

BRAIDSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CP Policy reviewed by BoG May 11; updated for consultation October 13, updated September 16, reviewed Sept '17



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Vision Statement

2008

We aim to work together to support each child in reaching their personal and academic potential within a culture of mutual respect.

Main Principles

The school values children, their right to safety and care, their right to a childhood, and their right to be free from inappropriate concerns.

The school sets a high priority on the comfort and self-esteem of the children. As set out in school policies, discipline should be as far as possible positive, dealing with behaviors, and sensitive to the child's self-respect.

The school respects the need for dignity and fair treatment of children, parents, and staff.

It is harmful to children if suspicions of abuse are neglected or not acted upon. It is also potentially harmful to children if their lives are upset unnecessarily. Preliminary enquiries should be sensitively made. Urgency is needed where there are significant or severe signs of abuse or where a disclosure has been made. Other situations of concern need to be carefully monitored. Children should never be asked leading questions or asked for details of abuse beyond what they may disclose directly. Social services and the police have professionals with expertise in talking with children in the event of an investigation.

The school promotes good communication with parents. There may be times when sensitive advice can be given over areas of concern, which may include nurture and care. The Parents Advice Centre operates locally and parents may be made aware of this resource as appropriate.

Section 1

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Braidside Primary School has at the core of its ethos a commitment to provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment. The rights of the child and their safety are at the centre of all that we do.

The School will place the welfare and safety of the pupils and staff to the fore in accordance with statutory guidelines and the current legislation, The Children (NI) Order 1995 and The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003. To this end the Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff will follow a Code of Conduct and other associated school documents.

If guidance from the Department of Education and the area child protection panel is updated between reviews this will take precedence should there be a conflict between this policy and the current best practice advice.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Section 2

AWARENES OF THE ISSUES

The detection and prevention of child abuse depends on the cooperation of all concerned. The following points are central to the success of this effort:

- Knowledge of the behavioural and physical indicators of various forms of abuse;
- Knowledge of the appropriate action and response to be taken when abuse is revealed, suspected or detected;
- Vigilance and avoidance of all situations conducive to risk;
- Open, trusting and cooperative relationships within the school and with parents/guardians and others concerned with children's progress or welfare.

Definitions of Abuse

<i>Categories of abuse</i>	<i>Definition</i>
PHYSICAL	Is any form of non-accidental injury that causes significant harm to a child.
NEGLECT	Failure to protect a child from harm or persistent failure to provide adequate care.
EMOTIONAL	Actual or likely persistent or significant treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the child.
SEXUAL	When a child is abused by another for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

Bullying

Is repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical, which is conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour which is intentionally aggravating and intimidating. It includes behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, or extortion against a victim.

Sometimes children are reluctant to tell adults that they are being bullied; there is a need for constant vigilance and the pupils should be encouraged to report bullying. The School has a Bullying Policy in place.

Special Needs

The School recognizes that some children have special needs which may be physical, emotional or academic or a mixture of these difficulties. We will be sensitive to individual needs and in particular (in the context of this Policy) to emotional or communication difficulties which may make it more difficult for a child to make a disclosure. Staff will be patient and understanding where there are communication difficulties. We will work in partnership with children and parents to provide a welcoming and safe environment where diversity is embraced.

The Area Child Protection Committee has provided guidance on protecting children with disabilities.

Physical contact may be a necessary part of teaching some pupils with significant special educational or emotional needs. The Staff Code of Conduct and Safe Handling Policy provide guidance.

The Role of Staff

It is our legal responsibility to oversee the welfare of the children in school.

Staff should

- Behave in a way towards children which is beyond reproach;
- Be vigilant for signs of abuse.
- Foster a caring and listening environment in their area of work which encourages trust.
- Keep a note of any concerns and pass concerns on the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher, who will act within Child Protection guidelines and seek advice or make a referral as appropriate.
- Be aware that where a referral is made and an investigation is carried out by appropriate agencies trained professionals will work with the children. It is important that school staff do not ask leading questions.

Staff should show patience and tolerance in all dealings with children. Physical contact of any kind should never be used as part of disciplining a child.

An annual report of child protection concerns should be made to the Board of Governors.

Role of other agencies

It is the responsibility of the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher to

-seek advice from the NEELB Child Protection Officer and/or Social Services as appropriate;

-make a formal referral to Social Services or the Police as appropriate;

-keep a confidential record of concerns and referrals.

Social Services should inform the school of the name of any child who is on the Child Protection Register.

The Preventative Curriculum

At Braidside IPS we recognize the importance of promoting the emotional health and well-being of pupils within the school community. We aim to raise awareness of social, emotional and health issues, developing the confidence, resilience and coping skills of the all pupils in our care and will aim to intervene and support pupils when they are experiencing difficulties.

The Preventative Curriculum and lessons associated with emotional well-being, health and safety, relationships and the development of a moral thinking and value system will be delivered in a cross-curricular approach through various subjects including RE, PDMU, PE, RSE, etc. At Braidside we incorporate a topic-based approach to learning and this allows for greater scope for issues and aspects of the preventative curriculum to be addressed.

