

Dromara Primary School



Safeguarding Policy

Incorporating Pastoral Care, Child Protection and Intimate Care

“Happy children; learning and achieving together.”

Safeguarding Team:

Chair of Board of Governors:	Mrs I Burrows
Designated Teacher:	Mrs H Milligan
Principal/Deputy Designated Teacher:	Mr A Armstrong
Designated Governor:	Mrs I Burrows

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Legislation and Government Initiatives

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
“Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.”
“When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think about what would be best for the child”
- The Children (N.I.) Order 1995
“The welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration”
- DENI Circular 1997/4
“As well as their statutory responsibilities in relation to pupils' learning, schools have a pastoral responsibility towards their pupils and should recognise that the children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm”
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Education & Libraries Order 2003 – Education & Protection of Pupils
- Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures (April 2005)
- DENI Circulars 1999/9, 1999/10, 2006/6-9 and 25, 2007/01, 2008/03 and 10, 2010/01 and 07, 2011/22, 2012/19 and 2013/01, 2015/13, 2016/20, 2016/27
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) order 2007
- The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008
- Safeguarding Board Act NI 2011
- Protection of Freedom Act 2012
- Multi-agency Practice Guidelines Female Genital Mutilation DFP 2014
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children (DHSSPS 2016)
- DE Circular 2017/04 - Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools

Introduction

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children refers to the process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Child Protection refers to the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering significant harm. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

We in Dromara Primary School have a primary responsibility to do what is reasonable in all circumstances to safeguard and promote the welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where all pupils are respected and valued. We seek to protect our pupils by helping them learn about the risk of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

We are alert to the signs of possible abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure pupils receive effective support and protection.

We will carry out this duty through our:

- Pastoral Care Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Positive Behaviour Policy;
- 'E-Safety Policy – (Use of Images, Mobile Phone, Acceptable Use of the Internet);
- Intimate Care Policy;
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Safeguarding

'Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection' (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016)

Physical Safety

The school aims to provide a safe environment for the children. It has a secured perimeter fence, a CCTV monitoring system for the front entrance, a secured access/entry system to all areas. Children are supervised during break and lunch times and good behaviour and care for others is encouraged in order to reduce the frequency of minor accidents/incidents. The school maintains a record of visitors in its Visitor 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 returned when the person signs out upon departure.

Online Safety

Parental permission is sought for use of the internet in school. The school provides filtered internet access to pupils and staff on the C2k network. Children are taught how to stay safe online through class lessons e.g. talks during Internet Safety Day and activities on the dangers of cyber bullying, during Anti-Bullying week in November. Children do not have access to mobile phones during the school day (see Social Media & Mobile Phone Policy).

Health and Safety

E.A. Central Contracts ensure that the site is secure and its contents are fit for purpose. Fire alarms are tested weekly. Fire equipment, PE equipment, drinking water, electrical appliances etc. are checked annually and the findings reported and logged. Fire drills are carried out termly. The Building Supervisor monitors cold and hot water temperatures in order to comply with E.A.

recommendations with regard to Legionella. The School Servery is regularly inspected and graded by Food Hygiene (Environmental Health Service).

Risk Assessments

The school has a risk assessment policy, with a file containing individual risk assessments as recommended by the Education Authority. Risk assessments are carried out regularly to ensure the on-going safety of the children all around the school premises, both indoor and outdoor. Risk assessments are also carried out for any occasion that the children are off school premises in the care of a teacher. This includes educational trips, sporting events, swimming lessons and residential trips.

Responsibilities

The Governors and Principal have overall responsibility for the cleaning, maintenance and security of Dromara Primary School. The day to day management is the responsibility of the Building Supervisor. An annual Health and Safety inspection is carried out by the Board of Governors' Health and Safety Team.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the school is provided with up to date contact and medical details.

Vetting Procedures

All staff appointed to positions in the School and tutors/volunteers in Regulated Activity are vetted in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

All staff employed within Dromara Primary School have been subject to appropriate background checks as described in Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools (April 2017).

All staff have adopted a school Code of Conduct for Employees which has been drawn up to reflect DE Circular 2017/04.

Anyone interacting with our pupils leading after- school activities or Breakfast Club, will be informed of our procedures, adhere to our Staff Code of Conduct and be subject to AccessNI vetting.

PASTORAL CARE

It is the aim of Dromara Primary School to provide a disciplined, caring, supportive and happy environment where effective learning can take place.

In the school it is also our aim that through this environment each person, both child and adult, associated with the school can feel safe and secure.

What this means for Pupils:

For **pupils** this means encouraging them:

- to set and achieve personal, social, moral, physical and academic goals through a planned and developmental programme.
- to help them gain maximum benefit from their time in the school.
- to develop independence of mind and to take responsibility for their own actions.
- to develop self-discipline and self-respect.
- to develop an understanding of themselves as individuals recognising their strengths and limitations, their personal qualities, their attitudes and values.
- to develop a respect for the opinions and rights of others and show tolerance towards them.
- to develop an understanding of the world in which we live.
- to foster relationships where they feel happy and secure.

