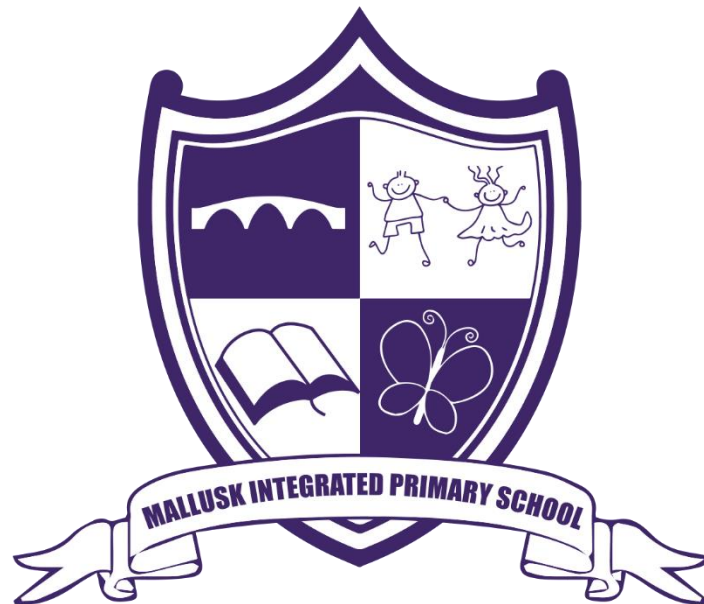


# MALLUSK INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Date: January 2024

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## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

We, in Mallusk Integrated Primary School, have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our care, and we will carry out this duty through our Pastoral Care Policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment in which all our pupils can learn and develop to their full potential.

All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks. The members of staff of Mallusk Integrated Primary School have also adopted a Code of Practice for our behaviour towards pupils.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in Mallusk Integrated Primary 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.

All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or harm to a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school

### **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](#)” (DOH, 2017), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “[Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools](#)” (DENI Circular 2017/04) and the [Safeguarding Board for NI 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; and
- 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:

- Addressing Bullying
- Attendance
- Adverse Weather & Exceptional Closure
- Positive Behaviour
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Data protection
- Drugs
- Educational Visits
- ICT Policy- E-Safety & Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras sections
- First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Intimate Care
- Pastoral Care
- Privacy Notice
- Disposal of Records Schedule
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Safe Handling

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

**[www.malluskintegratedprimary.co.uk](http://www.malluskintegratedprimary.co.uk)**

### **THE FOLLOWING ARE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL'S SAFEGUARDING TEAM:**

- Chair of the Board of Governors: Mrs Williamson
- Designated Governor for Child Protection: Mrs Williamson
- Principal: Mrs Kinsella
- Designated Teacher: Mrs Kinsella
- Deputy Designated Teacher: Mr McGrath

### **Designated Teacher/ Deputy Designated Teacher**

Every school is required to appoint a Designated Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection. They must also appoint a Deputy Designated Teacher who as a member of the Safeguarding team will actively support the Designated Teacher in carrying out the following duties:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff
- Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- 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 Board of Governors regarding child protection.

### **Principal**

- As secretary to the Board of Governors, assist in fulfilling its safeguarding and child protection duties;
- Ensure the Board of Governors are kept fully informed of all developments relating to safeguarding including changes to legislation, policy, procedures, DE circulars, inclusion of child protection on the termly meeting agenda;
- To manage allegations / complaints against school staff;
- To establish and manage the operational systems for safeguarding and child protection;
- To appoint and manage designated teacher/deputy designated teachers who are enabled to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities;
- To ensure safe and effective recruitment and selection including awareness of safeguarding and child protection for new staff and volunteers;
- Ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy or summary of the child protection policy at intake and at a minimum every 2 years; and
- To maintain the schools record of child abuse complaints.

## **Board of Governors**

- 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;
- 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. See the [Addressing Bullying in Schools Act \(NI\) 2016](#);
- 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 Circular 2012/19](#);
- They receive a full 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; and
- 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](#).

## **Chair of Board of Governors**

- Has a pivotal role in creating and maintaining a safeguarding ethos;
- Receives training from CPSS and HR;
- Assumes lead responsibility in the event of a CP complaint or concern about the principal; and
- Ensures compliance with legislation, Child Protection record keeping and policies.

## **Designated Governor for Child Protection**

Advises the Board of 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 teachers report; and
- Recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

## **Other members of school staff**

- Members of staff **must** refer concerns or disclosures initially to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or to the deputy designated teacher if he/she is not available
- class teachers should complete the 'Note of Concern' if there are safeguarding concerns such as: 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 and concerns about home circumstances including disclosures of domestic abuse
- **staff should not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures, should not investigate nor should they ask leading questions

## **Support Staff**

- if any member of the support staff has concerns about a child or staff member they should report these concerns to the designated teacher or deputy designated teacher if he/she is not available. A detailed written record of the concerns will be made and any further necessary action will be taken.

## **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](http://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.**

## **CHILD PROTECTION DEFINITIONS**

### **Definition of Harm**

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

**Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm.**

### **Harm can be caused by:**

Sexual abuse

Emotional abuse

Physical abuse

Neglect

Exploitation

**Sexual Abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child 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.

**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.



**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, and 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.

Although 'exploitation' is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register, professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of these forms of abuse

### **Signs and symptoms of abuse**

**Details of definitions may be found at:**

<https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms/media/1248/signs-and-symptoms-of-child-abuse-and-neglect.pdf>.

### **Specific types of Abuse**

In addition to the types of abuse described above there are also some specific types of abuse that we in Mallusk Integrated Primary School are aware of and have therefore included them in our policy. Please see these in **Appendix 1**.

### **Children with Increased Vulnerabilities**

Some children have increased risk of abuse due to specific vulnerabilities such as disability, lack of fluency in English and sexual orientation. We have included information about children with increased vulnerabilities in our policy. Please see these in **Appendix 2**

## **RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS**

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 are likely to suffer significant harm<sup>1</sup>.

### **How a Parent Can Raise a Concern**

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School we aim to work closely with parents/carers in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner.

