

BLOOMFIELD COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



Approved by the Board of Governors 28 November 2019

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Throughout this policy, the term 'parent' refers to those who have 'parental responsibility for the pupil as defined in Article 6 of the Children Order.

The term 'child/pupil' has the same meaning as in the Children (NI) Order 1995 i.e. a person under the age of 18. In the case of a pupil with Special Educational Needs, the term should be interpreted as including any person who has not attained the age of 19 and is a registered pupil at the school. A person who attains age 19 during a school year shall be deemed not to have attained that age. While a school has responsibility for all registered pupils, referral pathways and processes may differ for a young person over the age of 18 (Education (NI) Order 1996).

The term 'staff' refers to all staff including paid, unpaid, non-teaching and volunteers.

The contents of this policy do not constitute, or purport to be, an authoritative interpretation of the law; that is exclusively a matter for the courts.

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1 INTRODUCTION

This policy is one of a suite which underpin safeguarding and child protection in Bloomfield Collegiate School: Pastoral Care Policy; School Citizenship and Behaviour Policy; Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy; Safe Handling Policy; Educational Visits Policy; Attendance Policy; E-Safety Policy; Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy; Whistleblowing Policy, Complaints Policy. The policy is available on the School website and paper copies are obtainable from the School Office on request at any time. A copy is made available to new entrants to the school and sent to parents every year by email.

2 POLICY STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

The Board of Governors, Principal and Staff of Bloomfield Collegiate School are committed to promoting a harmonious educational environment and an open climate within which each individual recognises their duty to help to protect children from abuse or the risk of abuse. Young people have a right to services developed and tailored to best meet their assessed needs regardless of gender, racial group, age, religious belief, political opinion or sexual orientation.

Bloomfield Collegiate School sustains a safeguarding ethos; it is recognised that, not only does the School have statutory responsibilities in relation to pupils' learning, but it also carries pastoral responsibility towards all pupils in its care. The School believes that individual pupils should be supported in achieving positive academic outcomes through the provision of pro-active, engaged, responsive and enabling pastoral care. The School accepts that all pupils in its charge have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and will seek to do whatever is reasonable to safeguard and promote the physical and emotional well-being of its pupils.

3 AIMS

The aims of this policy are:

- to provide guidance on Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- to make explicit our main responsibilities in the context of Safeguarding and Child Protection: prevention; recognition; response; referral; confidentiality/record keeping;
- to ensure that all staff are trained in Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- to make all staff aware of, and alert to, the signs and symptoms of possible abuse, and of the procedures to be followed;
- to ensure that pupils are advised, as part of the curriculum, about actions they and staff may take to protect personal safety and how to access help if needed; and

- to ensure that procedures and training are in place, so that parents/guardians feel confident that their child is in a safe environment.

4 SAFEGUARDING ETHOS

Bloomfield Collegiate School aims to take appropriate preventative measures to protect the pupils in its care and to promote their emotional and physical safety. Such measures, amongst others, include:

- procedures for recording, reporting and referral of Child Protection concerns, including reports to the Board of Governors at stated meetings;
- Selection and Recruitment procedures for staff;
- regular Safeguarding and Child Protection training for staff;
- a code of professional conduct for all adults working in the school;
- regular review of policies;
- procedures for entrance of visitors to school premises;
- a system of Form Teachers and Heads of Year (HOY);
- presence of staff trained in First Aid;
- the work of the School Council;
- availability of the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS);
- positive imagery around school buildings;
- making available information regarding support networks and routes of referral for concerns to pupils; and
- a defined, evolving and responsive pastoral programme for pupils, i.e. the preventative curriculum. The statutory personal development curriculum requires schools to give specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships and the development of a moral thinking and value system. Within Bloomfield Collegiate School, we seek to raise awareness of social, emotional and health issues, developing the confidence, resiliencies and coping skills of pupils, offering early intervention when pupils are experiencing difficulties. The School considers that pupils need to be empowered to possess the strategies and knowledge required to recognise and prevent the dangers of abuse across a range of issues including bullying. This involves a process of raising awareness and is underpinned by the value of partnership between school, home, community and relevant agencies.

With regard to prevention of child abuse, the curriculum contributes in a number of areas:

- the development of an on-going programme of Personal Development;
- enabling pupils to become aware of strategies which they may use to protect themselves from potentially abusive situations;
- enabling pupils to develop realistic and responsible attitudes towards the responsibilities of adult life; and
- raising awareness of available support, both within school and the community, to help pupils to recognise and deal with potentially dangerous situations.

Bloomfield Collegiate School has an ‘open door’ policy for parents to raise concerns. The normal lines of communication should ensure that any concern is addressed immediately: Form teacher; HOY; Vice Principal; and Principal. As the problem is addressed and every effort is made to find a solution, only relevant staff will be involved.

Bloomfield Collegiate School has in place a Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy. Concerns expressed are received sympathetically and appropriate action is taken following procedures are outlined in the policy.

5 PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Details of the legislative context for Safeguarding and Child Protection are set out in Appendix 4. Further detail is available in Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools, DENI, 2017, Annex A, accessible at www.education-ni.gov.uk.

The following principles are reflected in the Children Order and should underpin all strategies, policies, procedures, practice and services relating to safeguarding young people:

- the young person’s welfare is paramount;
- the voice of the young person should be heard;
- parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together;
- partnership – safeguarding is a shared responsibility;
- prevention through timely, supportive measures;
- responses should be proportionate to the circumstances;
- protection – children should be safe from harm; and
- decisions and actions taken should be evidence-based and informed.

SECTION 2: MANAGING SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure the protection and welfare of children is paramount. This extends to any volunteers accepted to work in the school during school hours when pupils are on the premises.

1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS (BOG)

The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 places a statutory duty on the BOG to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils;
- have a written child protection policy;
- specifically address the prevention of bullying in school behaviour management policies.

The BOG acknowledges and works within the guidance and procedural documents produced by the Department of Education and Department of Health. Governors undertake relevant Child Protection training. The BOG ensures that:

- there is a Designated Governor, Designated Teacher (DT) and Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection;
- they have a full understanding of the roles of the DT and DDT;
- safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors, including refresher training;
- 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 Anti-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;
- other safeguarding policies are reviewed at least every three years, or as specified in relevant guidance;
- there is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school;
- all staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted in line with DE Circular 2012/19;
- they receive a full annual report (or termly) on child protection matters, including details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including staff training; and
- child protection records are maintained in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations 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).

2 SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Safeguarding Team is comprised of:

- the Principal, Mr G. Greer (Chair);
- the Chairperson of the BOG, Mr N. McBride;
- the Designated member of the BOG for Child Protection, Mr B. Conaghan
- the DT, Mrs J. Wharry, and the DDTs, Mr G. Greer and Mrs J Waterworth.
- the team may co-opt other members as required to help address specific issues, for example the SENCo, School nurse etc

The responsibilities of the team include:

- monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection Arrangements;
- support for the DT and DDT in 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.

