



Child Protection Policy

(Primary School and Nursery Unit)

Introduction

This policy is based on the 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools 2024', 'Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016', DENI Circular (2015/13), and the SBNI Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures. The systems in place for safeguarding children involve joint working and shared decision-making by the professionals and agencies involved. Children's needs must always come first.

We in Maghaberry Primary School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare, and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our Pastoral Care Policy, which aims to provide a happy, caring and safe environment (where a love of learning is fostered, and everyone is valued for their unique talents and individual abilities). One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

The purpose of the policy and procedures on Safeguarding and Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence. We recognise that Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection.

Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or who are likely to suffer significant harm. All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks. The staff of our school have also adopted a Code of Conduct for our behaviour towards pupils. (Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers).

Key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection

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, “Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland” (DHSSPSNI, 2017 and 2024), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools” Circular 2017/04 (and subsequent amendments) and the SBNI Core Child Protection Policy and Procedures (2017).

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy:

- The child or young person’s welfare is paramount
- The voice of the child or young person should be heard
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped stay together
- Partnership
- Prevention
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances
- Protection
- Evidence based and informed decision making.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES -

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

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Management and Discipline / Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Care
- Addressing Bullying Policy
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- RSE Policy
- Intimate Care
- E-Safety Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistle blowing

These policies are available to parents and any parent wishing to have a copy should contact the school office or visit the school website.

The following are members of the school’s Safeguarding Team:

Chair of Board of Governors	Mr J Watson
Designated Governor for Child Protection	Mr K McCarthy
Principal	Mr D Spratt
Designated Teacher	Mrs R Wilson

Deputy Designated Teacher(s)	Mrs J Hamilton Mr D Spratt
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Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Governors must ensure that:

- A Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- A Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed in their schools.
- They have a full understanding of the roles of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection.
- Safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training.
- Relevant safeguarding information and guidance is disseminated to all staff and governors with the opportunity to discuss requirements and impact on roles and responsibilities.
- The school has a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually, and parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- The school has an Addressing Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying.
- The school ensures that other safeguarding policies are reviewed at least every 3 years or as specified in relevant guidance.
- There is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school.
- All school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circulars
- They receive an annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff.
- The school maintains the following child protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools: Safeguarding and child protection concerns; disclosures of abuse; allegations against staff and actions taken to investigate and deal with outcomes; staff induction and training.

The School Safeguarding Team

As best practice, in the best interests of the children, and as a support for the Designated Teachers, the school should establish a Safeguarding Team. This team should include the Chair of the BoG, the Designated Governor for Child Protection, the Principal (as Chair), the DT and the DDT. The team may co-opt other members as required to help address specific issues, for example the SENCO, ICT Co-ordinator, etc. Where schools have employed an individual with social work qualifications/ experience, the postholder may be included in the school safeguarding team. However, only teachers in schools can assume the safeguarding role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher.

This Safeguarding Team is a vehicle for ensuring effective co-ordination and co-operation between the key individuals responsible for safeguarding throughout the school.

The EA CPSS provides child protection training in relation to the specific responsibilities of each member of the team.

The responsibilities of the team should include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Support for the DT in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.

Chair of Board of Governors

The Chairperson of the BoG plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment.

In the event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint being made against the Principal, it is the Chairperson who must assume lead responsibility for managing the complaint/allegation in keeping with guidance issued by the Department (and relevant guidance from other Departments when it comes to other early years settings), employing authorities, and the school's own policies and procedures.

The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries.

Designated Governor for Child Protection

The BoG delegates a specific member of the governing body to take the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues in order to advise the governors on: -

- The role of the designated teachers
- The content of 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 Teacher's Report
- Recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

The School Principal

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

The Principal has delegated responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school. This includes the appointment and management of suitable staff to the key roles of DT and DDT Designated Teacher posts and ensuring that new staff and volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions as part of an induction programme.

It is essential that there is protected time and support to allow the DTs to carry out this important role effectively and that DTs are selected based on knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role.

The Principal must ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy, or summary, of the Child Protection Policy at intake and, at a minimum, every two years.

Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Every school is required to have a DT and DDT with responsibility for child protection. These are highly skilled roles developed and supported through a structured training programme, requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues. The responsibilities involve:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff before they commence their role
- Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns.
- Ensuring staff are aware that Notes of Concern should be completed using the template provided in DE circular 2020/07
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate
- Liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keeping the school Principal informed
- Lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
- Compiling written reports to the BoG regarding child protection.

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The role of the DDT is to work co-operatively with the DT in fulfilling his/her responsibilities.

It is important that the DDT works in partnership with the DT so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when required. DDTs are also provided with the same specialist training by CPSS to help them in their role.

Schools to specify if they have additional provision such as a nursery, learning support centre, speech and language unit, or boarding department

ALL MEMBERS OF SCHOOL STAFF

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations (see Annex A of DENI Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Schools Guide 2017), including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children. Staff in school see children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural, and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse.

Staff must:

- **Act promptly;**
- **Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child;**
- **Not give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures;**
- **Not investigate;**
- **Not ask leading questions;**
- **Refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teachers for Safeguarding and Child Protection/Principal;**
- **Avail of whole-school training and other relevant training regarding safeguarding children;**
- **Make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child.**

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.

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers will immediately follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

Parents

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child.

Parents can play their part in safeguarding by informing the school:

- If the child has a medical condition or educational need.
- If there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- If there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- If there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school.
- If their child is absent and should send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence. More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at:
www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection

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

RECORD KEEPING

All Child Protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in a locked drawer. These records are kept separate from other files that are held on that child and are only accessible by the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal. All record keeping is in line with our Record Management Policy.

TRANSFER OF RECORDS

Under the Education (Pupil Records and Reporting) (Transitional) Regulations (NI) 2007, Boards of Governors are required to make arrangements to transfer a formal record of a pupil's academic achievements, other skills and abilities and progress within 15 school days of a pupil transferring schools. The requirement does not include the transfer of Child Protection records. However, where there have been, or are current, concerns about a pupil, the school should consider what information should be shared with the new school.

Past safeguarding concerns and the response to these can be significant, should concerns arise for the child at a later time. The third Data Protection Principle is key in relation to deciding whether to transfer past concerns. If the information, current or historical, is deemed to be relevant then it should be shared.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that copies of relevant Child Protection records are transferred to the DT of the receiving school, in the most secure and appropriate manner to minimise the risk of any data breach. The data controller, ie the school, is accountable for any data breach.

When a child on whom the school holds Safeguarding or Child Protection information leaves the school and the school are unaware of the new school they must notify the Education Welfare Service at the Education Authority who will then attempt to locate the child. Social Services must be informed immediately if the child has a Child

Protection Plan or is a Looked After Child. The school must retain the child's Child Protection records and forward the relevant information to the receiving school when the child has been traced.

When a child whose name is on the Child Protection Register changes school, the school which the child is leaving should inform the receiving school immediately that his/her name is on the Register and pass on contact details for the social worker. The school should then destroy all Child Protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of Case Conferences, and should inform the child's Case Coordinator in Social Services. The remaining Child Protection record should be copied, as relevant, to the new school. When considering what information is relevant, advice can be sought from the CPSSS. The school to which the child is transferring should contact the child's social worker for relevant information. The leaving school can retain original copies of their own documents.

It is good practice for the DT to discuss concerns directly with the DT from the receiving school in advance of sending the Child Protection record.

APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

All staff (paid or unpaid) appointed to Maghaberry Primary School, are vetted in accordance with relevant legislation and to DENI guidance. Substitute Teachers are employed through NISTR. All adults working on a regular basis with our pupils will be vetted through Access NI. Volunteers brought in on an irregular basis, will be supervised by a member of staff.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Child Protection arrangements will seek to maintain the necessary balance between protecting children and respecting the rights of parents, families/carers and members of staff.

ADDRESSING BULLYING

A separate document outlining the school's policy and procedures regarding 'Bullying' is available. This has been brought up to date with regard to the 'Addressing Bullying in Schools' Act.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools A Guide for Schools'. Appendix 1 highlights physical and behavioural signs.

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting 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.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent

adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones - by a child's peers.

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.

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.

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.

Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or a group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may even have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through technology.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. 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.