What this means for Teachers:

For **teachers** this means:

- establishing a clear vision of the school with its pupils, its community and its point of development.
- developing whole school policies which establish principles for action throughout the school.
- promoting a caring environment where pupils' learning is developed within the context of their individual needs and abilities.
- providing them with opportunities for their own professional development.
- establishing appropriate structures of time and support for those in need.
- being aware of the children's individual "backgrounds and experiences" and individual "needs and aspirations".
- fostering relationships where children feel happy and secure and can come to the class teacher for any reason.

What this means for other Adults in the School

For **other adults** associated with the school this means:

- understanding, and having an empathy with, the general ethos of the school.
- being partners with the teachers in providing a caring approach.
- helping the pupils achieve their personal goals.
- developing a team approach where each member has a particular role to play.
- being aware of the children's individual "backgrounds and experiences" and individual "needs and aspirations".

The pastoral dimension has a general and specialised focus.

A - GENERAL FOCUS

Since the pastoral dimension permeates all activities, the general focus requires a caring commitment by all teachers and adults to every aspect of school life. The implication of this is that the pastoral dimension should therefore be evident in:

- the school ethos
- the hidden curriculum
- extra-curricular activities
- individual subjects
- discipline procedures
- reward procedures

1. The School as a Community

The school as a community should be seen as an extended family where everyone works for the common good.

- Parents will be made welcome in the school and encouraged to feel that their role is important and appreciated: Open Days, Sports Day.
- Parents will be encouraged to show their support in a variety of ways: e.g. Football/Netball matches, Fund Raising, Concert.
- Teachers will share duties as part of a mutually supportive team.

The school is also part of a wider community

- The assistance of outside agencies will be sought to extend pupils' experiences: e.g. the visit of a policeman, the visit of a local person to speak on the school/home life during certain periods of the 20th century.
- Links will be established with neighbouring schools.
- There will be links with statutory agencies involved in the health and welfare of children.

2. The School in the Community

a) The school will have close associations with local bodies e.g. the churches, council and other community organisations.

b) The school will involve the community through aspects of the hidden curriculum e.g. anti-vandalism, litter and environmental projects.

Activities

Some specific activities which show how the pastoral dimension permeates all aspects of school life are listed below:

a) Individual classes and year groups collaborate in projects e.g. those which will provide an awareness of local environmental issues.

b) School is used for community activities where possible to ensure everyone has a vested interest.

c) Schools in an area can collaborate e.g. through competitions, Youth Sport initiatives and work in Education for Mutual Understanding where appropriate.

d) Children can help support a variety of charities having recognised the needs of those less fortunate than themselves.

Ethos of the School

The pastoral dimension is central to the ethos of the school; the atmosphere which the school is creating is ordered yet sympathetic.

- a) Children's work is displayed in classrooms and corridors.
- b) Supervisory and classroom assistants are included in discussions promoting a positive behavioural programme.

Attitudes to Learning

The pastoral dimension influences the attitudes to learning.

- a) Teachers will provide a range of learning styles in an encouraging framework to promote opportunity for active research and self-expression. The development of a flexible approach is of paramount importance to effective learning.
- b) The school will encourage a positive disciplined, caring and happy atmosphere for learning.
- c) Every child will be treated as an individual.
- d) Children with special needs will be integrated with other children.
- e) Each child will be stretched to achieve his/her maximum potential.

Caring Attitude

The pastoral dimension necessitates a caring approach to all activities.

- a) A positive and fair approach to discipline, where praise and reward are fundamental, will be adopted.
- b) Appropriate strategies will be adopted where there are particular home circumstances.
- c) Parents will be encouraged to support the school in the common aim of ensuring the whole development of the pupils.

B- SPECIALISED FOCUS

The class teacher should endeavour to have a detailed knowledge of the needs, aspirations, interests and academic progress of each pupil in the class. With this knowledge, allied to the teacher's skills, the work of the school, parents and other adults is integrated to support the learning and development of each pupil. The following are specific examples:

(I) Development of Inter-Personal Relationships

The development of good inter-personal relationships is vital to ensure mutual respect, positive attitudes and happiness and security for both pupils and staff.

- a) Pupils will be encouraged in the classroom situation to assist one another, care for one another and develop the skill of listening, thereby promoting in them tolerance and respect for others.
- b) Staff will encourage good relationships through the careful management of human relationships.

(II) Areas of Experience

The pastoral dimension means that children are offered a wide variety of experiences.

- a) The school will continue to have an educational visits programme, which is progressive and developmental.
- b) A community service programme will be explored.

(III) Discipline Procedures

A positive behavioural programme to enhance self-esteem will be adopted where self-discipline is encouraged.

Central to the school's discipline policy is a programme for positive behaviour.