The Chairperson of the BOG: plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the school's safeguarding ethos; assumes lead responsibility for managing any complaints/allegations in the event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint against the Principal; ensuring child protection records are kept and signed; dating the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries.

The Designated Governor for Child Protection takes the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues in order to be able to advise the governors on: the role of the DT/DDTs; 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 Principal, as secretary to the BOG, assists the BOG to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation, ensuring circulars and guidance from the Department of Education are shared promptly, and termly inclusion of child protection activities on the BOG meeting agenda. The Principal takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff, and has delegated responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school.

The DT has responsibility for:

- induction and training of all school staff including support staff;

- being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff;
- record keeping of all child protection concerns;
- maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services;
- making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate;
- liaison with EA Designated Officers for Child Protection;
- keeping the Principal informed;
- lead responsibility for the development of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school;
- compiling written reports to the BOG regarding child protection.

The DDTs work co-operatively and in partnership with the DT.

Each member of staff acts in loco parentis in respect of young people in their charge.

Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) counsellors work within the school's child protection guidelines to access support for young people. If the Counsellor becomes aware that a young person is, or has, suffered significant harm or is at risk of suffering significant harm, his/her concerns should be reported through the DT or DDT, for onward referral to a Health and Social Care Trust.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Our chief aim of 'Excellence in a Caring Community' is reflected in our daily conduct. The values of honesty, tolerance, compassion, courtesy and determination are implicit in our work and relationships, and underpin our code of professional practice. By our attitudes we strive to promote a school in which each person feels involved, supported, valued and satisfied.

Each member of staff has a pastoral responsibility towards children and young people in their charge and should take all to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved. All staff members who work in the school during the hours in which pupils are on the premises, including support staff and volunteers accepted to work in the school, need to be aware of Child Protection procedures.

The pupils are the foundation of our school. In working with the pupils we will strive to:

- * treat them with respect, courtesy, tolerance and sensitivity;

- * avoid prejudice on such matters as religion, race, family background, appearance, sexual orientation;
- * avoid compromising the rights of the individual to confidentiality (subject to legal and regulatory disclosure regulations);
- * provide a healthy and safe learning place;
- * achieve a consistently high standard of education, both academic and pastoral;
- * make learning interesting and enjoyable; and
- * praise achievements, and offer criticism only in a constructive manner, avoiding offence and recrimination.

- * Staff members should ensure that relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and gender 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. Never make personal comments about a child, even in jest.

- **Physical Contact With Pupils**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. School staff must accept that all physical contact can be open to scrutiny and that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued.

Whilst, as a general principle, staff members are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children and young people, it is also unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that physical contact should only happen in emergencies. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. As a general rule, when physical contact is made with pupils, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

In extreme cases, a staff member may have to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him or her from committing an offence, from causing injury to him or herself, to others or to property, or otherwise from behaving in an undisciplined way. Staff are empowered to use reasonable force in these circumstances, either on school premises or anywhere else where the member of staff is in lawful charge of the pupil concerned. In such instances, no more than the minimum necessary force should be used. Staff should act within the Department's and the EA's guidelines on the use of reasonable force and should seek to avoid causing injury to the pupil. Further guidance is contained in the Safe Handling and Reasonable Force Policy of Bloomfield Collegiate School.

Staff who administer first-aid should ensure, wherever possible, that other pupils or another adult is present. The First Aid Co-ordinator or substitutes, may administer First Aid alone, but only in a room with visual access. Staff must never go into the toilet alone with a child; if this is absolutely necessary, enlist support.

- **Injury**

In the event of injury to a child, details of the incident must be recorded on an Accident Report Form and forwarded to the Principal. First Aid should be administered following School procedures (refer to the School Medical Policy).

- **Teaching, Performance and Rehearsal Circumstances**

Certain educational activities, such as music tuition, work with a language assistant or drama rehearsals, involve particular teaching, performance and rehearsal circumstances. HODs are responsible for the development of relevant Departmental Safeguarding Policies and for the dissemination of relevant information regarding good practice pertaining to safeguarding in their subject area to members of their department, including peripatetic and support staff. Staff members are responsible to be familiar with the relevant policy documents and must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies of the department and school.

The City of Belfast School of Music policy states that ‘the simple rule is that there must be no relationships/inappropriate conversations between staff and pupils/students’. Staff offering music, language or other personal tuition should work in a room where it is possible to be observed at all times; no obstructions should be placed between the student and the exit door; a walk-in culture should exist.

- **Interviews/Meetings between Pupils and Staff**

Staff members must display appropriate professional behaviour during private interviews with individual pupils. The following precautions should be taken:

- interviews should take place on school premises, during school time;
- interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access, the teacher and pupil remaining in clear sight, and/or the door should be left ajar. (N.B. For music tuition, it may not be possible to leave the door ajar);
- the interview should be held in an area likely to be frequented by other people;
- the teacher should ensure that another adult such as the HOD knows that the interview is taking place, and its location. When possible, another adult should be present or nearby;
- ‘Engaged’ or ‘Do not Disturb’ signs should not be used and
- if possible, a table should be kept between the teacher and the pupil.

If a pupil becomes distressed during an interview, physical comfort should not be the first response; rather, comforting words should be used.

- **After School Arrangements**

Pupils who stay in school after 3.45pm are asked to sign the register at Reception, Library, Weir or Neill Buildings. Unless under the supervision of member staff for an exceptional reason such as Play Rehearsals, pupils are asked to sign out on the register by school closing time. Pupils are not permitted to leave school and re-enter; having signed in, they must remain in that location until such time as they are collected or leave to make their way home.

During term time, a senior staff member is present until at least 5pm on Monday to Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday, unless collaboration classes are in operation or the school day ends early. In the event of a safeguarding or child protection concern during extra-curricular activities the member of staff should follow normal procedures and make immediate contact with the DT.

- **Choice and Use of Teaching Materials**

When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature, teachers should be aware of the danger that their use, either by pupils or by their teacher, might be criticised after the event. Teachers should consult parents and the Principal in connection with the use of sensitive materials in certain curricular programmes such as RSE, and ensure that teaching programmes take place within a caring moral and ethical context.

- **Trips and Transport**

Before taking pupils out of school, teachers must follow the procedures laid out in the Trips Policy. Child Protection procedures must be followed throughout the visit. Staff should never transport pupils in their car. One possible exception may arise should urgent medical treatment of a child be required.

- **Images**

In regard to images of children, privacy and respect for the individual are key considerations.

