

**ACORN INTEGRATED
PRIMARY SCHOOL
& NURSERY UNIT**

**CHILD PROTECTION
POLICY**

January 2018

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy is based on

‘Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools’-A Guide for Schools 2017

‘Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland’ (March 2016)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Safeguarding Programme at Acorn Integrated Primary School seeks to support the child’s development in ways which foster security, confidence and independence. It is viewed as central to the well-being of every individual. The child’s welfare is paramount and an intrinsic part of all aspects of the curriculum. Children at Acorn are taught the skills to keep themselves safe.

“Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with preventative education and activities which enable children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is promoted. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and it continues through to child protection, which refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer harm.”

Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools (2017)

Principles of safeguarding and child protection

Although a balance between the child’s rights and the parent’s rights is sought at all times the child’s welfare is paramount. Efforts should be made to work in co-operation with parents unless it is inconsistent with ensuring the child’s safety.

Children have the right to be listened to and their voice should be heard. They should be consulted and involved in decisions affecting their lives.

Where it is the best interest of the child families should be supported to stay together as this often provides the best outcome for their future. Parents may share responsibility with other carers or statutory authorities.

Safeguarding is most effective when the child’s needs are met through partnership and responsibility is shared between families, agencies, individuals and professionals.

Supportive measures prevent safeguarding problems occurring or worsening.

If support services can meet the child’s needs then these should be provided, practitioners must respond proportionately to the needs of a child in accordance with their duties and powers available.

Children should be safe from harm and protected by the state if their needs are not being met.

Decisions and actions must be well informed, based on sensitive outcomes and sensitive to the child or young person’s specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed needs.

AIMS OF SAFEGURDING

To enhance children's self-esteem, self-confidence, assertiveness, communication skills and personal safety by developing skills to make informed choices.

To ensure safeguarding arrangements are known to children and they are aware of the 'safe adults' in school.

To ensure that staff and pupils are able to recognise abuse of power.

To ensure that staff teaching and non-teaching are well-informed about signs of possible abuse

To ensure that staff are well-informed about school procedures for reporting concerns to the safeguarding team (appendix 1 note of concern)

To ensure that staff are aware of their duty of care and their responsibility to report concerns.

To provide for effective communication between children, teachers, parents and other adults working with children.

To develop co-operation with statutory agencies, families and professionals.

MEANS

Means by which the policy will be put into effect

*By providing an environment within the school and classroom in which every child is valued as a member of the community.

*By allowing a variety of opportunities for class and group discussion of thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance.

*By identifying a range of people to whom children can turn to share concerns and discuss problems.

*By developing awareness and skills of personal safety.

*By monitoring children's physical, emotional, social, intellectual and behavioural development.

*By promoting staff awareness of types and indicators of child abuse and neglect, the appropriate response to the child, knowledge of procedures for reporting concerns and their statutory responsibilities.

*By informing staff of the importance and nature of appropriate record keeping and report writing, and the need to make a clear distinction between factual reporting and personal opinion.

*By informing parents of the school's child protection policy.

*By establishing regular contact with appropriate agencies.

LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

There is a broad range of international and domestic legislation relating to child welfare and protection. Details of all relevant legislation are set out in Annex A of the Department of Education Northern Ireland's document, 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools (2017)'. Schools must be aware of their responsibilities; however, as a starting point schools must be aware of the following:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995;
- The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003;
- Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007;
- The Safeguarding Board (Northern Ireland) Act 2011;
- The Public Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016;
- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016;
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016);
- Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy 2013-2020 and subsequent action plans;
- Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Prevention in Partnership.

DEFINITION OF A CHILD

A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in 'The Children (NI) Order 1995.

In the case of a pupil with special educational needs 'child' should be interpreted as including any person who has not attained the age of 19 and is a registered pupil at the school. A person who attains age 19 during a school year shall be deemed not have attained that age. While a school has responsibility for all registered pupils, referral pathways and processes may differ for a young person over the age of 18 (Education (NI) Order 1996

THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ACORN INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

At Acorn we have a Safeguarding Team who are responsible for promoting the welfare of the children in our care. They ensure effective co-ordination and co-operation between the key individuals responsible for safeguarding throughout the school. This team is made up of a designated teacher, a deputy designated teacher, a designated governor and the Principal

The Designated Teacher is: Mrs Anna Rolloos

(All matters must be referred to the above in the first instance)

(In the absence of the above)