(IV) Extra-Curricular Activities

The school will encourage positive attitudes throughout its extra-curricular programme.

- a) Positive attitudes will be actively promoted in games activities and those of the arts.
- b) On day visits pupils will be encouraged to respect people and property.
- c) Pupils on a residential visit will learn to share in responsibilities undertaken.

(V) Personal and Social Development

The school will encourage the development in pupils of a wide range of personal interests and in the ability to take responsibility.

- a) The school will continue with its extensive range of after school activities.
- b) The school will continue with its road safety programme.
- c) The school will promote individuals' talents in all areas of the curriculum.

(VI) Health Education

Implicit in the pastoral dimension is a programme throughout the school for Health Education.

Communication

A policy on Pastoral Care depends on it being communicated positively to staff, pupils, parents and all others involved in the life of the school. To support this pastoral dimension, the Principal has overall responsibility for pastoral care although Mrs Heather Milligan is the teacher assisting with the development of Pastoral Care within the school.

Training

Opportunities will be provided for the above members of staff to undergo training appropriate to this school. In addition, all staff will be trained on a regular basis in the areas of Pastoral Care and Child Protection.

Evaluation

The school will carry out at regular intervals an evaluation of the pastoral dimension to determine ways of improving the quality of provision for the benefit of all pupils and teachers. This will assess what is being achieved.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Introduction

Every child in Dromara Primary School has the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. The guidelines in this policy are designed to safeguard children and staff. They apply to every member of staff involved with the intimate care of children.

Disabled children can be especially vulnerable. Staff involved with their intimate care need to be sensitive to their individual needs.

Definition

'Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs to each individual child. Parent/guardians have a responsibility to advise staff of the intimate care needs of their child, and staff have a responsibility to work in partnership with children and parents'.

(Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children: Area Child Protection Committee, 2005)

Principles of Intimate Care

The following are the fundamental principles upon which the Policy and Guidelines are based:

- Every child has the right to be safe.
- Every child has the right to personal privacy.
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual.
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities.
- Every child has their right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account.
- Every child has the right to have levels to intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

Procedures

We will try to encourage a child's independence as far as possible in his/her intimate care. Where the child is fully dependent on an adult's help we will talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible.

We will ask the child/parent/guardian about any likes/dislikes while carrying out intimate care and obtain consent. Effective communication between parents/guardians/staff ensure practice is consistent.

Where possible, two classroom assistants will help a child to change their clothes. If there is only one classroom assistant available, another member of staff will be sent for. If a child has to be changed then this will be recorded on the 'Clothes Changing Record' and the parent/guardian will be told verbally where applicable, otherwise in writing. In extreme circumstances parents or guardian will be contacted.

Menstrual Care

Dromara Primary School will provide sanitary protection for pupils when required. It is necessary that parents inform a member of staff if their daughter may require this facility.

If a pupil were to take their period for the first time in school, the situation will be handled with the utmost sensitivity and discretion. A parent will be informed immediately and the Designated Teacher will discuss an appropriate course of action.

Child Protection

“All Children have the right as individuals to knowledge that will help them to be safe, independent and to be able to express their own feelings and concerns.”

Kidscape

“All adults have the responsibility to keep children safe, to listen to their feelings and take them seriously.”

Kidscape

“Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence”

U N Convention 1991

“When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what would be the best for the child.”

U N Convention 1991

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| Members of Staff | - | all teachers, full and part time, secretarial, ancillary auxiliary staff and classroom assistant(s) |
| D.T. | - | designated teacher |
| B.O.G. | - | Board of Governors |

The School’s Responsibility

The teaching staff in Dromara seeks to reinforce the ethos and general aims of the school. It recognises the importance of values and caring attitudes. It aims to contribute to an atmosphere in which all pupils are confident that they are cared for, valued and respected. It endeavours to ensure they receive the guidance and support necessary to reach their full potential.

All members of staff have a responsibility for the day-to-day care of their pupils. If a pupil asks to speak to a member of staff in confidence, he/she should respond positively, but point out that it may be necessary to seek advice before an answer can be given.

If a member of staff becomes concerned about the welfare of a particular pupil, he/she should consult the Designated Teacher (D.T.), and secondly, the Principal.

Members of staff should also appreciate that, while every effort will be made to keep them informed about pupils for whom they have direct responsibility, there may be occasions when it will not be possible to provide confidential information.

Role of the Principal

It would be neither desirable nor practical for the Principal to deal with each concern personally, but he should be satisfied that each is being dealt with appropriately. This will mean working closely with the D.T. The Principal should ensure that parents and the appropriate agencies are being informed and consulted. He will inform the B.O.G. of any action taken on behalf of the school.

Role of the Designated Teacher

The D.T., Mrs Heather Milligan, has the responsibility of dealing with suspected child abuse. She will ensure that the staff is aware of the procedures to be followed in such cases. She will consult with the teachers individually with regard to including child protection, personal and social development and pastoral care elements within the curriculum.