If a parent has a concern they can talk to the Class Teacher, the Designated or Deputy Designated teacher for Child Protection or the Principal.

If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. If after this a parent still has concerns they can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman.

At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Central Referral Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 3**.

### **Where School has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff**

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School 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 will complete a Note of Concern (see **Appendix 6**) and act promptly. **They will not investigate** - this is a matter for Social Services - but will discuss these concerns with the Designated Teacher (DT) or with the Deputy Designated teacher (DDT) if he/she is not available.

The Designated Teacher/ Principal will take care to avoid due delay. The Chair of Governors & Designated Governor are contacted. If required, advice may be sought from an Education Authority Child Protection Officer. The designated teacher may also seek clarification from the child or young person, their parent/carer.

If a child protection referral is not required the school may consider other options including monitoring, signposting or referring to other support agencies e.g. Family Support Hub with parental consent and, where appropriate, with the child/young person's consent.

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<sup>1</sup> Co-Operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (August 2017)  
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland>

If a child protection referral is required, the designated teacher will seek consent from the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm.

The DT will phone the Gateway team and/or the PSNI and will submit a completed UNOCINI referral form. Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed of the action taken.

For further detail please see **Appendix 4.**

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

When a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff the Principal (or the designated teacher if the principal is not available) must be informed immediately. If the complaint is against the principal then the designated teacher should be informed and he/she will inform the Chairperson of the board of governors who will consider what action is required in consultation with the employing authority. The procedure as outlined in **Appendix 5** will be followed.

**Consent**

Concerns about the safety or welfare of a child/young person, should, where practicable, be discussed with the parent and consent sought for a referral to children's social services in the local HSC Trust, unless seeking agreement is likely to place the child/young person at further risk through delay or undermine any criminal investigative process (for example in circumstances where there are concerns or suspicions that a crime has taken place); or there is concern raised about the parent's actions or reactions.

The communication/language needs of the parents/carers should be established for example in relation to disability/ethnicity and the parent's/carer's capacity to understand should be ascertained. These should be addressed through the provision of appropriate communication methods, including, where necessary, translators, signers, intermediaries or advocacy services.

Effective protection for children/young people may, on occasions, require the sharing of information without prior parental/carer consent in advance of that information being shared.

Where staff decide not to seek parental consent before making a referral to children's social services in the local Health and Social Care Trust or the police, the reason for this decision must be clearly noted in the child/young person's records and included within the verbal and written/UNOCINI referral.

When a referral is deemed to be necessary in the interests of the child/young person, and the parents/carers have been consulted and do not consent, the following action should be taken:

- the reason for proceeding without parental consent must be recorded;
- the withholding of permission by the parent/carer must be included in the verbal and written referral to children's social services;
- the parent/carer should be contacted to inform them that, after considering their wishes, a referral has been made.

Staff making a referral may ask for their anonymity to be protected as far as possible because of a genuine threat to self/family. In such instances this anonymity should be protected with an explanation to the staff member that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as information may become the subject of court processes.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held “in confidence”. In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a ‘need to know’ basis.

Where there have been, or are current, child protection concerns about a pupil who transfers to another school we will consider what information should be shared with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

Where it is necessary to safeguard children information will be shared with other statutory agencies in accordance with the requirements of this policy, the school data protection policy and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

### **Record Keeping**

In accordance with DE guidance we must consider and develop clear guidelines for the recording, storage, retention and destruction of both manual and electronic records where they relate to child protection concerns.

In order to meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in our School Name are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child’s date of birth plus 30 years. If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected.

These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

### **Safe Recruitment Procedures**

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals' access to children and vulnerable adults through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate. All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in Mallusk Integrated Primary School are vetted / supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

### **Code of Conduct For all Staff - Paid or Unpaid**

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach. All members of staff are expected to comply with the school's Code of Conduct for Employees and Volunteers which has been approved by the Board of Governors. **(See Appendix 6 or the school's Code of Conduct is available on request)**

### **THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM**

Our school seeks to promote pupils' awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues, including those related to child protection through its curriculum. The safeguarding of children is an important focus in the school's personal development programme and is also addressed where it arises within the context of subjects. We are also committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We recognise that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that Mallusk Integrated Primary School has an important role to play.

At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- Help children to develop strategies for self-regulation and for dealing with difficult emotions
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children socially to form and maintain positive relationships
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they are valued and important
- Encourage children to be confident and celebrate their individuality
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
- Promote a friendly environment where staff feel comfortable sharing concerns in confidence

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Encouraging children to have a voice and a say in things that happen in school life
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Providing opportunities to express themselves
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

Through the preventative curriculum we aim to build the confidence, self-esteem and personal resiliencies of children so that they can develop coping strategies and can make more positive choices in a range of situations.

Personal safety and e- safety issues are embedded in our Thematic approach- see the following table:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Preventative Curriculum Covered</b>
In the Toy Box	Personal safety when playing outside
Splish Splash Splosh Blue Planet Coast	Safety around water
Look at Me, Look at You Mighty Me	Personal hygiene Privates are private On-line safety Emotional wellbeing
Going Places	Road safety Safer strangers
Home Sweet Home	Safety around medicines and in the home Safe adults
It's a bug's life Growing Together	Safety in the garden Sun safety
Food and Celebrations	Healthy eating
Mighty Me	Smoking, drug and alcohol awareness Healthy lifestyle choices

	On-line safety Personal hygiene Emotional wellbeing
Are you Wise?	Smoking awareness Anti-bullying On-line safety
Impact	Healthy lifestyle choices Anti-bullying & Cyber Bullying

Throughout the school year child protection issues are addressed through class assemblies and there are permanent child protection displays throughout the school, which provide advice and displays child helpline numbers. Other initiatives which address child protection and safety issues:

- NSPCC make presentations & hold workshops every other year to all the classes
- P6/ 7 take part in the PSNI CASE programme/ Bee Safe
- Anti-Bullying week
- Assemblies- Child Protection team, bullying, dealing with worries and fears, talking to a friend/ adult to solve problems, healthy lifestyle assemblies
- Circle Time- talking about worries, concerns etc.
- Community of Enquiry- discussing issues of concern
- Parent information sessions from PSNI regarding e-safety will be organised by school
- Regular communication with parents in regard to CP issues- policy sent to parents, parents consulted in policy review
- C2k software used- Let's stop Bullying (NIABF)
- Children participate in Safer Internet Day each February
- Parents are encouraged to download the Safer Schools App
- There are resources for children and parents on the school Learning Site <https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/mipshomelearning>

## **Identifying Emotional Needs**

All school staff are vigilant and monitor the emotional wellbeing of each child. Staff are aware of the need to identify indicators of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Designated & Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## **Working with Parents**

In order to support parents, we will:

- Regularly highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing via email
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health at home
- Keep parents informed about thematic links to mental health & wellbeing and share ideas for extending and exploring this in the learning notes



### **Working with other agencies and partners**

The school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including, but not limited to:

- The school nurse
- Educational Psychology
- Behaviour Support Service
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Action Mental Health
- Parenting NI

### **Support for school staff**

The school aims to provide a friendly, supportive environment, where all staff members feel valued and cared for. Staff are also provided with information about where they can seek help, including 'Inspire' and the EA Healthwell programme and support hub. The school provides access to staff training in Mental Health awareness, managing stress and self-care, such as that provided by EA and other agencies, such as Action Mental Health.

### **COVID 19 MEASURES**

The ongoing health concerns relating to Covid-19 creates uncertainty in the lives of children and young people. Daily routines, family life, friendship groups and the safe space that schools provide have been disrupted. For many children, the need to spend most of their day at home will bring an additional challenge, and for some this will be an additional safeguarding risk factor. It is important that the adults responsible for safeguarding children are sensitive to their physical, social and emotional needs in these most unusual circumstances. It is critically important that children who are or may be at risk are identified so that that a proportionate, compassionate and sensitive response can be taken.

The school email address, teachers' email addresses and main school phone number have been made available to all parents. Parents have been informed that the DT is contactable at all times. In the event of a long term school closure, an emergency contact mobile number will be made available to parents. Parents are regularly provided with details of support available to them, e.g. Family Support Hubs, Parenting NI etc.

The current guidance from DENI and EA relating to Covid 19 are followed.

### **Hygiene routines**

Hand sanitiser must be used by all adults and children on entry to the school. There will be sanitiser stations at each entrance point and outside each classroom. Children will wash their hands regularly, including when handling equipment/ practical resources. Teachers will provide instruction on how to wash hands correctly. Parents will be expected to support this at home.

## **Cleaning**

The normal cleaning regime will continue using the same cleaning materials used throughout a normal school year with specific attention to high contact surfaces such as toilets, telephones and door handles.

## **Use of PPE**

PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases such as when administering First Aid or Intimate Care. In these situations, staff will wear a face mask, gloves and a disposable plastic apron. If any staff members wish to wear face coverings, they will be enabled to do so.

## **Ventilation**

The opening of doors and windows will be encouraged to increase natural ventilation and also to reduce contact with door handles. However, propping open of doors into corridors, external doors, security access systems and any other fire safety doors is prohibited. It should be sufficient for windows to be open dependent weather permitting. Air filters are used in all classrooms.

## **LONG TERM CLOSURE**

In the event of long term closure, regular contact will be maintained with families to offer pastoral care and support. Our most vulnerable children and those with social services involvement will be placed on a list and will be contacted on a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly basis by the Designated Teachers for Child Protection, depending on perceived need. LAC reviews and Case conferences will be attended by a Designated Teacher for Child Protection using online conferencing tools put in place by the relevant outside agencies. The same procedure for reporting child protection concerns, where a member of staff completes a record of concern form and forwards it to a member of Designated Teacher for Child Protection for follow up, will be strictly adhered to. Staff have been advised to be vigilant in their contact with children (on the school learning site, email and Class Dojo) in identifying any safeguarding concerns.

## **Remote learning**

In the event of long term closure, we anticipate moving remote learning, Underpinning this approach, careful planning and effective use of assessment for learning (AfL) will aim to maximise the children's learning. Remote learning is an extension of the classroom and will be covered by the school Acceptable Use Policy. All principles outlined by the Acceptable Use Policy will apply to all online teaching activity. Staff must use only their C2k email account and should avoid using personal accounts if contacting children or their parents. Parents may contact staff through Class Dojo and the 'Tell the Teacher' facility on the school learning site. Due to concerns around the safety of conferencing, such as Zoom, we do not currently use digital conferencing. Teachers may make videos to be posted on the learning site. This ensures teachers are able to maintain full control of the audio and video content and what is shared on the platform.

Issues to consider:

- The well-being of the children, their parents/carers/guardians and the school staff
- The wide range of issues that the families are facing
- The resources, time and hardware available to the teachers
- What is realistically achievable in the current climate with the aim of establishing a sensitive balance between home and work life of parents/carers/guardians and teaching staff
- The sensitive consideration of the parents'/carers'/guardians' capacity to support learning at home and communicate clearly what support is available from the school when this is required
- The amount of work set for pupils – too much can be as much of a problem as too little
- Issues with digital connectivity
- Approaches that ensure regular staff contact with pupils to support them with their learning
- The recognition that it is not possible to replicate school experiences in a home environment and instead, encourage parents to engage confidently, innovatively and creatively when supporting the learning of their children

Collaboration between learners and between learners and teachers is an important component of blended learning as it helps to create connection and build a sense of community.

Teachers will promote collaboration by:

- Maintaining a pastoral presence online, through regular online communication, to reduce the feeling of isolation
- Giving feedback
- Providing opportunities for peer interaction via a 'Collaborate Board'

The NHS recommend that 8- to 11-year-olds have no more than 2 hours a day screen time (including TV, smartphones, tablets and video games). In light of this advice, we recognise that constant screen time is neither realistic nor beneficial. When appropriate, teachers will engage the children with practical activities that make use of the home environment. Again, teachers will use professional judgement to decide what areas to focus on.