Teachers are asked to monitor the use of images on display in their classroom or corridor. The teacher will be responsible for the removal, storage and destruction of such images. Staff are permitted to take suitable photographs of pupils on their personal phones or mobile devices (eg during extra curricular activities, trips). Such images must be uploaded to the school's archive as soon as possible and the images deleted from their personal devices. Images of pupils must not be shared on personal devices.

Year 8 parents are issued with a letter requesting permission for images to be taken and displayed, and a photograph of each pupil is taken for the computer system. The parental responses are held in the School Office; staff should check these details prior to image use.

Group or individual photographs/moving images may be taken at school activities throughout the academic year and may be used, with parental assent, for display purposes in the school, on the school website, or for publication in the press or for promotional purposes. (Please note, although this is a non-exhaustive list, photographs and moving images taken with parental permission will only be used at the discretion of the school.

4 RECRUITMENT

Bloomfield Collegiate School recognises the valuable contribution made by employees and volunteers. However, the protection of children is of paramount importance; the School will, therefore, ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 provide the legislative framework for a vetting and barring scheme for people who work with children and vulnerable adults. The responsibilities and processes to be followed by the school are set out in: DE Circular 2013/01 Guidance for Schools and Employing Authorities on Pre-Employment Vetting Checking and Safer Recruitment Practices; and DE Circular 2012/19 Guidance for Schools and Employing Authorities on Changes to Pre-employment Checking and Safer Recruitment Practices. The following groups must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from AccessNI before taking up post: paid teaching and non-teaching staff; examination invigilators; private contracted transport providers.

Following DE Circular 2012/19, a person seeking to work as an unsupervised volunteer will be required to complete an application form for an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC). As determined by the Principal, a volunteer who works under supervision will not be required to obtain an EDC. Adults who work in the school but are employed by others or who are self employed contractors (e.g. coaches, music tutors, school photographers) must have the necessary clearances in place. All self employed coaches and music tutors must have the appropriate insurance.

A three month break in service will require a new Enhanced Disclosure application form to be completed.

5 VISITORS TO SCHOOL PREMISES

Temporary visitors to Bloomfield Collegiate School are:

- issued with information on the Code of Conduct at Reception;
- issued with a pass to wear during their visit and return on leaving the building;
- met/directed by school staff/representative;
- signed in and out of the school by school staff;
- if appropriate, given restricted access only to specific areas of the school;
- where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative;
- access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit; and
- if delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks, their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

6 WORK EXPERIENCE

It is important that each pupil is in a safe environment during work experience; appropriate vetting procedures will be followed by those responsible for organisation of work experience placements and employers receive information relating to Child Protection. Further information on Work Experience is available in the Work Experience Policy.

Health and Social Care Programmes will require an EDC for pupils on long-term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/shadowing placements. Pupils coming into the school on work experience do not require AccessNI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal child protection induction processes apply.

7 CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING

Governor Child Protection Training has three strands: initial Child Protection Awareness Training; CPSS Child Protection Training for the Chairperson and the Designated Governor; and training on recruitment, selection and vetting.

All Governors will receive an element of safeguarding training as part of their induction with the Chair and Designated Governor for Child Protection. All Governors will undertake refresher Child Protection Training every term of office (four years). This training may be delivered by the Principal or DT with resources available from the EA CPSS.

The DT and DDT attend initial CPSS Introduction to Child Protection training, followed by refresher training every three years. The DT and DDT cascade Child Protection training to staff annually, and/or on appointment.

8 CONDUCT OF STAFF

The protection and promotion of the welfare of children and young people is a responsibility for all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching. In meeting this, staff should work towards a culture of mutual trust and respect through which the best interests of the pupils entrusted to their care is paramount.

9 PARENTS

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents and they should feel confident of raising any concerns they have in relation to their child with the school. Parents/guardians are asked to inform the school if:

- the child has a medical condition or educational need;
- there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or well-being of a parent or child;

- there is a change in circumstances such as change of address, contact details, name, parental responsibility; and
- if their child is absent and this should be verified in writing on return to school.

The procedures for a parent or person with parental responsibility to register a concern about a child are as follows:

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

- I can talk to the Form Teacher
- If I am still concerned I can talk to the Head of Year
- If I am still concerned I can talk to the DT/DDT or the Principal
- If I am still concerned I can talk/write to the Chairperson of the BOG
- If I am still concerned, I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman 0800 343 424
- At any time I can contact Social Services Ards Gateway Team 03001000300 *or* Belfast Gateway Team 02890507000; PSNI Central Referral Unit 02890 259299

Every effort will be made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the pupil's or pupils' safety.

10 CHILD PROTECTION SUPPORT SERVICES

The Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) is a regional service for schools, based within the EA Directorate of Children and Young People's Services. The CPSS represents the education sector at multi-agency meetings including Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences. Bloomfield Collegiate School accesses training from the CPSS as well as support and advice in relation to particular situations. Contact details are included in the contacts section of this policy.

SECTION 3: DEALING WITH CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

1 WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Staff members are well placed to observe outward symptoms or distress or 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.

Staff should be alert to all forms 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.

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse are not in themselves evidence that abuse has occurred. However, 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, they must report this immediately to the DT. Any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, will be reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure emergency protection measures are put in place.

2 TYPES OF ABUSE

Child abuse may take a number of forms as outlined below (from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, 2017).

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 deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of 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 penetrative or non-penetrative acts. 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 (Psychological) Abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child’s emotional development. It 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 some 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 also be sexual in nature.

3 TALKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE WHERE THERE ARE CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE

Where teachers see signs which cause them concern, they should, as a first step, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a classroom assistant or other member of the school's non-teaching staff sees such signs, they should immediately bring them to the attention of either the class teacher or the DT, and it may be appropriate for the necessary clarification to be carried out by the teacher. Such clarification may reassure teachers that abuse has not occurred, but signs and symptoms which cause concern, while perhaps not a result of abuse, may nevertheless indicate that the child, or family, is in need of intervention by statutory, voluntary or community based services through a 'child-in-need' referral (with parental consent). Should a pupil present at school hungry, the school will provide a free meal to the pupil. This initial decision, taken at the point of need, will be followed immediately with a referral to the relevant Education Welfare Service (EWS). The school will continue to provide free school meals to the pupil while the EWS is carrying out its assessment. If, following an initial assessment using the UNOCINI Assessment Framework, the EWS is not satisfied that sufficient indicators are present, the provision of free school meals will cease. Further details on this process are available from the Department of Education.

Care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to, questions about indications of abuse. The same considerations apply when a child makes an allegation of abuse, or volunteers information which amounts to that. In some circumstances, talking to a child will quickly clarify initial concerns into a suspicion that abuse has occurred, and point to the need for an immediate referral. Staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings, and the extent of questioning should, therefore, be kept to a minimum.

Staff should not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.