The Deputy Designated Teacher is: Mrs Sharon McIlmail

The Designated Governor is: Mrs Denise Ferguson

The Deputy Designated Governors is: Dr Adrian Gregory

The Principal is: Mrs Clodagh Webb

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE 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;

As best practice, the Safeguarding Team should review their child protection/ safeguarding practices annually using the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) pro-forma entitled 'Guidance for the evaluation of child protection/safeguarding'. ETI expects the pro-forma to be completed and provided to them as a permanent record on all types of inspections. Phase and sector appropriate versions of the pro-forma (which is annually reviewed and updated) and other information from ETI is available on the ETI website. (www.etini.gov.uk/articles/safeguarding)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 places a statutory duty on Boards of Governors (BoG) to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils;
- have a written child protection policy; and
- specifically address the prevention of bullying in school behaviour management policies.

All Governors should have initial Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) child protection training with the chair and Designated Governor for Child Protection undertaking full CPSS training. All governors should undertake refresher training every term of office (four years)

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MUST ENSURE THAT

- A Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed;
 - A Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed in their schools;
 - They have a full understanding of the roles of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers 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 school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circular 2012/19;
 - They receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). 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; and
 - Staff induction and training.

THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The chair of the Board of Governors should ensure that:

- They have received Education Authority training
- A safeguarding ethos is created and maintained within the school environment
- The school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place and is implemented
- They assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint or allegation against the school principal
- The Record of Child Abuse Complaints is signed and dated annually even if there have been no entries

THE DESIGNATED GOVERNOR FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The Designated Governor for Safeguarding and Child Protection should take the lead in child protection issues in order to advise the Governors on:

- the role of the Designated Teachers;
- the content of the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection policy';
- 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 of staff.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The Principal, as the Secretary to the Board of Governors, will assist the Board of Governors to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring any circulars and guidance from the Department of Education is shared promptly, and termly inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. In addition, the Principal takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

The Principal has delegated responsibility for:

- establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school.
- appointment and management of suitable staff to the roles of Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers
- ensuring new staff and volunteers are given safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction
- the school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and parents and pupils receive a copy or summary of this policy at intake and at least once every 2 years
- safeguarding and child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates and annual report are provided.

When the designated teacher comes to the principal with an incident to be referred he/she may want to talk to someone before initiating the referral procedures. Advice is available from:

EA CPSSS - 02894482223

Education Welfare Officer:- Phyllis Lewis Ph 028 9085 4826

Social Services:(Duty Social Worker) Children's Services, Ellis Street Ph 028 93315114

NSPCC:- Ph 0800 800 500

School Doctors:- Dr. C Bailey, Whiteabbey Hospital Ph 028 9086 5181

School Nurse:- Dawn Lyttle, Carrickfergus Health Centre. Ph 028 9331 5800

Gateway team- 0300 1234 333

When seeking advice DO NOT name a child. A child should only be named at the referral stage.

Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the Board of Governors on a need to know basis. The head teacher and deputy head will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors when an incident occurs. Confidentiality is crucial and information should only be passed on a 'need to know' basis.

THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILD PROTECTION

The designated teacher role involves

- training to ensure they are aware of duties, responsibilities and their role
- induction and training for all staff -whole school training
- lead the development of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- being available for discussion with staff and parents/carers
- promoting a safeguarding and child protection ethos in school
- making referrals to Social Services or PSNI when appropriate
- liaising with the Education Authority's (EA) Designated Officers for Child Protection
- maintaining records of all safeguarding / child protection concerns
- keeping the school principal informed
- providing written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

THE DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR 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 Deputy Designated Teacher works in partnership with the Designated Teacher so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher when required. Deputy Designated Teachers are also provided with the same specialist training by CPSS to help them in their role.

CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

Training for governors has three strands

- Initial Child Protection Awareness Training as part of induction for all new governors
- child protection training from CPSS for Chairperson and Designated Governor for Child Protection, each term of office (every four years)
- Training on recruitment, selection and vetting incorporating Child Protection legislation and DE guidance for all governors who will be sitting on interview or teacher appointment panels

Designated Teacher Training/ Deputy Designated Teacher Training

All new DTs and DDTs should attend the two day CPSS introduction to Child Protection course within their first year of post.

DTs and DDTs should attend refresher training every three years thereafter. A certificate of attendance may be examined by ETI during inspection. All training is subject to Safeguarding Board for northern Ireland's (SBNI) Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy 2014-2017

The DT and DDT are expected to cascade Child Protection training to the whole school, at a minimum every two years, with new staff receiving training as part of their induction programme. All staff should know how to identify the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and be aware of the relevant child protection procedures, including how to contact the designated teacher.

