

St. Francis' Primary School
Drummaroad



Safeguarding Policy

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St Francis' Primary School

St Francis' Primary School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

POLICY AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Identify the names of responsible persons in the school and explain the purpose of their role
- Describe what should be done if anyone in the school has a concern about the safety and welfare of a child who attends the school
- Identify the particular attention that should be paid to those children who fall into a category that might be deemed "vulnerable"
- Set out expectations in respect of training
- Ensure that those responsible for recruitment are aware of how to apply safeguarding principles in employing staff
- Set out expectations of how to ensure children are safeguarded when there is potential to come into contact with non-school staff, e.g. volunteers, contractors etc.
- Outline how complaints against staff will be handled
- Set out expectations regarding record keeping
- Clarify how children will be kept safe through the everyday life of the school
- Outline how the implementation of this policy will be monitored

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the Governors and should in particular be read in conjunction with the following policies relevant to the safety and welfare of children:

- Health and Safety, Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying,
- Behaviour, E Safety

Responsibilities and Immediate Action

All adults working in this School (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection.

- The Designated Teacher is: Mrs S McIvor
- The Deputy Designated Teacher is: Mr J P Magee

The Designated Teacher is also the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection investigations and co-ordinates the school's representation at CP conferences and Core Group meetings (including the submission of written reports for conferences). When an individual concern/incident is brought to the notice of the Designated Person, they will be responsible for deciding upon whether or not this should be reported as a safeguarding issue. Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern, or disagreement between the Designated Person and the member of staff reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the Deputy Designated Teacher or the Child Protection Officers at the EA (Colum Boal or Alison Casey) and alternatively Social Services (Gateway)

The parent/carer will normally be contacted before a referral is made to Social Services. However, if the concern involves alleged or suspected sexual abuse or the Designated Teacher has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing will be said ahead of the referral.

In circumstances where a child has an unexplained or suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the CP referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. If a pupil is thought to be at immediate risk because of parental violence, intoxication, substance abuse, mental illness or threats to remove the child during the school day, for example, urgent PSNI intervention will be requested.

Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement, or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation. Referrals to Children's Social Care will be confirmed in writing, using the UNOCINI Form and copied to the Child Protection Officers at EA.

All parents applying for places at this school will be informed of our safeguarding responsibilities and the existence of this policy. In situations where pupils sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the school, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible.

St Francis' Primary School recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others who may wish to harm children in school or pupils travelling to and from school and will take all reasonable steps to lessen such risks.

VULNERABLE PUPILS

Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of pupils who are the subjects of Child Protection Plans and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker (and confirmed in writing; copied to the EA Child Protection Officer). If the pupil in question is a Looked-After child, this will also be brought to the notice of the Social Worker with responsibility for children in public care.

If a pupil discloses that they have witnessed domestic violence or it is suspected that they may be living in a household which is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the Designated Teacher as a safeguarding issue.

We acknowledge that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, school work or other children. The school has a strong commitment to an anti-bullying policy and will consider all coercive acts and inappropriate child-on-child behaviour and sexual activity within a Child Protection context.

TRAINING

Whole-school in-service training on safeguarding issues will be organised on at least a three yearly basis and the next CP INSET session for all staff will take place before Spring 2018. All newly recruited staff (teaching and non-teaching) and Governors will be appraised of this policy and a representative will be required to attend relevant Child Protection training or Safeguarding Board training. In addition, all new staff and temporary staff will be required to attend an induction session with the Designated Teacher or their deputy on their first day in the school. The Designated Teacher (and their Deputies) will attend the EA's refresher training at least every three years.

RECRUITMENT

St Francis' Primary School is committed to the process of becoming a Safe School Environment. Safe recruitment processes are followed and all staff recruited to the school will be subject to appropriate vetting in line with the DENI guidance circular number 2012/19. They will also be subject to qualification and health checks. References will be verified and PSNI checks undertaken before staff is appointed and commence their duties.

This School will only use employment agencies which can demonstrate that they positively vet their supply staff and will report the misconduct of temporary or agency staff to the agency concerned and to Social Services. Staff joining the School on a permanent or temporary basis will be given a copy of this policy.

VOLUNTEERS

Any parent or other person/organisation engaged by the school to work in a voluntary capacity with pupils will be subjected to all reasonable vetting procedures and Criminal Records Checks. Where it is not appropriate to instigate an enhanced CRB check for volunteers, they may be required to provide references and will be asked to sign a declaration that they have not been convicted of any criminal or disciplinary offence which could preclude their employment as a worker with children. Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member and will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of the school. Volunteers will at no time be given responsibility for the personal care of pupils. Voluntary sector groups that operate within this school provide off-site services for our pupils or use school facilities will be expected to adhere to this policy.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff (paid and voluntary) is expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families. Children will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside of those detailed in the school's Behaviour Management Policy. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Where incidents occur which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in the exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil for their own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Head teacher and parents. Any physical restraint used will comply with CP guidance.

Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment, there will, wherever possible, be another adult present. If a child needs help with toileting, nappy changing or washing after soiling themselves, another adult should be present or within earshot. All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. (See Intimate Care Policy)

Children requiring regular medication for long-term medical conditions have written consent from their parents' for a member of staff to administer the medication.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. Other than in formal teaching situations; musical instrument tuition, for example, the door to the room in which the 1:1 coaching, counselling or meeting is taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting. All rooms that are used for the teaching or counselling of pupils will have clear and unobstructed glass panels in the doors.

CONTRACTORS

Individuals and organisations that are contracted by the school to work with, or provide services to, pupils will be expected to adhere to this policy and their compliance will be monitored.

COMPLAINTS/ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF

St Francis' Primary School takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff. Procedures are in place for pupils, parents and staff to share any concern that they may have about the actions of any member staff or volunteer. All such complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Principal, in order that they may activate the appropriate procedures.

