

Safeguarding Policy

September 2019

1. Introduction

In keeping with the aims of Crumlin Integrated College, the school has a pastoral responsibility towards its pupils and should take steps to ensure their welfare and safety are protected and promoted. This policy sets out the principles and procedures in Crumlin Integrated College, in line with D.E. guidance and relevant legislation. All staff should be familiar with this policy. It will be given to all substitute teachers, volunteers and parents.

2. Principles Concerning the Protection of Children

- a. The child's welfare must always be **paramount**, and 'what is best for the child?' is central to all decision making.
- b. A balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families. Where there is a conflict, the child's interests must remain paramount.
- c. Children have a right to be heard and listened to and to be taken seriously.
- d. The process of protecting the child from harm should be carried out with the parent/carers' involvement wherever possible.
- e. Information exchange between the child, the parents/carers and all professional disciplines is of utmost importance.
- f. Actions taken to protect a child should not in themselves be abusive or distressing.
- g. At all times, the emphasis must be on a multi-disciplinary and a multi-agency approach.
- h. Decisions should take into account the wishes of the child and the parents/carers.
- i. Where it is necessary to protect the child from further harm, alternatives which do not involve re-locating the child and which minimise disruption of a family, should be explored.
- j. Where concern about a child's welfare is significant, school staff have a statutory duty to report to social services and/or PSNI.

3. A Definition of Child Abuse

'Child Abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are many types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.' (*Definition taken from ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures*)

A child may be abused by a parent, sibling or other relative, a carer, an acquaintance, a professional worker or a stranger. Statistics show that in 90% of child abuse cases, the offender is known to the child. Typically, the offender is 'normal' to the outside observer. Most abused children live within a 'normal' two parent/carer home. Abuse may take a number of forms, chiefly:

- a. *Neglect* - Persistent or severe neglect which results in serious impairment of a child's health or development.
- b. *Physical* - Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.
- c. *Sexual* - Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The use of children by adults for sexual gratification. This can take the form of:
 - viewing of 'adult' and explicit videos or pornography
 - exhibitionism
 - intimate fondling or/and sexual stimulation
 - sexual intercourse - oral, vaginal or anal.
 - exploitation for financial gain (prostitution).

Under-age pregnancy is sometimes the result of sexual abuse, and therefore all reports of pregnancies, or even suspected pregnancies must be reported to the Designated Teacher.

d. *Emotional* - The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment.

e. *Exploitation* – grooming of a young person is always abusive and/or exploitative. It involves perpetrator(s) gaining trust of a young person or child. Grooming is often associated with Child Sexual exploitation and can be a precursor to other forms of abuse i.e. adults may misuse online settings eg chat rooms, social and gaming environments to establish contact with children

4. **Signs of Child Abuse**

Neglect

- i. poor state of clothing and personal hygiene
- ii. untreated medical problems
- iii. constant tiredness

Behavioural Indicators

- a. tiredness and listlessness
- b. lack of social relationships
- c. compulsive stealing
- d. frequently absent or late
- e. low self esteem

Physical Abuse

- i. unexplained bruises, burns, bite marks, cuts or fractures
- ii. untreated injuries

Behavioural Indicators

- a. self destructive tendencies
- b. excuses to explain injuries
- c. aggressive or withdrawn
- d. fear of going home or chronic runaway
- e. reluctant to have physical contact

Sexual Abuse

- i. chronic ailments such as stomach pains or headaches
- ii. difficulty in walking and sitting
- iii. frequent urinary infections
- iv. unexplained pregnancies

Behavioural Indicators

- a. chronically depressed or even suicidal
- b. inappropriately seductive
- c. sexually explicit language
- d. low self esteem, lack of confidence
- e. recurring nightmares/fear of the dark
- f. outbursts of anger
- g. overly protective of siblings

Emotional Abuse

- i. sudden speech disorder
- ii. signs of solvent abuse e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness
- iii. attention seeking
- iv. poor relationships

Behavioural Indicators

- a. neurotic behaviour e.g. hair twisting, thumb sucking
- b. reluctance for parent liaison
- c. fear of new situations
- d. chronic runaway
- e. inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- f. compulsive and obsessive behaviour

5. **The Staff's Role**

Staff in school are often the first to notice worrying symptoms or to receive disclosures. No promise of confidentiality should ever be given where abuse is alleged. Staff in schools have a professional responsibility to share relevant information with other professionals. The following five 'R's provide a sensible and sensitive approach framework should a pupil make a disclosure – Receive; Reassure; Respond; Record; Report.