ALL MEMBERS OF SCHOOL STAFF

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations (annex A - DE NI Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Schools Guide 2017), including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the **Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967** makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children.

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

Staff should remember the 5 Rs:

- Receive;
- Reassure;
- Respond;
- Record;
- Refer.

Staff must:

- Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teachers for Safeguarding and Child Protection/Principal;
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child;
- Act promptly;
- Make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child
- 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.

RECRUITMENT, VETTING AND INDUCTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals access to children and vulnerable adults through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate.

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

Acorn Integrated Primary School's recruitment and selection of staff strictly follows the recommendations and guidance provided by **the Department of Education**.

APPLICATION FORMS

The application forms for teaching and non-teaching posts have been revised to include the requirement to account for gaps in employment and the requirement to provide two referees, at least one of whom must be a previous or current employer able to comment upon the applicant's suitability to work with children/young people.

PROOF OF IDENTITY AT INTERVIEW

Candidates must provide photographic proof of identity at interview.

GAPS IN EMPLOYMENT/ SUITABILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

If the governors have any doubts regarding candidates about gaps in a candidate's employment history they will request from the candidate a satisfactory explanation.

At the end of the interview each candidate is asked if they are aware of anything in their employment or personal history which would render them unsuitable to work with children and young people and their response should be noted in the interview notes.

REFERENCES

Details of two referees must be provided on the application form, who can comment upon the professional competence of the candidate. At least one of the referees should be from a previous or present employer who can also comment upon the candidate's suitability to work with children/young people. In the absence of previous paid employment, University tutors or employers where teaching practice or voluntary service was undertaken are also acceptable. References should be sought by the Board of Governors for short-listed candidates using the reference form provided by the Board.

The references received for the recommended candidate are forwarded to the Education Authority North Eastern Region with the application forms and the recommendation for appointment. If no references are received, Human Resources staff will request them for the recommended candidate only. No appointment will be confirmed until satisfactory references have been received. It should be noted that this may delay the appointment process.

TEMPORARY TEACHING POSTS

In accordance with **DE Circular 2006/07**, only teachers who are on the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (**NISTR**) should be employed. All teachers on the register have been subject to the vetting procedure and no further checks are required. Schools are not permitted to employ any teacher not registered. It should be noted that compliance will be monitored by the Department of Education.

Access NI Clearance

DE Circular 2013/01 (updated September 2015) sets out vetting requirements for schools.

Volunteers

There are two types of volunteers working in schools: those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision. Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, however, schools/ organisations must determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard - see DE Circular 2012/19.

Visitors to Schools

Visitors to schools, such as parents/carers, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc., do not routinely 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 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, 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.

Pupils on Work Experience

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

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF PAID OR UNPAID

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.

STAFF TRAINING

We are committed to in-service training for our entire staff (teaching and non-teaching). 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.

NEW STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

As part of the recruitment process, unsupervised volunteers are vetted by 'AccessNI' in accordance with Department of Education recommendations.

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

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS/CARERS

The staff will work alongside parents/carers in the best interests of the child. Any concerns identified within school regarding any child will be shared with the parents/carers. In most cases a referral to Social Services and or PSNI will be discussed with parents/carers, unless it is considered that the child may be at risk by informing the parents/carers. The staff have a statutory duty to report to statutory agencies if they have concerns.

PARENTS/CARERS

References to 'parent' have the same meaning as anyone with 'Parental Responsibility' as defined in the Article 6 of the Children Order ie 'all rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property'. In practical terms, it means the responsibility to care for, and the right to make important decisions about, the child.

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and 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 will help parents/carers to understand its responsibility for the welfare of all the children and young people in its charge.

It should be clear that the school will always protect the best interests of the child and, in cases of suspected abuse, may refer cases direct to the investigative agencies. It is important that parents take time to read these policies and know they are required to inform the school:

- If the 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 a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility;
- Parents/carers of primary school children should tell the teacher if there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school;
- Parents/carers should contact the school if their child is absent and send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence.

More information on parental/carer responsibility can be found on the EA website at:

www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection/

Parents/carers should play their part in safeguarding by:

- Informing the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation;
- Informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school;
- Letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home;
- Familiarising themselves other school policies relevant to Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Reporting to the office when they visit the school;
- Raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the school

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

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

www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland

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.