### **Digital learning at home**

We recognise that in some homes, there may be no devices or only one device but more than one child who requires access to that device for learning, or where parents/carers require the device for work purposes. Considering this, we will focus primarily on an asynchronous delivery model of learning, where teaching materials, which may include video/audio clips, are posted online, and learners work through these materials in their own time, communicating with the teacher via email. This approach allows families to engage when it is most appropriate for them and their family/home circumstances. However, there will be an expectation that work should be completed before the next face-to-face session.

### **The role of parents/ carers**

Parents and carers play a key role in their child's education and never more so when a significant proportion of the learning is taking place at home. As a school, we want to consider how to ensure that this partnership is supported and developed further by providing relevant and timely information to the parent or carer, giving and taking feedback more regularly on progress, building a culture of learning with parents as key partners. Teaching staff will be available to answer emails/ make phone calls. If a parent/ carer wishes to speak to the teacher, they should make the request by phoning school or by sending an email to the teacher. In the event of closure, parents & carers are encouraged to establish a routine with their children to include:

- Times for waking, working and eating whilst ensuring regular intervals for physical activity and relaxation
- The creation of a schedule to co-ordinate the learning plan provided by the school
- Ensuring their child takes a leading role when making choices about how to engage in the learning provided
- A balance between offline and online learning activities
- Talking about and being interested in what their child is learning rather than on the activity
- The importance of staying safe online and engaging respectfully and appropriately with others in an online learning environment, in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use policy

### **Cyber safety**

We recognise that the Internet is a part of everyday life for education, business and social interaction. Children use the Internet widely outside school and need to learn how to evaluate Internet information and to take care of their own safety and security. C2k filters the Internet in Mallusk Integrated Primary School for the protection of the pupils.

The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management functions.

Each child has a unique log on and password. Children will be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and given clear objectives for Internet use. Children will be taught to be critically aware of the materials they read and shown how to validate information before accepting its accuracy. Children will use age-appropriate tools to research Internet content. The evaluation of online materials is a part of teaching and learning in every subject and will be viewed as a whole-school requirement across the curriculum. Teachers will closely monitor the websites being used by children and supervise any Internet research closely. Teachers should always evaluate any websites/search engines before using them with their pupils. This includes websites shown in class as well as websites accessed directly by the children.

Children will only e-mail each other using the internal C2k system. In learning to e-mail, children will be taught that they must not reveal personal details of themselves or others in email communication, or arrange to meet anyone without specific permission from an adult. Teachers and support staff are advised to report any concerns about internet content to the ICT coordinator, who will report the issue to C2k, and to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Lessons on Cyber bullying are embedded in our Themes. Children will be taught how cyber bullying is different from other forms of bullying, how it can affect people and how to respond and combat misuse. Promoting a culture of confident users will support innovation and safety. Children are encouraged to report any instances of cyber- bullying to teachers.

We will distribute an ICT code of practice agreement to all parents and pupils. These agreements will be signed and returned to each class teacher. Information for using the Internet safely at home will be sent home.

If school devices are borrowed during closures, MIPS Safer Internet Policy must be followed at all times. Any inappropriate web or email activity can result in loss of the iPad privilege. The use of proxy servers is strictly forbidden and is a violation of the school network policy. If a pupil unintentionally links to an inappropriate web site, it should be reported to the Principal immediately. Parents are responsible for supervising student Internet use while at home- the filtering services we implement on the school network do not transfer to home use. Parents should monitor the use of the device at home to ensure that its primary function is academic and that students are completing assigned schoolwork rather than gaming, chatting, etc. Use of Internet resources – including online curriculum content purchased by the school will be an integral part of the learning activities during long term closure.

A parenting session on Internet safety delivered by PSNI is held bi-annually as well as school wide discussion on Safer Internet Day. Key stage 1 & 2 teachers will discuss Safer Internet with their classes and this may form part of a wall display.

### **Social media**

C2k filters and controls access to social media and social networking sites. Children will be taught never to give out personal details of any kind which may identify them and/or their location. Examples would include real name, address, mobile or landline phone numbers, school attended, instant messaging (IM) and email addresses, full names of friends or family, specific interests and clubs etc. Children and parents are advised that the minimum age for using Facebook etc. is 13 years old. Children will be advised on security and privacy online and will be encouraged to set passwords, deny access to unknown individuals and to block unwanted communications. Children will be encouraged to approve and invite known friends only on social networking sites and to deny access to others by making profiles private.

Teachers will not take photographs of any children using their mobile phone or tablet. They are advised not to be a 'Friend' on social media with a pupil, past pupil or parent. Parents must give permission for their child's photograph to be used on the school Facebook page and website. Children's full names will not be used anywhere on the website or Facebook page, particularly in association with photographs.

Staff and Governors are reminded that their social media use should not negatively reflect on the school and are advised to keep their Facebook page 'Friends only' rather than public. Children are not allowed to use mobile phones in school. P7 children are permitted to have phones, but they must be switched off during school. If a child breaches the school policy then the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile phones and devices will be released to parents / carers at the end of the day. Where cyber bullying outside school is reported to the school, it will be investigated and acted on in accordance with the anti-bullying procedures set out in the school policy. The Police will be contacted if a criminal offence is suspected.

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. The curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive issues with children and young people in an age-appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours. (2017/04)

### **Operation Encompass**

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police 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 police 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 Police 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.

Further information see [The Domestic Abuse Information Sharing with Schools etc. Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2022](#).

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the safeguarding team and approved at least every 2 years by the Board of Governors for dissemination to parents, pupils and staff. It will be implemented through the school's staff induction and training programme and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the designated teacher for child protection and periodically by the Schools Safeguarding Team. The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the designated teacher.

**Date: February 2024**

**Signed:**

S. Kinsella (Designated Teacher, Principal)

A. Williamson (Chair of Board of Governors)

## **Appendix 1**

### **Specific Types of Abuse**

#### **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. 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. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) but can be a precursor to other forms of abuse. Grooming may occur face to face, online and/or through social media, the latter making it more difficult to detect and identify.