Responding to a Pupil Disclosure

i. Receive

Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.

Accept what is being said with tact and understanding.

Care must be taken in asking and interpreting children's responses.

Note any significant non verbal behaviours (Do not ask leading questions or interrogate for full details).

Do not pass judgement on any person in the scenario.

In the event of a child reporting physical marking;

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY ARTICLE OF CLOTHING BE REMOVED OR EVEN PULLED ASIDE, NO SENSITIVE PART OF THE BODY SHOULD BE REVEALED, AND NO TOUCHING OF EVEN THE MOST INNOCENT AND CARING NATURE BE MADE.

ii. Reassure

Reassure but only as far as is honest and reliable e.g. do not for example make promises which may not be possible to honor.

Tell the child they have done the right thing by telling you.

Do not promise confidentiality - you have a moral, professional and legal duty to refer.

Reassure and alleviate guilt e.g. You're not to blame, you're not alone.

iii. Respond

Explain that you will tell the school's Designated Teacher/s.

Check out child is okay before you leave.

iv. Record

Complete a 'Note of Concern' form, recording the time, place, date and those present, and as far as possible, what was said at the time of disclosure. Outwardly physical signs of physical injury should be observed and described in detail. All notes should be carefully retained and immediately passed to the designated teacher for action and filing.

v. Report (To the designated teacher)

b. Referring Suspicions of Abuse

If a teacher has any causes for concern about possible abuse, either in terms of ‘signs’ as listed at 4 above, or through any other means of deduction, he or she should share such suspicions with the school’s Designated Teacher/s, making and retaining notes, on Note of Concern form.

***Special Note**

Any teacher or any other member of staff who complies with the school procedure in making a report of suspected child abuse, is acting within the course of his/her employment and in such circumstances, where he/she has acted in good faith, he/she will receive the full support of the Board of Governors and will not be legally or financially liable.

6. Child Protection Procedures

Designated Teachers:	Mrs. R. Camlin (Mon & Tues)
Designated Teacher	Mrs. P. Aitken (Wed – Fri)
Deputy Designated Teacher:	Mrs. S. McCabe
NEELB Designated Officer:	Paula McCreesh 028 94482223

Single Point of Entry (SPOE) Gateway: Telephone 03001234333
Email : SPOE.Referrals@northerntrust.hscni.net

Education Welfare Officer:	Mr. Bob Booth
Chairman of the Board of Governors:	Mr. Brendan Loughran

Procedural Framework

- a All members of staff (teaching and non teaching) should be aware of:
 - i. signs of possible child abuse
 - ii. his or her part as ‘first contact’ agent in dealing with reported or suspected incidence of child abuse
 - iii. school procedures for dealing with reported or suspected child abuse.

- b. First contact procedures may, at the discretion of the teacher concerned, be enacted either by him/herself or the Designated Teacher/s if child abuse has been reported or suspected.

- c. The member of staff concerned must inform the Designated Teacher/s of the complaint or the suspicion immediately or, if first contact procedures are enacted, immediately after their completion.

- d. In the event of the Designated Teacher/s being absent or unavailable, contact must be made with the Deputy Designated Teacher.
- e. The Designated Teacher/s (or Deputy) should ensure that all ‘first contact’ procedures have been enacted by the reporting member of staff, or if this had not been done totally, she should do so at this stage, again ensuring that precise documentation is made.
- f. **The member of staff must respect the right to confidentiality of the pupil/family.**

Role of the Designated Teacher

- a. The Principal must then be notified immediately by the Designated Teacher.
- b. If a decision is taken after discussion between the Designated Teacher and the Principal that there is reason for concern, the former shall then contact the Single Point of Entry Social Services Office and / or the NEELB Designated Officers. UNOCINI might also be completed at this point. This can be posted, via recorded delivery, or emailed, with password protection, to the Single Point of Entry Gateway Team.
- c. The Designated Teacher must maintain detailed records of every step taken in enacting procedures.
- d. She should, as time unfolds, also attend all convened, relevant meetings and case conferences with all necessary reports intact.

