

Safeguarding/ Child Protection Policy

2016-2017



Ashgrove Primary School

Learning, Caring, Growing Stronger Together



Article 1

Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights of the Convention

Article 3

The best interests of the child must be a top priority

Agreed by Governors	October 2016
Agreed by Staff	September 2016
Agreed by Pupils	

Agree Date	Review Date	Person Responsible
October 2016	September 2017	Mrs V Luney

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THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ASHGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Designated Governor Chairperson	Mr William Edwards Mr Gerard McIlroy
Principal	Mr Robert Smith
Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs Valerie Luney
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Miss Kirsten McLaughlin

INTRODUCTION

The governors and staff of Ashgrove Primary School fully recognise the contribution they make to the safeguarding of individual children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm. Parents are asked to work with us by updating school information regularly, disclosing relevant advice on court orders, etc. and by informing the school about anything which could cause distress and change to a child, such as bereavement, family disruption or social problem.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. Within this partnership the school will be sensitive and supportive in meeting its safeguarding duties.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection' (1999), 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child' (1990), 'Our Children and Young People: Our Pledge' (2006-2016) and Cooperating to Safeguarding Children 2003 and Area Child Protection Committees' - Regional Policy and Procedures 2005 with Amendments 2008 published by DHSSPSNI.

The central ethos of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is that *the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration* in all decision concerning the child. This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - *the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration*. The 'paramountcy' of the child principle underpins our Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school - teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who

works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence

There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
2. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
3. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
4. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. This may be done through discussions at circle time, PSNI "stranger danger" talks etc. The curriculum will be used, namely PDMU materials, to ensure children are aware of safeguarding.
5. Supporting pupils who have been socially or physically harmed by the effects of child abuse, in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER (DT) AND DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER (DDT)

The DT:

- To provide training to all school staff including support staff
- To be available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- To take responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- To make referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- To liaise with EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- To take lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's child protection policy
- To ensure parents receive a copy of the child protection policy every year which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school on this
- To promote a child protection ethos in the school
- To write reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- To maintain all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by The DT, DDT or Principal)

The DDT:

To support the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher (as outlined above) as required.

TRAINING

Governors, Principal, DT for Child Protection and DDTs for Child Protection will receive update training in line with the EA's programmes. Training of staff will take place annually. Any member of staff who misses CP training will receive mop-up training during the term.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

(A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order). 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.' (ACPC, 2005)

Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse / Injury - is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Chronic runaway / frequent absconding
- Fear of going home

Emotional Abuse - is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the needs of another person. It may involve causing

a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Bullying of others
- Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
- Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others
- Depression
- Signs of mutilation / self-harm
- Attention seeking
- Chronic runaway/ frequent absconding
- Wetting and soiling
- Sudden speech disorders
- Low self-esteem

Sexual Abuse - involves exploitation or forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Bruised or sore genitals
- Genital infection
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Inappropriate sexualised language or behaviour
- Low self-esteem
- Chronic depression
- Substance abuse
- Personality changes
- Fear of going home/ absconding
- Acquiring money or belongings without explanation

Neglect - is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

- Poor hygiene
- Constant hunger/cramming food/ storing food
- Inadequate / inappropriate clothing
- Constant tiredness
- Exposed to danger / lack of adequate supervision
- Untreated illness
- Lack of peer relationships
- Compulsive stealing / begging
- Chronic poor attendance (without valid cause)
- Inappropriate attachment/ clinginess

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.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child clearly states that children should be protected from harm and exploitation (Article 36), protected from violence, abuse and neglect (Article 19), should have an adequate standard of living (Article 27), be protected from sexual abuse (Article 34) and that they have the right of life, survival and development to their full potential (Article 6). In this policy we acknowledge these rights and aim to ensure that these rights are promoted, respected, protected and realised.

Bullying

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in Ashgrove Primary School.

Our Anti- Bullying Policy is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both the bully and the victim will be personally contacted when bullying has been identified.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the DT for Child Protection, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that an Ashgrove Primary School child or a group of small children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the

DT within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action taken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of privileges in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the child protection procedures

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) is Mrs Valerie Luney.