In January 2017 a new RSE policy was developed. A consultation process with parents was carried out following this which endorsed the policy and enabled it to be implemented.

The personal development and well-being of pupils is a high priority at Braidside IPS and to this end we are committed to delivering the keeping safe messages across the school.

In addition to the learning and teaching delivered by teachers we also utilize a variety of outside agencies in delivering their programs in school including NSPCC (Speak Out – Stay Safe), Women’s Aid, Community Nurse educators, PSNI, Fire Service, Cancer Focus. During 2017/18 we will be participating in the Sustrans Active School Travel Initiative which will aim to get children more active in how they travel to school, considering their health and well-being.

At all times, we will endeavor to explore issues in an age-appropriate manner which will help children to develop appropriate protective behaviours. We aim to consult with parents when new policies and procedures are introduced, inform them of outside agency visits and will carefully select and evaluate material which is to be delivered in school.

Section 3

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. A cluster or patterns of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. Indicators should be noted. It is important, however to realize that all of these indicators can occur in other situations where abuse has not been a factor and the list is not exhaustive. The safety of the child should at all times be paramount.

<i>Physical Indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural Indicators</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas• Repeated injuries• Black eyes• Injuries to the mouth• Torn or bloodstained clothing• Burns or scalds• Bites• Fractures• Marks from implements• Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries• Weight loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unexplained changes in behaviour - becoming withdrawn or aggressive• Difficulty in making friends• Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults• Sudden drop in performance• Changes in attendance pattern• Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language• Reluctance to remove clothing

Information relating specifically to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Domestic Violence can be found in Appendix 7.

Section 4

Braidside Integrated Primary School **Complaints and Concerns Policy**

(below is a summary, a full copy of the new policy and procedures can be obtained from the Principal or office staff.)

While the Principal is happy to be contacted about significant matters or about concerns which you have not been able to resolve, the majority of complaints, concerns and queries can be best put right at an early stage and by direct contact with the member of staff most directly involved:

e.g. homework, learning issues, behaviour, and general class matters-	Class Teacher.
Bus issues, incidents on walk to school, etc.-	Principal.
Reporting absence, dinner money, etc-	Main Office.

Contact can be made in person, by 'phone, or in a note.

We will acknowledge your contact as soon as possible and will aim to reply to most enquiries within two days. A reply may be reporting an outcome, suggesting a solution, or an invitation to meet to discuss the matter further.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of a concern you may take the matter on to the Principal or Deputy Principal, and if unhappy with their response or conduct you may contact the Chair of the Board of Governors.

We aim

- to be responsive
- to be fair (which may involve gathering more information about an issue).

The Chair of the Board of Governors is Maurice Johnston. He can be contacted by writing in through the school. Staff will also be happy to try to put you in touch.

Child protection concerns are dealt with under our Child protection policy.

Child Protection Concerns

Child protection concerns should be taken to the

Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Ms. J McAuley

or the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs. K Bradley

If a complaint or concern is about the Designated Teacher / Principal, then the concern should be taken to the Chair of the Board of Governors (Mr. Maurice Johnston). If you wish the Deputy Designated Teacher will help to put you in touch. If a concern is about the other named designated staff then it should be taken to the Principal / Designated teacher, Ms. J McAuley or to the Chair of Governors.

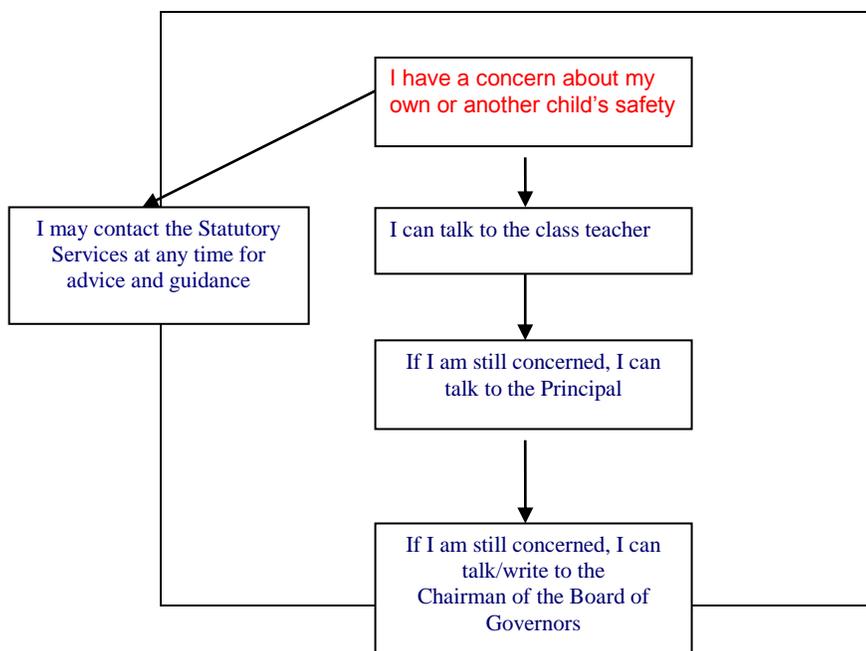
Concerns are treated confidentially and within the statutory guidelines.

