

KNOCKBREDA PRIMARY SCHOOL



Child Protection Policy

Reviewed February 2020

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	3
<i>What is child abuse?</i>	4
<i>Preventative Curriculum</i>	5
<i>School Safeguarding Team</i>	6
<i>Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse</i>	6
<i>Accessing the Child Protection Policy:</i>	8
<i>Access to the Internet and e-Safety awareness</i>	8
<i>Related Policies:</i>	9

KNOCKBREDA PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

We in Knockbreda Primary School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our Pastoral Care policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

Within the Child Protection and Pastoral Care policies of Knockbreda Primary School, we adhere to 3 underlying principles: -

1. In all matters relating to child protection procedures and policies, the best interest of the child are of paramount consideration (UN Convention, Article 3, Children (NI) Order 1995)
2. As a school we have a pastoral responsibility towards the pupils in our care and are taking reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved (UN Convention Article 19)
3. Each child has the right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously and to be consulted, depending on his/her age and understanding, about the proposed action. (UN Convention Article 12)

The Designated Teacher (DT) for child protection is Mrs Cara Poole. She has received training on the Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures. In her absence Mr Collin Bell, Deputy Designated teacher (DDT), will assume responsibility for Child Protection matters. Mr Bell has also received relevant training. The Principal, Mrs P McKenna is also part of the Child Protection team and her training is up to date.

All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks and receive training in Child Protection and safeguarding matters on an annual basis. The members of staff of our school have also adopted the 'Staff Code of Conduct' which relates to behaviour towards pupils.

Members of the Board of Governors also receive appropriate training and the Designated Governor for Child Protection is Ms F Campbell.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone 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 overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem 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.

What is child abuse?

We use the following definitions:

Neglect - the persistent or significant neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical - physical injury to a child, whether deliberately inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

FGM- There are no medical reasons for FGM to be carried out and it is often performed by someone with no medical training. Children are unlikely to get anaesthetic and are often forcibly restrained. It can cause long lasting damage to both physical and emotional health.

Sexual - the sexual exploitation of a child or young person for an adult's or another young person's own sexual gratification: the involvement of children or young people in sexual activities of any kind (including exposure to pornography) which they do not understand, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate normal family roles.

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

Exploitation - Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person: to take a selfish or unfair advantage of a child, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, engaging in criminal/sexual activity, begging, benefit of financial fraud or child trafficking.

Bullying - Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in our school. However, we are aware that bullying can take happen and have in place an Anti-bullying Policy to help ensure no child feels unsafe or threatened while in the school environment. Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring and will take appropriate action following guidance in the Anti-bullying policy if bullying behaviour is identified.

Any complaint by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the DT working with the Principal, teacher and any other staff member involved and a response given indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action being taken.

Preventative Curriculum

At Knockbreda Primary School we believe that our pupils should be kept safe from harm through safeguarding procedures and educating every pupil about how to care for their bodies and protect themselves from physical and emotional harm.

The school's planned Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) programme further supports our duty to safeguard pupils and enables our pupils to:

- Know their rights to be protected and kept safe
- Understand potential dangers they could face
- Be encouraged to adopt safe and responsible practices and deal sensibly with risk
- Develop personal skills to protect themselves and others from unsafe influences and physical or emotional harm
- Know when and who to ask for help when needed.

Particular sensitive issues that staff may need to take into may include:

- Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Racist, disability, homophobic and transphobic abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting
- Substance misuse
- Particular issues affecting children including domestic violence, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriages

We have a duty to report concerns about pupils who we feel are at risk of harm or when we suspect that FGM has already been performed.

School Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team meets at least once every half term (more regularly if necessary) to discuss matters relating to current Child Protection or safeguarding issues. Members of the team will attend training and keep up to date in relevant matters and disseminate information to governors, staff, parents and pupils as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Team comprises of:

- Mrs C Poole – Designated Teacher for Child Protection
- Mr C Bell- Deputy Designated teacher for Child Protection
- Mrs P McKenna – Principal
- Mrs C McGowan – SENCO
- Ms F Campbell – Designated Governor for Child Protection

Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse

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.

She/he should not investigate - this is a matter for the Social Services - but should report these concerns immediately to DT, discuss the matter with her and make full notes.

The DT will discuss the matter with the Principal or DDT as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record is made.

The Principal, in consultation with the DT and or the DDT, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

The Principal, DT or DDT may seek clarification or advice and consult with the Education Authority (South Eastern Region) Designated Officer or the Senior Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the Principal will inform:

- The Social Services
- The Education Authority (South Eastern Region) designated Officer for Child Protection

(This will be done in an envelope marked '**CONFIDENTIAL – CHILD PROTECTION.**)

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or DT, if she is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the DT). Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that 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 is unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the DT or DDT.

If for whatever reason, a person feels that he/she cannot raise the matter with the DT, DDT or the Principal then advice from an Education Authority Officer should be sought.

WHEN IN DOUBT ALWAYS ASK FOR ADVICE

- Education Authority (South Eastern Region) – 028 9056 6200
- Colum Boal, Designated Officer for Child
 - Protection – 028 9056 6434
- Alison Casey, Designated Officer for
 - Child Protection – 028 9056 6274
 - Social Services (Gateway) – 02890 50 7000

HELPLINES

- NSPCC: 0808 8005000
- N.I. CHILDLINE: 0800 1111

It should be noted that 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 told.

Documentation will be stored in accordance with appropriate procedures.

Accessing the Child Protection Policy:

All families at Knockbreda Primary School are given a paper copy of the school's Child Protection Policy upon entering the school.

The Child Protection Policy is published on the school's website and parents are advised of this at least once per year; they are also advised that a paper copy of this policy is available upon request.

This policy is applicable at all times during the school day and also during school trips or outings. During Educational visits procedures outlined in the Educational Visits Document 2009 will be adhered to.

Access to the Internet and e-Safety awareness

Use of the Internet has been carefully considered and is monitored at all times. Parents are given a copy of the school's e-Safety Policy which can be accessed on the school's website. An Acceptable Use Agreement in relation to Internet use must be signed by all pupils, parents and staff.

- The e-Safety Policy and agreement form highlight the risks to pupils and parents of inappropriate use if the Internet and other digital equipment. Staff also enter into this agreement.
- Parents must give permission before children are allowed to access the Internet while children sign an agreement to show their understanding of proper use of the Internet and associated equipment.
- The C2K network in use in Knockbreda Primary School is protected and filtered. Children are unable to access unsuitable sites.
- Teacher guidance on the use of the Internet is provided to pupils. Children are warned about sites which may be deemed unsuitable.
- In school use of the Internet is monitored at all times and supervised by a member of staff.
- Mobiles phones are not permitted for pupil use during school hours. Phones used in breach of this regulation will be retained by teacher until parent is contacted and then returned. Cameras on such phones are not permitted to be used in school **AT ANY TIME**.
- All parents/guardians are asked to indicate their preference regarding the use of photographs in school. They indicate whether their children's photographs may be used in school/ in the press/ on the school website etc. Teachers hold lists of parental choices.

This policy reflects guidance in the Department of Education publication 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in schools – A Guide for Schools (updated September 2019)

Supportive guidance and resources can be found on the Education Authority's Safeguarding site: www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection

Related Policies:

Pastoral Care

Anti-Bullying

Positive Behaviour

Intimate Care

Drugs Policy

PDMU Policy

Policy review February 2023 (or sooner if necessary).