Grooming of a child or young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It often involves perpetrator(s) gaining the trust of the child or young person or, in some cases, the trust of the family, friends or community, and/or making an emotional connection with the victim in order to facilitate abuse before the abuse begins. This may involve providing money, gifts, drugs and/or alcohol or more basic needs such as food, accommodation or clothing to develop the child's/young person's loyalty to and dependence upon the person(s) doing the grooming. The person(s) carrying out

the abuse may differ from those involved in grooming which led to it, although this is not always the case.

Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse -The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual violence and abuse as follows: Domestic Violence and Abuse ‘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.’ If it comes to the attention of school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a child/young person, this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with Social Services.

Sexual Violence and Abuse ‘Any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).’ Please note that 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.healthni.gov.uk/publications/stopping-domestic-and-sexual-violence-and-abusenorthern-ireland-strategy

Forced Marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced Marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland, and where an agency, organisation or practitioner has knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person, they should contact the PSNI immediately.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection, or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. CSE does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

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

Sexting is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the Internet. There are two aspects to Sexting:

- Sexting between individuals in a relationship Pupils need to be aware that it is illegal, under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, to take, possess or share ‘indecent images’ of anyone under 18 even if they are the person in the

picture (or even if they are aged 16+ and in a consensual relationship) and in these cases, the PSNI will be contacted.

- Sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress Schools are not required to investigate incidents. It is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted) to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent - see Articles 33-35 of the Act for more detail. Police should be contacted to help prevent further such incidents.

If a young person has shared an inappropriate image of themselves that is now being shared further whether or not it is intended to cause distress, the child protection procedures should be followed.

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local PSNI and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children's exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them. Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse. As an Operation Encompass school, when the PSNI have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school Safeguarding Team. This will allow the school Safeguarding Team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the Designated Teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns. This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the PSNI will only be shared outside of the Safeguarding Team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the Safeguarding Team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding Team. For further information, see The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

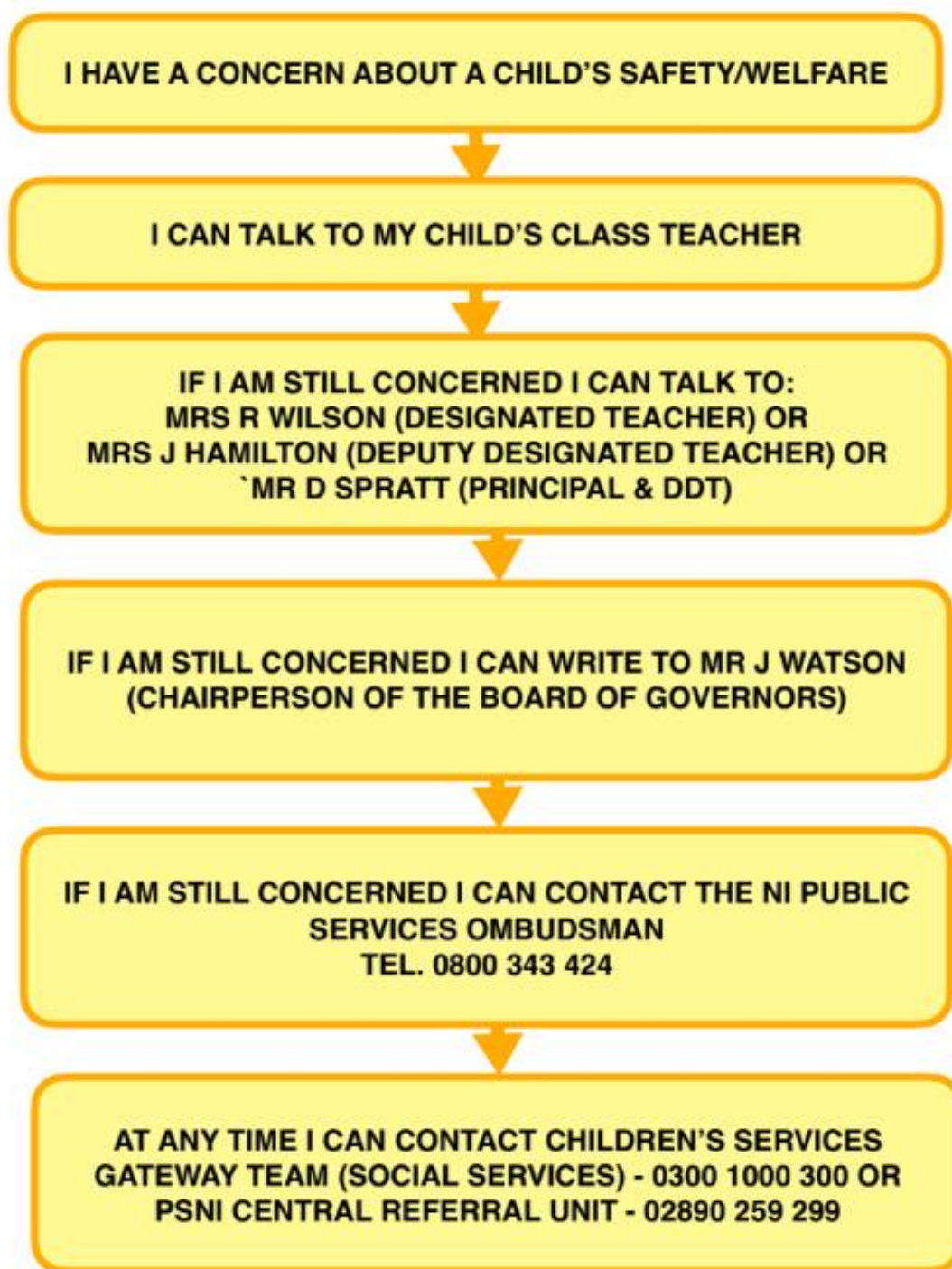
THREE FLOW DIAGRAMS, taken from ‘Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DENI)’ have been included to summarise procedures.