Staff should not ask questions which encourage the child to change her/his version of events in any way, or which impose the adult's own assumptions. For example, staff should say, "Tell me what has happened", rather than, "Did they do X to you?";

The priority at this stage is to actively listen to the child, and not to interrupt or try to interpret if they are freely recalling significant events (the child must not be asked to unnecessarily recount the experience of abuse) and as soon as possible afterwards to make a record of the discussion to pass on to the Designated Teacher. The note should record the time, date, place and people who

were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, *but under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed nor a photograph taken*;

Any comment by the child, or subsequently by parent, carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used.

Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should reassure them that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know. Staff should be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings. Staff should not ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record.

4 CHILD DISPLAYING SYMPTOMS OF, OR SCHOOL ALERTED TO, POSSIBLE ABUSE

In all cases where symptoms displayed by a child give rise to concerns about possible abuse, or about the welfare of the child, the teacher or other member of staff should report these concerns to the DT **without delay**. If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must notify the DT immediately and make full written notes which are passed to the DT.

A parent or other carer may give information to a member of staff of the school which gives rise to concern about possible child abuse by someone outside the school, or by a person working in the school in a volunteer capacity. The person making the complaint should be advised of their responsibility to refer to the local HSCT Gateway Team. The staff member should also inform the DT in the school who will refer, if necessary, to the appropriate statutory authorities.

In order to form a view on whether a child or children may indeed be being abused, or be at risk of possible abuse, the Principal/DT/DDT may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information, or from others who may have relevant information. While such clarification will often help to confirm or allay concerns, it is not the responsibility of teachers and other education staff to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse, or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers. This is the responsibility of the investigating agencies, the Social Services and/or PSNI.

The DT will discuss the matter with the Principal and, as a matter of urgency, plan a course of action, ensuring that a written record is made. The Principal, in consultation with the DT, 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 of serious harm, the school is obliged to make a referral.** The CPSS can offer advice on all child protection issues.

In discussion with Social Services Gateway Team, an early consideration will be to agree how, when, and by whom the parent will be informed. If a parent is the alleged abuser, Social Services will investigate. If a parent is not the alleged abuser, the parent will be informed.

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with the EA Designated Officer for Child Protection 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.**

5 DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF

Where a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of school staff, the procedures set out in DE Circular 2015/13 will be followed. In all decisions, the child's welfare is the paramount consideration and the child should be listened to and his/her concerns taken seriously. The possible risk of harm to children posed by a member of staff must be evaluated and managed and in some cases this will require consideration of suspension as a precautionary measure.

Principals and Boards of Governors have a duty of care for the welfare of pupils and any allegation needs to be effectively evaluated and managed. As employers, they also have a duty of care to staff and should ensure that they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation of abuse.

All allegations should be reported immediately, normally to the Principal, DT or DDT. A lead individual (normally the Principal or a designated senior member of staff) should be identified to manage the handling of the allegation from the outset. If the Principal is the subject of concern, the allegation should be reported immediately to the Chairperson of the BOG, Deputy Chairperson, Designated Governor for Child Protection, and the person about to be the lead individual.

The issue should be dealt with as a priority and unnecessary delays avoided. Every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity must be made. Allegations should not be shared with other staff or children.

Allegations of a child abuse nature are recorded in the Record of Child Abuse Complaints, which is retained securely by the Principal. A record of this is placed on the relevant pupil's Child Protection file.

6 PROCESS FOR REFERRAL

The DT is responsible for making referrals. The 'Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland' (UNOCINI) referral form is completed when a referral to Social Services is being made for support, safeguarding or a fuller assessment of a child's needs.

If there is a concern that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, an urgent referral will be made by phone to Social services through the Gateway Service. Subsequently, a UNOCINI form will be submitted within 24 hours.

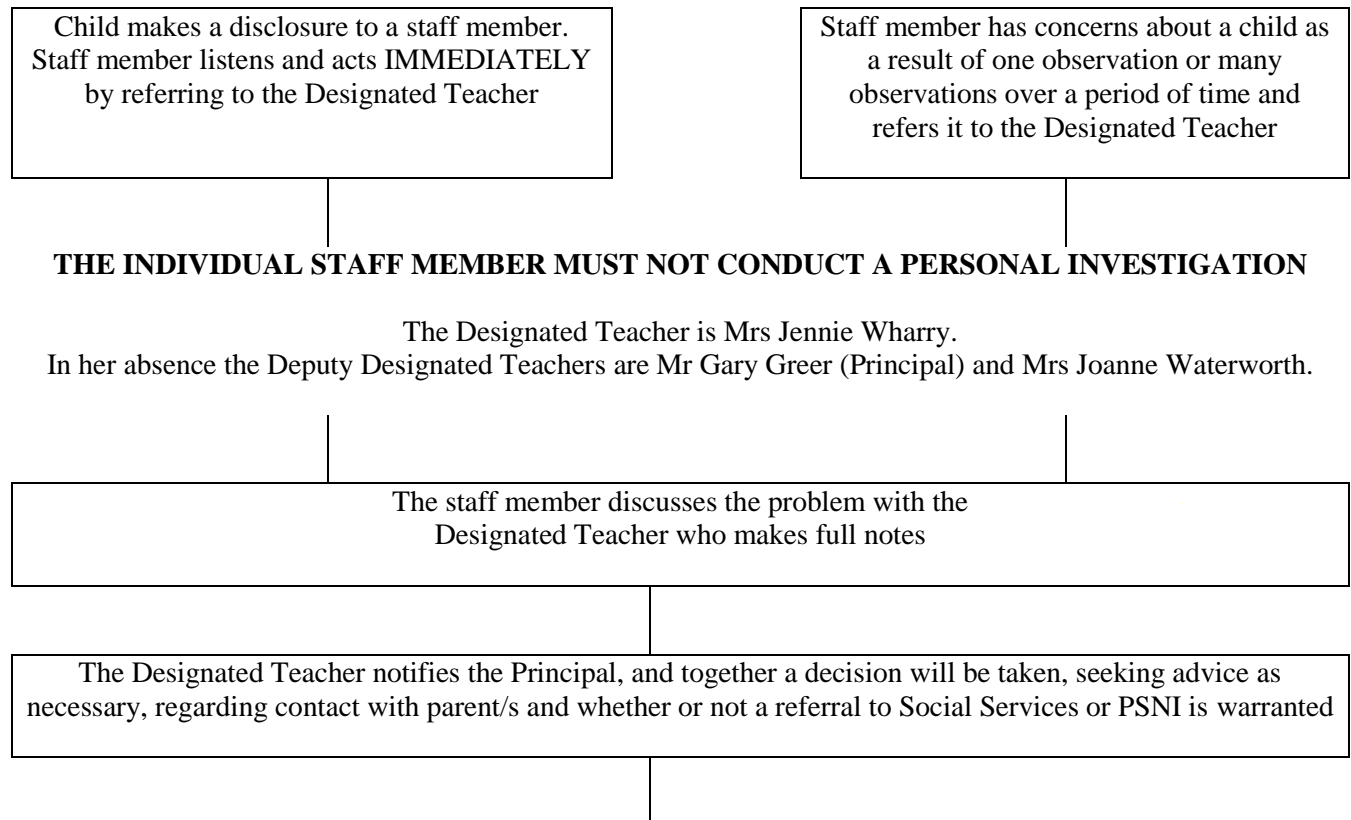
Prior to making a referral to Social Services, the consent of the parent/carers and/or the young person (if that person/s is/are competent to give this) will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek such consent would put that child, young person, or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of significant harm, or it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