These types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed.

DEALING WITH A CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN

Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organisations. Abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, 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.

Under Section 5 (1) of the Criminal Law Act (N.I.) 1967 anyone who knows or believes that an arrestable offence has been committed, and has information which is likely to secure the arrest of the person responsible, has a duty to give that information to the police, failure to do so is in itself an offence. Physical abuse and sexual abuse are arrestable offences.

- definitions taken from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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. CSE can be difficult to identify and the young person may not see themselves as a victim. Possible indicators include- acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phone without plausible explanation; truanting; inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age; new peer groups; significantly older boyfriend/girlfriend and increasing secretiveness around behaviours.

GROOMING

Grooming is always abusive and/or exploitative. It involves the perpetrator gaining the trust of a young person, or in some cases, the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse. This may involve money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food accommodation or clothing to develop the young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person doing the grooming. Grooming is often associated with CSE but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect. Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments to establish contact with children. Those working with children should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming and take early action in line with child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs. Those involved in grooming may be children or young people acting under coercion or influence of adults.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM is a form of child abuse and as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through the agreed established school procedures. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it an offence for UK nationals or permanent residents to perform FGM overseas or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad even in countries where it is legal. Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced a new offence of failing to protect a girl against FGM. For more details, refer to the Department of Education's Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools- A guide for school 2017 section 6.4

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

It is recognised that children who live in an atmosphere of domestic violence may be at risk. Domestic violence is 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 partner or family member.:

Symptoms which young people may display when suffering domestic violence and abuse which are indicators may include:

- nervousness, low self-worth, disturbed sleep patterns, physiological – stress / nerves, stomach pain, immature / needy behaviour, aggression, internalising distress or withdrawal, bullying.

These symptoms can lead to a child/ young person being misdiagnosed as having an illness, learning difficulties, or being naughty or disruptive. If it comes to the attention of school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a child/young person this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information to Social Services.

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

HARMFUL SEXUALISED BEHAVIOUR

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual nature that takes place when: There is no informed consent by the victim; and/or the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim.

Harmful sexualised behaviour can include:

- Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and schools should refer to their own child protection policy and, seek the support that is available from the CPSS.

E-SAFETY/INTERNET ABUSE

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. It is wider than simply internet technology and includes electronic communication via text messages, social environments and apps, and using games consoles through any digital device. In all cases, in schools and elsewhere, it is a paramount concern.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report 'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland' which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- Content risks:** the child or young person is exposed to harmful material
- Contact risks:** the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- Conduct risks:** the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.
- Commercial risks:** the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

Schools have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and should be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like. Policy Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

-Acorn I. P.S. has an internet Policy which addresses relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy issues.

- School will only allow the pupils to access the Internet using the filtered Internet services provided by C2K and ClassNet.

-While using the internet at school, pupils should, where possible, be supervised. However, when appropriate, pupils may pursue research independent of staff supervision if they have been granted permission. In all cases, pupils will be reminded of their responsibility to use these resources in line with the school policy on acceptable use.

-The staff of Acorn Integrated Primary School will ensure that the pupils understand how they are to use the Internet appropriately and why the rules exist.

-The staff must adhere to the school's internet policy and the school's 'Acceptable Internet Use Agreement for Staff/Volunteers';

-Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. While privacy is respected, users must not expect files stored on C2K to be absolutely private.

SCHOOL WEBSITE (Refer to internet Policy)

- No names and photographs that identify individual children will appear on the website without prior permission from a parent/carer. Only photographs of children with parental/carer consent will appear on the school's website.

-Group photographs will not contain a names list unless all children have parent/carer consent to have their names included.

MOBILE PHONES and RELATED TECHNOLOGIES

- DE Circular 2007/1 - guidance on Internet Use Policy.

- DE Circular 2011/22 - advice on the safe use of the internet and digital technologies.

- DE Circular 2013/25 - guidance on e-Safety policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

- DE Circular 2016/27 - guidance on online safety.

- DHSSPS Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016) - Section 7.2.9 offers advice on Risks of Misuse of Digital Technologies.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE: POSSIBLE INDICATORS

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. However, teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are repeated regularly.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for safeguarding / child protection. **The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed,** including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school's staff, teaching or non-teaching. (Refer to Dealing with Allegations Against a Member of Staff - DE Circular 2015/13).

