

**Assumption Grammar School**

**Ballynahinch**

**SPECIALIST SCHOOL FOR MUSIC WITH**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**



**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

***Reviewed Jan 2018***

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**Assumption Grammar School** is Voluntary, Catholic Grammar school committed to promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting them from harm. This principle underlines the school’s policy on Child Protection.

**AIMS**

* To introduce procedures into the school to ensure that vulnerable pupils are protected and suspected cases of child abuse appropriately dealt with.
* To provide guidelines to staff\* on specific measures to protect pupils from abuse.
* To provide clear guidance to staff on referral procedures - detection of abuse, handling of disclosures by children reporting procedures and including the use of UNOCINI (Appendix 8).
* To promote understanding among pupils and to provide them with procedures to follow.
* To provide guidance to parents\*\* on how to raise concerns about their child’s safety/welfare.
* To have a teacher with designated special responsibility for handling cases of child abuse.
* To appoint three Deputy Designated Teachers with responsibility for dealing with cases of child abuse within their sections of the school and reporting them to the Designated Teacher.
* To ensure that the school complies with the demands of the Children NI Order 1995.

\* The term staff denotes teaching, support and peripatetic support teachers.

\*\* The term parents denotes those with parental responsibility and those who act as carers.

**The Safeguarding Team**

**Designated Teacher for Child Protection – Mrs M Orsi**

**Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection – Mrs M Orsi (Junior School); Mrs A McGinn (Middle School) and Mrs L McMenamin (Senior)**

**Training**

Designated Teachers– Two days training course on 28/29 January 2015

Principal Training – One day course on 21 January 2017

CEOP Training: Linda McMenamin 24 February 2015

Governor Training - Safeguarding at Dundonald in November 2015.

June 2013 M OHalloran - Child Protection Strand 2 The Safeguarding Role of School Governors

A McGinn - CP training 11th and 12th October 2016

CEOP training on Digital World Masterclass 12th December 2016

Refresher DT Training – Marcelle Orsi 7th December 2017

Relevant Literature

* *School Governors Handbook* *Safeguarding and Child Protection; Legal Island Northern Ireland Education Law: Department of Education Circular –‘Legislation Changes To Age Of Consent’ dated 2 February 2009; Byron Review ‘Children and New Technology’.*
* *Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools (DENI) 2017*
* *See reference to circulars at end of document*

**Other Relevant School Policies/Documents**

Data Protection Policy Revised February 2013

Anti- Bullying Policy June 2016

Educational Visits Policy Updated November 2013

Internet Policy Updated June 2015

The Use of Photos in Assumption Grammar School

 Updated June 2013

Critical Incident June 2017

Health and Safety Policy Updated November 2013

Use of Mobile Phones Reviewed August 2014

Visiting Speakers Checklist Written in May 2010

Complaints Procedure Reviewed Feb 2018

Risk Assessment

*‘’In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities, or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration’’*

**Context – Why Child Protection? The Law**

**The** United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Kingdom agreed to be bound by the Convention in 1991. It sets out the rights which all children and young people up to the age of 18 should have.

**The** Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is the principle statute governing the care, upbringing and protection of children in Northern Ireland. It applies to all those who work with and care for children, whether parents, paid carers or volunteers. It is the most comprehensive and far reaching child care legislation ever introduced to Northern Ireland. It clearly identifies five key principles which are Paramountcy, Prevention, Protection, Partnership and Parental Responsibility with the welfare of the child considered as being of paramount importance.

**The** Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003

Articles 17, 18 and 19 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 place a statutory duty on Boards of Governors (BoG) to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils and to determine the measures to be taken at the school with a view to protecting pupils from abuse (whether at school or elsewhere). Article 18(d) requires BoG to prepare a written statement of such measures and to provide this to parents. BoG must also have regard to any guidance given by the Department, the Education Authority (EA), the former DHSSPS (Department of Health from 9 May 2016), Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland (SBNI) and the relevant Employing Authority.

As such, all grant-aided schools must have a child protection policy which includes the appointment of a Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher with responsibility for child protection. Requirements on other settings are a condition of grant.

**Key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection**

* The following principles should underpin all strategies, policies, procedures, practice and services relating to safeguarding children and young people.
* **The child or young person’s welfare is paramount** - The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration for the courts and in childcare practice. An appropriate balance should be struck between the child’s rights and parent’s1 rights. All efforts should be made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the child’s safety.
* **The voice of the child or young person should be heard** - Children and young people have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously, taking account of their age and understanding. They should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives and be provided with appropriate support to do so where that is required. Where feasible and appropriate, activity should be undertaken with the consent of the child or young person and, where possible, to achieve their preferred outcome.
* **Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together** - Parents have responsibility for their children rather than rights over them. In some circumstances, parents will share parental responsibility with others such as other carers or the statutory authorities. Actions taken by organisations should, where it is in the best interests of the child, provide appropriate support to help families stay together as this is often the best way to improve the life chances of children and young people and provide them with the best outcomes for their future.
* **Partnership** - Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and the most effective way of ensuring that a child’s needs are met is through working in partnership. Sound decision-making depends on the fullest possible understanding of the child or young person’s circumstances and their needs. This involves effective information sharing, strong organisational governance and leadership, collaboration and understanding between families, agencies, individuals and professionals.
* **Prevention** - The importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.
* **Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances** - Where a child’s needs can be met through the provision of support services, these should be provided. Both organisations and individual practitioners must respond proportionately to the needs of a child in accordance with their duties and the powers available to them.
* **Protection** - Children should be safe from harm and in circumstances where a parent or carer is not meeting their needs, they should be protected by the State.
* **Evidence-based and informed decision making** - Decisions and actions taken must be considered, well informed and based on outcomes that are sensitive to, and take account of, the child or young person’s specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed needs.
* **In relation to the school setting for the purposes of this guidance:**
* The term ‘child’ has the same meaning as in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 ie a person under the age of 18. In the case of a pupil with special educational needs the term ‘child’ should be interpreted as including any person who has not attained the age of 19 and is a registered pupil at the school. A person who attains age 19 during a school year shall be deemed not to have attained that age. While a school has responsibility for all registered pupils, referral pathways and processes may differ for a young person over the age of 18 (Education (NI) Order 1996).
* All schools have a safeguarding responsibility towards the young people in their charge and should take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.
* Safeguarding/Child Protection arrangements should be accessible in the school and understood by children so that they know what to do and who to go to.
* References to ‘parent’ have the same meaning as anyone with ‘Parental Responsibility’ as defined in Article 6 of the Children Order ie ‘all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property’. In practical terms, it means the responsibility to care for, and the right to make important decisions about, the child.