Adults may misuse online settings e.g. chat rooms, social and gaming environments and other forms of digital communications, to try and establish contact with children and young people or to share information with other perpetrators, which creates a particular problem because this can occur in real time and there is no permanent record of the interaction or discussion held or information shared. Those working or volunteering with children or young people should be alert to signs that may indicate grooming, and take early action in line with their child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to enable preventative action to be taken, if possible, before harm occurs. Practitioners should be aware that those involved in grooming may themselves be children or young people, and be acting under the coercion or influence of adults. Such young people must be considered victims of those holding power over them. Careful consideration should always be given to any punitive approach or 'criminalising' young people who may, themselves, still be victims and/or acting under duress, control, threat, the fear of, or actual violence. In consultation with the PSNI and where necessary the PPS, HSC professionals must consider whether children used to groom others should be considered a child in need or requiring protection from significant harm.

If the staff in Mallusk Integrated Primary School become aware of signs that may indicate grooming they will take early action and follow the school's child protection policies and procedures. The HSCT and PSNI should be involved as early as possible to ensure any evidence that may assist prosecution is not lost and to enable a disruption plan to reduce the victim's contact with the perpetrator(s) and reduce the perpetrator(s) control over the victim to be put in place without delay.



## **Child sexual exploitation**

(CSE) is a form of child 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. (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI. DHSSPS version 2.0 2017).

The key factor that distinguishes cases of CSE from other forms of child sexual abuse is the concept of exchange – the fact that someone coerces or manipulates a child into engaging in sexual activity **in return for something** they need or desire and/or for the gain of those perpetrating or facilitating the abuse. The something received by the child or young person can include both tangible items and/or more intangible ‘rewards’ OR ‘benefits’ such as perceived affection, protection or a sense of value or belonging.

Any child under the age of eighteen, male or female, can be a victim of CSE, including those who can legally consent to have sex. The abuse most frequently impacts upon those of a post-primary age and can be perpetrated by adults or peers, on an individual or group basis.

CSE can be perpetrated by adults or by young people’s peers, on an individual or group basis, or a combination of both, and can be perpetrated by females as well as males. While children in care are known to experience disproportionate risk of CSE, **the majority of CSE victims are living at home.**

CSE is a form of child abuse and, as such, any member of staff suspecting that CSE is occurring will follow the school’s child protection policy and procedures, including reporting to the appropriate agencies.

## **Domestic and Sexual violence and abuse**

This can have a profoundly negative effect on a child’s emotional, psychological and social well-being. A child does not have to witness domestic violence to be adversely affected by it. Living in a violent or abusive domestic environment is harmful to children.

Domestic violence and abuse is defined as ‘threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.’ Sexual Violence and Abuse is defined as ‘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).’ (Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016).

If it comes to the attention of school staff that Domestic Abuse, is or may be, affecting a child this will be passed on to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with the Social Services Gateway Team.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

(FGM) is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls. FGM comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure is also referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision' and 'initiation'. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. FGM is a form of child abuse and, as such, teachers have a statutory duty to report cases, including suspicion, to the appropriate agencies, through agreed established procedures set out in our school policy.

### **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland and if in Mallusk Integrated Primary School we have knowledge or suspicion of a forced marriage in relation to a child or young person we will contact the PSNI immediately.

### **Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour**

Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development. It will help them as they grow up, and as they start to make decisions about relationships. As a school we support children and young people, through the Personal Development element of the curriculum, to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships. Teachers are often therefore in a good position to consider if behaviour is within the normal continuum or otherwise.

It is important to distinguish between different sexual behaviours - these can be defined as 'healthy', 'problematic' or 'sexually harmful'. Healthy sexual behaviour will normally have no need for intervention, however consideration may be required as to appropriateness within a school setting. Problematic sexual behaviour requires some level of intervention, depending on the activity and level of concern. For example, a one-off incident may simply require liaising with parents on setting clear direction that the behaviour is unacceptable, explaining boundaries and providing information and education. Alternatively, if the behaviour is considered to be more serious, perhaps because there are a number of aspects of concern, advice from the EA CPSS may be required. We will also take guidance from DE Circular 2016/05 to address concerns about harmful sexualised behaviour displayed by children and young people.

## What is Harmful Sexualised Behaviour?

Harmful sexualised behaviour is any behaviour of a sexual 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
- Harmful sexualised behaviour can include: Using age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases
- Inappropriate touching.
- Using sexual violence or threats.
- Sexual behaviour between children is also considered harmful if 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.
- However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled.

Sexually harmful behaviour is primarily a Child Protection concern. There may remain issues to be addressed through the school's Positive Behaviour Policy but it is important to always apply principles that remain child centred.

Harmful sexualised behaviour will always require intervention and in our school we will refer to our child protection policy and, seek the support that is available from the CPSS.

## 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.

In January 2014, the SBNI published its report 'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland' which identified the associated risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content risks:** the child or young person is exposed to harmful material.
- **Contact risks:** the child or young person participates in adult initiated online activity.
- **Conduct risks:** the child or young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange.
- **Commercial risks:** the child or young person is exposed to inappropriate commercial advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs.

We in Mallusk Intergated Primary School have a responsibility to ensure that there is a reduced risk of pupils accessing harmful and inappropriate digital content and will be energetic in teaching pupils how to act responsibly and keep themselves safe. As a result, pupils should have a clear understanding of online safety issues and, individually, be able to demonstrate what a positive digital footprint might look like.

The school's actions and governance of online safety are reflected clearly in our safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare around digital technology is the responsibility of everyone who comes into contact with the pupils in the school or on school-organised activities.

**Sexting** is the sending or posting of sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobile 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 we will contact local police on 101 for advice and guidance. We may also seek advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service.

Please be aware that, while offences may technically have been committed by the child/children involved, the matter will be dealt with sensitively and considering all of the circumstances and it is not necessarily the case that they will end up with a criminal record. It is important that particular care is taken in dealing with any such cases. Adopting scare tactics may discourage a young person from seeking help if they feel entrapped by the misuse of a sexual image.