Important Other Points

It is **not** the responsibility of school staff to undertake investigations or to make enquiries of parents or guardians, and in some cases, it could be counter productive for them to do so. It is for Social Services or PSNI to investigate suspected abuse and determine what action to take.

Allegations, especially regarding sexual misconduct, made against members of staff, shall be referred immediately to the Principal and to the NEELB Designated Officers for guidance as to the correct means of procedure in what will be a highly sensitive and difficult situation.

Should a member of staff be found alone with a child at the end of the day the member of staff should phone home immediately but if no-one responds they should phone the PSNI.

If a parent has a child protection concern, they can follow the guide below:

Talk to the Form Tutor

Mrs. P. Aitken or Mrs. R Camlin
Designated Teachers

Mrs. S. McCabe
Deputy Designated Teacher

7a. **Allegations against a member of Staff**

In the event of a complaint being made about possible abuse by a member of the school staff, the following procedures must be followed:

a. **Stage One**

- (i) the information must be passed to the Designated Teacher, who will keep a written record of the complaint. In the event of the Designated Teacher being the subject of complaint, the information must be passed directly to the Principal who will make the written record.
- (ii) the Designated Teacher will inform the Principal of the complaint (provided that they are not the subject of complaint).
- (iii) the Principal will seek clarification from the person making the complaint.
- (iv) the (Principal /or Designated Teachers) will consult with the Chair of the School's Board of Governors.

b. **Stage Two - ALTERNATIVE ONE**

It may be, in the event of the Principal and the Designated Teacher/s and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors being satisfied that it would have been

impossible for the alleged event to have taken place that no further action will be taken. In this case:

the Principal must inform the member of staff of the complaint and that no action is being taken. The Principal must inform the Designated Officer, NEELB, of the decision taken.

(i) the Designated Teacher/s must place a brief record of the complaint in the file of the pupil concerned.

c. **Stage Two - ALTERNATIVE TWO**

In the event that the or/and the Principal Teacher and the Chairman of the Board of Governors considers that it was possible for the alleged incident to have occurred, then formal referral procedures should be initiated thus:

- (i) the (Principal and or the Designated Teacher/s) will inform Social Services.
- (ii) the (Principal or Designated Teacher) will inform the PSNI.
- (iii) the Principal (or Designated Teacher) will inform the NEELB Designated Officer.
- (iv) In consultation with NEELB, the Chairperson of the Board of Governors will decide if the member of staff concerned is to be suspended with pay **as a precautionary measure.**
- (v) if so, the member of staff concerned should be advised in writing of the reason for the precautionary suspension and also advised to seek professional advice before making a formal response.
- (vi) irrespective of (iv) and (v) above, the pupil making the complaint and the pupil's parent must be informed immediately, in writing, of the actions which are being taken.
- (vii) the Principal must keep a detailed record of all stages of the formal referral. He should sign and date all notes which should also be countersigned by the Designated teacher. Such notes must be retained in the files of both the member of staff accused, and of the pupil making the complaint.
- (viii) if the allegation is later retracted or/ and due process exonerates the member of staff, all such notes in his or her file must be stroked out.

d. **Stage Two - ALTERNATIVE THREE**

In the event of a complaint being made by a pupil regarding inappropriate teaching content, inappropriate intrusive questioning or certain types of

bullying behaviour, the or/and the Principal Teacher will not interpret the allegation as a Child Protection issue per se, but instead as one warranting the execution of procedures under the school's Code of Conduct.