Flowchart 1 – How To Raise a Concern Regarding Child Protection/Safeguarding.

Flowchart 2 - Procedures where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school’s staff.

Flowchart 3 - Outlines procedures where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school’s staff.

FLOWCHART 1 - How to Raise a Concern Regarding Child Protection/Safeguarding



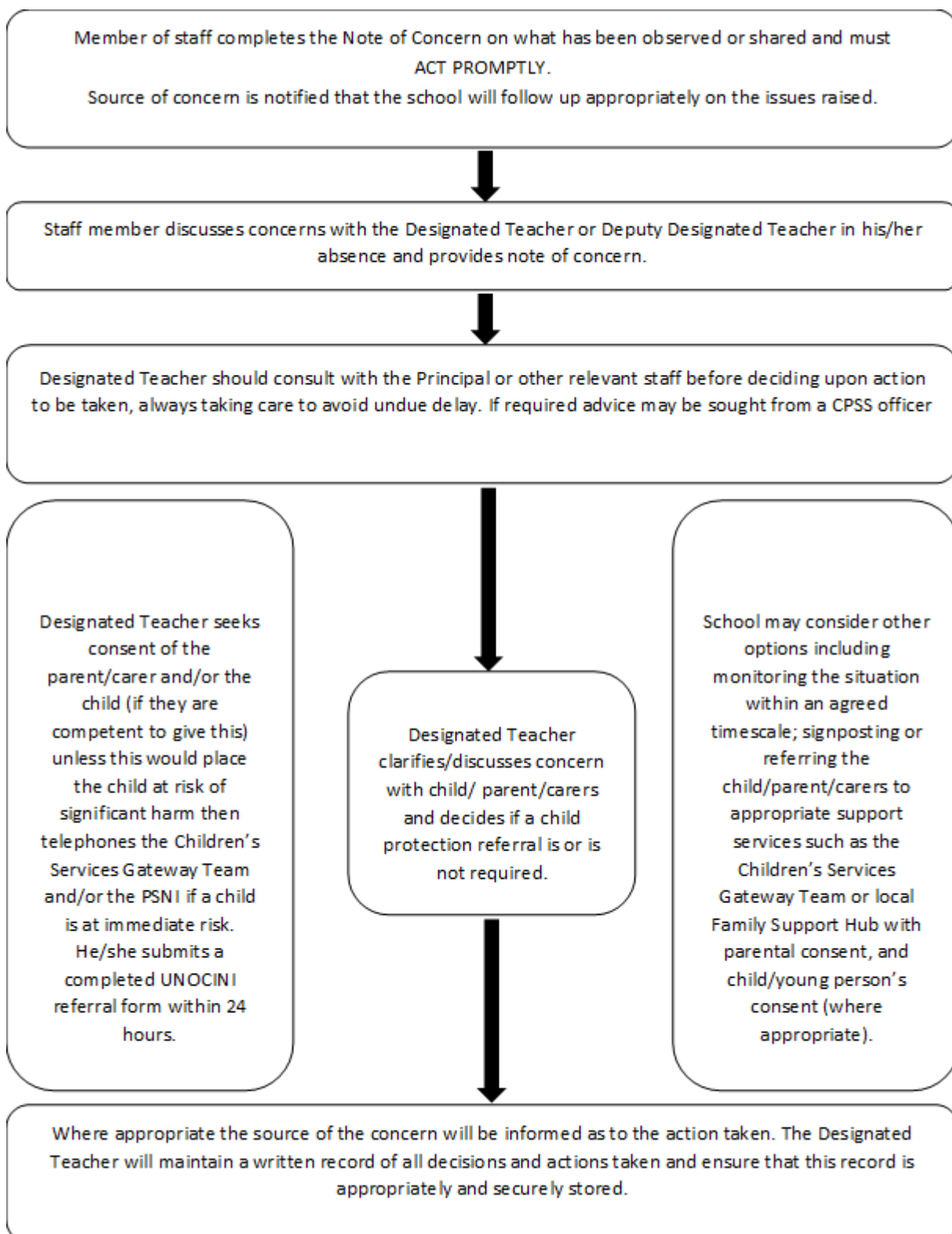
WHO CAN I SPEAK TO?