In her absence, **the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DDT) Miss Kirsten McLaughlin will assume responsibility for child protection.**

1. DETECTION

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly.**

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

DO	DO NOT
Listen to what the child says	Ask leading questions
Assure the child they are not at fault	Put words into the child's mouth
Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret	Ignore the child's behaviour
Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words	Remove any clothing
Remember not to promise the child confidentiality	Panic
Stay calm	Promise to keep secrets
Listen	Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
Accept	Delay
Reassure	Start to investigate
Explain what you are going to do	Do nothing
Record accurately	
Seek support for yourself	

2. REFERRAL TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

The staff member should not investigate - this is a matter for social services - but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT. The DT will then complete a **Child Protection: Incident Report Form.**

3. ACTION PLANNING

The DT in consultation with other members of the safeguarding team and/or The Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS), will plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

4. ACTION

The DT will talk further with the child in an attempt to reassure him or her and simply to clarify and record what has happened (This will not involve detailed investigation or interpretation and no promise of confidentiality will be given); the second section of the form **Child Protection: Record of Related Conversation during Clarification Process** will be completed.

If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to Social Services and/or the PSNI. A parent will always be informed about a referral to Social Services, unless doing so places the child at greater risk of harm.

The Designated Teacher will consult with the CPSSS (Child Protection School Support Service) - Designated Officer for Child Protection at the Education Authority (NE Region) before a referral is made.

NO DECISIONS TO REFER A CHILD TO SOCIAL SERVICES WILL BE MADE WITHOUT FULL CONSIDERATION AND ON APPROPRIATE ADVICE.

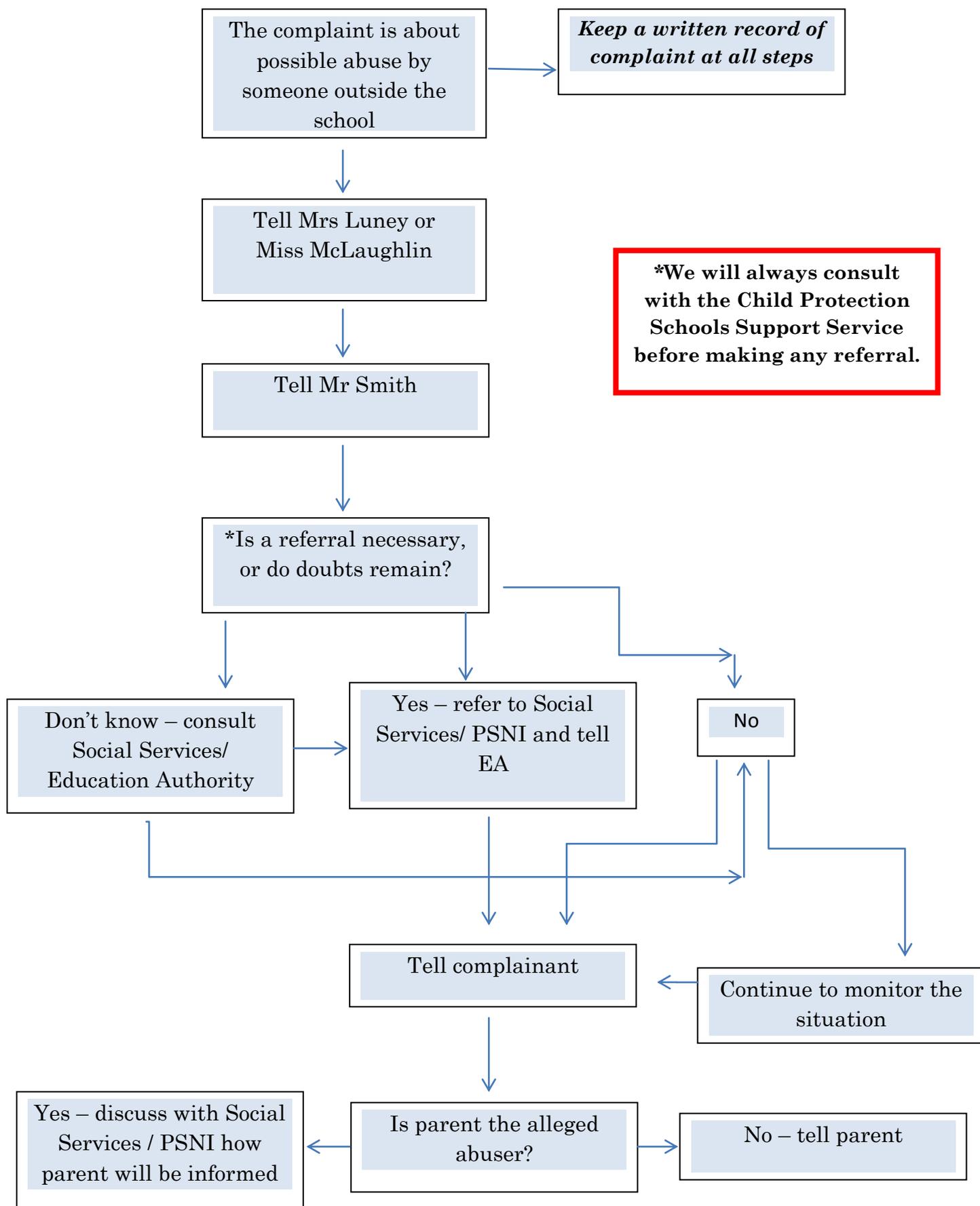
The safety of the child is our first priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the DT may inform:

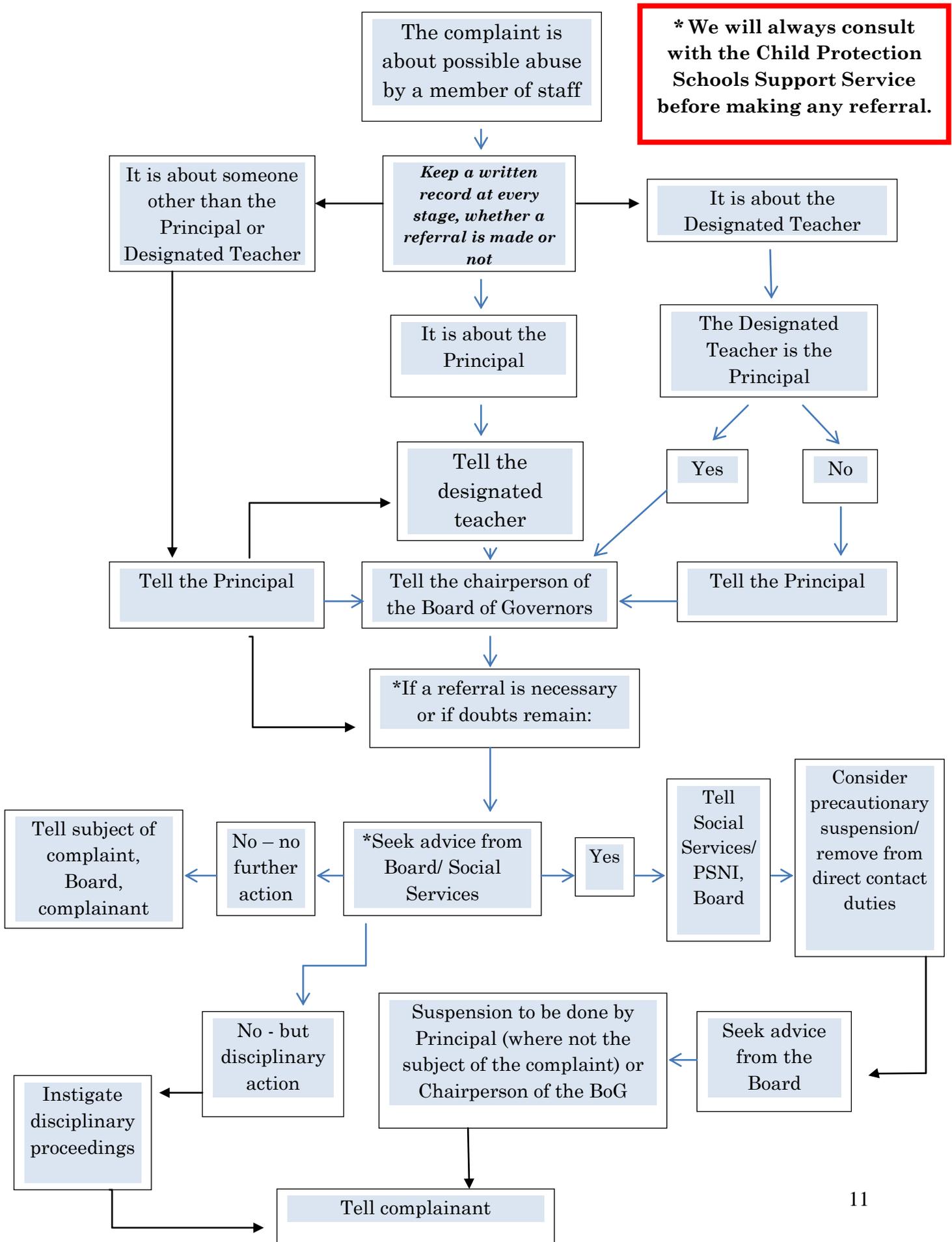
- Social Services
- EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection
- A referral may be made using the Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) referral form and forwarded to Referral Gateway in Northern Health and Social Services Trust.