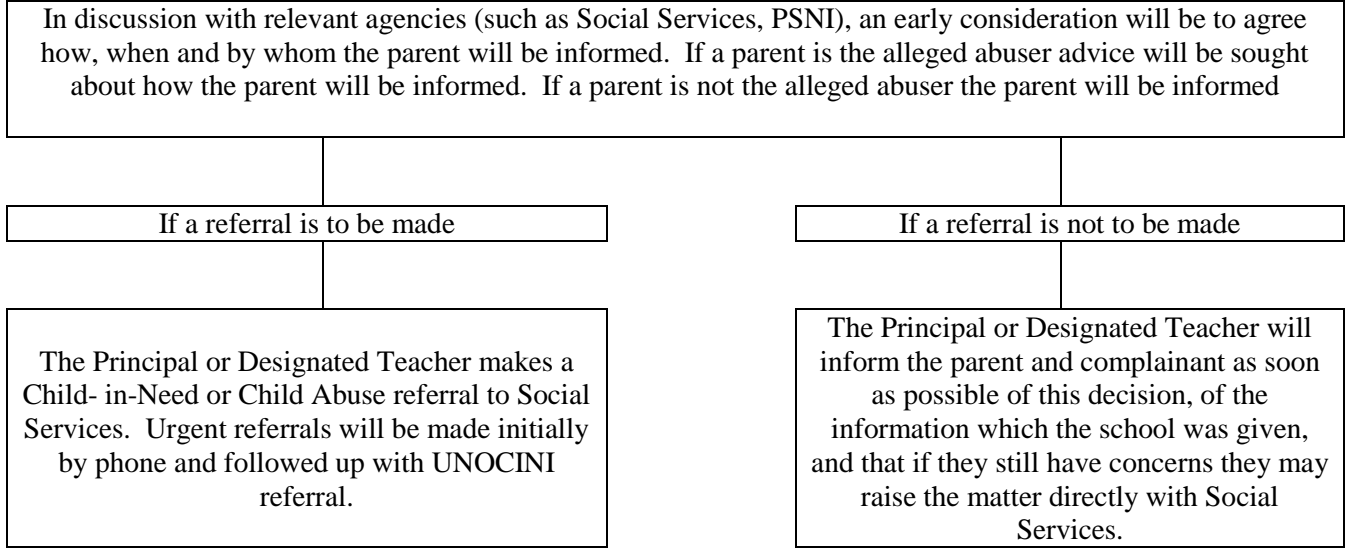
In instances where consent is sought but refused, a referral should be made and a record maintained of the reasons for that decision and the actions taken.

Non-urgent referrals (child-in-need/family support) must have the consent of the parent/carers and/or the young person (if they are competent to give this) and are made in writing through the UNOCINI form.

The welfare of the child is paramount; if unable to contact the parent/carers, the referral to Social Services will be progressed. Issues of consent (including when consent is not forthcoming) must be recorded.

**PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF SUSPECTED / DISCLOSED
CHILD ABUSE OR CONCERNS THAT A CHILD MAY BE IN NEED**





Throughout this procedure full notes will be made. The welfare of the child will be constantly monitored.

SUMMARY OF STAFF PROCEDURES REGARDING CONCERN OR DISCLOSURE

CONCERN

When there are concerns about possible abuse or the welfare of a child, or School is alerted to possible abuse, staff must adhere to the following procedures.

- **Do not investigate.**
- Bring concerns **immediately** to DT or, if unavailable, a DDT. In their absence, report to Principal.
- Keep a brief written record and forward it to DT or, if unavailable, a DDT.

DISCLOSURE

When a disclosure is made to a member of staff, they must adhere to the following procedures.

- **Do not investigate and do not make a promise of confidentiality.**
- Listen; do not probe. Ensure care is taken in asking and interpreting the pupil’s responses to questions about indications of abuse. Do not ask the pupil to make a written statement.
- Be aware that the way in which one talks to the pupil could have an effect upon the evidence put forward if there are criminal proceedings.
- Bring concerns **immediately** to DT or, if unavailable, a DDT. In their absence, report to Principal.

STEPS FOR MANAGING A DISCLOSURE

RECEIVE

- Stay calm, listen and do not ask leading questions.
- No promise of confidentiality can, or should, be given where abuse is alleged.
- Tell the pupil that you want to help and may need to tell someone else who can help.
- If possible, have another person present.

- Do not suggest a reason for what has happened to them.
- Make factual notes as soon as possible.

REASSURE

- Reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing in talking about it.
- Affirm feelings and explain process (need to talk to the lead in Safeguarding who will know what to do next).

RESPOND

Be empathic – ‘I’m sorry this has happened to you and I’m glad you’re able to tell me’

- Take action to ensure that the pupil is safe and secure.

RECORD

- Make a brief written note of events/conversations using factual and neutral language. Record the time, date, place and people present, as well as what was said with quotations if possible.
- Describe any signs of physical injury; under no circumstances should a pupil’s clothing be removed or photographs be taken.
- Any indication of stress and noticeable non-verbal behaviour should be noted.

REPORT

- **Immediately** after disclosure or after you come to suspect that abuse has occurred, report it without delay to DT or, if unavailable, a DDT. In their absence, report to Principal.
- Give original notes to DT for filing.

7 ANONYMOUS INFORMATION

The school may receive an anonymous letter or telephone call alleging abuse either by someone outside the school or by a member of staff. In such cases, the Principal will consider carefully whether the allegation may have substance: as in the case of information from a named source, the impetus for action will be the potential risk to children. If the Principal concludes that the allegation may have substance, they will ensure that it is referred immediately to the Social Services or PSNI. Again, if they are unsure about the appropriate course of action, or if unsubstantiated anonymous information is received which the Principal believes to be malicious or mischievous, the Education Authority will be contacted for advice, as will the Social Services or PSNI. If a referral is made, the procedures above should be followed on the same basis as a complaint from a named source, including recording arrangements.