7b. Allegations against the Principal

Where a member of staff receives a complaint concerning possible child abuse by the, Principal all aspects of the above procedures for allegations against a member of staff should be followed, save that the role set out above for the Principal should be exercised by the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, in whom the power to suspend is vested. The employing authority should be immediately consulted in any such case.' (*Definition taken from Pastoral Care in Schools Child Protection*)

8. Vetting of Members of Staff and others coming into Contact with Pupils

Criminal record checks should be sought in respect of:

- (i) all newly appointed members of the school staff - teaching, ancillary, administration and clerical
- (ii) all newly appointed school governors
- (iii) peripatetic, supply and home tuition teachers
- (iv) drivers and escorts
- (v) school crossing patrol personnel.
- (vi) volunteers

NB Parents, and other individuals, not already vetted by their own organizations, or those acting 'freelance', should not normally be in contact with children without the presence of a teacher. Where this is not the case, police record checks should be sought.

The school's vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars 2006/06, 2006/07, 2006/06, 2006/07, 2006/08, 2006/09, 2008/03 and 2013/01. Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: www.deni.gov.uk

9. The Preventative Curriculum

Within the school, we aim to establish and maintain an environment where pupils feel safe, and we provide them with good lines of communication with trusted adults in order to play a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils.

Pupils are aware that there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if

they are worried or in difficulty. Our pupils are encouraged to talk and they are listened to effectively.

Opportunities are included in the curriculum for Personal and Social Development which equips our pupils with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises.

10. **Bullying**

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in Crumlin Integrated College. Our anti-bullying policy has been recently amended having taken guidance from E.A. recommendations and is at present under review. It is and is set out in a separate policy.

Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying in school, and will take immediate action to stop it happening to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both the bully and the victim may be personally contacted when bullying has been identified.

A parent making a complaint about bullying should have a personal response within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action taken.

The sanctions taken place against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, and his/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

11. **The Internet and Digital Technologies**

Our E-Safety policy is set out in a separate document and is informed by DE guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies.

12. **Role of the Designated Teacher/s (DT) and Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT)**

The DT:

To provide training to all school staff, including support staff. Invite Governors to training.

Being available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff.

Responsibility for recordkeeping of all child protection concerns.

Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units.

Liaising with NEELB Designated Officer for Child Protection.

Keeping the school Principal informed.

The lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's child protection policy.

Ensures parents receive a copy of the child protection policy every 2 years.

Promoting of a child protection/safeguarding ethos in the school.

Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection.

Maintains all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the Designated Teacher and the School Principal as appropriate).

The DDT:

To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

APPENDIX

CODE OF CONDUCT

13. Good Practice and Guidelines for Protection of Pupils and Staff

a. Private meetings with pupils

i. Teachers should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private meetings with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential meetings must take place, but, where possible, such meetings should be conducted in a room with visual access, or with the door open, or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people.

ii. Where such conditions cannot apply, teachers are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the meeting is taking place. The use of 'engaged' signs or light is not advisable.

iii. Where possible, another pupil or another adult should be present or nearby during the meeting.

b. Physical contact with pupils

i. As a general rule, teachers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.

ii. Physical contact which may be misconstrued by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided. Such contact can include well intentioned informal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, which if repeated with an individual pupil, could be misconstrued, as well as more obvious and more intimate contact, which should never occur.

iii. There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and

reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Teachers should use their discretion in cases to ensure that what is, and what is seen by others present, to be normal and natural, does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same child over a period of time.

iv. Some teachers are likely to come into physical contact with their pupils from time to time in the course of their teaching, for example, when showing a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment or while demonstrating a move or exercise during games or PE. Teachers should be aware of the limits within which such contacts should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted by the pupil.

v. Teachers who have to administer first-aid should ensure, wherever possible, that other children or another adult are present.

vi. If a pupil touches a teacher or talks to him or her in a sexually inappropriate manner, the teacher should record what happened and tell the Designated Teacher/s. As it could be totally innocent, the pupil should not be made to feel like a “criminal”. However, ignoring the action may place the teacher in a difficult situation.

vii. Following any incident where a teacher feels that his/her actions have been, or might be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal this would apply especially in a case where a teacher had been obliged to restrain a child physically or to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or to self.

c. Residential Settings

- i. Teachers should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting such as a ski-trip, outdoor education camp, or extended visit away from home, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where teachers may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school environment.
- ii. Never, under ANY circumstances, should they permit a pupil to be present in their bedroom, or “staff only” area.
- iii. If visiting the bedroom of pupils in order to exercise supervision or to take disciplinary action, a teacher should ensure that another member of staff is in attendance, and that there is more than one pupil present in the room.

d. Choice and use of Teaching Materials

- i. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.
- ii. When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature, a teacher should be aware of the danger that the application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might

after the event, be criticised. It is advisable to inform parents before using teaching materials of a sensitive nature.

- iii. When sexual matters are being taught, it is best not to ask pupils to ‘contribute’ their experiences. Also matters regarding sexually inappropriate behaviour should be dealt with in a highly sensitive manner. The behaviour in question may represent an imitation of the abuse which a pupil might be suffering on an ongoing basis.

e. **Other Situations**

- i. In the event of injury to a child, teachers should ensure that the relevant incident is recorded. If another adult is present, his or her name should be recorded as a witness.
- ii. Records of any false allegations a child makes against a member of staff should be recorded. Such might include - “You’re always picking on me”, to “You hit me”, or comments such as “Don’t touch me”
Records should include dates and times, and the names of any other witnesses, if possible.
- iii. Suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a colleague should be shared with the Designated Teacher. Attempted or presumed cover-ups might in time, lead to implication by silence.
- iv. Teachers should not go into the toilets along with children if at all possible.
- v. *Under no circumstances should a teacher have a pupil as a passenger in his or her car, even if other pupils or adults are also passengers.*
- vi. Sexually suggestive comments to a child or about a child, even in jest, should never be made.
- vii. Teachers should not loiter in changing rooms where children are changing.

Conclusion

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which teachers inter-relate with pupils and where opportunities might occur for their conduct to be misconstrued. In all circumstances, the teacher’s professional judgement should be exercised. From time to time, however, it is wise for all teachers to review their teaching styles, relationships with pupils and their manner and approach to individual pupils, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of pupils or of their parents.

14. **Other Information**

a. **Important Contact Numbers**

- i. NEELB Designated Principal Officer - Mrs M. Brady – 028 94482223
- ii. Social Services 03001234333 (Single Point of Entry)

NHSCT Referral Gateway Team
Oriell House
2-8 Castle Street, Antrim
Co. Antrim
BT41 4JE

- iii. PSNI Care Unit (Ballymena) Police Exchange – 02825653355 / 01232 650222
- iv. CRUSE – 028 90232695
- v. N.I. Childline – 028 90327773 - 0800 212888 (free line)
- vi. Child Care N.I. – 028 90 234499
- vii. NSPCC - 0800 800500 (free line)
- viii. Northern HSS Board Area - 01266 653333
- ix. The Young People's Counselling Service (Substance Abuse) 028 25652105
- x. Family Support N.I. www.familysupport.gov.uk 0845 600 6483

b. **Relevant Literature**

- i. DENI Circular 1997/4 “Child Protection”.
- ii. Away from Home and Safe - A Code of Good Practice.
- iii. A Guide to the Children's Order.
- iv. The Children Order - A Guide for Children and Young People.
- v. Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection.
- vi. Area Child Protection Committees – Regional Policy and Procedures 2005.
- vii. DENI Circular 1999/9 Guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force to Restrain or Control Pupils

c. **Videos**

- i. Protecting Children. An information resource for teachers on Child Abuse and Neglect. Presented by Anne Hailes.
- ii. Good Things Can Still Happen.
- iii. Protecting Children - A Duty to Care.

d. **DVD's**

- i. “Safeguarding Children” - Training materials for schools (Dept of

Education) January 14, W. Austen.

ii. “Safeguarding Children” – Sarah Travers.

d. **Web Addresses**

i. UNOCINI (Undertaking the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland)

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/unocini-forms.doc (SPOE should be contacted prior to completing)

ii. familysupportni.gov.uk

Independent Safeguarding Authority

www.isa-gov.org.uk

Department of Education (Circulars)

www.deni.org.uk - click on right side for circulars.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP).

www.thinkuknow.com

www.niabf.org.uk

Policy updated by Mrs. P. Aitken

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