When a child protection concern is raised we

- take advice as appropriate from the Designated Child Protection Officer of the NEELB and / or Social Services (where the concern can be seen to be of substance);
- take appropriate action as outlined in child protection guidance to schools;
- make a formal referral to Social Services and / or the Police where this is indicated in the statutory guidance to schools;
- keep a confidential record.

You have the right to take any child protection complaint to the police or social services.

Recommended route for parents with concerns:



Section 5

Procedures

The school follows the procedures currently put in place by the Area Child Protection Committee when dealing with concerns about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff and concerns about possible abuse by a member of staff.

We aim to maintain an environment which is listening, believing and reassuring.

In the event of a disclosure being made to a member of staff they should

-make a note of the concern and refer to the Designated / Deputy Designated teacher as soon as possible. In the case of an allegation against the designated teacher they should contact the Chair of Governors.

The Designated / Deputy Designated teacher will note the referral and take immediate action in urgent cases, or offer advice in other cases.

It is the responsibility of the Designated / Deputy Designated teacher to try to determine if there is substance to the matter referred, and to seek and /or make a formal referral as appropriate.

A confidential written Child Protection record is kept securely in school.

Allegations about staff

It is the responsibility of the Principal (or where the complaint is about the Principal, the Chair of the Board of Governors) to ensure that any complaint is thoroughly investigated, and that action on advice / referral is taken where there may be substance to the concern.

When the school carries out preliminary investigations these should have regard first and foremost, to the welfare of the pupil concerned and that of other pupils in the school (the paramount concern in child protection).

All action taken should be in line with child protection procedures, and within the school disciplinary procedure, including suspension from duty where warranted. Suspension from duty is in law a neutral event. The school must notify the Department of Education of any instance where a teacher is dismissed on grounds of gross misconduct, so that his or her recognition as a teacher can be considered.

Related documents and sources of information

A statutory Child Protection manual is kept in school by the Designated / Deputy Designated staff and must be followed when dealing with Child Protection issues.

Key circulars currently in force are listed below.

Circular 1999/10; 03/13; 06/02, 06,07,08,09,09a,09b, 14.

Related School Documents: - Code of Conduct, Pastoral Care, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safe Handling, Intimate Care Policy, ICT/ E-safety, Attendance and Promoting Positive Behaviour.

Section 6

Designated Contacts

Postal Address: -

Braidside Integrated Primary School

87 Fry's Road

Ballymena

BT43 7EN

Principal: - Ms. Julie McAuley

Telephone: - 028 25647899

Designated Teacher for Child Protection Ms. Julie McAuley (Principal)

Deputy Designated Teacher Mrs. Kelly Bradley (Vice – Principal)

Chair of the Board of Governors Maurice Johnston

Section 7

STATUTORY SERVICES

North Eastern Education and Library Board

www.neelb.org.uk

NEELB Designated Officers for Child Protection

Mrs Linda O'Hara 9448 2223

Mrs Elaine Craig 9448 2223

Social Services

Gateway To Children's Social Work Service: 0300 1234 333

Central Gateway Team (covering Ballymena, Cookstown and Magherafelt) Unit 5A

Toome Business Park

Hillhead Road

Toomebridge

BT41 3SF

Telephone: 028 7965 1020

Email: central.gateway@northerntrust.hscni.net

Out of hours' emergency social work service (after 5pm each evening and all day weekends and bank holidays): (028) 9504 9999.

Ballymena CARE Unit: Ballymena PSNI Station, 26 Galgorm Road, Ballymena

Co Antrim BT43 5EY

Tel: - 028 25653355

Despite our best efforts we cannot plan for every possible scenario. This document and its appendices offer the reader a platform upon which to build and develop the necessary skills to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our children. The information and procedures outlined are the current best practice.

Child Protection depends upon the cooperation of all concerned. We have a collective responsibility to be vigilant, observant and proactive in allowing our children to grow and develop to their full potential personally and academically.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: - Child Protection procedure flow charts.
- Appendix 2: - Recruitment and Vetting
- Appendix 3: - External Course Provision
- Appendix 4: - Code of Conduct Teachers and other Staff.
- Appendix 5: - Training and Best Practice
- Appendix 6: - Guidance on the use of reasonable force and safe handling.
- Appendix 7: - Specific Types of Abuse; CSE, FGM.