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported **immediately** to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home. Contact details for the PSNI Central Referral Unit and Duty Social Workers can be found in the Contacts Section.

Pupils who are the victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties which may require a holistic assessment of need to determine appropriate level and types of intervention. It is always preferable to prevent abuse or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage.

Dealing with children with Increased Vulnerabilities

Children with a disability

Children and young people with a disability may be more vulnerable to abuse and individuals and organisations working with children with disabilities should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues. Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden making disclosure particularly difficult. Staff and volunteers should receive training to enable them to identify and refer concerns early, to allow preventative action to be taken.

Children with limited fluency in English

As with SEN, children who are not fluent in English should be given the chance to express themselves to a staff member or professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially when concerns of abuse have occurred.

Pre School Children including Nursery Schools and Units

Many of the issues will also be relevant in the pre-school setting as young children may have limited communication skills. Teachers, assistants and other adults will come into contact while helping them toilet and change clothing and they should be aware of the boundaries of physical contact.

Gender Identity Issues/Sexual Orientation

Schools should strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

RECOGNISING ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators

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 or immersion burns (glove like in appearance); unexplained fractures; lacerations or abrasions; bruising on both sides of the ear - (symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion); injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday.

Behavioural Indicators

Self destructive tendencies; aggressive towards 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; comes to school early or stays late as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather - to hide part of body; Violent themes in art work or stories.

Neglect

Physical Indicators

Looks very thin, poorly or 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.

Behavioural Indicators

Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); steals food; compulsive stealing; begging from class friends; withdrawn; lacks concentration; misses school medical; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at School; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.

Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators

Well below average in height and weight; "failing to thrive" poor hair and skin; alopecia; 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).

Behavioural Indicators

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 a new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships.

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators

bruises, scratches, bite marks or other 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 walking or sitting; frequent urinary infections; avoidance of lessons especially PE, games; anorexia/gross over-eating.

Behavioural Indicators

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; overly 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.

Indicators of Sexual Abuse by Child or Young Person

Background

Previous therapy;
witnessed family violence;
abused (including physical, emotional, sexual and neglect);
parental loss;
feels persecuted, by parents, by system;
substance abuse.

Behaviour

Inappropriate sexual contact with another child e.g. fondling, simulated sexual acts;
exhibitionism;
voyeurism;
obscene calls;
stealing underwear;
uninvolved with peer groups in acceptable social ways;
isolated;
no social activities e.g. youth club;
obsessive interest in pornographic material;
lack of empathy for others.

Grave Concern:

While strictly speaking not a form of abuse but a category of registration of abuse, this term covers children where situations do not currently fit any of the four categories above but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of above. These could include situations where another child in the household has been harmed or the household contains a known abuser.

ABUSE CARRIED OUT BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When abuse of a child is alleged to have been carried out by another child or young person, it is important that the appropriate Child Protection procedures are followed in respect of both the victim and the alleged abuser.

Most cases of physical or emotional ill-treatment within school may be dealt with in accordance with the school's policy on bullying, except in the most serious cases where statutory agencies and/or Educational Psychology Service may be involved.

The problem of sexual abuse by children and young people is increasingly being recognised. When sexual activity takes place and there is lack of consent, lack of equality (e.g. size, intellectual capability, strength or age) or coercion, then it is sexual abuse.

An abusing child is often an abused child.

ABUSE CARRIED OUT BY A MEMBER OF STAFF

If a member of staff is suspected of child abuse the head teacher must be informed immediately by the person who suspects. It is then the head teacher's duty to notify the EA, and the social services. The Chairperson of the Governors should also be informed.

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff. Refer to DE Circular 2015/13.

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

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

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

Safeguarding and child protection procedures will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

Process

Principals and Boards of Governors have a duty of care for the welfare of pupils and any allegation needs to be effectively evaluated and managed. However, as employers, they also have a duty of care to their staff and should ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation of abuse.

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 would 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 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 guard against unwanted publicity must be made.

Allegations should not be shared with other staff or children.

PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS OR HAS BEEN GIVEN CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF STAFF

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

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

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

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

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

Child Protection referral is required

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

Child Protection referral is not required

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

UNOCINI

Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland is a framework to support professionals in assessment and planning to better meet the needs of children and their family. The supporting document "thresholds of Need Model" assists staff to describe the levels of the child's needs. The UNOCINI must be completed whenever staff want to refer a child to social services for support, safeguarding or a fuller assessment of a child's needs. If concerned that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm, then an **urgent** referral to children's social services through the local gateway service must be made. When making an urgent referral by telephone the duty social worker will advise you that you will be required to confirm your referral in writing on a UNOCINI within 24 hours. Further details at www.health-ni.gov/publications/understanding-needs-children-northern-ireland-unocini-guidance

Prior to making a referral to social services the consent of the parents/carers and/or the young person (if they are competent to give this) will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek consent would put that child, young person, or others at increased risk of significant or an adult at risk of serious harm, or it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

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. For more information on recording of child protection complaints see DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools.

N.B. Need for Constant Vigilance

Abuse can occur inside and outside the family. Many child abusers cultivate an image of respectability and may appear to be extremely co-operative with schools and other agencies. They may foster a belief that such a person could not be an abuser. Paedophiles will plan and infiltrate social groups, work or voluntary organisations, where they can have access to children.

WHAT HAPPENS FOLLOWING A REFERRAL?

Once a referral has been made, Social Services and the Police will hold a strategy discussion within 24 hours. This can be done by telephone. The purpose of the discussion is to: -

- examine the available information about the child and family.
- plan the investigation.
- agree the role of each agency.
- agree the extent of joint investigation.

Decisions should be reached on the initial action to be taken, by whom and when, and the arrangements for reporting back. Schools should be informed of the outcomes of the discussion. School staff should keep a written record of plans and agreements made with other agencies, including those agreed by telephone.

Join Investigations by Statutory Agencies.

Specially trained social workers and police officers from CARE (Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry) teams carry out a joint investigation in order to minimise the trauma for a child. Repeated interviewing can be a further abuse of a child. The police focus on criminal investigation and Social Services on child protection. However, both agencies work on the principle that the child's interests are paramount.

Statutory agencies ie Social Services Gateway team and the police will carry out any investigation. **It is not the role of any member of school staff to investigate nor to contact the child's family on a referral.** Contact with a family should only be made after agreement with the statutory agencies. Schools should be kept informed of decisions made by other agencies and the head teacher should feel free to make contact with other agencies.

If a child protection case conference is convened this should be held not later than 15 days after initial referral to Social Services. The head teacher will be invited and should attend or send an appropriate member of staff. Schools should be represented at all Child Protection Case Conferences of school age children from the school whether or not the school made the initial referral.

The purpose of the case conference is to exchange information and plan together. Its function is to decide whether or not to place a child's name on the Child Protection Register, to draw up a written protection plan and to identify a core group to implement the protection plan. Schools should be notified when a child's name is placed on the Register, similarly they should be notified when a name is removed from the Register.

These decisions should be arrived at by unanimous or majority agreement. Any dissent should be recorded.

A case co-ordinator will be identified from Social Services and will have responsibility for co-ordinating and developing the multi-agency protection plan, and who provides a focus for communication within the core group and with other professionals.

It will be the responsibility of individual agencies to implement the parts of the plan relating to them and to communicate with the key worker and others as necessary.

At the initial Case Conference, the timing of the review, within three months, will be agreed. Any appropriate professional can ask for a case review to be convened earlier than this, should there be cause for concern.

REPORTS

Reports prepared for Child Protection Conferences should focus on the child's educational progress and achievements, attendance, behaviour, participation, relations with other children, and, where appropriate, the child's appearance. If relevant, reports should include what is known about the child's relations with his/her family and the family structure. Reports should be objective and based on evidence. They should distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. Reports may be made available to the child's parents at the Child Protection Conference. If a school cannot be represented at the Case Conference, a written report should be sent. In the initial stages reports may be restricted at a school's request.

RECORD KEEPING

The school has a responsibility to create and retain accurate and reliable records to demonstrate accountability for decisions and actions taken. All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked cabinet. 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.

It is essential that an accurate record of all cases of child abuse, or possible abuse, is maintained detailing all actions taken. DE Circular 2016/20 provides a framework for managing child protection records in order to ensure that schools create and retain reliable records to demonstrate accountability for decisions and actions taken.

Files must not be removed from school premises except when taken to a case planning meeting or on foot of a court order. A record should be kept of when information is removed, by whom, for what purpose, and when it is returned.

If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop or portable memory device all must be encrypted and appropriately password-protected.

Refer to Departmental Guidance;

- DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping School;
- DE Circular 2015/13 Dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff;
- Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995; and
- Data Protection Act 1998. and guidance in DE Circular 2016/20.