#### **Sharing an inappropriate image with an intent to cause distress**

If a pupil has been affected by inappropriate images or links on the internet it is important that it is **not forwarded to anyone else**. 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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted)) to share an inappropriate image of another person without the individual's consent.

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 of the school will be followed.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Children with Increased Vulnerabilities**

#### **Children with a disability**

Children and young people with disabilities (i.e. any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse and staff will be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues.

Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult. Staff and volunteers working with children with disabilities in Mallusk Integrated Primary School will receive training to enable them to identify and refer concerns early in order to allow preventative action to be taken.

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

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

The Designated Teacher will seek advice from the EA's Inclusion and Diversity Service to identify and respond to any particular communication needs that a child may have. At Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we work hard to create an atmosphere in which pupils with special educational needs which involve communication difficulties, or pupils for whom English is not their first language, feel confident to discuss these issues or other matters that may be worrying them.

#### **Looked After Children**

In consultation with other agencies and professionals, a Health and Social Care Trust may determine that a child or young person's welfare cannot be safeguarded if they remain at home. In these circumstances, a child may be accommodated through a voluntary arrangement with the persons with parental responsibility for the child or the HSCT may make an application to the Court for a Care Order to place the child or young person in an alternative placement provided by the Trust. The HSCT will then make arrangements for the child to be looked after, either permanently or temporarily. It is important that the views of children, young people and their parents and/or others with parental responsibility for the looked child are taken into account when decisions are made.

A member of school staff will attend LAC meetings and will provide a written report. Where necessary, school support will be put in place for the child/young person. Information will be shared with relevant staff on a need to know basis.

### **Children / young people who go missing**

Children and young people who go missing come from all backgrounds and communities and are known to be at greater risk of harm. This includes risks of being sexually abused or exploited although children and young people may also become homeless or a victim or perpetrator of crime. Those who go missing from their family home may have no involvement with services as not all children and young people who run away or go missing from their family home have underlying issues within the family, or are reported to the police as missing.

The patterns of going missing may include overnight absences or those who have infrequent unauthorised absences of short time duration. When a child or young person returns, having been missing for a period, we should be alert to the possibility that they may have been harmed and to any behaviours or relationships or other indicators that children and young people may have been abused.

School staff will work in partnership with those who look after the child or young person who goes missing and, if appropriate, will complete a risk assessment. Current school policies will apply e.g. attendance, safeguarding, relationships and sexuality education.

### **Young people who are homeless**

If we become aware that a child in our school is homeless we will share this information with Social Services whose role is to carry out a comprehensive needs and risk assessment. We will contribute to the assessment and attend multi-disciplinary meetings.

### **Separated, unaccompanied and trafficked children and young people**

**Separated children** and young people are those who have been separated from their parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver. **Unaccompanied children** and young people are those seeking asylum without the presence of a legal guardian. Consideration must be given to the fact that separated or unaccompanied children may be a victim of human trafficking.

**Child Trafficking** is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child or young person, whether by force or not, by a third person or group, for the purpose of different types of exploitation. If we become aware of a child who may be separated, unaccompanied or a victim of human trafficking we in Mallusk Integrated Primary School will immediately follow our safeguarding and child protection procedures.

### **Children of parents with additional support needs**

Children and young people can be affected by the disability of those caring for them. Parents, carers or siblings with disabilities may have additional support needs which impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the family, possibly affecting their education or physical and emotional development. It is important that any action school staff take to safeguard children and young people at risk of harm in these circumstances

encompasses joint working between specialist disability and children's social workers and other professionals and agencies involved in providing services to adult family members. This will assist us in ensuring the welfare of the children and young people in the family is promoted and they are safeguarded as effectively as possible.

Where it is known or suspected that parents or carers have impaired ability to care for a child, the safeguarding team will give consideration to the need for a child protection response in addition to the provision of family support and intervention.

### **Gender identity issues and sexual orientation**

Children from the LGBTQ community may face particular difficulties which could make them more vulnerable to harm. These difficulties could range from intolerance and homophobic bullying from others to difficulties for the young person themselves in exploring and understanding their sexuality. At such times young people may be more vulnerable to predatory advances from adults seeking to exploit or abuse them. This could impede a young person's ability or willingness to raise concerns if they feel they are at risk or leave young people exposed to contact with people who would exploit them.

We will support children from the LGBTQ community to appropriately access information and support on healthy relationships and to report any concerns or risks of abuse or exploitation.

### **School trips and educational visits**

Our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people also includes periods when they are in our care outside of the school setting. We will follow DE guidance on educational visits, school trips and work experience to ensure our current safeguarding policies are adhered to and that appropriate staffing levels are in place.

## **Children/young people's behaviours**

### **Peer Abuse**

Children and young people may be at risk of physical, sexual and emotional bullying and abuse by their peers. Such abuse should always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. Where a child or young person has been harmed by another, all school staff should be aware of their responsibilities in relation to both children and young people who perpetrate the abuse as well as those who are victims of it and, where necessary, should contribute to an inter-disciplinary and multi-agency response.

### **Self-Harm**

Self-harm encompasses a wide range of behaviours and things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and usually hidden way, which are damaging. It may indicate a temporary period of emotional pain or distress, or deeper mental health issues which may result in the development of a progressive pattern of worsening self-harm that may ultimately result in

death by misadventure or suicide. Self-harm may involve abuse of substances such as alcohol or drugs, including both illegal and/or prescribed drugs.

Self-harming behaviours may indicate that a child has suffered abuse; however, this is not always the case. School staff will share concerns about a child who is self-harming with a member of the safeguarding team who will seek advice from appropriately qualified and experienced professionals including those in the non-statutory sector to make informed assessments of risk in relation to self-harming behaviours.

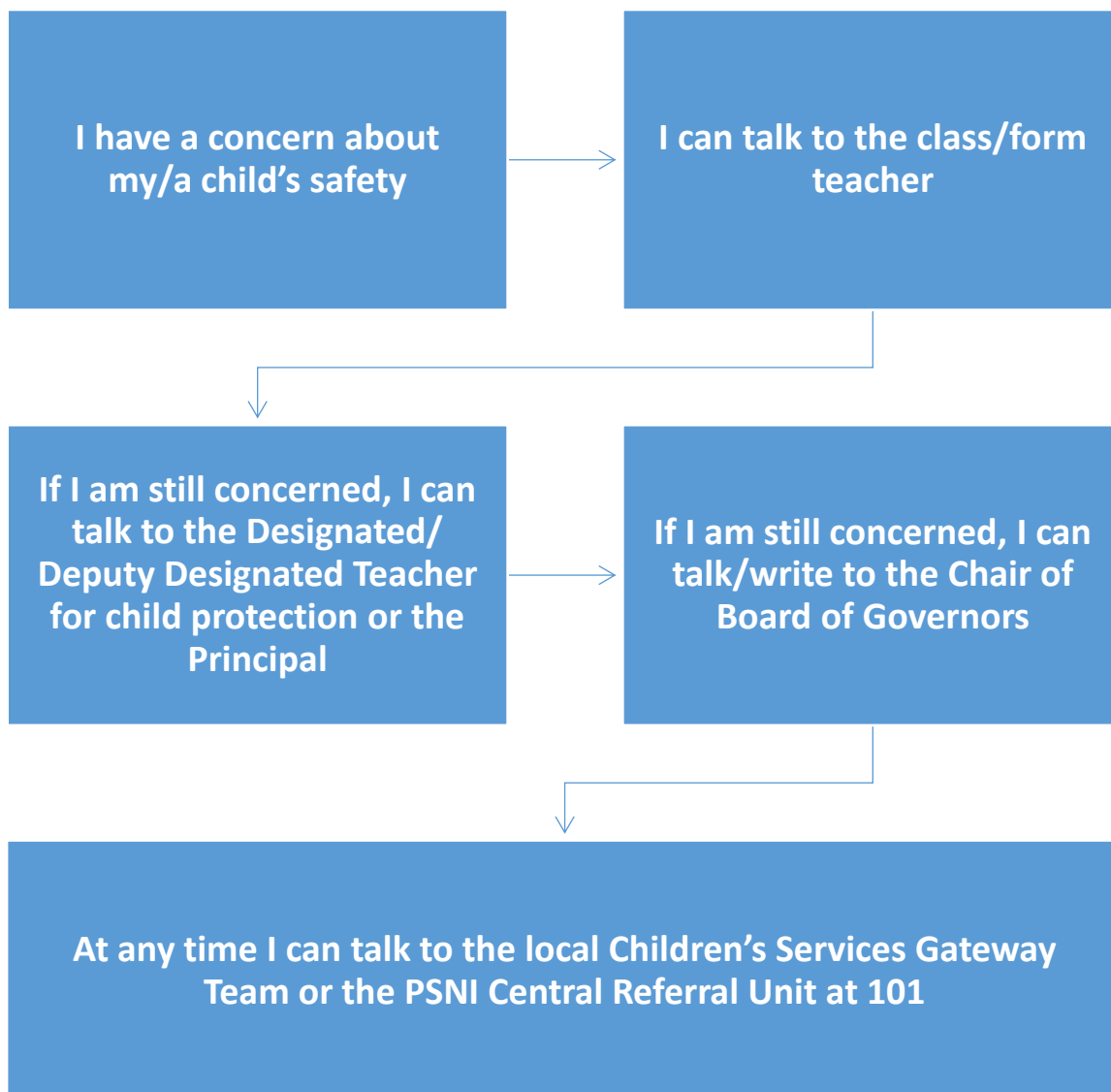
### **Suicidal Ideation**

Staff must act without delay if they have concerns about a child who presents as being suicidal as it is important that children who communicate thoughts of suicide or engage in para-suicidal behaviours are seen urgently by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, including those in the non-statutory sector, to ensure they are taken seriously, treated with empathy, kindness and understanding and informed assessments of risk and needs can be completed as a matter of priority.