Appendix 1

Flow charts for action to be taken by Designated Staff

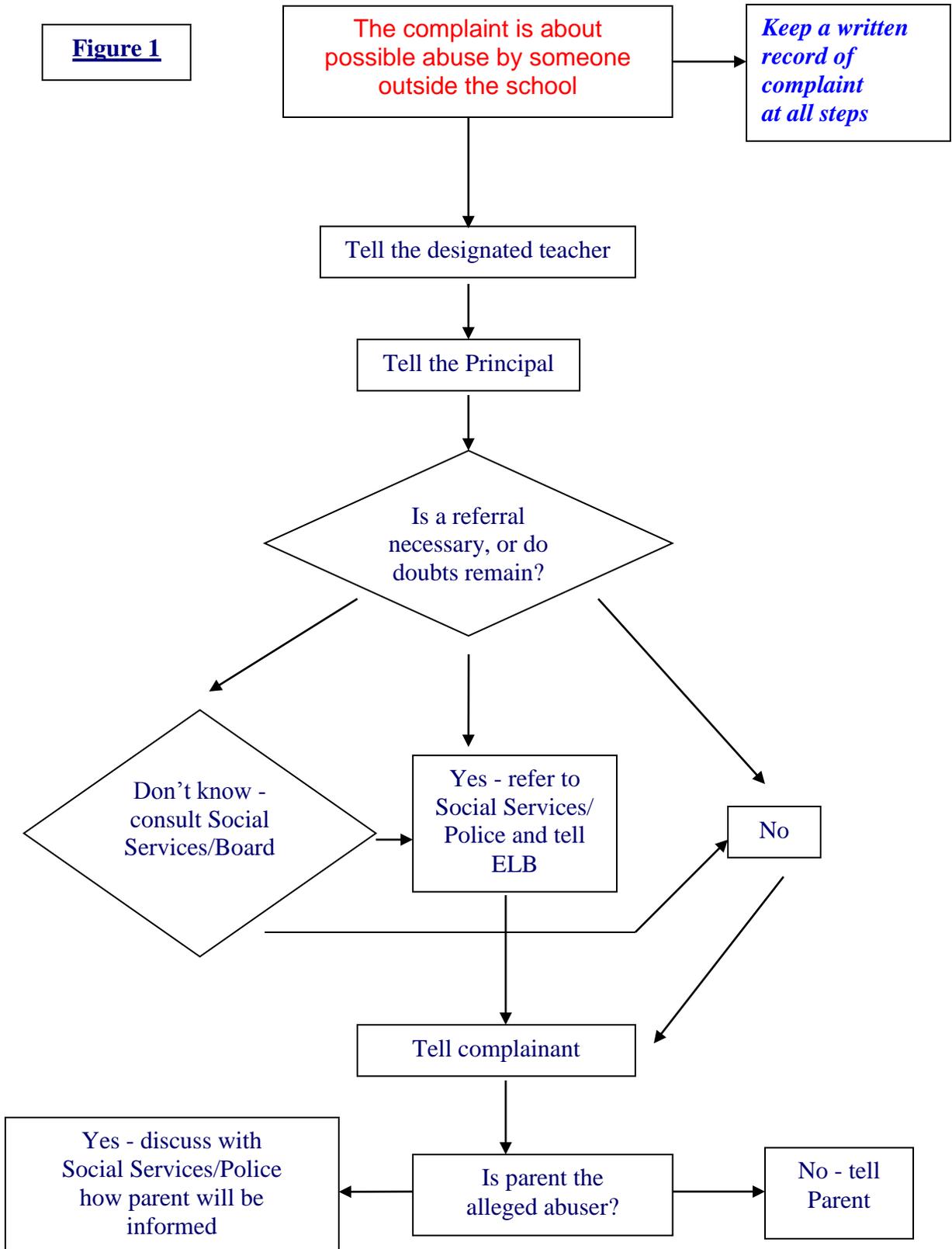
Figure 1

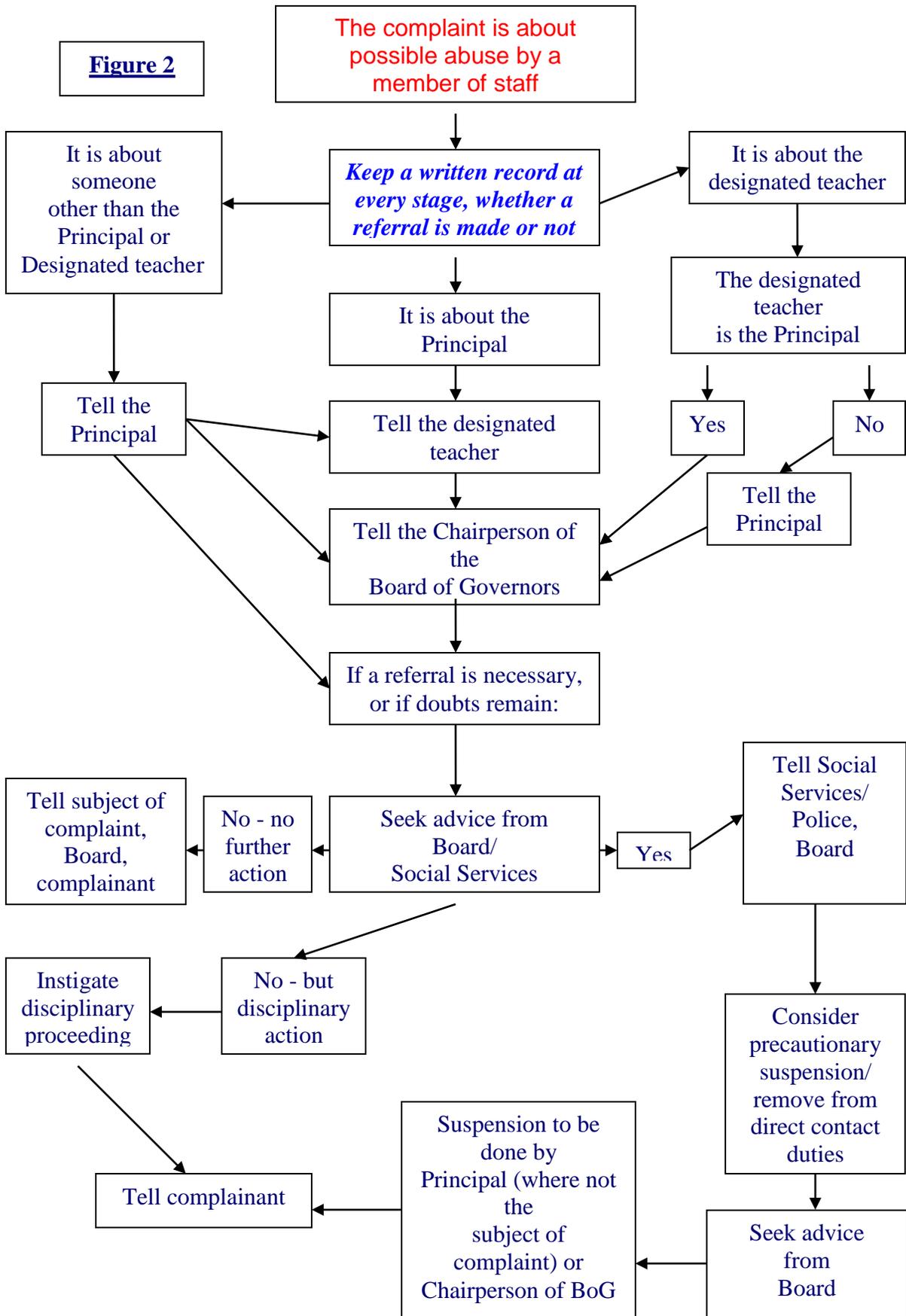
Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff.

Figure 2

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

Figure 1





Appendix 2: -

Recruitment and Vetting

Introduction

Arrangements for checking a person's criminal history background are to be followed in line with DENI Circular 08/03 (or any Circular which supersedes 08/03).

Pre-employment checks are carried out through the **Access NI enhanced disclosure process**.

- The prospective employee, volunteer or school governor completes a Disclosure Certificate Application Form (formerly the DOR Form);
- The Principal of a school is responsible for verifying the identity of the applicant. Three documents must be produced in the name of the applicant and at least one of these should include photographic identification.

The Principal must sign and date an Identity Verification Form for the recommended candidate to confirm that the identity has been verified.

- The Disclosure Certificate Application Form and Identity Verification Form are sent to the appropriate registered body
 - The registered body endorses the Disclosure Certificate Application Form and forwards it to AccessNI;
 - AccessNI will carry out the check and issue a Disclosure Certificate to both the registered body and the applicant;
 - The registered body will be billed by AccessNI for Disclosure Certificates which have been issued
 - The bill will be passed to the Department for payment.
- As a Grant Maintained Integrated Primary School the Registered Body we will use will be the Department of Education Teachers Pay and Pensions Branch.

Full information about AccessNI and all aspects of the service on offer, together with downloadable versions of the application can be found at www.accessni.gov.uk.

Appendix 3

External Course Providers

Child Protection training for Designated Staff and for Governors must be delivered by the Education and Library Board.

All External Course Providers will only have admittance to the school if they are previously approved by the Department of Education or can satisfactorily demonstrate they have complied with the vetting procedures laid out in this Policy. All external providers must be qualified, insured and reputable. This includes those external providers who are in the school in relation to Extended Schools provision. All should be vetted through AccessNI. Providers who are on their own, will not be unaccompanied during sessions with the children but joined by a member of the school staff.

Appendix 4

A Code of Conduct for Employees.

Related documents: Child Protection Policy, Safe Handling, Bullying policy, Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy, Pastoral Care Policy, Staff Handbook

Taken from the model *A Code of Conduct for Employees within the Education Sector whose work brings them into contact with children/young people* given in Appendix 9 of the Department of Education 1999/10 Child Protection circular.

Introduction

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 children and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within the education sector. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

Code of Conduct

1. Private Meetings with Pupils

a. Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.

- b. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- c. Where possible another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview, and the school should take active measures to facilitate this.

2. Physical Contact with Pupils

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.
- b. It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- c. Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (*Power of member of staff to restrain pupils*)).
- d. Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- e. Schools should, in particular circumstances, such as use of certain areas like the photographic darkroom, draw up their own guidelines for these circumstances.
- f. Staff who have to administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. *However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide First-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.*
- g. Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- h. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to his/her line manager.
Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

3. Choice and Use of Teaching Materials

- a. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.
- b. When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might after the event be criticised. Schools have already received advice on the value of consulting parents and Governors when proposing to use materials such as the AIDS education for schools and in connection with sex education programmes.
- c. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal before using it.