Any abuse that is ultimately confirmed will be followed up with support for the victim and an appropriate combination of discipline and support as advised by the confirming outside agency and agreed by the school safeguarding team.

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



If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal). Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

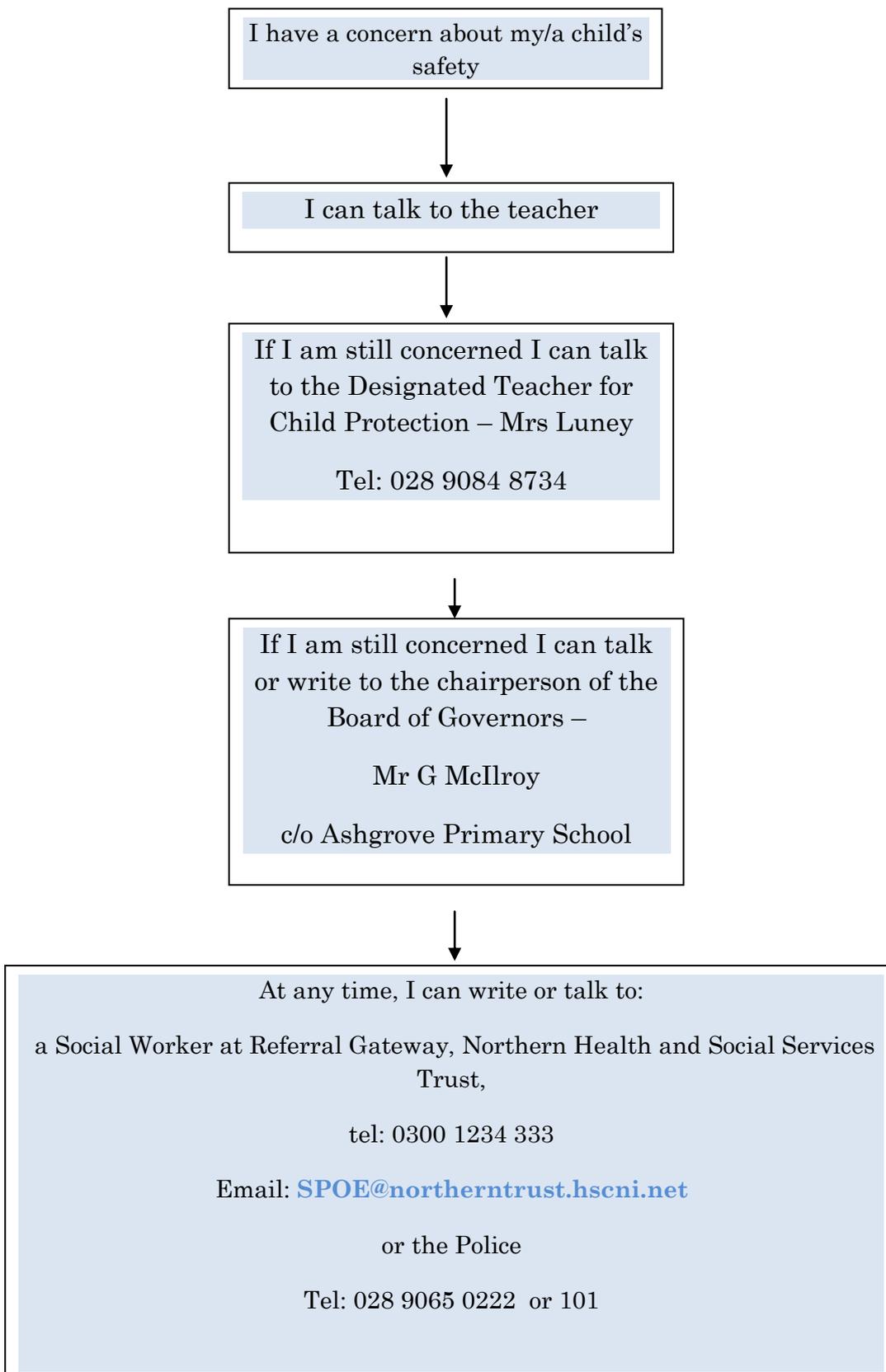
If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. He will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

