



BALLYKEEL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES

The School Safeguarding Team

Principal Mrs S Sheeran	Designated Teacher & Acting Vice-Principal Mrs JD Thompson
Chair of Governors / Designated Governor Mr A Kennedy	School Welfare Support Officer Mrs H Young
Deputy Designated Teacher & Head of KS1/Foundation Mrs J Thompson	Health & Safety Mrs K McGuckin
Online Safety & Deputy Designated Teacher Mrs B Esler	Deputy Designated Teacher / Nursery Unit Teacher Mrs K Cumberland

Introduction

This is a summary of our full Child Protection Policy. The full policy is accessible on the website (www.ballykeelps.org.uk) and a paper copy is available on request from the school.

In all matters relating to Child Protection procedures, the best interest of the child is of paramount importance. Children have the right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously, and to be consulted according to their age and understanding about proposed action.

Ballykeel Primary school and Nursery Unit has a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care, and take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved.

There are clear procedures in place to be followed where the school has been alerted to possible abuse. All teaching and support staff are alert to, and regularly trained in, the signs of possible abuse and understand what procedures need to be followed.

The school also appreciates that Child Protection arrangements should also seek to maintain the necessary balance between protecting children and respecting the rights of parents, carers, families and members of school staff.

We may not be able to prevent child abuse, but by closely following child protection procedures, we are trying to protect all our children. Suspected cases are reported, procedures adhered to and subsequent actions are left to the appropriate agencies.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.

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.

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others.

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.

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.

We are also aware, and will support pupils and follow child protection procedures where appropriate, in relation to the following: Grooming, Child Sexual Exploitation, Domestic Abuse, Female Genital Mutilation, Harmful Sexualised Behaviours, Self-Harm, Sexual Identity and Looked After Children.

Other Relevant Policies and Guidance

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 and guidance including those listed below:

Attendance, Positive Behaviour, Pastoral Care, Anti-Bullying, Safe Handling & Use of Reasonable Force, Special Educational Needs, First Aid & Administration of Medicines, Health & Safety, Relationships and Sexuality Education, Period Dignity, Intimate Care, E-Safety, Educational Visits, Staff Code of Conduct, Drugs and Alcohol, Critical Incident and Volunteers in School. All these policies can all be accessed on the school website.

Summary of Procedures

Where a pupil makes a disclosure, or the school has concerns about possible abuse:

- Staff member immediately completes a written report. No promise of confidentiality can, or should be given, where abused is alleged
- Designated Teacher for Child Protection is informed (or DDT in her absence)
- Principal is informed
- A decision on referral to Social Services and / or PSNI is made. If unsure about whether to refer the matter, the DT should take advice from EA CPSS or Social Services. Parents should not be informed if doing so could place the child at risk of harm
- A written record of the details of the complaint should be made at each stage of the process. These records will be held securely in school
- The complainant should be kept informed about the outcomes of the process
- If the parent is the alleged abuser and the decision not to refer is made, the parent is to be informed unless guidance is given not to do so. If the decision to refer is made it will be decided with Social Services and/or the PSNI how to inform the parent

Details about how the school manages a complaint about abuse by a member of staff are included in the full policy document.

If a parent has a concern about the safeguarding of a child:

- Parent talks to class teacher
- If still concerned, parent can talk to the Designated Teacher or the Principal
- If still concerned, parent can talk / write to the Chair of the Board of Governors or the EA
- If still concerned, parent can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (Tel: 0800 343 424)

At any time, parents can communicate with Slemish Children's Services, Ballymena (028 25635640), the local Children's Services Gateway Team (028 94424459 / 0300 1234 333), EA CPSS (028 95985590) or the PSNI Central Referral Unit (028 9025 9299).