4. Relationships and Attitudes

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of the school and the employing authority, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when staff is dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelates with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. If employees have any doubts about points in this booklet, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult their line manager or a representative of their professional association.

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children/young people and their manner and approach to individual children/young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children/young people or of their parents/guardians.

Appendix 5

Training and Best Practice

Governor Training

It is a requirement that Principals and School Governors should be trained to ensure that recruitment processes take into account the importance of Child Protection.

It is the Policy at Braidside that all Governors will attend the mandatory training in Child Protection available from the Education and Library Boards as a matter of course.

The Board of Governors will also undertake to ensure that sufficient numbers of Governors are trained in Selection to maintain a pool of suitably qualified persons for recruitment needs.

Governors will be encouraged to attend the recurrent Training available from the Education and Library Boards and other recognized providers such as NICIE.

It is a requirement that at a minimum one School Governor on every recruitment and selection panel will be trained in recruitment and selection including Child Protection issues.

Staff Training

The School Principal and Senior Management team will identify training needs of Staff to achieve and meet the School Development Plan.

It will also take place on an adhoc basis as the need arises due to legislative changes outside the period of review of existing School policies.

Training for Staff will also be identified which will help individuals to enhance their skills and provide for career enhancement. This will form part of the Staff PRSD.

This will be communicated to the Board of Governors via the Chair for inclusion in the School Development Plan where applicable.

Best Practice

At all times where reasonably practical and within the context of our circumstances, we will comply with published best practice where applicable to the safe day to day running of the School.

APPENDIX 6: Guidance on the use of reasonable force and safe handling.

*Source: Appendix to Circular 1999/9
Guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force to Restrain or Control Pupils*

Who may use reasonable force?

Teachers

1. Article 4 of the 1998 Order authorises teachers to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from:

- committing an offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Non-teaching staff

2. Other members of staff at the school are also authorised to use reasonable force in the circumstances described at 1. above, provided they have been authorised by the Principal to have lawful control or charge of pupils. This might, for example, include classroom assistants, midday supervisors, and escorts. In addition, the authorisation could extend to education welfare officers and educational psychologists.

3. In determining which non-teaching staff to authorise, Principals will wish to have regard to the roles and responsibilities of the staff concerned. In particular they should consider whether the staff have a responsibility to supervise pupils as part of their normal duties or whether, from time to time, they may have to take on that responsibility when a teacher is not present.

Volunteers

4. Suitably vetted volunteers normally work only under the direction and supervision of a teacher or other member of staff and should not be expected to assume sole responsibility for the safety and well-being of pupils. Where a situation arises, therefore, where the use of reasonable force may need to be exercised, the volunteer should alert the member of staff in charge and defer to his/her judgement as to the appropriate means of handling the situation. There may, however, be circumstances in which the Principal may need to authorise a volunteer to use reasonable force in exceptional circumstances. These might include school visits, holidays and residential activities where some degree of delegated responsibility may have to be given to the volunteers in the organisation of activities; where a member of school staff may not be readily available to deal with an incident; and where it is possible that significant harm will occur if action is not taken immediately. Where volunteers are so authorised; it is essential that they receive appropriate

training and guidance.

5. The key issue is that all non-teaching staff and volunteers must be identified and specifically authorised by the Principal to be in control of or in charge of pupils. The Principal should clearly inform all persons concerned and ensure that they are aware of and understand what the authorisation entails. Principals may find it helpful to arrange for training or guidance to be provided by a senior member of the teaching staff who has been designated as having special responsibility for this matter and who has already received suitable training on the use of reasonable force. Principals should also keep an up to date list of authorised non-teaching staff and others who are so authorised and ensure that teachers know who they are, for example, by placing a list on the staff room notice board.

Where can reasonable force be used?

6. The right of a teacher or other person to use reasonable force applies where the pupil concerned is on the school premises **and** when he/she has been authorised to have lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere e.g. supervision of pupils in bus queues, on a field trip, or other authorised out of school activity such as a sporting event or educational visit.

What is meant by reasonable force?

7. There is no precise legal definition of “reasonable force” so it is not possible to state, in fully comprehensive terms, when it is appropriate to use physical force to restrain or control pupils or the degree of force that may reasonably be used. It will always depend on the circumstances of each case. However, there are three relevant considerations to be borne in mind:

- the **use of force** can be regarded as reasonable **only** if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force;
- the **degree of force** employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result;
- whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on the age, level of understanding and sex of the pupil, and any physical disability he/she may have.

Is it appropriate to use reasonable force in every situation?

8. Reasonable force should not be used automatically in every situation nor should it be used as a form of discipline? In a non-urgent situation, reasonable force should only be used when other behaviour management strategies have failed. That consideration is particularly appropriate in situations where the aim is to maintain good order and discipline, and there is no direct risk to people or property. Any action which could exacerbate the situation needs to be avoided, and the possible consequences of intervening physically, including the risk of increasing the disruption or actually provoking an attack, need to be carefully evaluated. The age and level of understanding of the pupil is also very relevant in those circumstances - physical intervention to enforce compliance with staff instructions are likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils and **should never be used as a substitute for good behaviour management.**

9. Staff may not always have the time to weigh up the possible courses of action and it would be prudent therefore for them to have considered in advance the circumstances when they should and should not use reasonable force. Staff should, whilst taking due account of their duty of care to pupils, always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using reasonable force. All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and situations which they can use to defuse and calm a situation. Best practice guidelines on successful discipline policies are currently being drawn up by a Working Group comprising representatives from schools, the Education and Library Boards, CCMS and the Department. These will be circulated to all schools shortly.