**GUIDANCE FOR STAFF & VISITORS IN THE CASE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE**

The primary statutory responsibility for the protection of children from abuse rests with the Social Services. However, all our staff who come into contact with children and young people have a duty to help protect them from abuse or the risk of abuse.

The Board of Governors is sensitive to the fact that relationships between teachers and children are based on a trust and often a confidentiality which fosters a caring environment in which young people develop personally and learn. Staff must maintain a professional relationship with pupils irrespective of the pupils’ age. They are in a position of trust and must act accordingly.

There must be no personal relationships, inappropriate conversations, messages or meetings between staff and pupils. Any recourse to the legal “age of consent” or any “consensual” relationship is deemed to be indefensible. Staff has a Duty of Care to act appropriately in their position as in loco parentis.

All staff has a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals in order to protect them from harm. Therefore, confidentiality must, if necessary, be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action for the child’s best interests.

The school indemnifies any employee who complies with school procedures detailed in this policy in making a report of suspected child abuse.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURES**

1. The designated teachers shall have special responsibility for dealing with cases of suspected child abuse.
2. Members of staff will receive guidance in the recognition, reporting and responsibilities of the school as regards child abuse.
3. New members of staff and teachers involved in Initial Teacher Training will be made aware of the school’s procedures and given appropriate guidance.
4. Members of staff who suspect that a child is being, or has been, abused or to whom a child has disclosed information must follow the school’s referral guidance:-
* He / She must report their suspicions immediately to the Designated or relevant Deputy Designated Teacher who will discuss the matter with the Designated Teacher. The Designated Teacher will keep the Principal informed of all suspected cases.
* The Principal/Designated Teacher may, in the best interests of the child, seek clarification or advice and consult with SEELB’s Designated Officers.
* If a decision is taken that there is cause for concern and that, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services, the Designated Teacher will immediately contact the Social Services and later confirm the referral in writing.

The school’s pastoral curriculum will include self-protection programmes to help children recognise and deal with a potentially threatening situation. They will also help develop an awareness of the responsibilities of adult life including respect and care for others and the responsibilities of parenthood.

**What should staff and visitors do if a case of abuse is disclosed or alleged?**

**A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE**

A child may quite innocently disclose details of abuse that occurs within the family or a child may confide in a member of staff/visitor as the one adult she can trust.

It is important that the member of staff/visitor is sympathetic and supportive. He/She should always believe what the child is saying - Research has shown that children rarely fabricate allegations of sexual abuse.

The member of staff/visitor should remain calm and reassuring - children who have been abused often have low self-esteem and may withdraw if they detect signs of doubt. **DO NOT DISPLAY SIGNS OF SHOCK OR DISBELIEF.**

The member of staff/visitor should listen carefully. He/She should never ask leading questions, attempt to cross-examine the child, impose the adult’s own assumption or press for evidence. e.g. Do not say “What did he do next”? This can later be interpreted as putting ideas into a child’s mind. Instead say, “Tell me what happened”.

**It is not the responsibility of staff/visitors to carry out investigations into suspected or reported abuse. They simply seek discreet clarification or listen to disclosures of the child.**

**THE MEMBER OF STAFF/VISITOR MUST THEN TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:**

1. Do not promise to keep secret what the child has said.
2. Do not discuss concerns with the parent(s) or with anyone who is not involved in the care of the child. If the child’s allegations prove to be untrue, reporting them to someone who is not concerned with the care of the child may be deemed defamatory.
3. Report immediately to one of the designated teachers.
4. Prepare a detailed report adhering to format on Child Protection Incident Record Form
5. Keep a copy of the report securely and pass a copy to the designated teacher.

**B IF THE ABUSE IS MERELY SUSPECTED**

The designated teacher must always be informed even if abuse is merely suspected. If injuries are noticed, keep a note of when and how bruises/other signs were seen. If the child makes any reference (or if a parent does) to marks or bruises which are suspicious, note these down as accurately as possible.

**SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING INCIDENT/SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE**

*After the disclosure to member of staff/visitor of concern or suspicion of abuse.*

**MEMBER OF STAFF/VISITOR TO WHOM DISCLOSURE WAS MADE - EXPLAIN TO CHILD THE PEOPLE WHO NEED TO BE CONTACTED AND WHY.**

**CHILD IS ASSURED THAT ONLY THOSE WHO NEED TO KNOW WILL BE INFORMED**

**↓**

**JOT DOWN NOTES - FACTS, TIME, DATES, CHILD’S WORDS, OBSERVATION - RETAIN COPY SECURELY**

**↓**

**CONTACT ONE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHERS.**

**Mrs Orsi, Mrs McGinn, Mrs McMenamin**

**↓**

**DESIGNATED TEACHERS – INFORM PRINCIPAL.**

**PREPARE WRITTEN REPORT**

**↓**

**DESIGNATED TEACHER MAKES REFERRAL TO SOCIAL SERVICES -**

**Check if there is police involvement (where appropriate)**

**RECORDING INFORMATION IN CASES OF SUSPECTED OR ALLEGED CHILD ABUSE**

**NB: RECORDS MUST BE KEPT SECURELY AT ALL STAGES**

**The member of staff/visitor to whom the disclosure is made:-**

1. Makes rough notes as soon as possible after the disclosure. Retains these notes **securely**.
2. Records - Time, Date, Place.
3. Records - Words used by the child (exact words).
4. Records - Noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
5. Records (at time of a disclosure or in case of suspected abuse) - injuries, bruises, when observed (sketches may be helpful).
6. Records - Action taken - To whom reported.
7. Retains details and stores securely.
8. Passes copy to Designated Teacher.

**SPECIFIC RECOMMENDED MEASURES TO PROTECT PUPILS FROM ABUSE**

* Where staff/visitors meet pupils on a one-to-one basis, they should ensure that the meeting takes place in a room with visual access or with the door open.
* Staff/visitors should not undertake a car or minibus journey alone with a single pupil. In exceptional circumstances the parents should be contacted to give permission.
* Staff/visitors should not engage in or tolerate any behaviour - verbal, psychological or physical - that can be construed as bullying.
* Staff/visitors should avoid any form of contact or language which might be interpreted as inappropriate.
* Staff/visitors should adhere to school policy in the use of images/photographs of pupils.
* Pupils in RSE class will receive information designed to heighten their awareness of Child Abuse and will be given strategies to deal with this.
* All new staff must receive a Police Check. (See Appendix 7 Page 22)
* Access to the school by visitors should be controlled.
* Visitors must report to Reception and sign in.
* Staff who invite visitors into school to make presentations must ensure that the ‘Checklist To Be Used When Visiting Speakers Are in School’ form is completed (see Appendix 9)
* All staff receives a PowerPoint summary of the school’s Child Protection Policy at the beginning of the school year, or at an appropriate time during the school year, and are advised to access the whole policy on the school website.
* All visitors to the school, whose work brings them into contact with pupils, will be given a copy of “A Code of Conduct for Visitors whose work brings them into contact with pupils”

**FURTHER GUIDANCE ON RECOGNITION OF ABUSE**

**Dealing with Child Protection Concerns**

**What is Child Abuse?**

Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organisations. Abusers come from all walks of life and all occupations and professions. Child abuse can manifest in a number of ways and can involve a combination of the forms of abuse. Those working with children and young people must have an awareness and understanding of the nature and prevalence of different manifestations within their practice area.

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Through their day-to-day contact with individual children, school staff, especially teachers, but also non-teaching staff, including lunch-time supervisors and ancillary or auxiliary staff, are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms, change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm. **‘Harm’** means ill treatment or the impairment of health or development, and the question of whether harm is significant is determined in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Children Order. More detail on the concept of harm and significant harm can be found in Section 2.4 of Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016) and in the Children (NI) Order 1995.

Staff should be alert to all types of abuse and to their legal obligations (see Annex A), including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the **Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967** makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children.

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. However, teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are repeated regularly.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection. ***The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed,*** including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school’s staff, teaching or non‑teaching (see Section 5.5 on Dealing with Allegations Against a Member of Staff - DE Circular 2015/13).

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

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

**Types of Abuse**

Child abuse may take a number of forms, including:

* **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child’s basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.
* **Physical Abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.
* **Sexual Abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including 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.
* **Exploitation** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

\**All the above definitions are from Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)*

www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland

These types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed.

**Talking to Children where there are Concerns about Possible Abuse**

Where teachers see signs which cause them concern, they should, as a first step, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a classroom assistant or another member of the school’s non-teaching staff sees such signs, he/ she should immediately bring them to the attention of either the class teacher or the Designated Teacher, and it may be appropriate for the necessary clarification to be carried out by the teacher.

Such clarification may reassure teachers that abuse has not occurred; but signs and symptoms which cause concern, while perhaps not a result of abuse, may nevertheless

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.

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

* Staff should not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child’s mind.
* Staff should not, therefore, ask questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events in any way, or which impose the adult’s own assumptions. For example, staff should say, “Tell me what has happened”, rather than, “Did they do X to you?”.
* The priority at this stage is to actively listen to the child, and not to interrupt or try to interpret if he/she is freely recalling significant events *(the child must not be asked to unnecessarily recount the experience of abuse)*, and as soon as possible afterwards to make a record of the discussion to pass on to the Designated Teacher, using for example, the template ‘Note of Concern’ from the DE ‘Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools’ circular 2016/20. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, but *under no circumstances should a child’s clothing be removed nor a photograph taken*.
* Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred, should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used.
* Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should, of course, reassure that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.
* Staff should also be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings. Subsequent sections of this booklet give guidance on record-keeping. It should be emphasised that lack of proper records will not, of itself, exempt the school from any subsequent requirement to give evidence in court. *It is therefore essential that accurate contemporaneous records are maintained*.

 Staff should **not** ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record.

The NSPCC report ‘No-one Noticed No-one Heard: A Study of Disclosures of Childhood Abuse’ (2013) describes childhood experiences of disclosing abuse. It provides useful insight-on-barriers to children’s disclosure and key factors that promoted disclosure.