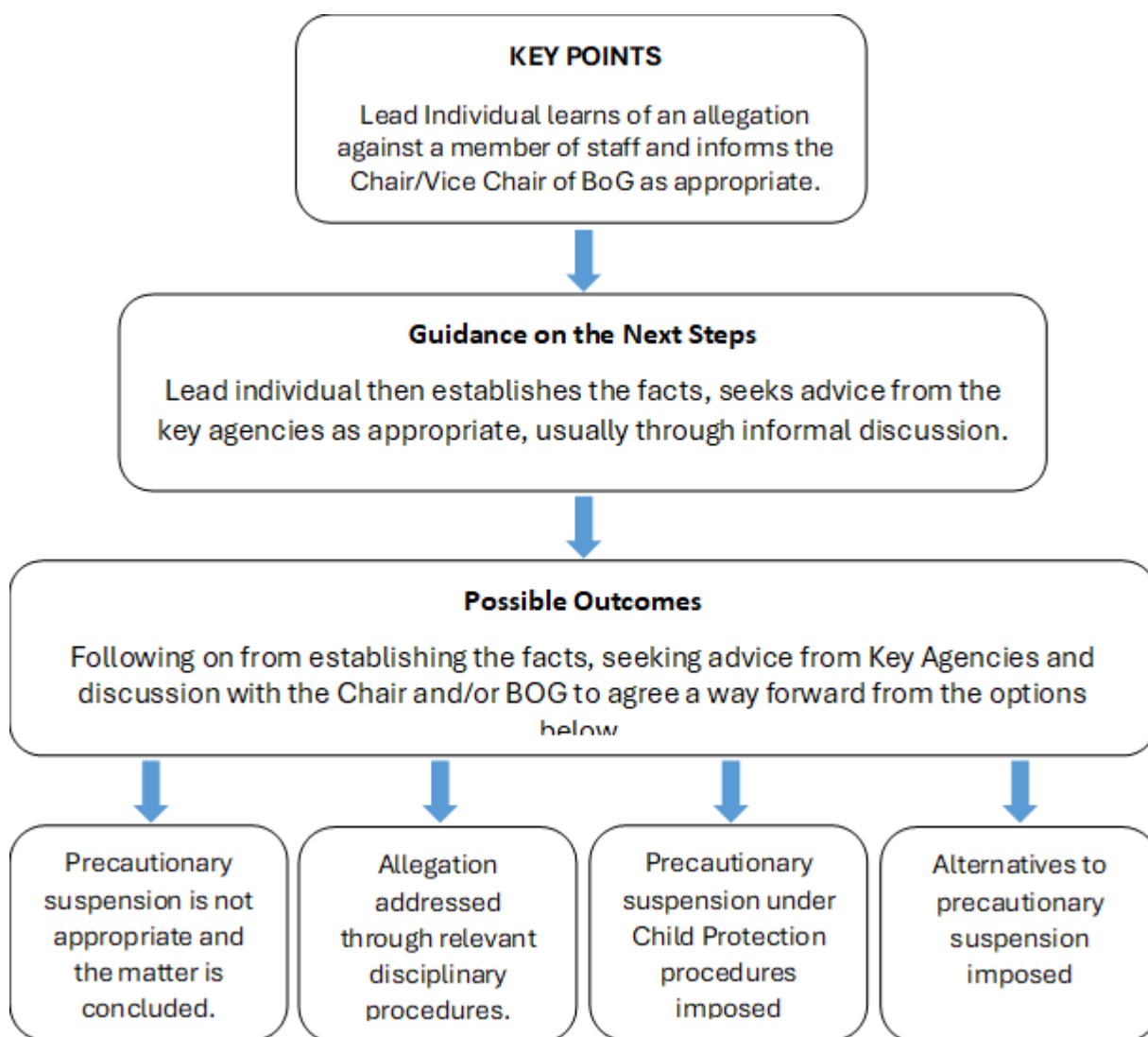
Principal
Designated Teacher
Deputy Designated Teacher(s)
Chairperson Board of Governors