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

10. In a situation where other behaviour management strategies have failed to resolve the problem, or are inappropriate (eg in an emergency), there are a wide variety of circumstances in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to restrain or control a pupil. They will fall into three broad categories:

- a. where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
- b. where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
- c. where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

11. Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident,

by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects;

- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him- or herself or others;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (**NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school**).

12. Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

13. However, some practical considerations also need to be taken into account:

- Before intervening physically a member of staff should seek to deploy other behaviour strategies. Where these have failed, the member of staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he/she does not. The member of staff should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.
- Sometimes a member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency), for example, when dealing with an older pupil, or a physically large pupil, or more than one pupil, or if the teacher believes he/she may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances the member of staff should remove other pupils who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary telephone the Police. The member of staff should inform the pupil(s) that he/she has sent for help. Until assistance arrives the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.
- Situations where a pupil refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom need to be handled carefully as they can be a prelude to a major confrontation, especially if reasonable force is used to eject older pupils. Where a pupil persistently refuses to leave a classroom and the teacher believes that the use of reasonable force will endanger the teacher or other pupils, the school should have an emergency response procedure whereby assistance can be summoned quickly, for example a trusted pupil is sent for help.
- If a school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it will be sensible to plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning needs to address:

- managing the pupil (eg reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary);
- involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take;
- briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance);
- ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.

What might be regarded as constituting reasonable force?

14. Physical intervention can take a number of forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils;
 - blocking a pupil's path;
 - holding;
 - pushing;
 - pulling;
 - leading a pupil by the arm;
 - shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- or
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

15. In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of "reasonable force", for example, to prevent a young pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something. **However, staff should never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:**

- holding a pupil round the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe;
- slapping, punching, kicking or using any implement on a pupil;
- throwing any object at a pupil;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil;
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear;
- holding a pupil face down on the ground.

16. Staff should also avoid touching or holding a pupil in any way that might be considered indecent.

What action can be taken in self-defence or in an emergency situation?

17. Neither Article 4 nor the guidance contained in this Circular can cover every possible situation in which it might be reasonable for someone to use a degree of force. For example, everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force

to do so. Similarly, in an emergency, for example if a pupil is at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, **any** member of staff would be entitled to intervene whether or not specifically authorised by the Principal to do so. The purpose of Article 4 and this Circular is to make it clear that teachers, and authorised staff, are also entitled to intervene in other, less extreme, situations.

Is physical contact with pupils appropriate in other circumstances?

18. The Code of Conduct for staff which has been issued to all schools makes it clear that, although physical contact with pupils should generally be avoided, there can be occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be proper or necessary other than those situations covered by Article 4. For example, some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons, sports coaching, music or technology and design, or if a member of staff has to give first aid. Young children and children with special educational needs may also need staff to provide physical prompts or help. Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Teachers should use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support. Guidance on these issues can be found in the Code of Conduct, and also in paragraphs 73 and 74 of the booklet accompanying Circular 1999/10 (Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection).

19. There may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome, because, for example, they have been abused. Physical contact with pupils becomes increasingly open to question as pupils reach and go through adolescence, and staff should also bear in mind that even innocent and well intentioned actions can sometimes be misconstrued.

Should incidents where reasonable force is used be recorded?

20. It is extremely important that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, and written report of any occasion (except minor or trivial incidents) where reasonable force is used. This may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful should there be a complaint. Schools should keep an up-to-date record of all such incidents, in an incident book. Immediately following any such incident, the member of staff concerned should tell the Principal or a senior member of staff and provide a short written factual report as soon as possible afterwards. That report should include:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place;
- the names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident;
- the reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil,

another pupil or a member of staff);

- briefly, how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long;
- the pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident;
- details of any obvious or apparent injury suffered by the pupil, or any other person, and of any damage to property.

At least annually, the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the Principal should review the entries in the incident book. Records of incidents should be kept for 5 years after the date they occurred.

21. Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague (e.g. the Principal or senior member of staff who has been designated to provide training and guidance on the use of reasonable force), or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report.

22. Incidents involving the use of force can cause the parents of the pupil involved great concern. It is always advisable to inform parents of an incident involving their child (other than a trivial incident), and give them an opportunity to discuss it. The Principal, or a member of staff to whom the incident is reported, will need to consider whether that should be done straight away or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

Are complaints about the use of reasonable force likely to occur?

23. Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, and having a clear policy about the use of reasonable force that staff adhere to, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not, however, prevent all complaints, and any complaint from a parent about the use of reasonable force on his/her child should be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the booklet accompanying Circular 1999/10 (Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection).

24. The possibility that a complaint might result in a disciplinary hearing, or a criminal prosecution, or in a civil action brought by a pupil or parent, cannot be ruled out. In these circumstances it would be for the disciplinary panel or the court to decide whether the use and degree of force was reasonable in all the circumstances. In doing so, the disciplinary panel or court would have regard to the provisions of Article 4. It would also be likely to take account of the school's policy on the use of reasonable force, whether that had been followed, and the need to prevent injury, damage, or disruption, in considering all the circumstances of the case.

Will suitable training and supporting advice on the use of reasonable force be provided for teachers and other authorised staff?

25. Education and Library Boards are being asked to arrange suitable training courses for a senior teacher in each school who will then be responsible for providing “cascade” training and advice to other staff in the school. Boards are being asked to place an emphasis on and cover behaviour management strategies which seek to avoid the need to use reasonable force to restrain or control pupils. Such training will be in the context of schools’ behaviour and child protection policies. Arrangements are also being made for suitable training to be included as part of INSET and initial teacher training courses.

26. The Education and Library Boards are also establishing multi-disciplinary Behaviour Support Teams, to offer professional advice and practical support to schools on a range of behavioural and disciplinary matters, including the use of reasonable force.

APPENDIX 7: SPECIFIC TYPES OF ABUSE

1. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

This 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. CSE does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. Any child under the age of 18 can be a victim of CSE and while younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years. Young males can also be victims of CSE.

Identifying CSE:

CSE can be very difficult to identify and young people may not see themselves as victims. Nevertheless, professionals need to be able to identify vulnerability in the midst of challenging behaviour and frequent resistance to, or even apparent disregard for professional support.

Potential Indicators:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones, etc. without plausible explanation
- Truancy/ leaving school without permission
- Persistently going missing or returning late
- Receiving texts/ phone calls prior to leaving
- Change in mood
- Appearing distraught/ dishevelled or under the influence of substances
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age
- Physical symptoms
- Collected from school by unknown adults or taxis
- New peer groups
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- Low self-esteem
- Change in personal hygiene
- Self-harm and other expressions of despair
- Evidence/ suspicion of substance abuse

While these indicators can be useful in identifying potential risk, their presence does not necessarily mean CSE is occurring. More importantly, nor does their absence mean it is not.

What to do:

The HSCT and PSNI should be involved as early as possible to ensure any evidence that may assist prosecution is not lost and to enable a disruption plan to reduce the victim's contact with the perpetrator(s) and reduce the perpetrator(s) control over the victim to be put in place without delay.

More information:

More information on CSE, including a guide on “What can schools do to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation” can be found on NSPCC website at www.nspcc.org.uk

Resources for schools can be found on the EA website under the heading “Child Sexual Exploitation”: www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection/

2. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as “cutting”, “female circumcision” and “initiation”. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

FGM is a complex issue with many men and women from practising communities considering it to be normal to protect their cultural identity. The procedures may be carried out when the girl is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases are thought to take place between the ages of 5- 8, putting children in this age bracket at highest risk.

What to do:

FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory obligation to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed and established school procedures.

In the UK, FGM has been a specific criminal offence since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. The FGM Act 2003 replaced this in England, Wales and NI and this was further strengthened in 2015 with the Serious Crime Act.

Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at immediate risk of FGM this should be reported to the PSNI without delay. Contact can be made direct to the Sexual Referral Unit (within the Public Protection Unit) AT 028 90259299. Where there is a concern that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, referral should be made to the relevant HSCT Gateway Team.

All staff should be aware of warning signs, appropriate response and signposting to further information and sources of help.

More Information:

www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/multi-agency-practice-guidelines-female-genital-mutilation

Tackling FGM in the UK: Intercollegiate recommendations for identifying, recording and reporting

fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk Phone: 0800 028 3550

info@asconi.org Phone: 028 9043 4090

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse (2016) defines domestic violence and abuse as:

“threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.”

Coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual’s incapacity to give informed consent.

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy can be found at:
www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/stopping-domestic-and-sexual-violence-and-abuse-northern-ireland-strategy

Statistics for NI in 2016 indicate an increase in the number of calls to PSNI related to the incidence of Domestic Violence and abuse. It is estimated that there are 15,000 children living in an environment where domestic violence occurs.

At Braidside IPS we are aware of the impact that an abusive family setting can have on children. In such cases, where staff become aware of the incidence of domestic violence, as purported by a child or another adult, cases will be reported to the appropriate statutory agency. If advice is required, the DT or DDT may contact CPSS at any stage.

Domestic and sexual violence is included in the school’s preventative curriculum, through the PDMU curriculum and/or the use of outside agencies to deliver information to the children. E.g. Women’s Aid.

Further Information and Resources

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

www.thehideout.org.uk/young-people/adults-young-people-and-domestic-abuse/resources/educational-toolkit/

www.nidirect.gov.uk/domestic-violence

Helpline: 0808 802 1414

Email: 24hrssupport@dvhelpline.org

Children and young people can contact the Childline Free helpline at 0800 1111

www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/safe-learning-how-support-educational-needs-children-and-young-people