Domestic Violence

Where situations involving domestic violence are suspected staff are required to report to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teachers using CP Incident Record Form (CPIR 1).

Sexting

Where a pupil is suspected of sending inappropriate images of another child, this must also be reported to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teachers using CP Incident Record Form (CPIR 1).

**Recognising the Signs**

**Below is an extract from “Child Abuse and The Children Act”, ATL Publications**

There are certain symptoms that children who are suffering, or have suffered abuse are likely to exhibit. Some will lead to powerful suspicion, others will simply suggest the possibility that abuse is taking place, or has done so.

**BEHAVIOURAL**

Teachers see individual children over prolonged periods and can, over time, notice changes in the way they act. They are, therefore, particularly well placed to notice unusual patterns of behaviour which **may** be evidence of abuse.

The word **may** is emphasised, because it is of crucial importance that teachers do not read into a child’s behaviour “evidence” that may not signify abuse at all but is instead the result of some other, possibly innocent, factor.

Nonetheless, experienced teachers have found that the following behaviours can, with other indicators, point to the possibility or likelihood of abuse:

* persistent tiredness/sleepiness
* sudden switches in mood or behaviour
* regression to more immature behaviour
* excessive nervousness
* attention-seeking behaviour
* deterioration in school work
* reluctance to participate in physical education, games, swimming or other activities that involve changing clothes or physical exposure
* running away from lessons/school or reluctance to go home at the end of the day
* poor school attendance
* inappropriate conduct towards, or relationships with, peers and/or adults ( demonstrations of sexual precocity that cannot easily be explained by normal, natural curiosity)
* compulsive stealing

Obviously no child will demonstrate all these signs simultaneously: some are, indeed, mutually exclusive. Moreover, none of them - individually or in combination - conclusively suggests child abuse.

Nevertheless, teachers must be aware that such signs are not inconsistent with abuse: where there is no other convincing explanation for unusual patterns of behaviour, the possibility of abuse cannot be ruled out. If there are other indicators of abuse, or concerns about the child’s family life, the evidence must be carefully investigated.

**PHYSICAL**

On the face of it, evidence of physical abuse (which often accompanies, or is the culmination of, emotional abuse) is easier to identify and to assess.

But, as any experienced teacher knows, children - particularly young children - frequently have accidents which result in minor or major physical injury. Is there any way to judge whether an injury or succession of injuries is genuinely accidental, or non-accidental and therefore suggestive of abuse? Perhaps the best indication is the reaction of the parent(s) or adults responsible for the child’s care.

Where an injury is the result of a genuine accident, they will almost invariably be willing to discuss it openly with the child’s teacher(s), as well as the child. Suspicions should be aroused, however, when children and parents/guardians are reluctant to discuss the injury at all, or when their explanations differ in significant detail or are inconsistent with the severity of the injury. This list (by no means exhaustive) indicates the kinds of injury for which an explanation should be sought. In the absence of a convincing account of the cause of such injuries, teachers are justified in suspecting the possibility of non-accidental injury:

* multiple bruising and/or bizarre markings on the skin
* multiple bruising at different stages of resolution
* bruising and/or lacerations around the mouth
* finger and thumb marks on the face or body
* marks or bruising which seem to have been caused by adult bites
* black eyes (particularly when both are affected)
* cigarette burns and other burns or scalds

Any suspicion of physical abuse may be intensified if the following factors are also present:

* reports of earlier abuse of the child or other children in the care of the same parent(s) or other adult(s)
* failure by the parent(s) or responsible adult(s) to mention previous injuries
* a history of unexplained or inadequately explained injuries
* explanations of the cause of the injury which are contradictory and/or implausible
* delay in seeking medical or other help which would clearly have been appropriate
* refusal by the parent(s) or responsible adult(s) to allow the injury and/or its circumstances to be investigated further.

**Further Indicators Of Abuse**

Where there is, or has been, abuse, there are often other indicators which will manifest themselves at school. Again, it is important to stress that these indicators are not, in themselves, conclusive evidence of abuse: they should merely alert teachers to the possibility - although the possibility is not one to be ignored:

* in very young children, an inexplicable, persistent failure to thrive
* poor relationships between a child and her/his peers, including an inability to make friends
* consistent inability to concentrate, leading to identifiable learning difficulties
* disobedience, attention-seeking, restless or aimless behaviour
* regular avoidance of school medical examinations.

In addition, there are signs which may point, with varying degrees of certainty, to the possibility of **sexual** abuse:

* sudden changes of mood
* regressive behaviour, e.g. a sudden onset of bed-wetting or its persistence in older children
* lack of trust in adults (including, particularly, any marked fear of men)
* hints of sexual activity in a child’s conversation, play or drawings (this may include unusually graphic sexual additions to book illustrations, or sexually explicit graffiti in exercise books or elsewhere)
* excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, including:
* precocious knowledge or apparent experience of adult sexual behaviour
* repeated episodes of sexual play with peers, particularly if these seem to go beyond mere childish curiosity
* persistent, obsessive sexual self-stimulation
* with adults, sexually provocative behaviour which is inappropriate to the age of the child.