Reports of suspicions of child abuse will be kept by the D.T. These will remain confidential, and will only be available to appropriate persons. Information recorded will include dates, events and action taken, and copies will be sent to the Education Welfare Officer, Social Services as deemed necessary.

Teachers may themselves be in need of support, having discovered signs of abuse, and the D.T. should be aware of this.

Role of the Class Teacher

The teacher is probably the first professional person a child in need may choose to speak to. S/he must act with tact and sympathy, without appearing to pry, and certainly without examining the child in any way. S/he must not make any promises as to confidentiality to the child, or appear to "take sides".

The teacher must make notes, even roughly, immediately after the chat, and these should be made available to the D.T. (*See "Procedures to follow when there is suspicion of child abuse."*)

It may be necessary to inform outside agencies of the abuse allegations, and the teacher must be prepared for a formal interview.

In class, it is important to be sensitive to the child and to reassure him/her, without singling him/her out for special attention.

Identifying Signs of Abuse

Children may be abused by a parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer (*i.e. a person who has actual custody of a child such as a foster parent or staff member in a residential home*), an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both. The abuse may take a number of forms

Neglect

- persistent or significant neglect of a child which results in severe impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include:

- hunger and tiredness
- poor personal hygiene
- unkempt state
- emaciation
- few friends
- withdrawal or aggression
- health problems
- difficulties in school work

Physical

- actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

Signs may include:

- unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- unwillingness to change for PE
- self-harm tendencies
- aggression towards others
- fear of physical contact

Sexual

- actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not fully understand, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos or family trends.

Signs may include:

- sudden changes in mood
- regressive behaviour (*bed wetting*)
- lack of trust in adults, perhaps one person in particular overly affectionate in behaviour
- displaying sexual behaviour inappropriate to age
- drawing explicit pictures
- playing sexually explicit games
- inability to concentrate
- social withdrawal
- medical; problems in the genital area

Emotional

- actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child.

Signs may be:

- physical, mental and emotional immaturity
- sudden speech disorders
- very low self esteem
- neurotic behaviour (*rocking, pulling hair*)
- overreaction to correction by adult aggression

- inability to play cooperatively
- extreme fear of new situations

Exploitation

- intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engaging in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

This is defined as '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.'

(Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland; A Seven Year Strategy - March 2016)

Incidents of Domestic Violence will be reported to Social Services/PSNI as per the school's referral procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

'Multi-agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation (DFP 2014)' states:

'FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons.'

The school will follow the procedures outlined in the above guidelines if FGM or proposed FGM is disclosed or suspected.

It should be noted that a child may display a combination of behavioural signs, and that these are only indicators, not evidence of abuse. Conversely, a child may display none of these signs, and still be a victim.

Bullying

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself. Three main types are physical, verbal or indirect, e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups. Symptoms – behaviour change such as withdrawal, lack of concentration, marked deterioration in school work or absenteeism.

It is vital that schools should act – and moreover, be seen to act – promptly and firmly to combat bullying. All schools should have, within their pastoral care and statutory discipline policies, a clear whole school anti-bullying policy statement, familiar to staff, parents and pupils. It should set out the measures which the school will take to prevent bullying or describe how bullying will be tackled including the sanctions which will be taken against the perpetrator. A senior member of staff should always report back to parents on the steps which have been taken by the school in response to an expressed concern about bullying.

In extreme cases, a teacher might have to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him or her causing injury to him or herself, to others or to property. In such instances no more than the minimum necessary force should be used.

The Department has no direct role in the investigation of allegations of abuse involving teachers, this is a matter for the school in the first instance and ultimately for the employer of the member of staff. Some schools have self-protection programmes in place to help children recognize and deal with potentially dangerous situations. School inspectors will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's procedures for child protection as part of the evidence about the quality of pastoral care.

Reference should be made to the School's Anti-bullying Policy.

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](#).

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN THERE IS A SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

Teachers are probably the first professionals to notice a change in a child's physical or mental demeanour. These changes may be part of a child's normal development or they may be signs of child abuse. The child may actually disclose facts of physical or sexual abuse, which may have happened in the home or elsewhere. The abuse may have taken place at school involving a colleague.

However, the suspicion is raised, it will produce a feeling of fear and disbelief in the mind of the teacher receiving the information, especially if the alleged abusers are known to the teacher. These reactions are understandable. Where a child is at risk of suffering “significant harm” from abuse, teachers have an obligation to report the fears or suspicions to the D.T. or the principal. They will then liaise with Social Services and seek advice as to how to proceed. If necessary, the police will be informed. These procedures are standard in all cases of alleged abuse and are instigated to protect the child from further abuse.