Mr D Spratt
Mrs R Wilson
Mrs J Hamilton/Mr D Spratt
Mr J Watson

Children's Services Gateway Team – 0300 1000 300
PSNI Central referral Unit - cru@psni.police.uk or 02890 259 299

FLOWCHART 2 - Procedure Where the School Has Concerns, or Has Been Given Information, about Possible Abuse by Someone Other Than a Member of Staff



FLOWCHART 3 – Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

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.

Any member of staff who has a concern about the welfare or safety of a child or young person should complete a Note of Concern (Appendix 2). Notes must be made as soon as possible after the incident to ensure an expedient response, and certainly within 24 hours, to maintain the accuracy and content of the report. For some children, a one-off serious incident or concern may occur and staff will have no doubt that this must be immediately recorded and reported. More often, however, it is the accumulation of a number of small incidents, events or observations that can provide the evidence of harm being caused to a child.

The staff member should report the concern to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) at an early stage, immediately if the concern is of a serious nature, as the DT may be aware of other circumstances which would influence steps to be taken. The Note of Concern and any further details discussed, or action taken, should be placed on the pupil's Child Protection File and should be signed and dated by both parties to confirm the information is accurate. Following procedures in Flowchart 2:

- If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other members of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly.
- He/She should not investigate – this is a matter for the Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the Designated Teacher, discuss the matter with him, and make full notes on the Note of Concern form.
- The Designated Teacher will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record is made. Appendix 3 Note of Concern form.

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

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

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

- Social Services and/or the PSNI

- If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the Designated Teacher, if he is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated Teacher). Where the matter is referred to Social Services, the member of staff will be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately. (Following procedures in Flowchart 2.)
- If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated Teacher (or Deputy Designated Teacher, if he is not available) must be informed immediately. He will inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.
- If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the Designated Teacher.
- It should be noted that information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be told.

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

Pupils who are the victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties which may require a holistic assessment of need, to determine appropriate level and types of intervention.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage.

All school staff are well placed to observe outward symptoms which may be due to child abuse.

CONCLUSION

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff inter-relate 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 policy or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the Principal.

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 1**PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing; grip marks on arms; slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns (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	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.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
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; apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations; rocking/head banging; inability to play; indifference to separation from family; recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders; signs of self-mutilation; signs of solvent abuse (eg mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (eg anorexia, vomiting, stooping).	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/carer liaison; fear of new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships.

NEGLECT

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
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.	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.

APPENDIX 2

NOTE OF CONCERN

Reports to Designated Teacher for Child Protection

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:	
Date and time of report to DT	

Name of staff member making the report		
Signature of staff member		Date:

APPENDIX 3

Relationships with Students Outside of Work Declaration



A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF

(Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools 2017)

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby staff and volunteers of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students.

Employee Name:	
Student Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school, I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring.
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school.
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (eg via the child) or formally.
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed _____ Date _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal.