



LONGSTONE SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Article 3 UNCRC

“The best interests of the child must be a top priority
in all things that affect children.”

REVIEWED: August 2022



1. Child Protection Ethos

We in Longstone have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment (**Article 24**), where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities (**Article 29**), and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed (**Article 34 & 36**). This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

2. Principles

The general principles, which underpin our work, are those set out in the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** and are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance “Pastoral Care in Schools- Child Protection” (DENI Circular 99/10) and the Area Child Protection Committees’ Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

The following principles form the basis of our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

- It is a child’s right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously (**Article 12 right to an opinion**).
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and should take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved (**Article 19 protection from violence and being mistreated**).
- In any incident the child’s welfare must be paramount, this overrides all other considerations (**Article 3 best interests of the child**).
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child’s interest must always come first.

3. Other Relevant Policies

The school has a duty to ensure that safeguarding permeates all activities and functions. This policy therefore complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Guidelines for Dealing with Difficult Situations
- Code of Conduct
- Use of Reasonable Force
- Health and Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- RSE Policy
- Intimate Care
- Rights Respecting School

These policies are available to parents and can be obtained by contacting the School Office.

4. School Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the school's Safeguarding Team

- Designated Teacher – [Mr John McIlmoyle](#)
- Deputy Designated Teacher – [Mr Ioannis Skarmoutsos](#)
- Deputy Designated Teacher – [Mr J Starrs](#)
- Deputy Designated Teacher – [Mrs A Gordon](#)
- Designated Governor for Child Protection – [Mr Alan Newell](#)
- Chair of the Board of Governors – [Mr Alan Newell](#)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher

The designated teacher and deputy designated teacher must:

- Avail of training so that they are aware of duties, responsibilities and role.
- Organise training for all staff (whole school training).
- All new members of staff are given a copy of Safeguarding & Child Protection procedures as part of their induction into the school.
- Lead in the development of the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Act as a point of contact for staff and parents.
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our Child Protection arrangements for parents.
- Make referrals to Social Services Gateway team or PSNI Public Protection Unit where appropriate.
- Liaise with the Education Authority Designated Officers for Child Protection.
- Maintain records of all child protection concerns.
- Ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from pupils' records.
- Keep the School Principal informed.

5.2 The Principal

The Principal must ensure that:

- DENI 1999 / 10 is implemented within the school / superseded by Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools 2017
- That a designated teacher and deputy are appointed.
- That all staff receive child protection training.
- That all necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner.
- That the Chairman of the Board of Governors (and, when appropriate, the Board of Governors) is kept informed.
- That child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates are provided.
- That the school child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy of this policy at least once every 2 years.
- That confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.

5.3 The Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Designated Governor will provide the child protection lead in order to advise the Governors on:

- The role of the designated teachers.
- The content of child protection policies.
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school.
- The content of the termly updates
- Recruitment, selection and vetting of staff.

5.4 The Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors must:

- Ensure that a safeguarding ethos is maintained within the school environment.
- Ensure that the school has a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy.
- Ensure that Governors undertake appropriate child protection and recruitment & selection training provided by the Education Authority Child Protection Support Service for Schools, the EA Governor Support and Human Resource departments.
- Ensure that a Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed
- Assume lead responsibility for managing any complaint/allegation against the School Principal.
- Ensure that the Board of Governors receive termly updates and a full written annual report in relation to child protection activity.

5.5 Other Members of School Staff/ Classroom Assistants/ Ancillary Staff

Staff in school see children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse.

Remember the 5 Rs: Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer.

The member of staff must:

- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection;
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child.
- act promptly.
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child (**Appendix 1**).
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children.
- **Not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures.
- **Not** investigate.
- **Not** ask leading questions.

In addition the Class Teacher should:

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying, concerns about home conditions including disclosures of domestic violence.

5.6 Parents

Parents should play their part in Safeguarding & Child Protection by:

- telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation;
- informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school;
- letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home;
- familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Internet and Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies;
- reporting to the office when they visit the school;
- raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the school.

5.7 The Board of Governors

Board of Governors must ensure that:

- the school has a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy in place and that staff implement the policy;
- relevant Child Protection training is kept up-to-date by at least one governor and a record kept of the same;
- confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to an entire Board of Governors on a need-to-know basis.

6. What Is Child Abuse?

(Article 19 protection from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment).

6.1 Definition of 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 different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards a child.

6.2 Types of Abuse

1. **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.
2. **Physical Abuse** – actual or deliberate physical injury to a child or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury and suffering to a child.
3. **Sexual Abuse** – actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child, including children and adolescents in sexual activities. (including exposure to pornography) This may include grooming a child in preparation for abuse. (including via e-technology)
4. **Emotional Abuse** – is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate.
5. **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.