***The issue of pupil safety and welfare arises in the school’s Pastoral Programmes and in RSE (Years 8-12).***

***This Programme is reviewed regularly and new materials are added as, and when, appropriate. We are also increasing our involvement with external agencies to offer support to our pupils on a number of topics and to improve our preventative approach to Child Protection.***

**CHILD PROTECTION – Parents/Carers**

**HOW YOU CAN RAISE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD’S SAFETY/WELFARE IN ASSUMPTION GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

I have a concern about my/a child’s safety

**↓**

I can talk to the Form Teacher

or Year Head

**↓**

If I am still concerned, I can talk to one of the

Designated Teachers for Child Protection

***Mrs Orsi,*** ***Mrs L McMenamin, Mrs A McGinn***

**↓**

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal

**↓**

If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to

the Chairman of the Board of Governors

**↓**

At any time, I can talk to a Social Worker, South Eastern

Health & Social Care Trust (028 92 669111) or the PSNI Child

Protection & Sexual Offences Unit (028 90 650222)

NB The full Child Protection Policy is available on request from the school.

***APPENDIX 1***

**ASSUMPTION GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

A Code of Conduct for visitors whose work brings them into contact with pupils.

**INTRODUCTION**

Visitors must always be mindful that their behaviour towards the pupils must be above reproach. For the majority of visitors, this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has already been their practice.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**1 Private Meetings with Pupils**

1. A visitor should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. A visitor should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access or with the door open.
2. Where such conditions cannot apply, the visitor is advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.
3. Where possible, another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview.

**2 Physical Contact with Pupils**

1. As a general principle, visitors are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.

 However, in some instances, it may be necessary to protect the pupil, others or property from harm. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998).

1. Physical punishment is illegal.
2. Following any incident where a visitor feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal.
3. Visitors should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities.

**3 Choice and Use of Teaching Materials**

If materials of a sensitive nature are to be used, the visitor should consult with the Principal and, if necessary, the parents beforehand.

**4 Relationships and Attitudes**

Visitors should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.

*The Child Protection Policy is distributed to parents at the Year 8 Induction Day in June, is available on the school website and from the Vice Principal through the Secretary in Reception.*

**Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers in**

**Schools**

Date Ratified by BOG: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff and volunteers are expected to observe. School staff and volunteers are role models and are in a unique position of influence and trust and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school.

As a member of a school community, each person has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all staff and volunteers of the school.

This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employees’ contract of employment.

1. Setting an Example

1.1 All staff and volunteers who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must therefore for

example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

1.2 All staff and volunteers must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.

1.3 All staff and volunteers must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

1.4 This Code helps all staff and volunteers to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable and regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out by the employing authority.

1.5 All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

2. Safeguarding Pupils/Students

2.1 All staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns

about a pupil/student or colleague to a member of the school’s Safeguarding

team (Designated Teacher (DT)/Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child

Protection or the Principal).

2.3 **The school’s DT is Marcelle Orsi and the DDTs are Anita McGinn and Linda McMenamin.**

2.4 All staff and volunteers are provided with personal copies of the school’s Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and must be familiar with these documents and other relevant school policies eg e-Safety and Acceptable Use

Policy.

2.5 All staff and volunteers should treat children with respect and dignity. They

must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents, carers or colleagues.

2.6 All staff and volunteers should not demonstrate behaviours that may be

perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.

2.7 All staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff should also complete risk assessments where appropriate in accordance with school policies.

3. Relationships with Students

3.1 All staff and volunteers must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils/students outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. A declaration form may be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

3.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, sexual

relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to an abuse of trust and criminal conviction.

4. Pupil/Student Development

4.1 All staff and volunteers must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.

4.2 All staff and volunteers must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.

5. Honesty and Integrity

5.1 All staff and volunteers must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

5.2 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Principal with the exception of “one off” token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff or volunteers to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

6. Conduct Outside of Work

6.1 All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/

volunteers own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school

community.

6.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are to be regarded as unacceptable.

6.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. It should not contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual’s work performance in the school. Staff should seek advice from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

7. E-Safety and Internet Use

7.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the schools’ E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.

7.2 Staff and volunteers must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff and volunteers should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

7.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other

web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or

photographs, and views expressed either directly or by ‘liking’ certain pages or

posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites

where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting

covertly.

7.4 Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students.

If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the

contact to the Principal immediately.

7.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using

school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should

always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given.

The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be

retained and destroyed in accordance with the schools Records Management

Policy and Disposal Schedules.

8. Confidentiality

8.1 Members of staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information

about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In

some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private

information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his family for their own, or others’ advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.

8.2 Confidential information about students should never be used casually in

conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the student’s identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

8.3 There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

8.4 If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it

confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior leadership.

8.5 Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support students, they must not promise confidentiality or request students to do the same under any circumstances.

8.6 Additionally concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as

confidential and passed to a senior leader without delay.

9. Dress and Appearance

9.1 All staff and volunteers must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a

professional role and promoting a professional image.

9.2 Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

9.3 Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

10. Disciplinary Action

Staff and volunteers should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

11. Compliance

All staff and volunteers must complete the form in Appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated.

***Relationships with Students Outside of Work Declaration***

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

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

Employee Name Student Name Relationship

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

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

• I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable -

this is a stipulation of such tutoring.

• I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school.

• No monies come through the school at any point, informally (eg via the child) or formally.

• No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises.

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Appendix 2

Confirmation of Compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school’s

code of conduct.

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position/Post Held \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Appendix- Updated

**Specific Types of Abuse (Grooming and SE) APPENDIX 2**

**6.1 Grooming**

Grooming11,12 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) (see Section 6.2), 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 eg 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.

DoH publication ‘Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland’ (March 2016) www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland

12 NSPCC definition - ‘Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people do not understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

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.

**Child Sexual Exploitation**

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

Female Genital Mutilation

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 and established school procedures.

In the UK, FGM has been a specific criminal offence since the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 replaced the 1985 Act in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Serious Crime Act 2015 further strengthened the law on FGM.