8 RECORD KEEPING

Staff should be aware of the need to record and report child protection concerns

General Record Keeping

The School aims to maintain a robust system of record keeping. Members of staff are asked to draw up written records of concerns/incidents and to store these in secure locations. When behaviours/concerns are judged to be sufficiently persistent or serious, these records are forwarded to the HOY and, again stored in a secure location. When behaviours/concerns are judged to be sufficiently persistent or serious, or if a cluster of concerns is emerging, these records are

forwarded to the Vice-Principal Pastoral and, again stored in a secure location. At all stages, appropriate steps towards resolution are taken.

Record Keeping of Child-in-Need Referrals and Child Abuse Complaints

The DT will retain records of possible child abuse complaints not referred to Social Services and those which are referred but which do not result in placement upon the Child Protection register in line with the Disposal of Records Schedule. A confidential copy of such records will be sent to any school to which the child subsequently transfers.

The DT will maintain appropriate records for any child placed on the Child Protection Register including associated documentation from Social Services. Such records will be kept in a secure location in the Vice-Principal's Office. If the child changes school, the receiving school will be informed immediately and all Child Protection records supplied by Social Services relating to the child destroyed (including records of case conferences). The school will inform the child's case co-ordinator in Social Services.

If a child who is on the Child Protection Register transfers into Bloomfield Collegiate, the DT should make contact with Social Services for relevant information. If Social Services inform the School that the child's name has been removed from the Register, the School will destroy all Child Protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of Case Conferences.

Records are kept in line with the School's Data Protection Policy and Disposal of Records Schedule.

Reports for Child Protection Conferences

Reports prepared for Child Protection Conferences should focus on the child's educational progress and achievements, attendance, behaviour, participation, relationships with other children and adults in the school, and, where appropriate, appearance. If relevant, reports should include what is known (other than from specific investigation) about the child's relations with his/her family and about the family structure. The reports should be objective and evidence based. They should therefore contain only fact, observation and concern.

SECTION 4: SPECIFIC TYPES OF ABUSE

Bloomfield Collegiate School takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously and, in an increasingly complex world, is cognisant that a range of situations may arise. As considered appropriate, advice and support from the EA CPSS and Social Services will be sought.

1 GROOMING

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.

Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation, but it can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media.

Bloomfield Collegiate School staff should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming and take early action in line with this policy.

The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 provides for offences relating to sexual grooming of children and young people.

2 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or 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 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 the use of technology.

The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 provides for a number of offences that between them could enable prosecution of all cases of CSE. The Children (NI) Order 1995 and the Child Abduction (NI) Order 1985 can be used in cases where children have gone missing as part of the exploitation.

CSE can be difficult to identify and a young person may not see themselves as a victim. 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. While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, the majority of CSE victims are living at home.

Potential indicators of CSE include: acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc without plausible explanation; truanting/leaving school without permission; persistently going missing or returning late; receiving many texts/calls prior to leaving; change in mood such as agitation or stress; appearing distraught or dishevelled or under the influence of substances; inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age; physical symptoms such as bruises or bite marks; collected from school by unknown adults or taxis; new peer groups; significantly older boyfriend or girlfriend; increasing secretiveness around behaviours; low self-esteem; change in personal hygiene (greater attention or less); self-harm and other expressions of despair; and evidence or suspicion of substance abuse. Whilst these indicators can be useful in identifying CSE, their presence does not necessarily mean that CSE is occurring, nor their absence mean that it is not.

If a member of staff suspects that CSE is occurring, they should follow the referral process set out in this policy.

3 DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

An abusive family setting will have an impact upon a child/children; suspected cases will be reported to the appropriate statutory agency. 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.’

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).’

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

4 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. It 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.

FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, staff members have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed and established school procedures. 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 directly with the Sexual Referral Unit (based within the Public Protection Unit) at 028 9025 9299. 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.

5 FORCED MARRIAGE

A Forced Marriage is one conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced Marriage is an offence in Northern Ireland and suspicions of a Forced Marriage should be referred to the PSNI immediately.

Warning signs within the school environment may include: absence and persistent absence; request for extended leave of absence/failure to return from visits to country of origin; surveillance by siblings or cousins; decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or punctuality; poor examination results; being withdrawn from school by those with parental responsibility and not being provided with suitable education at home; not allowed to attend extracurricular activities; sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger; and being prevented from going on to further/higher education.

6 CHILDREN WHO DISPLAY HARMFUL SEXUALISED BEHAVIOUR

Sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a child protection concern and, although there may remain issues to be addressed through the Citizenship and Behaviour Policy, the principles that are applied must remain child centred.

Sexual behaviours can be defined as ‘healthy’, ‘problematic’ or ‘sexually harmful’. Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention (although consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting). Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and the level of concern. Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention following this policy.

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexualised nature that takes place when: there is no informed consent by the victim; and/or the perpetrator uses threat (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce, threaten or intimidate the victim. It can include: using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases; inappropriate touching; using sexual violence or threats; sexual behaviour between children where one of the children is much older (particularly if there is more than two years’ difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not); a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them (for example if the older child is disabled).

7 E-SAFETY/INTERNET ABUSE

Online safety means acting and staying safe when using digital technologies. In Bloomfield Collegiate School, online safety is integrated into existing safeguarding, behaviour, code of practice and policies including, for example, the E-Safety Policy. Risk Assessments may be undertaken to mitigate specific risks, if appropriate

Cyber-bullying is addressed within the Positive Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Under the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008, it is illegal to take, possess or share ‘indecent images’ of anyone under the age of 18 even if they are the person in the picture (or even if they are aged

16+ and in a consensual relationship). Schools are not required to investigate incidents; rather, if school becomes aware of such an event, PSNI will be contacted for guidance. In addition, the CPSS may be contacted for advice. At all times, the matter will be dealt with sensitively. If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that you do not forward it to anyone else.

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, child protection procedures will be followed. The school will work alongside appropriate agencies and parents, as appropriate, to support the emotional and physical safety of its pupils. Advice and support will be given to the victim of abuse as appropriate.

8 IDENTIFYING ABUSE

All adults working with children and families need to be aware of the indicators of child abuse. Teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of such signs and be alert to their presence, particularly if they appear in combination or are regularly repeated. No list can, however, be exhaustive; the signs and symptoms presented are indicators only and merely highlight the need for further checking and assessment. They can do no more than give rise to concern and are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It should also be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist.