In order to give all teachers confidence in handling the difficult situations, here are some guidelines to follow.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse:

- do not agree to keep it a secret
- tell the child that you want to help and may need to tell someone who can help
- do not ask leading questions
- do not suggest a reason for what might have happened
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing to talk about it

Immediately after disclosure or suspicion of abuse:

1. write down your suspicions or make a note of the words spoken, and also note the behaviour of the child including when and where disclosure took place.
2. report immediately to the D.T. and /or principal, making a note of when and where this took place.
3. provide a copy of the report of the words spoken by the child.

After the Report is Submitted:

- ask to be kept informed of the result of any decisions or case conferences.
- seek advice from the D.T. or union headquarters as to how to proceed with reports etc.
- do not take sides in proceedings, and try to put the child’s feelings and wishes first.

ADDITIONAL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Police Checks

All adults working with pupils in school or in the after-school clubs will be police checked using the appropriate EA vetting form. These will be updated on an annual basis as appropriate.

Photographs

All parents will be asked to give permission at the beginning of the school year for photographs to be taken and displayed of their children. These will include press articles, photographs for the school display boards and the school website. Teachers will receive a list of pupils in their class

who are not allowed to have their photographs used and the relevant context. A copy of the complete list will be displayed in the school staff room.

School Visits

On all school visits, whether it be to the swimming pool or on an educational residential trip, the correct adult / pupil ratio will be observed. A risk assessment will be carried out for all visits and these will be filed for future reference. The guidance suggests an adult: pupil ratio of approximately 1:10 for FS/KS1 and 1:15 for KS2.

Transportation

If pupils are being transported by coach, the company must be recommended by the Education Authority or be a reputable operator, with correct insurance documents available upon request. All coaches must have fitted seatbelts installed and these will be worn at all times by the children while travelling.

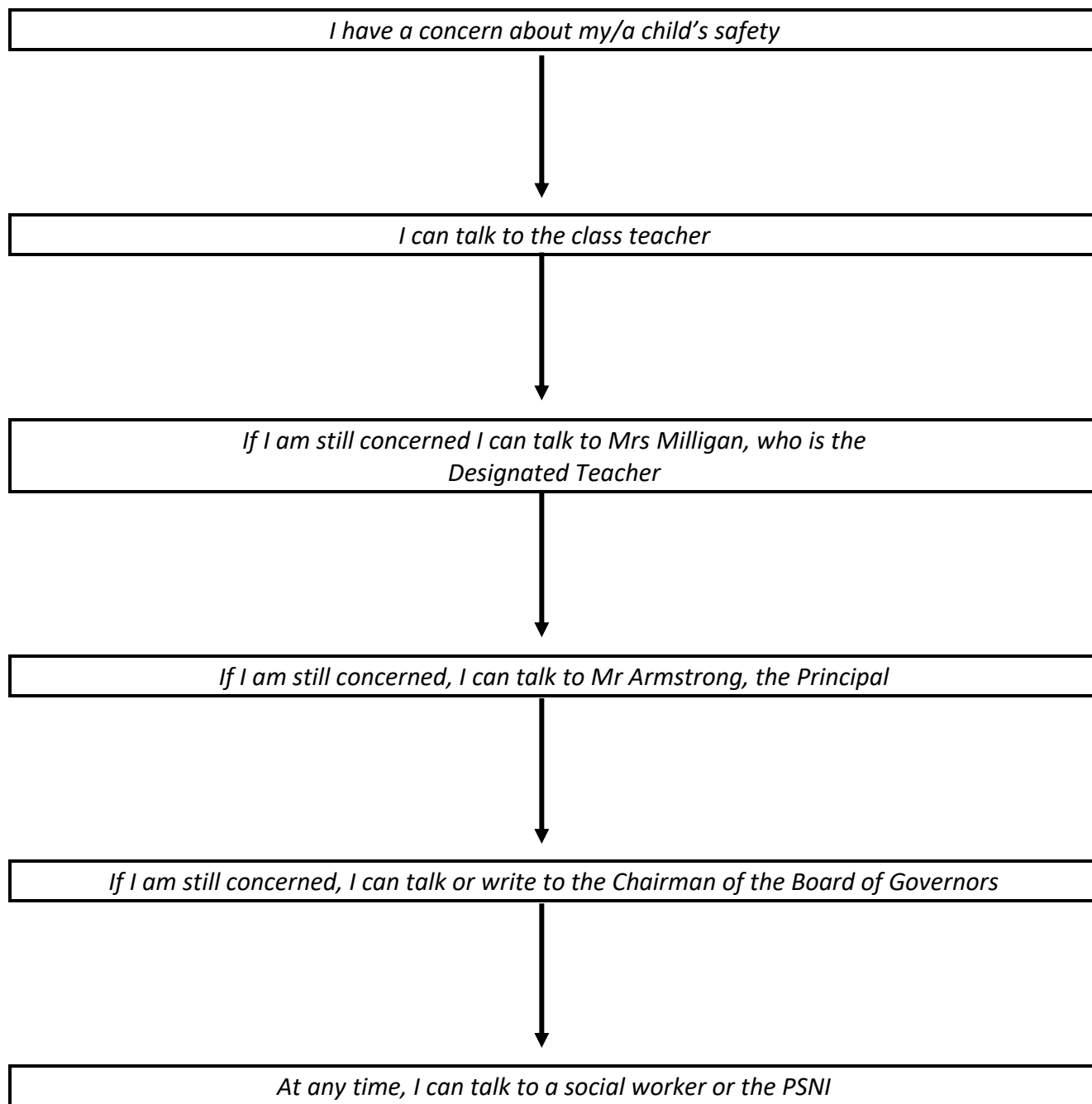
If children are traveling in a teacher's car or the vehicle of another parent e.g. to a football match or inter-school quiz, then an individual booster seat may be provided by parents if their child is below the necessary height restriction.