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 signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, they should talk with the DT.

It should be noted that the 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 informed.

HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN

If a parent has a child protection concern they can follow the guide below:



PARENTS AND CHILD PROTECTION

This Child Protection Policy will remain available to all parents via the school's website. A summary will be distributed annually in print. Advice will be given on procedures for reporting child abuse and a synopsis of the policy will be included in the school prospectus.

Parents are asked to supply the school with the names of all persons who have permission to collect their child from school (or to confirm that their child may leave the grounds unaccompanied). They are asked to inform the school of any change in this routine.

Parents are asked to brief school about arrangements following any separation or divorce. Members of staff need to be aware of legal responsibilities, agreed access or exclusion and any involvement of Social Services. Such information will be requested formally each September, but parents are encouraged to keep the school informed as necessary.

Parents will be made aware that on occasions staff may have to change pupil's clothes when administering first aid, after toilet accidents, for PE and on other such occasions. The school's Intimate Care Policy applies.

In the event of a parent making a complaint about a member of staff, volunteer or student, the school's complaints procedure will be followed and the complaint addressed directly to the principal. If the complaint is against the principal it will be addressed to the chairman of the governors. If a complaint includes a disclosure relating to another child, the accused child's parents will be informed. Discipline must remain solely in the hands of the staff.

PARENTAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION

All requests for pupil information in relation to Safeguarding/Child Protection matters will be treated as a request under the Data Protection Act 1998. We will consult with CPSSS (NE Region) if we receive a request for information.

"Child Protection records may be exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 in cases where disclosure may cause serious physical or emotional harm to the child or any other person. This means that neither pupils nor their parents have an automatic right to access them. However, the exemption only applies to the information that may cause harm and is not a blanket exemption for the file as a whole. In addition, the exemption can only be relied upon if it is endorsed by the opinion of an appropriate health professional. (Data Protection (Subject Access Modification) (Health Order) 2000)." DENI Circular 2016/20

VETTING PROCEDURES

The selection and appointment process is the starting point for ensuring that only those who are suitable are employed to work in close proximity with children, in either a paid or unpaid capacity on our school.

In order for all reasonable steps to be taken to employ and engage suitable staff to work with the children in our care, we follow the guidance provided by the Department of Education on pre-employment checking and safe recruitment practices. Ashgrove has adopted the new arrangements for the vetting and checking of staff prior to appointment or volunteering within the school:

- DE Circular 2006/06: Child protection: Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings
- DE Circular 2006/07: Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2006/08: Child Protection: Training Requirements for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels
- DE Circular 2006/09: Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of staff in Schools - programme to extend coverage
- DE Circular 2006/25: Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors
- DE Circular 2008/03: Pre-Employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools - New Arrangements
- DE Circular 2008/10: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2012/19: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements
- DE Circular 2013/01: Disclosure and Barring Arrangements
- DE Circular 2016/20: Child Protection- Record Keeping in Schools

Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website. Click on 'Circulars':

www.deni.gov.uk

All staff whether paid or unpaid are inducted in our Safeguarding Children/ Child Protection Policy.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF

The code of conduct is known to all staff - permanent, non-permanent and volunteers. It reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school. Please refer to the Code of Conduct Policy.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

Please refer to our Intimate Care Policy.

GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTEERS

The school will ensure that volunteers supply two good references and submit to a criminal record check upon appointment. Criminal record checks are carried out by AccessNI. Please refer to our Guidance for Volunteers Policy.

THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. An awareness of "stranger danger"; an understanding of how to respond to perceived threats; care in regard to e-safety; and the development of standards of behaviour that are appropriate for primary school children are all reinforced through the school's work on PDMU within the Northern Ireland Curriculum. They are also the focus of assemblies, visits from outside professionals and on-going guidance opportunities as they arise, such as circle time.

Alongside the use of curricular resources we also use Women's Aid Helping Hands materials, the NSPCC PANTS campaign and Childline in Schools. Internet safety is addressed by using CEOP resources and materials and contact with PSNI.

In September 2016 we embarked on the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Programme. This will raise awareness for our children of the legal protections and rights they have to be safe and free from harm.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to;
- Ensure that all children know there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty; and
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social Development which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Our policy on physical restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy, "Reasonable Force and Safe Handling", in accordance with guidelines from EA.

It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our Health and Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

E-SAFETY

Our policy on the internet and digital technologies is set out in a separate document and is informed by DE guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies. Specifically it addresses safeguarding issues that may arise in the use of the internet and digital technologies.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES OF CHILDREN

All parents are asked at the start of the academic year to consent to their child's photographs being taken and displayed within the school, occasionally in newspapers or on the school website.

A list of any children who MAY NOT have photographs taken or displayed will be clearly sited for all staff to check.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS / VISITS

Ashgrove Primary School has a separate policy on Fieldwork and Educational Trips, as in accordance with Educational Visit, Best Practice (2009).

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

Other school policies that outline the school's approach to related areas of safeguarding children include:

- Anti-Bullying
- Pastoral Care

- Intimate Care
- Reasonable Force and Safe Handling
- Attendance
- Guidance for Volunteers
- ICT and Related Technologies Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Should any adult in the school find themselves in the rare position of being the only adult remaining in the school and in need of immediate safeguarding advice, they should use the contacts below (in the given order) to seek help:

Out of Hours Duty Social Worker:	028 9504 9999
Child Protection School Support Service (CPSSS)	028 9448 2223
Social Services, Gateway Team:	0300 1234 333
Childline:	0800 1111
Child Sexual Exploitation Helpline NSPCC:	0800 389 1701
PSNI:	0845 600 8000
24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline:	0808 802 1414
NSPCC Adult Helpline (For adults concerned about a child):	0808 800 5000 Text: 88858

Useful websites:

www.familysupportni.gov.uk

www.nspcc.org

www.addictionni.com

REVIEWING OUR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually by Ashgrove Primary School's Safeguarding team.

The policy's effectiveness will be evaluated in the event of a change of legislation or following an incident.

Written: September 2016

Date ratified by BOG: October 2016

Date of next review: September 2017