FGM is a complex issue with many men and women from practising communities considering it to be normal to protect their cultural identity. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, the majority of cases are thought to take place between the ages of five and eight, putting children in this age bracket at highest risk.

**Statutory Responsibilities**

Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 - Article 17 - schools have a statutory duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of its pupils.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 repealed and re-enacted the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985 to set the maximum penalty for FGM to 14 years imprisonment and to make it an offence for UK nationals or permanent UK residents to perform FGM overseas or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad, even in countries where FGM is legal.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 introduced a new offence of failing to protect a girl from FGM and lifelong anonymity for victims of FGM has been guaranteed. New FGM Protection Orders (FGMPO) were introduced in July 2015 (Section 73) and allows for the making of an FGMPO for the purpose of protecting a girl against the commission of a genital mutilation offence or protecting a girl against whom such an offence has been committed.

A new mandatory FGM reporting duty was also introduced. This duty does not extend to Northern Ireland, however, the **Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967** - Section 5 - makes it an offence to fail to report a “relevant offence” where a person has information which could lead to the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of such an offender. FGM would be such an offence.

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/58/section/5

The Department issued Multi Agency Practice Guidelines on FGM to all Principals, Designated Teachers, Boards of Governors and the CPSS in July 2014 and FGM is included as part of Child Protection training.***6 - 9***

Any child under the age of 18 can be a victim of CSE. Although younger children can experience CSE, the average age at which concerns are first identified is 12-15 years of age. Sixteen and seventeen year olds, although legally able to consent to sexual activity can also be sexually exploited. Young males can also be victims of CSE.

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**.

**Statutory Responsibilities**

While CSE is not a specific criminal offence, it does encompass a range of sexual offences and other forms of serious criminal misconduct.

The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 provides for a number of offences that between them could enable prosecution of all cases of CSE.

The Children (NI) Order 1995 and the Child Abduction (NI) Order 1985 can also be used in cases where children are going missing as part of the exploitation.

**Identifying CSE**

CSE can be very difficult to identify and a young person may not see themselves as a victim. However, it is our statutory responsibility to protect all children and young people from abuse, irrespective of whether or not they view themselves as a victim of abuse. **Professionals need to be able to identify vulnerability in the midst of challenging behaviour and frequent resistance to, or even apparent disregard for, professional support.**

Research repeatedly shows that young people rarely report abuse through CSE. Most concerns are identified by professionals, friends or family or by proactive investigation by authorities. In recognition of this, good practice guidelines state that all areas should assume that CSE is occurring within their area unless they have evidence to indicate otherwise. As such, **schools should be alert to the likelihood of CSE and plan to protect children and young people accordingly**.

 **ASSUMPTION GRAMMAR SCHOOL APPENDIX 3**

**CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT RECORD FORM (CPIR 1)**

(NB It is imperative that only factual and neutral information is recorded.)

|  |
| --- |
| Details of the Incident/Concerns/Disclosure – day, date, time, place, who dealt with it, observations or circumstances, description of physical/behavioural indicators, child/young person’s statements. |

|  |
| --- |
| Details of anyone else involved; conversations held with anyone else; witnesses e.g. parent, other staff member, designated teacher – day, date, time, place, factual content of conversation. |

|  |
| --- |
| Referral to one of the Designated Teachers in school who, when (date and time), where and advice given by the Designated Teacher. |

Signed by School Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

All completed forms should be placed in a sealed envelope and given to one of the Designated Teachers.

**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 NoIf ‘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 NoIf ‘No’ state reason: |

Name of staff member making the report:

Signature of Staff Member: Date:

Signature of Designated Teacher: Date:

**ASSUMPTION GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

**To be completed by the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher**

|  |
| --- |
| Advice sought/conversation with - Board Officer for CP, CCMS Diocesan Officer, Social Services, Police CPSA Unit, date, time, place, advice. |

|  |
| --- |
| Decision not to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved - how, when. |

|  |
| --- |
| Decision to refer and why. Other action plus type of feedback to all those involved - how, when. |

Signed by Designated Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland (UNOCINI) APPENDIX 4***

UNOCINI (a multi agency common assessment tool to assess vulnerable children and children in need in N Ireland) is a process used to make referrals to social services. When the Designated Teacher has concerns she/he can identify the needs of the child and communicate these needs to professional colleagues outside the organisation through UNOCINI.

UNOCINI offers a structure for recording information collected in conversation with the young person or family and assists in getting other services to help.

UNOCINI can be used when there is a concern about the health, welfare, behaviour, progress or well-being of a young person or if the child’s needs are unclear or broader than the school can address. It helps identify and clarify the child’s needs and/or engage other services to help meet those needs. It is used when a referral to a specialist agency is appropriate. Whether to use UNOCINI is a decision made jointly with the pupil and/or parent. If a pupil is old enough to understand and competent to make a decision, she should make the decision in consultation with the Designated Teacher.

If, however, a pupil may be deemed at risk of significant harm, or if involving the pupil and/or parent may place the child at further risk, it may not be appropriate to involve the pupil and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

**When a Child Protection referral is being made the following will be notified:**

* **Principal**
* **Chair of the Board of Governors**

**Child Protection Support Services for Schools**

**Checklist To Be Used When Visiting Speakers Are in School APPENDIX 5**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ISSUE** | **YES /NO** |
| Does the agency/individual have a specifiedChild Protection Policy? |  |
| How will the issue of confidentiality be dealt with? |  |
| Are resources such as videos/tapes/role plays appropriate? |  |
| Has the agency/individual worked with any other schools? |  |
| Does the agency/individual have a clear set of aims and objectives as well as lesson plans? |  |
| Has the agency/individual read the school’s RSE Policy and are they prepared to adhere to it (especially the ethos, morals and values of the school)? |  |
| Do parents/guardians know that an agency/individual is being used by the school? |  |
| Will teachers be present? |  |
| Will the input by the agency or individual be monitored? |  |
| Will the pupils be asked how the session/class with the agency/ individual went? |  |
| Can the school terminate the work of the agency or individual if the classes or sessions are deemed inappropriate? |  |
| Are evaluations carried out by the agency/individual and if so, will the school have access to them? |  |

**Recruitment and Selection APPENDIX 6**

A Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) check is required for a “regulated position” which involves work with children and young people. (Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003) (POCVA).