THE ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION SUPPORT SERVICE (CPSS)

The CPSS primary role is to provide:

- daily helpline to advise, guide and support DTs, DDTs, Principals in relation to concerns about individual children with safeguarding/child protection concerns and on policy and training matters
- initial, refresher and cluster group training for child protection
- support visits to schools where required
- advice and guidance on assessing and managing children who pose significant harm to themselves, others and staff
- dissemination of new information on training, DE circulars and guidance
- support in developing or reviewing the school's child protection policy
- follow up to ETI inspections where safeguarding/child protection is identified as an area for improvement

The CPSS will also

- offer training to the chairperson and designated governor for child protection in relation to their statutory safeguarding/child protection responsibilities
- offer support, advice and training to other services within the EA
- assist EA Human Resources Managers in dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other EA officers/employees
- liaise with social services and PSNI where appropriate
- represent the education sector at multi-agency meetings including MARAC meetings co-ordinated inter agency response to domestic violence and abuse.

THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

Education Welfare Officers have always been involved in child protection work and have been a source of advice and support to schools. The Education Welfare Officer is sometimes in a position to add some family background to a school's knowledge of a child.

Education Welfare Officers are available to assist and advise schools and because of their close contacts with families and schools there should be close liaison with designated teachers as required.

In some special circumstances Education Welfare Officers make referrals on behalf of schools. Head teachers and designated teachers may confer with Education Welfare Officers if they are unsure of how to act.

An Education Welfare officer to whom a disclosure is made within school, must consult the school's designated teacher and agree as to who will make the referral.

When the E.W.O. or Educational Psychologist is the first to identify an abuse problem, it is their responsibility to inform the head teacher and the EA. The EA will be responsible for contacting the social services.

THE ROLE OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS

The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is the authority designated by the Children Order and delegates its child safeguarding and child protection functions to the Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) the HSCTs work in partnership with other statutory agencies and with the community and voluntary sector to ensure children and young people are safeguarded and their welfare promoted. Where a potential risk has been raised, it is the responsibility of the Gateway Service or Children's services in the relevant HSCT to assess the risk to the child and his/her needs and determine what response is required. The HSCT must ensure the needs of the children are met as fully as possible and their best interests are effectively served and risks are effectively managed.

Social workers within HSCT are the lead professionals for safeguarding children and young people. As a profession they have responsibility to safeguard children and young people including managing and maintaining the Child Protection Register, its systems and for ensuring all statutory functions delegated to HSCTs in respect of safeguarding and protecting children are fulfilled. Social workers have lead responsibility for all Child Protection Investigations, and should liaise with other professionals and agencies, including PSNI, to achieve as full an understanding as possible of the child or young person's family circumstances. There are social workers based within organisations outside the HSC sector who provide safeguarding services to children, such as those within the Education Sector or those working in some voluntary organisations or independent practice. These Social Workers must liaise closely with HSCT Social Workers as necessary to ensure children and young people they work with are effectively safeguarded

THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

The statutory personal development curriculum requires schools to give specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships, and the development of a moral thinking and value system. The curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive issues with children and young people in an age-appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours.