School Premises

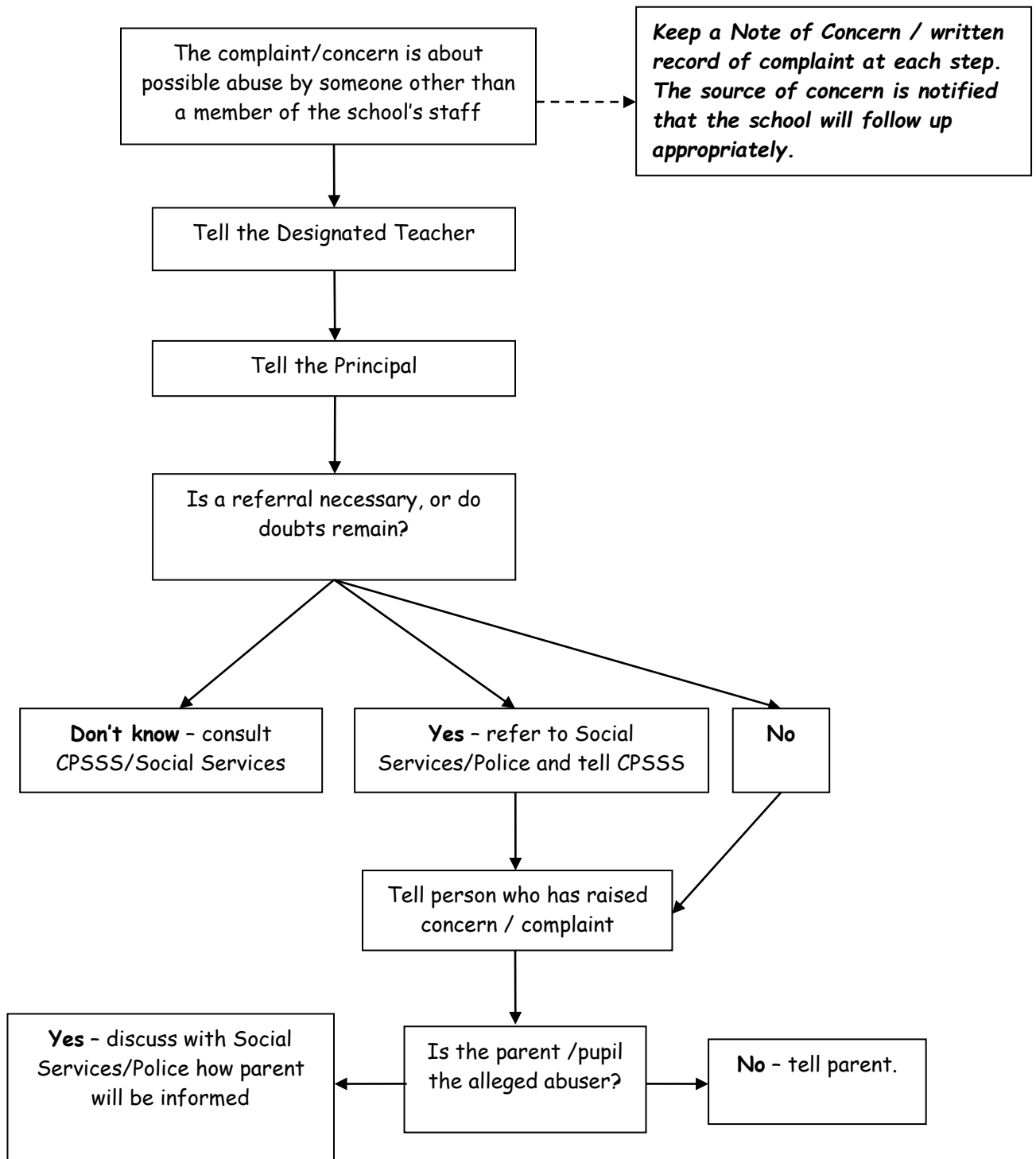
Parents/carers should not remain in the playground once the gates have been closed or accompany their child(ren) into school.