The Board of Governors will carry out pre-employment vetting on all posts deemed “regulated positions”.

**DENI Advice on Recruitment, Vetting and Induction of Staff and Volunteers**

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 .The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 provide the legislative framework for a vetting and barring scheme for people who work with children and vulnerable adults.

www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2007/1351/pdfs/uksi\_20071351\_en.pdf

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/9/contents/enacted

**Process**

The responsibilities and processes to be followed are clearly set out in:

DE Circular 2013/01 ‘Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for Paid Staff working in or Providing a Service in Schools’:

www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201301-guidance-schools-and-employing-authorities-pre-employment-safer

DE Circular 2012/19 ‘Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Changes to Pre‑Employment Vetting Checks for Volunteers Working in Schools from 10 September 2012:

www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201219-changes-pre-employment-vetting-checks-volunteers-working-schools

**4.4.1 AccessNI Clearance**

DE Circular 2013/01 (updated September 2015) sets out vetting requirements for schools. In brief, the following groups must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from AccessNI **before** taking up post:

All new **paid** teaching and non-teaching staff.

Examination Invigilators.

Private contracted transport providers - named drivers.

**4.4.2 Volunteers**

There are two types of volunteers working in schools: those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision. Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, however, schools/ organisations must determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard - see DE Circular 2012/19.

Schools must ensure that volunteers, eg coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc, who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place.

**APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES, VETTING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

AccessNI was established by a joint programme between the Northern Ireland Office, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/]

AccessNI is a Criminal History Disclosure Service within the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland. AccessNI commenced operations in April 2008 and operates in accordance with Part V of the Police Act 1997. [http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/accessni/]

AccessNI should only be used as part of an overall recruitment policy. It provides organisations registered with them with a central means of checking the suitability of an individual seeking work with children. The use of AccessNI by organisations has a deterrent effect but should **never** be relied upon to screen out all abusers. It is not a foolproof guarantee of suitability. AccessNI provides a means for accessing any information which might have a bearing on an individual’s suitability.

**DISCLOSURE APPLICATIONS**

There is a separate application form for seeking disclosure information on individuals.

**COST**

There is a charge for every AccessNI disclosure,

**TURN-AROUND TIME**

AccessNI seeks to have 90% of Enhanced Disclosures back with Registered Bodies within 4 weeks of receipt. This delay should be factored into the recruitment process.

Remember AccessNI is not a stand-alone service; it is only one step in a recruitment process and does not offer a guarantee of someone’s suitability. It only provides information that may enable a Governing Body to make a more informed decision. Governing Bodies which do make volunteers and coaches aware that they use AccessNI as part of their recruitment procedures will deter many of those with unsuitable convictions from volunteering or working for the Governing Body.

**Supporting our LGBTQ Community in school Appendix 7**

7.4 Gender Identity Issues/Sexual Orientation Schools should strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation. The Department of Education requires all grant-aided schools to develop their own policy on how they will address Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) within the curriculum. It is via this policy that schools are expected to cover issues relating to relationships and sexuality, including those affecting LGB&T children and young people. CCEA published updated guidance for primary and post-primary schools on RSE in August 2015. This guidance outlines the importance of RSE, the partnership approach needed for effective delivery of RSE (including the need for engagement with parents), the inclusive approach that is required (covering sexual orientation/gender identity) and the importance of the classroom environment. DE Circular 2015/22 - Relationship and sexuality education also provides help and advice for schools.

Statutory Responsibilities The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (NI) 2007 does not specifically refer to, “gender, race, political opinion, faith” but instead states that pupils should have opportunities to, “Investigate how and why conflict, including prejudice, stereotyping, sectarianism and racism may arise in the community”. The terms prejudice and stereotyping can cover a wide range of scenarios - including disability, gender, and sexual orientation. European Convention of Human Rights details the rights of all citizens. Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 places an obligation on Boards of Governors to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’. Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003 and Regulations (NI) 2006 makes it unlawful for service providers (including education service providers) to discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation. Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended in 2011 and 2012) makes it unlawful for an educator to discriminate based on sex, being married or having a civil partner, on the grounds of undergoing, undergone, or intention to undergo gender reassignment (this means someone who changes their sex under medical supervision). Each school is required to have in place a written RSE Policy with the latest guidance published in August 2015: www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/relationships-and-sexuality-education The policy should seek to promote an understanding of diversity and inclusiveness and Section 3 offers guidance specifically in respect of LGB&T pupils. While it is recognised that every school’s RSE policy will be different, there are some key areas which should appear in all policies, including how the policy takes account of statutory obligations including The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations NI 2006. The guide also provides support to teaching staff in dealing with sensitive issues such as sexual orientation.

