



**ST. JOHN THE  
BAPTIST'S COLLEGE**

**SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Reviewed: Sept 2021

Reviewed by: Mrs B Leathem

Next review: September 2022

## **1. Child Protection Ethos**

According to the Department of Education Circular Number 2017/04 all children and young people have a right to be safeguarded while in the care of a school. We in St John the Baptist's College have a responsibility for the pastoral care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. This will involve ensuring that preventative education and activities are in place to help promote and develop positive well-being. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. We will aim to work towards early intervention, and support to families. This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school. In all matters relating to safe guarding and child protection procedures, the best interest of the child is paramount.

## **2. Principles**

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance "Safeguarding and Child Protection – A Guide for Schools" (Circular 2017/04) and the Department of Health's "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" (March 2016)

The following principles form the basis of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount, this overrides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interest must always come first.
- We will work in partnership with relevant authorities to ensure the child's need are met.

### **3. Other Relevant Policies**

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Addressing Bullying Policy
- Drug Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Managing Critical Incidents Policy
- Educational Visits
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines\*\*\*
- Intimate Care Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality in Education
- E Safety

**These policies are available to parents and any parent requiring a copy should contact the School Principal or visit the school website on: [www.stjohnthebaptistcollege.com](http://www.stjohnthebaptistcollege.com)**

#### **4. School Safeguarding Team**

The following are members of the schools Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher: **Mrs Brenda Leathem**
- Deputy Designated Teachers: **Mrs Lynne Swain, Mr Justin Lynch, Mrs C O'Neill**
- Principal: **Mrs Noella Murray**
- Designated Governor for Child Protection **Mrs M fox and Mr J McConville**
- Chair of the Board of Governors: **Mrs T Martin**

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **5.1 The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher**

**The designated teacher must:**

- Promote a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role
- Organise training for all staff (whole school training)
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements for parents
- Make referrals to Social Services Gateway team or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate
- Liaise with the Education Authority's {EA} Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Maintain a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services eg Family Support Hubs
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns
- Keep the School Principal informed
- Provide written annual report to the Board of Governors regarding child protection

**The Deputy Designated Teachers should:**

- Work co-operatively with the Designated Teacher in fulfilling his/her responsibilities
- Develop sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher when required

##### **5.2 The Principal**

The Principal must ensure that: -

- DENI 2017/04 guidance is implemented within the school
- She attends training on Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection
- A designated teacher and deputy designated teachers are appointed. All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner

- The Chair of the Board of Governors is kept informed
- Child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates & annual report are provided
- The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this policy at least once every 2 years
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.
- All staff receive child protection training

### **The Designated Governor for Child Protection**

The Designated Governor should avail of Safeguarding and Child Protection Awareness training delivered by CPSSS and will take the lead in child protection issues in order to advise the Governors on:

- The role of the Designated Teachers
- The content of Safeguarding and Child Protection policies
- 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

### **5.3 The Chair of the Board of Governors**

The Chair of the Board of Governors should:

- Ensure that he/ she has received appropriate Education Authority training
- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment
- Ensure that the school has a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment & selection training provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools {CPSSS} and the Governor Support and Human Resource departments.
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the School Principal
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity

## 5.4 Other Members of School Staff

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

They should remember the 5 Rs:

***Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer***

**The member of staff must:**

- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for 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 in a Note of Concern (see appendices)
- 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

**In addition, the Class Teacher should:**

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

## 5.5 Parents

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so that 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 with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet, and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies;
- reporting to the office when they visit the school;
- raising any concern(s) they may have in relation to their child with the school.

## **5.6 The Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors must ensure that the school fulfills its responsibilities in keeping with current legislation and DE guidance including:

- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils
- having a written Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually;
- specifically addressing the prevention of bullying in school behavior management policies
- having a staff code of conduct for all adults working in the school;
- attendance at relevant training by governors and that up-to-date training records are maintained;
- the vetting of all staff and volunteers;
- receiving a full annual report on all child protection matters – including details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school.
- Ensuring the school maintains 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; staff induction and training.

## **6. What Is Child Abuse?**

Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organisations. Abusers come from all walks of life and all occupations and professions. Child abuse can manifest in a number of ways and can involve a combination of the forms of abuse. Those working with children and young people must have an awareness and understanding of the nature and prevalence of different manifestations within their practice area.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Through their day-to-day contact with individual children, school staff, especially teachers, but also non-teaching staff, including lunch-time supervisors and ancillary or auxiliary staff, are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms, change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a

child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm. 'Harm' means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, and the question of whether harm is significant is determined in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Children Order. More detail on the concept of harm and significant harm can be found in Section 2.4 of Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016) and in the Children (NI) Order 1995.

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations, 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.