The following procedures illustrate how concerns relating to Child Protection are dealt with in the school:

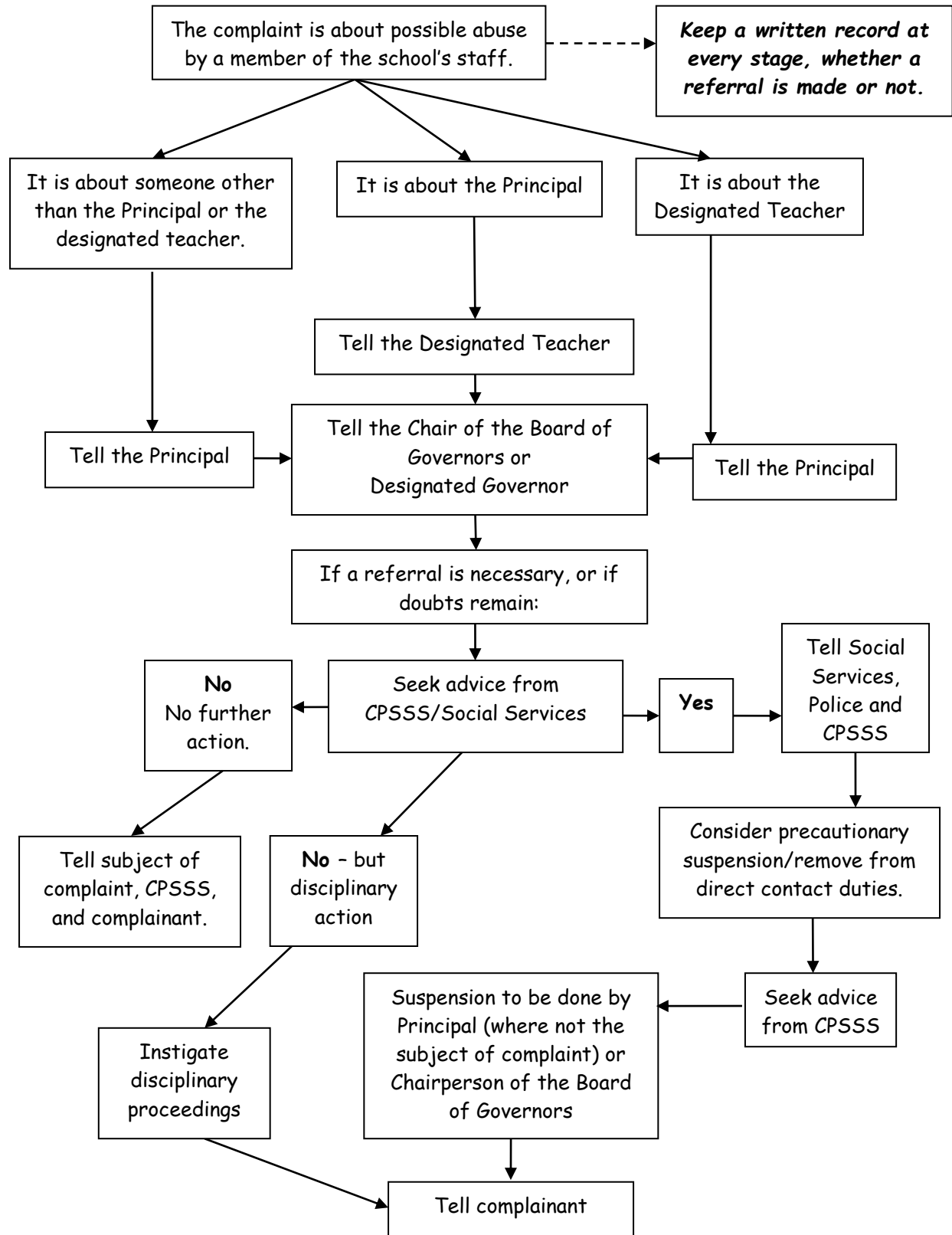
How can a parent make a complaint regarding concerns for a/their child's safety?



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



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



Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". The welfare of the child is paramount so members of staff have a responsibility to share relevant information with other professionals and the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to Social Services or PSNI. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a "need to know" basis.

Record Keeping

All Child Protection records are kept in a file labelled with the child's name. These files are stored in a locked filing cabinet and only the Principal, Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers have access to this filing cabinet. When a child transfers to another school, a copy of notes generated by Dromara Primary School is forwarded to the Designated Teacher in the child's new school. Documentation from Social Services is shredded. Child Protection records are kept by the school until a former pupil reaches 30 years of age.

Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings

The Principal, Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher may be invited to attend Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health and Social Care Trust. They will be asked to provide a written report and to make an oral contribution to the conference/meeting. The above staff may also be required to express their views as to whether a child's name should be placed / removed from the Child Protection 'At Risk' Register. Feedback from conferences /meetings will be kept confidential and disseminated to relevant staff on a "need to know" basis.

Self-Harm and Suicide

The delivery of The Personal Development and Mutual Understanding aspect of the curriculum helps pupils build the resilience required to deal with the many challenges and disappointments they will face in today's world.