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| **CIRCULARS** | **TOPIC** | **DETAIL** |
| Circular  [2003/13](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2003_13.pdf)  | Child Protection**STATUTORY** | Guidance for schools on the Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries ( NI ) Order 2003**School review required ‘from time to time’ – annually advised** |
|  [Circular 2004/09](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2004_09.pdf) | Drugs **STATUTORY** | Drugs: Guidance for Schools |
|  [Circular 2006/06](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2006_06.pdf) | Recruitment practices**STATUTORY** | Guidance on safer recruitment practices for education authorities |
|  [Circular 2006/07](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2006_07.pdf) | Employment of teachers (substitute) | Guidance for schools on the employment of substitute teachers |
|  [Circular 2006/08](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2006_08.pdf)  | Child Protection Training**STATUTORY** | Guidance for schools on the requirement for child protection training in relation to interviewing and selection panels**Renewal advised at least every three years** |
|  [Circular 2006/09](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2006_09.pdf) | Vetting (School staff) | Guidance on the vetting of paid and unpaid staff |
|  [Circular 2006/25](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2006_25.pdf) | Vetting (Governors) | Guidance on the requirement for vetting of school governors |
|  [Circular 2007/01](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2007_01.pdf)  | Internet use | Acceptable use of the internet and digital technologies in schools**School review required – 3 years at least is advised** |
|  [Circular 2008/03](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2008_03.pdf) | Pre-employment checks | Pre-employment checking of persons to work in schools |
|  [Circular 2008/10](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2008_10.pdf)  | Employment of Substitute teachers | From 1st August 2008 substitute teachers must be booked on line via NISTR |
|  [Circular 2010/01](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2010_01.pdf)  | RSE guidance | Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education |
|  [Circular 2010/07](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2010_07.pdf) | Attendance | Learner Attendance: Absence Recording by Schools |
|  [Circular 2010/18](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2010_08.pdf)  | Governors’ role | The governors' role set out in DE Governors’ Handbook**School review required – 3 years at least is advised** |
|  [Circular 2011/22](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2011_22.pdf)  | Internet use | Internet Safety guidance |
|  [Circular 2012/19](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2012_19.pdf)  | Pre-employment checks | Guidance for schools and employing authorities on changes to pre-employment checking and safer recruitment practices |
|  [Circular 2013/01](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2013_01.pdf)  | Pre-employment checks | Guidance for schools and employing authorities on pre-employment vetting checking and safer recruitment practices |
|  [Circular 2013/16](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2013_16.pdf)  | RSE policyNeeds checked | Reminds schools of the need to have a policy on Relationships and Sexuality in place. |
|  [Circular 2013/25](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2013_25.pdf)  | E-safety guidance | eSafety Guidance – provides information and guidance on eSafety within the context of the new C2k contract, Education Network (NI) and in relation to non-C2k networks**School review required – 3 years at least is advised** |
|  Circular 2014/14 | Learner participation | Guidance on how to encourage learner participation in decision making in schools |
| Circular 2014/24 | Education Other Than At School pupils | Section 6: Guidance for schools and providers with responsibilities for pastoral care and safeguarding. |
|  [Circular 2014/27](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_managing_information_on_persons_who_pose_a_risk_to_pupils.pdf)  | Managing persons who pose a risk | Managing persons who pose a risk to learners |
|  [Circular 2015/13](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_dealing_with_allegations_of_abuse_against_a_member_of_staff.pdf)  | Allegations of abuse | Dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff |
|  [Circular 2015/22](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2015_22.pdf)  | RSE guidance | Relationship and sexuality Education (RSE) guidance |
|  [Circular 2015/23](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/cpsss_circular_2015_23.pdf) | Drugs**STATUTORY** | Drugs Guidance |
|  Circular 2016/11 | Class sizes in post-primary schools – practical subjects | Requirement for a health and safety risk assessment in post-primary practical classes over 20 pupils |
|  Circular 2016/05  | Harmful Sexual Behaviour | Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour |
|  Circular 2016/20 | Record keeping in schools | Advice and guidance to schools onthe recording and retention of child protection concerns |
|  Circular 2016/26 | Effective educational uses of mobile digital devices  | Research-based advice and guidance |
|  Circular 2016/27 | Online Safety | A set of guiding principles for keeping learners and the wider school community safe online and for prioritising online safety within the school’s preventative education curriculum and overall Safeguarding Policy |
|  Circular 2017/04(replaces 1999/10) | Child protection/pastoral care **ASPECTS ARE STATUTORY** | Principle guidance on child protection in schoolsinc. Anti-bullying policy**Governors should review CP Policy - annually is advised** |

**DE Letters of Information**

* [Sexting and the law - Letter [pdf / 25KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41581.pdf)
* [Sexting and the law - Leaflet [pdf / 183KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41583.pdf)
* [ICT Provision in Schools - Letter [pdf / 298KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41584.pdf)
* [E-Safety guidance circular letter [pdf / 50KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41586.pdf)
* [Preventing child sexual exploitation - Circular letter issued to schools [pdf / 55KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41588.pdf)
* [Disposal of child protection records - letter to principals [pdf / 73KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41589.pdf)
* [Multi-Agency practice guidelines on female genital mutilation - Letter from DE [pdf / 69KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41590.pdf)
* [Concussion and Second Impact Syndrome [pdf / 255KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41592.pdf)
* [Provision of free School Meals on Humanitarian Grounds, Letter from DE [pdf / 76KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41593.pdf)
* [Sexual Offences Order 2008 - DE Letter to Schools [pdf / 1.08MB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/41594.pdf)
* [Child Protection School Holiday Procedures - Letter to Schools [pdf / 70KB]](http://www.eani.org.uk/_resources/assets/attachment/full/0/52497.pdf)

This policy has been agreed and formally adopted by the Board of Governors of Assumption Grammar School.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 *(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)*

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 *(Principal)*

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