In addition to those outlined above, below is a list of possible signs and symptoms; for a more detailed list, refer to Appendix 2 of the Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse

- bruises (especially of a regular shape), marks, scars
- refusing to do PE
- low energy levels
- nervous disposition, quiet, withdrawn, low self esteem
- difficulty forming relationships
- lack of concentration

Sexual Abuse

- physical signs
- personality change
- depression
- aggression
- eating disorders
- withdrawal, insecurity

Emotional Abuse

- poor social skills
- inferiority/superiority complex
- inability to make decisions
- inability to make and maintain relationships
- excessive dependence, attention seeking behaviour
- lack of concentration

Neglect

- poor hygiene
- poor growth
- abnormal eating behaviour (binging or hoarding) or apparently deficient nutrition, stealing food
- inappropriate clothing (for time of year)

- seeking male/female attention
- unmet medical needs
- substance misuse, promiscuity, precocity
- isolated child
- poor attendance
- low self esteem

Such symptoms may be due to a variety of other causes including bereavement or other disruption in family circumstances, or drug, alcohol or solvent misuse. Sometimes, however, they may be due to significant harm. Where a member of staff is concerned that significant harm may have occurred, they must report this without delay to the DT. The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not, however, be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of significant harm and being aware of the procedures to be followed.

The recognition and identification of child abuse can be difficult. The final decision will be made at a Child Protection Case Conference, which will also decide if a child's name should be placed on the Child Protection Register and under what category of abuse. Where a Case Conference regarding a pupil is called by Social Services, an appropriate member of the school staff will be invited to attend and bring a written report of the pupil's progress and presentation.

It is the responsibility of professionals, whether from statutory agencies or otherwise, to report concerns, not to decide whether it is, or is not, child abuse. No one individual can make the decision that a child has been, or will be harmed.

SECTION 5: DEALING WITH CHILDREN WITH INCREASED VULNERABILITIES

1. VULNERABLE PUPILS

Staff should be aware that a range of needs may place individual pupils in a place of increased vulnerability: Looked After Children; young people in supported accommodation or who are homeless or have gone missing; children of parents with additional support needs; separated, unaccompanied or trafficked young people or those experiencing honour-based violence; young people who have experienced trauma; those displaying self-harm behaviours or suicidal ideation; those displaying fabricated or induced illness.

Children and young people with disabilities (physical, sensory, learning impairment or significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse. Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked, making disclosure particularly difficult.

Children with a special educational need and/or those who are not fluent in English, should 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. Advice and guidance will be sought from the EA Inclusion and Diversity Service where appropriate.

All pupils have a right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Issues relating to Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are covered within the RSE Policy.

If pupils are to be placed with ‘host families’ during holiday periods, vetting checks are recommended. DoH Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2017) provides information on private fostering arrangements. Work experience and residential situations are covered under separate school policies.

2 CONFIDENTIALITY

The relationships which teachers have with children in their charge are based on trust and, often, on confidentiality. These relationships are an integral feature of a secure, caring environment which fosters learning and personal development.

However, members of staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies and, where physical or sexual abuse is suspected, a legal duty to report this. All staff should recognise, therefore, that in order to protect children from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action, by informing and involving others, in the child’s best interests.

If a child confides information in a member of staff which gives cause for concern about possible abuse, and requests that the information be kept secret, it is important that the member of staff should tell the child, sensitively, that they have a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the DT and, from there, to the appropriate agencies for the child’s own sake. **Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.** Staff members who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only with the DT.

No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.

Some victims of abuse find it impossible to talk about their problems to any familiar adult, and signs giving rise to concerns, which might prompt gentle questioning, are not always apparent. It is important, however, that children and young people feel able to share their concerns, whatever they may be, with staff. Their concerns may be about abusive behaviour, but equally they may be, for example, about their schoolwork, or something else that is happening to them or to someone they know which worries them.

The aim of the school always is to act in the best interests of the child and to encourage the fullest possible involvement of, and consultation with, the parents. It is also important that pupils know that there is always someone they can talk to.

Reviewing Committee: Education Committee

Dates of Policy Review

Date Review Completed	Nature of Review	Date Ratified by Board of Governors
January 2007	Policy re-written	
January 2010	Minor amendments	N/A
April 2010	Amendments in relation to closure of the Preparatory Department	22 April 2010
September 2012	Minor amendments	N/A
June 2012	Amendments: -ience; Trips; provision of meals to potential child-in need.	4 October 2012
April 2012	Amendments taking account of circular 2012/19	20 June 2013
July 2014	Minor amendments	25 September 2014
June 2015	Amendments taking account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circular 2015/13; • conversion to Education Authority; and • E-Safety Policy (ratified 26.2.15) 	18 June 2015
June 2016	Amendments taking account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young *People in Northern Ireland’ Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, March 2016 • Advice from CPSS EA 	16 June 2016
September 2017	Amendments taking account of ‘Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools’, DE, 2017.	22 February 2018
October	Amendments taking account of ‘Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools’, DE, 2019.	28 November 2019

APPENDIX 1: BLOOMFIELD SCHOOL CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT FOR PUPILS

If you have something important to talk to staff about...

If you are worried about something that is happening to you, or to someone you know...

If you need help, or if you need to know how to get help, the staff are here to listen and to help; they will try to do what they can.

If you are worried about telling things in confidence, tell the staff; they will understand. If they are concerned about your safety, they may need to share this with others, but they will always tell you first.

If you are still unsure about talking to a member of staff, you can telephone -

Childline on 0800 - 111

NSPCC on 0800 – 800500

Youthline 0808 808 8000

These calls are free, and they will not show up on your phone bill. These people will help you to work out what to do next.

APPENDIX 2: CONTACTS AND HELPLINES

Bloomfield Collegiate School	BOG Chair: Mr N. McBride Designated Governor for CP: Mrs B Conaghan Principal: Mr G Greer DT: Mrs J Wharry DDT: Mr G Greer & Mrs J Waterworth	Contact through Reception 028 9047 1214
Education Authority	Child Protection Service Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm	028 9598 5590
Gateway Teams (HSCT)	Belfast Northern South Eastern Southern Western Out of hours for all areas	028 9050 7000 0300 1234 333 0300 1000 300 028 3741 5285 028 7131 4090 028 9504 9999
PSNI	Central Referral Unit (part of Public Protection Unit) Monday-Friday 8am-9pm Weekends and public holidays 9am-5pm	028 9025 9299
NSPCC	Child Protection Helpline 24 hours call free	0808 800 5000 (concerned about a child)
Children's Law Centre	2 nd Floor, 127-131 Ormeau Road, Belfast	028 90245704 info@childrenslawcentre.org FREEPHONE ADVICE LINE 0808 808 5678 Email for advice: chalky@childrenslawcentre.org
Save the Children	15 Richmond Park, Belfast	028 9043 1123
Barnardos	542-544 Upper Newtownards Rd, Belfast	028 9067 2366

APPENDIX 3

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/INFORMATION

As it is not possible to account for every situation which may arise during the course of a school year, staff should always operate within the legislation and with the welfare of the child as the paramount consideration. HODs should consider drawing up guidelines to cover their department's particular circumstances. These must be discussed with the DT before being shared with department staff (including temporary) by the HOD.

ART DEPARTMENT

Due to the nature of Dark Room use, an observation window cannot be provided. Dark Room use is carefully monitored by staff. In particular, teachers should adhere to the guidelines for Interviews/Meetings between pupils and staff as set out in this policy.