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 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 dealing with Child Protection Concerns

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.

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.

## **6.1 Types of Abuse**

Child abuse may take a number of forms, including:

**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 also suffer from other types of abuse.

**Physical Abuse** is the deliberate physical hurting of a child. It might take a variety of different 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 opportunity 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.

**\*All the above definitions are from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)**

[www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-youngpeople-northern-ireland](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-youngpeople-northern-ireland)

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.

## **6.2 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators**

### **Physical Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>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 (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</p>	<p>Self-destructive tendencies; aggressive to 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; come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories</p>

### **Emotional Abuse**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Well below average in height and weight; “failing to thrive”; poor hair and skin; alopecia; swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; recurrent diarrhea, 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).</p>	<p>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 new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships.</p>

**Neglect**

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
Looks very thin, poorly and sad; constant hunger; lack of energy; untreated medical problems; special needs of child not being met.	Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); steals food; compulsive eating; begging from class friends; constant tiredness; inappropriate dress; poor hygiene; repeatedly unwashed; smelly; repeated accidents, especially burns. Withdrawn; lacks concentration; misses school medicals; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at school; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.

### 6.3 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

#### Sexual Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries 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 in walking or sitting; frequent urinary infections; avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers; unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating.</p>	<p>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; over 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.</p>

The listed 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 our school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a pupil this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information to Social Services.

**\*\*We acknowledge that a pupil 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.**

#### **6.4 Children with a Disability**

Within our school community we have children and young people with disabilities (ie any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) and we acknowledge these pupils may be more vulnerable to abuse. As a staff working with children with disabilities we should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues. Staff are aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult. Staff and volunteers working with children should receive training to enable them to identify and refer concerns early, to allow preventative action to be taken.

DoH Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016), Section 7.3.10 gives further information on children and young people with disabilities and steps to be followed.

Children with a special educational need will be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/ communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred.

Physical contact may be a necessary part of teaching some pupils with special educational needs, for example visually impaired children. Schools with such pupils should consider whether the Code of Conduct for Staff needs to be amplified to make clear

the necessary balance between providing support and preventing abuse or potential perceptions of abuse. Schools should inform staff, parents and pupils about their Code of Conduct and Intimate Care Policy.

#### **6.5 Children with limited fluency in English**

Children who are not fluent in English will be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language /communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred.

The Disability Discrimination Act further defines a disability as

“...a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”

[www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northernireland](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northernireland)

The designated teacher will work with the SENCO, seeking advice from the EA’s Inclusion and Diversity Service to identify and respond to any particular communication needs that a child may have. Our school will create an atmosphere in which pupils with special educational needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for

whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.

## **Child Protection During School Closure Due to Unforeseen Circumstances**

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic school closures have been announced, and health and safety is paramount for all of our students.

A Safeguarding phone has been issued:

Mrs. B Leathem: 07783616052

This number was shared with all students via Satchel One at the beginning of lockdown. Children are advised to use the number to contact the relevant staff member should there be an urgent safeguarding issue. If this occurs staff member will follow the normal protocol for a disclosure as laid out in this document.

**6.6 The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.**

<b>Do:</b>	<b>Do not:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Listen to what the child says</li><li>❖ Assure the child they are not at fault</li><li>❖ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret</li><li>❖ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words</li><li>❖ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality</li><li>❖ Stay calm</li><li>❖ Listen</li><li>❖ Accept</li><li>❖ Reassure</li><li>❖ Explain what you are going to do</li><li>❖ Record accurately</li><li>❖ Seek support for yourself</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Ask leading questions</li><li>❖ Put words into the child's mouth</li><li>❖ Ignore the child's behaviour</li><li>❖ Remove any clothing</li><li>❖ Panic</li><li>❖ Promise to keep secrets</li><li>❖ Ask leading questions</li><li>❖ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</li><li>❖ Delay</li><li>❖ Start to investigate</li><li>❖ <b>Do Nothing</b></li></ul>

## **7. Procedures for making complaints in relation to child abuse**

### **7.1 How a parent can make a note of concern**

We aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. As part of our ongoing work of fostering a good and trusting relationship with our parents/carers, St John the Baptist's College aims to help them develop an understanding of their responsibility for the children in their care. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or any member of the school's safeguarding team: The Principal, the Designated or Deputy Designated Teachers for child protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit.

Parents/Carers must ensure that the school is informed:

- 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 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.
- It is essential that the school has up to date contact details for the parent/carer.

## **7.2 Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers**

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate as this is the responsibility of Social Services and/or PSNI. Staff should report these concerns immediately to the Designated/Deputy Teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether in the best interest 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 parent will be informed immediately.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher may consult with members of the school's safeguarding team, the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the SELB Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. 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 prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. He/she will also notify the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team with a copy sent to the SELB Designated Officer for Child Protection and a copy will be kept in the school's child protection file.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 3**.