The following situations should always be referred to the EA Child Protection Team and Social Services:

- An allegation that a member of staff has seriously harmed a child
- An allegation that has been reported to the Police or Children's Services by the child or parent.
- An allegation involving a child who is Looked After in Public Care.
- An allegation involving a child who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- An allegation involving a child who has a disability or Statement of Special Educational Needs.
- The member of staff concerned has been subject to previous complaints. The allegation is one of sexual abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

If the complaint concerns alleged abuse by the Principal who is not the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding, this should be brought to the attention of the Designated Teacher, who will inform the Chair of Governors and Social Services. Any complaint concerning alleged abuse by the Designated Teacher whether it is the Principal or another member of staff should be reported to a Deputy Designated Person.

RECORDS

Brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents and child protection or child in need concerns relating to individual pupils. This information may be shared with other agencies as appropriate. Parental consent will be sought before making a Child Protection referral to Social Services. If consent is withheld, consideration will be given to the potential impact of this for the child and to the need for a child protection referral which does not require parental consent.

Child protection records are not open to pupils or parents. CP records are kept securely by the Designated Person and separately from educational records. They may only be accessed by the Designated Person, their Deputy with copies sent securely to Child Protection Officers at EA and Social Services.

If a pupil is withdrawn from the school having not reached the normal date of transfer; due to a family move or any other reason, all efforts will be made to identify any new address and the school

to which they are being admitted and to ensure that their educational records are sent without delay to the child's new school.

The content of Child Protection Conference or Review reports prepared by the school will follow the headings recommended by Social Services and will, wherever possible, be shared with the parents/carers in advance of the meeting.

Child Protection records will be sent to receiving schools separately and under a confidential cover.

SAFETY IN THE SCHOOL

No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas.

Entry to School premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision (except during times when parents are bringing or collecting children at the beginning or end of school sessions). Authorised visitors to the school will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with school visitor badges. Unidentified visitors will be approached by staff or reported to the Principal or school office.

The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers seen loitering near the school or approaching pupils, will be reported to the Principal and when required to the PSNI.

Parents, carers or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of pupils in school or on school-organised activities with the prior consent of the school and then only in designated areas. If parents do not wish their children to be photographed or filmed and express this view in writing, their rights will be respected.

CURRICULUM

ST Francis' Primary School acknowledges the important role that the curriculum can play in the prevention of abuse and in the preparation of our pupils for the responsibilities of adult life and citizenship. It is expected that all curriculum co-ordinators will consider the opportunities that exist in their area of responsibility for promoting the welfare and safety of pupils. As appropriate, the curriculum will be used to build resilience, help pupils to keep safe and to know how to ask for help if their safety is threatened. As part of developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, pupils will be taught, for example:

- to recognise and manage risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly;
- to judge what kinds of physical contact are acceptable and unacceptable;
- to recognise when pressure from others (including people they know) threatens their personal safety and well-being; including knowing when and where to get help

All computer equipment and internet access within the School will be subject to appropriate "parental controls" and Internet safety rules.

St Francis' Primary School will work with partners (including the Agencies Supporting Schools Programme (ASSP) and Safer Schools Partnership) to promote "Healthy School" status through the curriculum with the aim of:

- Developing a school ethos and environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle for pupils;
- Using the full capacity and flexibility of the curriculum to help pupils to achieve safe and healthy lifestyles;
- Ensuring that food and drink available across the school day, reinforce the healthy lifestyle message;
- Providing Physical Education and sport to promote physical activity;
- Promoting an understanding of the full range of issues and behaviours which impact upon lifelong health and well-being.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

It is our policy to work in partnership with parents or carers to secure the best outcomes for our children. We will therefore communicate as clearly as possible about the aims of this school.

We will use clear statements in our Newsletters and correspondence.

We will involve parents and pupils in the development of Codes of Conduct and Equalities and Behaviour Management policies.

We will liaise with agencies in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors and locality teams that are active in supporting families.

We will be alert to the needs of parents/carers who do not have English as their first language.

We will distribute the 'Child Protection Policy' and we will make available to any parent who requests a further copy of this policy. The policy will also be available through the school's web site.

We will keep parents informed as and when appropriate.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body has formally adopted this policy and will review its contents annually or sooner if any legislative or regulatory changes are notified to it by the designated governor or the head teacher.

The Governing Body has nominated Mrs Una Savage as its representative for child protection issues in the school. The representative will ensure that he/she is fully abreast of the guidance available for safeguarding and will be responsible for ensuring the Governing Body is discharging its duties for safeguarding children and for liaising with the local authority.

The Principal and Designated Teacher for Child Protection will provide an annual report to the Governing Body outlining details of any safeguarding issues that have arisen during the year and the outcome of any cases identified. These reports will respect all issues of confidentiality and will not therefore identify any person(s) by name.

The Governing Body will take responsibility for handling any allegation against the Principal, usually through the Chair of Governors, and this person will attend any strategy meetings called in respect of such an allegation against the Principal.

MONITORING

The policy will be updated annually at 1st term Board of Governors meeting.

The Designated person will provide all necessary information for this meeting, if there are urgent concerns, incidents or policy changes; they will be brought to the attention of the next Governor's meeting or in exceptional cases a Governor's meeting will be called as soon as possible

Each teacher will have a class discussion at least termly with their class to ascertain how safe children feel in school. They will report the outcome to the Designated Teacher. Where there are concerns, the Designated Teacher will follow up.

The Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that all referrals made to the Social Services receive a detailed action. If a detailed action is not received the Designated Teacher will inform the principal and Social Services and document the reasons why not.

_____ Chair of Governors _____ Date

_____ Head teacher _____ Date

_____ Designated Person _____ Date