ENGLISH AND DRAMA DEPARTMENTS

The Green Room is carefully monitored and should only be used in limited circumstances. Pupils are instructed to change under appropriate conditions in the designated changing areas and not, for example, their Form Classes.

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

During after school and lunchtime activities, a member of staff will be present in the Department and an attendance register kept. Senior pupils assisting with clubs will discuss planned activities with a member of staff in advance.

LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

The HOD is responsible to ensure that peripatetic teachers and Language Assistants have received SCP training from the DT.

PEER MENTORING

A number of senior pupils are selected and trained to act as Peer Mentors to junior pupils. Peer Mentors should be asked to follow a Code of Conduct and written permission sought from the parents of those seeking peer tutoring. The guidelines set out in this policy should be adhered to.

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Music Department is additionally guided by the Child Protection Policy of the City of Belfast School of Music. The HOD is responsible to apprise peripatetic teachers of relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies. Each peripatetic tutor has a copy of the Music Department Child Protection Guidelines in their registration folder. A copy of these Guidelines and the whole School policy are available for consultation in the Music staff room.

SCRIPTURE UNION

SU, on occasions, is visited by outside speakers who are provided with a copy of a guide to the School's Code of Conduct.

STUDENT TEACHERS

Student teachers are provided with information on the BCS SCP Policy during Induction.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

The DT/DDT will provide training for these groups of people, along with a copy of the relevant policy.

APPENDIX 4: LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international human rights treaty setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the child. Central to the Convention is the paramountcy of the welfare of the child. Each of the 41 Articles detail a different type of right, all of which interact to form one integrated set of rights for children and young people. The United Kingdom agreed to be bound by the Convention in 1991.

The articles with particular relevance for this policy include:

- Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child). The best interests of the child must be the primary consideration.
- Article 4 (Protection of Rights). Governments have a responsibility to take all available measures to make sure children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.
- Article 12 (Voice of the Child). A child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters which affect them, those views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.
- Article 19 (Protection from all forms of violence). Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and their right to be protected from harm and mistreatment is upheld.
- Article 20 (Children deprived of family environment). Children who cannot be looked after by their own family have a right to be looked after properly by people who respect their ethnic group, religion, culture and language.
- Articles 34 and 36 (Exploitation). Governments should protect children from all forms of exploitation.
- Article 39 (Rehabilitation of child victims). Children who have been harmed should receive help to recover and reintegrate into society.

The Children (NI) Order 1995

This Order is the principle statute governing the care, upbringing and protection of children in Northern Ireland. It applies to all those who work with and care for children, whether parents, paid carers or volunteers. It provides the legislative framework within which this policy operates.

The Human Rights Act 1998

This Act incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK legislation. State authorities must use their powers reasonably and proportionately to protect children and young people, and the ECHR holds them responsible for inhuman or degrading treatment inflicted within their jurisdiction.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007

This Order, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, provides the legislative framework for the establishment of a Disclosure and Barring Service and requirements relating to individuals who work with children and vulnerable adults. This legislation defines 'regulated activity' with children and prevents persons on barred lists from engaging in regulated activity.

The Children’s Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015

This Act places a requirement on individuals and organisations providing children’s services to children to co-operate with each other to devise and implement cross cutting strategies.

The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003

Articles 17 and 18 of this Order, place a statutory duty on Boards of Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils and to determine the measures to be taken at the school with a view to protecting pupils from abuse (whether at school or elsewhere). Article 18(d) requires Boards of Governors to prepare a written statement of such measures and to provide this to parents. Boards of Governors must also have regard to any guidance given by the Department, EA and CCMS. As such, all grant-aided schools must have a Child Protection Policy which includes the appointment of a Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher with responsibility for child protection.

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 *(not yet enacted)*

Section 2 of this Act will require that the BOG determine the anti-bullying measures pursued at the school, ensure that these are properly implemented and are reviewed at intervals of no more than four years.

Section 3 of the Act will place a statutory duty on the BOG of grant-aided schools to ensure that a record is kept of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a registered pupil at the school that occur”

- (a) on the premises of the school during the school day;
- (b) while travelling to or from the school during the school term;
- (c) while the pupil is in the lawful control or charge of a member of the staff of the school;
- or
- (d) while the pupil is receiving educational provision arranged on behalf of the school and provided elsewhere than on the premises of the school.

The Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998

This Order ensures employees are protected from suffering detrimental treatment by their employers for disclosing information (in good faith, and in the reasonable belief that it is substantially true) about the conduct of private or public bodies or individual employers (‘protected disclosure’). Protected disclosure includes any disclosure of information which, in the belief of the employee making the disclosure, tends to show that a criminal offence has been, is being or is likely to be, committed, or that the health or safety of an individual has been, is being or is likely to be, endangered; or that information about such matters has been, is being or is likely to be, deliberately concealed.

Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967

Section 5 of this Act (NI) 1967 makes it an offence to fail to report a ‘relevant offence’ where a person has information which could lead to the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of such an offender.

Family Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998

This order includes that, in addition to non-molestation and occupation orders, a court will have the power to attach an exclusion requirement to an interim care or emergency protection order in order to protect children, providing therefore for the removal of the suspected abuser, rather than the child, from the home.

Safeguarding Board (NI) Act 2011

This Act places interagency co-operation on a statutory footing. The objective of the Safeguarding Board NI is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland by co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the board. There is a statutory duty on members to co-operate with each other, to make arrangements to promote the welfare of children, and to supply information to the SBNI under certain conditions.

The Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016

This Act gives a power to investigate education authorities in respect of complaints made by a member of the public. From 1 April 2017, this power extended to Boards of Governors of grant-maintained schools.

Use of Reasonable Force

The Education (NI) Order 1998, Article 4, outlines the powers a member of school staff can use in restraining pupils.

Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008

This legislation reduced the age of consent in NI (in line with other areas of the UK) and strengthened the legal safeguards for young people between the ages of 16 and 17. It introduced the concepts of grooming (including online behaviours) and ‘Abuse of a Position of Trust’.

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016

This provides the overarching policy framework for safeguarding children and young people in the statutory, private, independent, community, voluntary and faith sectors.

Domestic and Sexual Violence and abuse strategy 2013-20 and subsequent action plans

The Department of Health and the Department of Justice are the strategic lead departments in taking forward both the domestic violence and sexual violence and abuse agendas through improved effective, collaborative and cohesive engagement within and across Northern Ireland.

APPENDIX 5: CODE OF CONDUCT

The Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools (DENI, 2017) includes a Code of Conduct which ‘...is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff and volunteers are expected to observe’. This Code of Conduct will be referred to in the Annual Safeguarding Training and a copy will be available on the Staff Folder.

As part of the Code of Conduct there is Relationships with Students Outside of Work Declaration for staff to complete.