### **7.3 Where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (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.

Child protection procedures as outlined in Appendix 4 will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

**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.**

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 4**

### **8. Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings**

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust. They will provide a written report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. A copy of the proforma to be used can be found in the Staff Documents/ Teacher Info 2021/2022 Safeguarding Updates. Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis. Children whose names are on the Child Protection register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the Child Protection Plan.

### **9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

Should a child transfer to another school whilst there are current child protection concerns we will share these concerns with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Also the Primary School Liaison Officer will liaise with the Primary Schools regarding any safeguarding concerns that there may be concerning year 8 intake. These meetings normally take place in the June prior to September intake.

## **10. Record Keeping**

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked drawer. 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.

## **11. Vetting Procedures**

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in the School are vetted / supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance. Access NI codes will be required for all staff who are responsible for the supervision of pupils. Visitors to Schools

Visitors to SJBC, such as parents, 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 report to the General Office to sign in and their visit will be managed by school staff and their access

to areas and movement within the school will be restricted as needs require.

Visitors will be:

- Met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff. Primarily Mrs Andrea Neeson, Miss Jill Martin or Miss Aine Cavanagh.
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Visitors will be escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- Visitors will be required to be clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- Access to pupils will be restricted to the purpose of their visit.
- If delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks visitors work will be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.
- Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions visitors must make an appointment, and upon entering the school must follow all health and safety guidelines.

## **12. 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.

The school's code of conduct is available on request and is also available on our school website.

## **13. Staff Training**

St John the Baptist's College is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. 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.

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

#### **14. The Preventative Curriculum**

"In recent years, the use of..... 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."

*(Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools)*

We in SJBC acknowledge our role in teaching pupils to how to develop healthy relationships, and to make informed choices in their lives in order to protect themselves. We are proactive in doing so. The determination to do so is promoted at all levels – governors, the principal, SLT and staff.

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class lessons in various subjects like Science, Home Economics, LLW and R.E., and assemblies.

Local agencies, and liaison with the PSNI Community Police, enable us to act quickly on child protection issues which may have arisen in our own area.

There is a permanent child protection notice board in the main corridor and relevant information in each resource area, which provides advice and displays child helpline numbers.

An enlarged flow diagram for a teacher allegation is in staff room.

Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- E-Safety Talks delivered by PSNI
- Substance/alcohol misuse and the potential risks associated with them. Taught through LLW in KS3 and PD at KS4.

**15. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Safeguarding Team in St John the Baptist's College will update this Policy and Procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually. The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Designated Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of Board of Governors)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 1**

**PROFORMA  
CONFIDENTIAL**

**NOTE OF CONCERN**

**CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER**

Name of Pupil:
Year Group:
Date, time of incident / disclosure:
Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature and description of concern:
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher:  
If 'No' state reason:

Yes:  No:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file  
If 'No' state reason:

Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2**

**How a Parent can make a Complaint:**

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



I can talk to the class/form teacher



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the  
designated/deputy designated teacher for child  
protection  
**Mrs Leathem or the Principal**



If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the  
Chair of the Board of Governors,  
**Ms Tanya Martin**



At any time a parent can talk to a Social Worker at the Gateway Team

**Tel: 0800 7837745** {Free Phone from a Landline}

Or can contact the PSNI Central Referral Unit 02890259299

**Tel: 101 Ext**

### Appendix 3

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

Child makes a disclosure to teacher/member of staff or there are concerns about child either as a result of one observation or many observations over a period of time. Member of staff should make notes of what was said or observed and must **ACT PROMPTLY**

Discuss disclosure/concerns with Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. Complete Note of Concern to Designated Teacher/Deputy.

Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher meets with Principal to plan course of action and ensures that a written record is made and treated confidentially.

#### CONTACT NUMBERS

Southern Health & Social Care Trust:

**028 3741 5285**

PSNI Public Protection Unit:

**028 9025 9299**

If doubts remain seek advice from EA and/or Gateway Team/PSNI

If a referral is necessary Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will refer to Gateway Team/PSNI and advise CPSSS Designated Officer

If referral to Gateway/PSNI is not necessary

If referral to Gateway/PSNI is not necessary

Tell Complainant

Yes – discuss with Gateway team/Police how parent will be informed

Is Parent alleged abuser

No – tell parent

**Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff**

**Key Points**

Lead Individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate

**Guidance on next steps**

Lead Individual then:  
Establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion

Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded

Allegation addressed through relevant Disciplinary Procedures

Precautionary suspension under Child Protection Procedures imposed

Alternatives to Precautionary Suspension imposed

**Possible Outcomes**

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or the BoG to agree way forward from the options below