In addition, the Pastoral Care Policy outlines a whole school approach to fostering good pupil-teacher relationships, good peer relationships and positive behaviour management which can help pupils increase their positive mental health and wellbeing thus making them less susceptible to anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicide.

The presence of a number of risk factors, however, may increase the vulnerability of a young person to self-harm or suicidal tendencies.

Knowledge of risk factors and protective factors is not always enough to help identify pupils who may be at risk of self-harm or suicide. Teachers have a key role to play in being able to identify warning signs of potential suicidal thoughts or behaviours.

Warning Signs:

- Ideas and themes of depression, death and suicide
- Writing about suicide
- Speaking about suicide
- Art work about suicide
- Threats and statements of intent
- Negative changes in mood and marked emotional instability
- Positive changes in mood and calmness
- Significant grief or stress
- Withdrawal from relationships
- Physical symptoms with emotional cause
- Preoccupation with a known suicide
- Life threatening risk taking behaviour
- Unexpected reduction in academic performance

Responding to a Pupil with Suicidal Tendencies

It is important for staff to consider in advance how they would react as self-harm and expression of suicidal thoughts are safeguarding issues.

- Listen
- Need to respond with empathy and in a non-judgemental way
- Need to follow CP and Safeguarding procedures and to make appropriate referrals
- Take the child seriously - accept the possibility of suicidal thoughts
- Don't promise confidentiality
- Show a caring attitude
- Be open (ask the young person if they are thinking of harming themselves)
- Supervise closely - **the pupil should not be left unsupervised**
- Inform the Designated Teacher.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure the pupil is not left unsupervised
- Contact parents/guardians and ask them to take the pupil to the GP or Out of Hours Service for '**an emergency mental state assessment**' and potential referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- Safely hand over the pupil into the care of the parents/guardians. Parents will be advised to supervise the child closely.
- If the school cannot safely deliver the pupil into the care of parents/guardians, or the school has concerns that appropriate support will not be sought/provided, school staff may seek appropriate medical advice acting in *loco parentis*.
- Remain in sensitive contact with parents/guardians
- Provide support for staff and/or peers.

Complete a Safeguarding action checklist as outlined in the D.E. publication 'Protecting Life in Schools'. (see Appendix 3)

Parental Responsibility

Who has it?

1. The birth mother or mother by adoption.
2. The birth father if:
 - Married to the birth mother at time of birth;
 - Subsequently marries birth mother;
 - Gets a "Parental Responsibility Agreement" through a solicitor;
 - Gets a "Parental Responsibility Order" Article 7, through the Court;
 - Registered as the child's father (after April 2002).
3. Anyone who has a Residence Order during the child's lifetime e.g. Grandparents.
4. The State if a Care Order is in force.

How do you lose it?

1. The birth mother if:
 - the child is adopted by someone else.
2. The birth father if:
 - the child is adopted by someone else;
 - through the Court.
3. Anyone with a Residence Order if:
 - end of Order;
 - new Order replaces it;
 - through the Court.
4. The State if:
 - new Order replaces it;
 - end of Order;
 - through the Court.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

CHILDLINE 0800 1111

NSPCC Call us on 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Local Social Service Gateway Teams:

Belfast HSC Trust	028 9050 7000
South Eastern HSC Trust	0300 1000 300
Northern HSC Trust	0300 1234 333
Southern HSC Trust	0800 7838745
Western HSC Trust	028 7131 4090

Regional Emergency Social Work Service 028 9504 9999

Child Protection Support Service (CPSS)

The **Child Protection Support Service (CPSS)** has one dedicated number which can be utilised across the Authority by schools and staff.

The new contact number is **028 9598 5590** and will operate from Monday to Friday from 9.00 am until 5.00 pm.

Safeguarding action checklist

The Designated Teacher/ Safeguarding Team may find the following checklist useful in helping to ensure that everything possible has been done to help the pupil.

If there is a disclosure or strong suspicion of suicidal intent, ensure that:

- The pupil is listened to and supported in the immediate term (e.g. is with a trusted member of staff).
- Designated pastoral care teacher is informed.
- Parents/guardians/carers are informed.
How was this done? Provide details below

Parent/guardian/carer comes to the school for the pupil and he/she leaves in their care (parents/guardians/carers are advised to monitor the child closely)

Teacher's Name: _____

Time: _____

Date: _____

Parents are advised to take their child to the GP and ask for a mental state assessment and appropriate action.

(Concerns around negligence regarding a child's mental health needs should be followed up through the normal safeguarding procedures).

School sends a follow-up letter to parents detailing concerns, action taken and advice given.

The Designated Teacher or appropriate alternative staff follows up with parent/guardian/carer within a short time frame.

This should be as soon as possible, but must be on the same day the incident has occurred.

Longer-term support is sought for the young person as appropriate.

Teachers' support needs are identified and action taken if appropriate.