## APPENDIX 3

### If a Parent Has a Potential Child Protection Concern Within the School

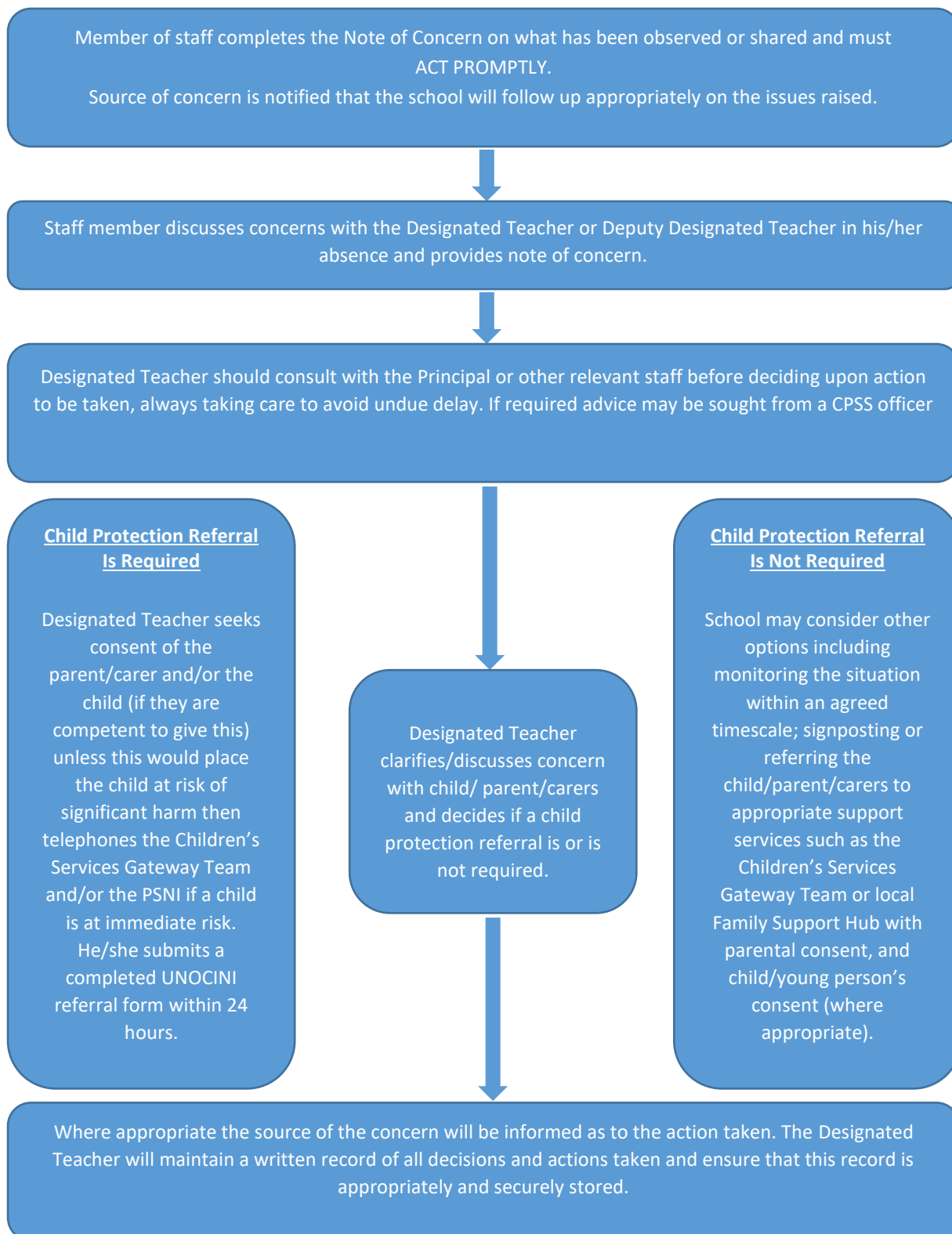


If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's complaints policy. This policy should culminate in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

If a parent has a concern about a child's safety or suspect child abuse within the local community, it should be brought directly to the attention of the Children's Services Gateway Team.

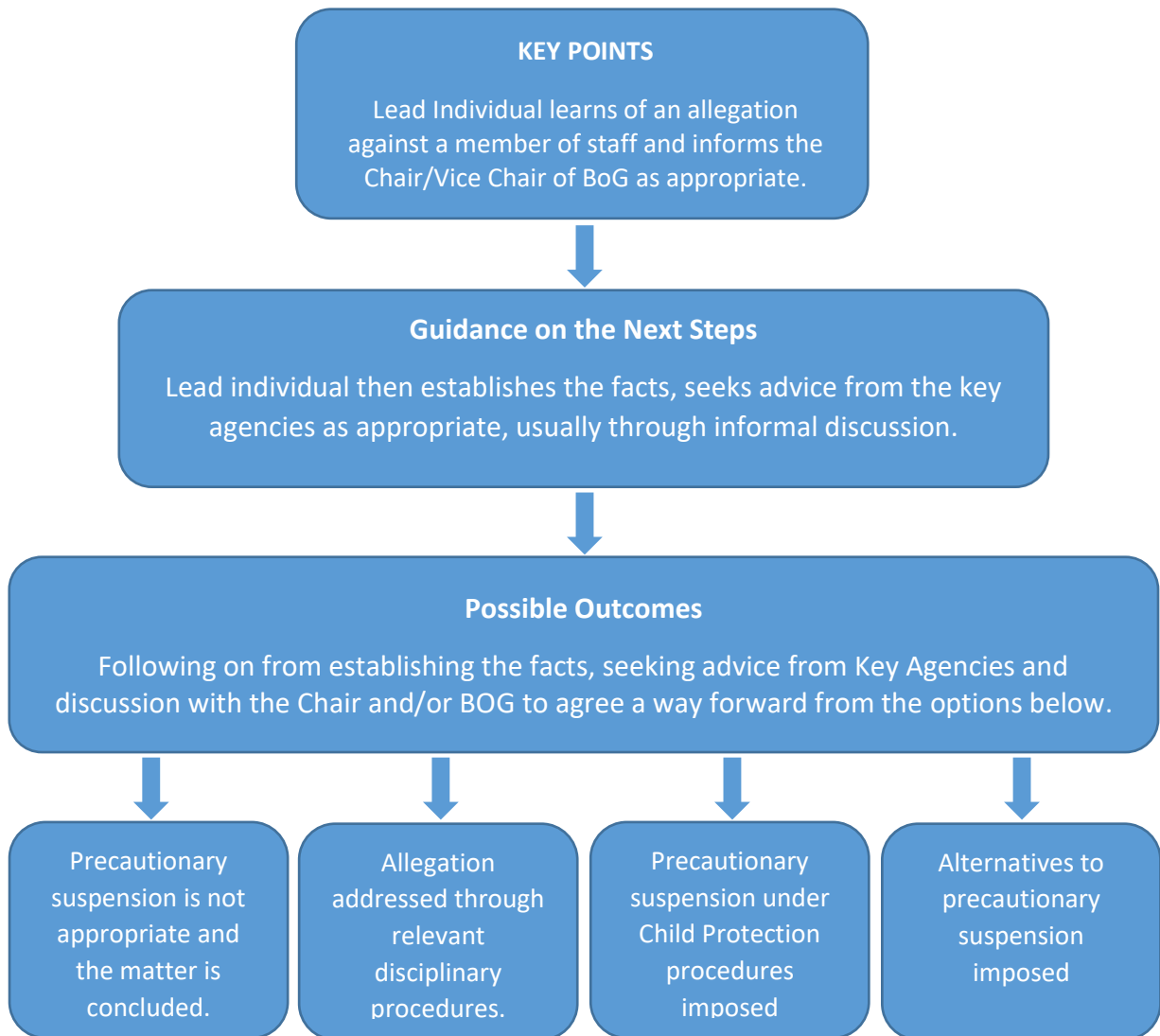
## APPENDIX 4

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



## APPENDIX 5

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



## Appendix 6

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### NOTE OF CONCERN

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

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

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:

Any further action taken:

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

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file

Yes                      No

If 'No' state reason:

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

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

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

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

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