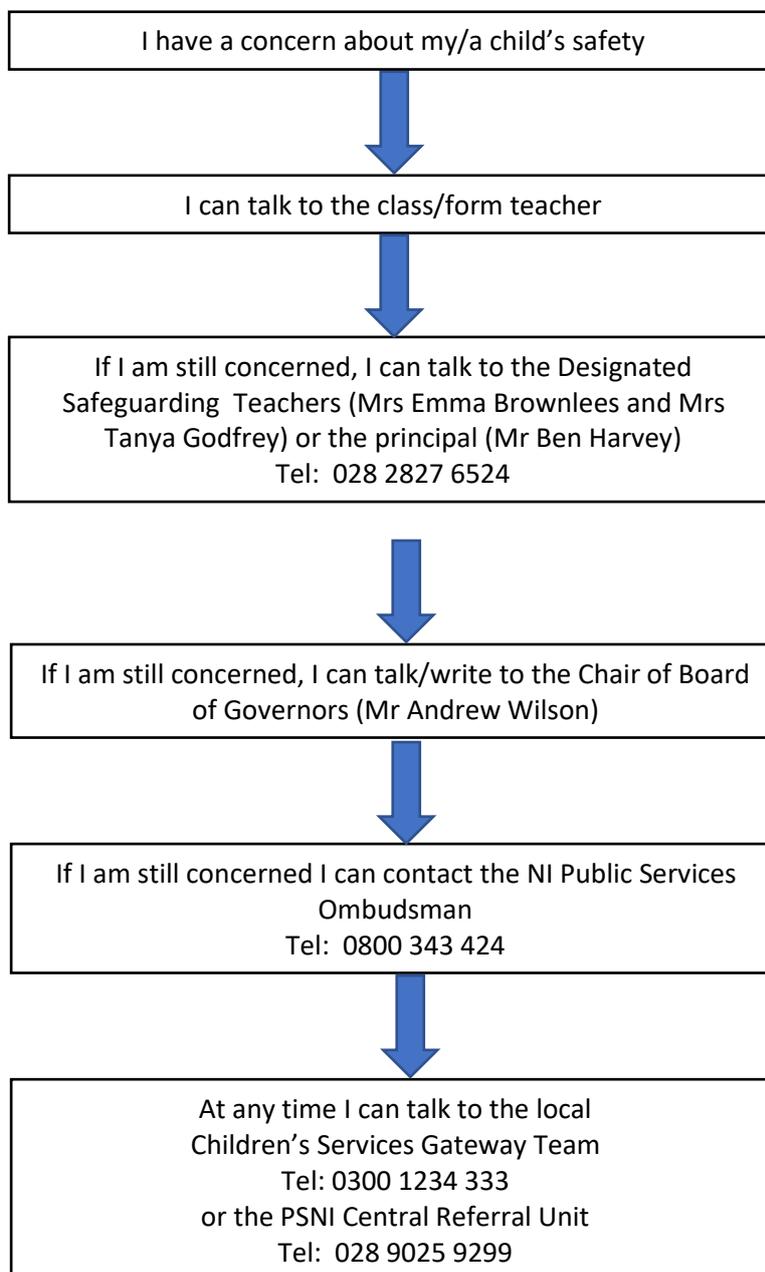
Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

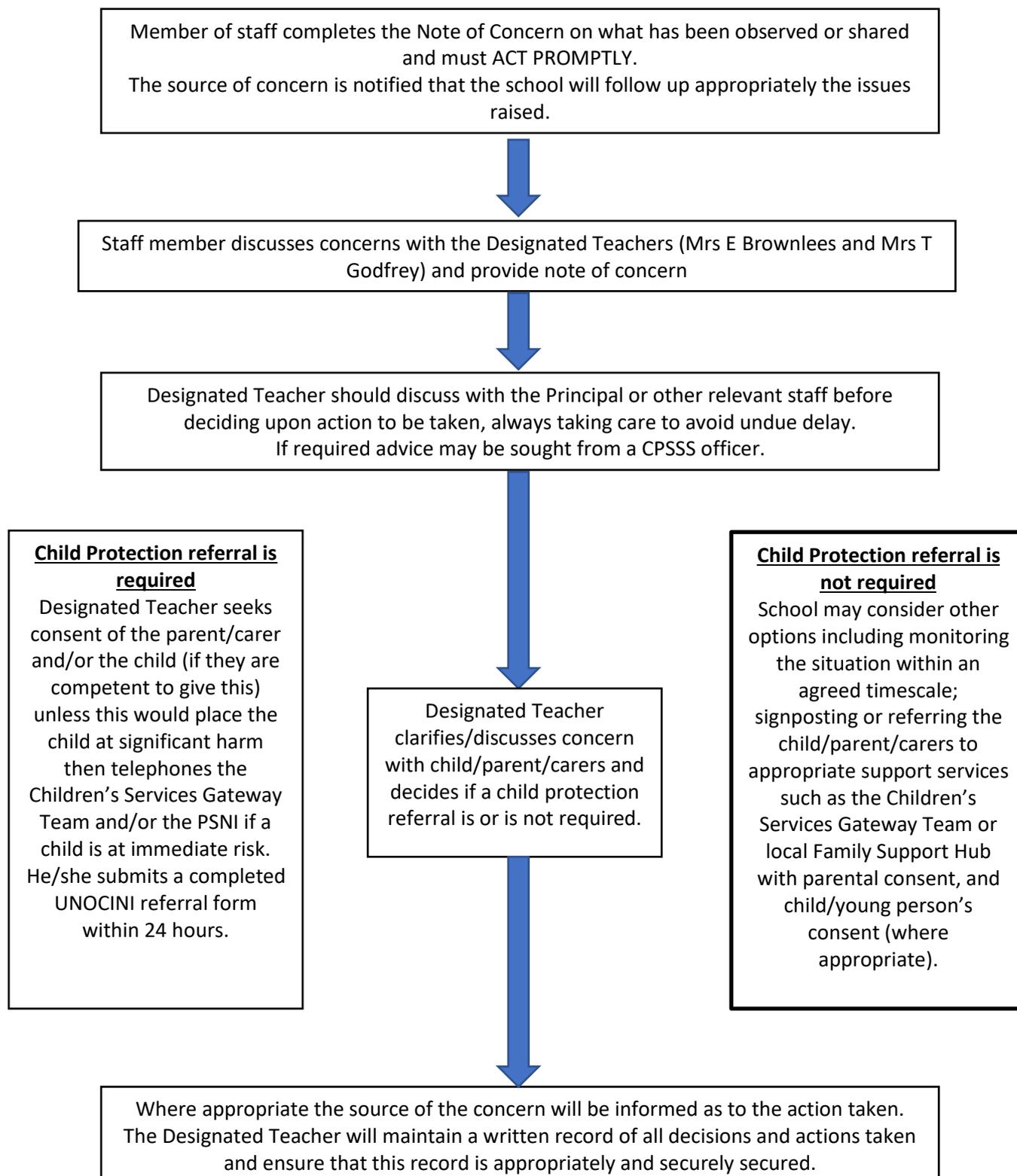
## Appendix 2

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



### Appendix 3

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



## Appendix 4

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