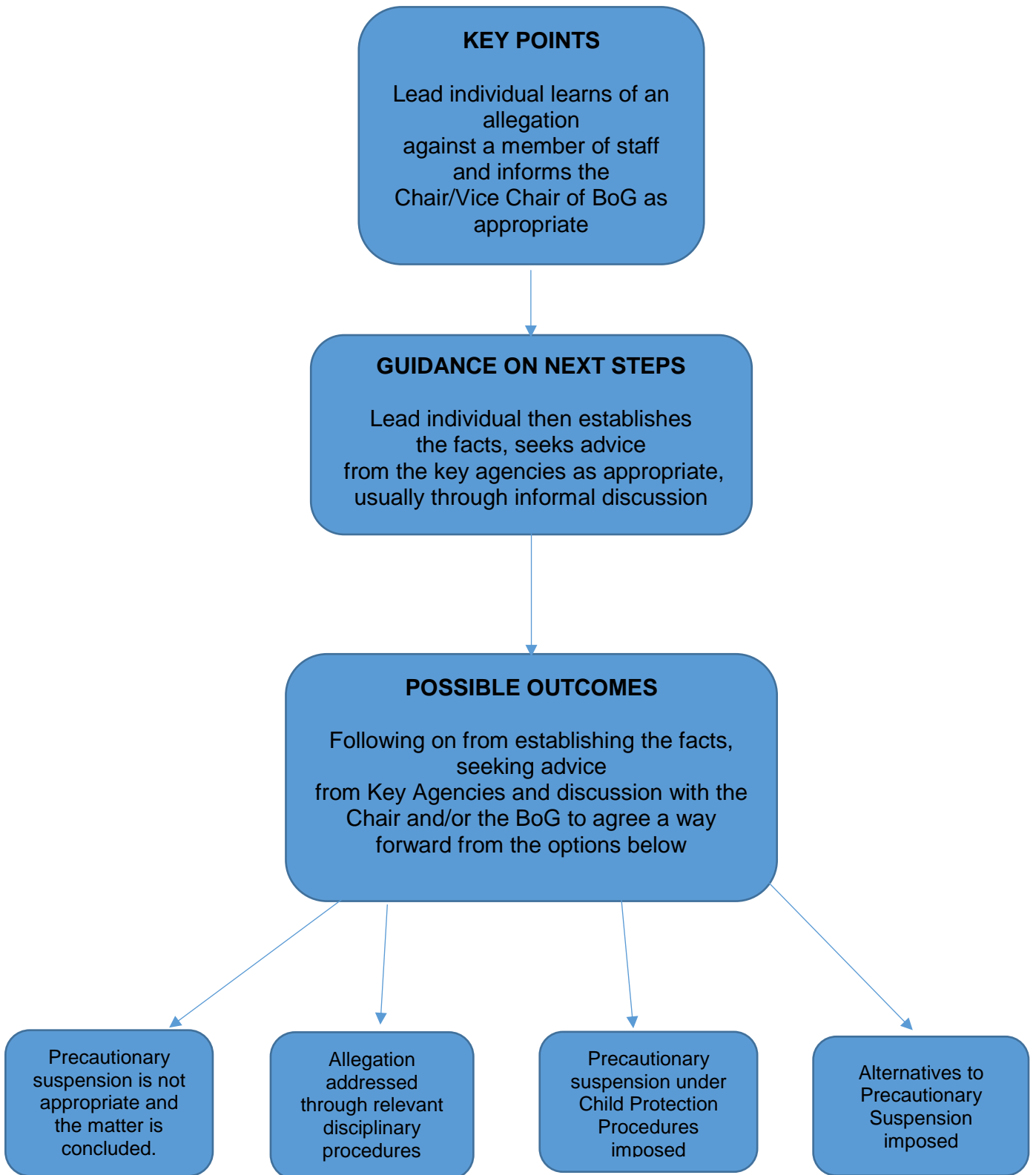
In recent years, the use of “keeping safe messages” and the term “preventative curriculum” have become more widely used to denote the proactive promotion of positive emotional health and wellbeing of pupils within and across the broader school community. This is achieved by raising awareness of social, emotional, and health issues, developing the confidence, resiliencies and coping skills of pupils, and in offering early intervention when pupils are experiencing certain difficulties.

Schools are well placed to teach pupils how to develop healthy relationships, and to make informed choices in their lives so that they can protect themselves. Throughout the school year at Acorn safeguarding issues are addressed through assemblies and individual class PDMU and “Keeping Safe” lessons. Class rights and responsibilities are discussed at the start of each academic year and classes create their class behaviour agreement. There is a permanent child protection notice board in both the school and nursery building to provide advice and display helpline numbers. Children throughout the school are regularly reminded to speak to the safeguarding team about any concerns they may have. Posters with photographs of the safeguarding team are displayed in Key Stage 1 and Foundation classrooms.

CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

Refer to the Department of Education N.I.'s Circular 2016/20



PROCESSES FOR REFERRAL

PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS OR HAS BEEN GIVEN CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF STAFF

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

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

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

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

Child Protection referral is required

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

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

CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL IS NOT REQUIRED

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

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

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and social services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is risk of the child at home.
DE circular 2016/20 Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools

SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION

Reporting process for child protection concerns

I have a concern about my/a child's safety

I can talk to my child's teacher

If I am still concerned I can talk to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection or the Principal

If I am still concerned I can talk/write to the Chair of the Board of Governors

If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman
Tel: 0800 343 424

At any time I can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team
(0300 1234 333)
Or the PSNI Central Referral Unit (028 90259299)

Acorn Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit - Safeguarding Team
Principal Mrs C Webb
Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs A Rolloos
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs S McIlmail
Chairperson Board of Governors Dr A Gregory
Child Protection Governor Mrs T Phillips