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse and abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

6.3 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

Physical Abuse

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
<p>Unexplained bruises – in various stages of healing – grip marks on arms; slap marks; human bite marks; welts; bald spots; unexplained/untreated burns; especially cigarette burns (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear – symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</p>	<p>Self-destructive tendencies; aggressive to other children; behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive); appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults; improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway; uncomfortable with physical contact; come to school early or stays last as if afraid to be at home; clothing inappropriate to weather – to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories</p>

Emotional Abuse

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
<p>Well below average in height and weight; “failing to thrive”; poor hair and skin; alopecia; swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders; signs of self-mutilation; signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).</p>	<p>Apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations; rocking/head banging; inability to play; indifference to separation from family indiscriminate attachment; reluctance for parental liaison; fear of new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships.</p>

Neglect

<u>Physical Indicators</u>	<u>Behavioural Indicators</u>
<p>Looks very thin, poorly and sad; constant hunger; lack of energy; untreated medical problems; special needs of child not being met; constant tiredness; inappropriate dress; poor hygiene; repeatedly unwashed; smelly; repeated accidents, especially burns.</p>	<p>Tired or listless (falls asleep in class); steals food; compulsive eating; begging from class friends; withdrawn; lacks concentration; misses school medicals; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at school; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.</p>

6.3 Signs and symptoms of abuse ~ Possible Indicators

(Article 34 protection from sexual abuse)

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs; bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas; torn, stained or bloody underclothes; chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches; difficulty in walking or sitting; frequent urinary infections; avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers; unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating.</p>	<p>What the child tells you; Withdrawn; chronic depression; excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness; children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal; over concerned for siblings; poor self-esteem; self-devaluation; lack of confidence; peer problems; lack of involvement; massive weight change; suicide attempts (especially adolescents); hysterical/angry outbursts; lack of emotional control; sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour; inappropriate sex play; repeated attempts to run away from home; unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories; vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation; promiscuity; exposure to pornographic material.</p>

7. Procedures for making complaints in relation to child abuse

7.1 How a Parent can make a Complaint

At Longstone School we aim to work closely with the parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of the child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or the Principal/Designated teacher for Child Protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors. At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Public Protection Unit. Details of who to contact are shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 2**.

7.2 Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers

Where staff become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate – this is a matter for Social Services – but should report these concerns immediately to the designated teacher and full notes should be made. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the designated teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The designated teacher will decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services (**Article 3 best interests of the child**). If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parent will be informed immediately.

The designated teacher may consult with the EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Designated Officer the child's details will be shared. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our prime priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse and a referral needs to be made the designated teacher will telephone Social Services Gateway Team. He/she will also notify the EA South Eastern Region Designated Officer for Child Protection. A UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) referral form will also be completed and forwarded to the Gateway team with a copy sent to the EA SE Region Designated Officer for Child Protection.

If the Principal has concerns that a child may be at immediate risk from a volunteer, the services of the volunteer will be terminated immediately.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 3**.

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

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or Designated teacher if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Principal/Designated teacher)

If a complaint is made against the Principal the Designated Teacher will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors who will ensure that necessary action is taken.

Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils (and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigation by the appropriate authorities). The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

Child protection procedures as outlined in Appendix will be followed in keeping with current Department of Education guidance.

This procedure with names and contact numbers is shown in **Appendix 4**.

The following are guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.

Do:	Do not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Listen to what the child says ❖ Assure the child they are not at fault ❖ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret ❖ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words ❖ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality ❖ Stay calm ❖ Listen ❖ Accept ❖ Reassure ❖ Explain what you are going to do ❖ Record accurately ❖ Seek support for yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ask leading questions. ❖ Put words into the child's mouth. ❖ Ignore the child's behaviour. ❖ Remove any clothing. ❖ Panic ❖ Promise to keep secrets ❖ Ask leading questions ❖ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily ❖ Delay ❖ Start to investigate ❖ Do Nothing

Receive

- Listen to what a child says but do not ask leading questions
- Accept what is said

Reassure

- Ensure the child is reassured that he/she will be safe and their interests come first

React

- React to the child only to ensure that he/she is safe and secure
- Explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk

Record

- Make notes at the time or as soon as possible
- Record the date, time, any noticeable behaviour and the words used by the child.
- Record statements and observable things – not your interpretations

Refer

- Report to the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher

8. Attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences and Core Group Meetings

The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher may be invited to attend an initial and review Child Protection Case Conferences and/or core group meetings convened by the Health & Social Care Trust. They will provide a written report which will be compiled following consultation with relevant staff. Feedback will be given to staff under the 'need to know' principle on a case-by-case basis. Children whose names are on the Child Protection register will be monitored and supported in accordance with the child protection plan.

9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. Where abuse is suspected schools have a legal duty to refer to the Statutory Agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis. **(Article 16 right to privacy).**

10. Record Keeping

All child protection records, information and confidential notes are kept in separate files in a locked Filing cabinet. These records are kept separate from any other file that is held on the child or young person and are only accessible by the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher.

A Child Protection Book is kept in a locked drawer in the Principal's Office. This includes a summary and overview of Child Protection phone calls, disclosures and meetings. A separate hard backed book is also kept for complaints against staff and is checked annually by the Board of Governors.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is received by the school and is not referred to Social Services – or if it is referred and Social Services do not place the child's name on the Child Protection Register – a record will be permanently preserved and a confidential copy will be sent to any school to which the child subsequently transfers.

If Social Services inform the school that a child's name **has** been placed on the Child Protection Register, a record of this fact and associated documentation from Social Services will be maintained on the Child Protection File while he or she continues to attend our school.

Should a child transfer to another school whilst their name is on the Child Protection Register, then we will inform the receiving school that his/her name is on the Register, and the name of the child's Social Worker will be forwarded as well. All Social Services records held by us in relation to the child will then be destroyed. The school's own child protection records in relation to the child will be held in secure and confidential storage for permanent preservation. **(Article 16 right to privacy).**

11. Vetting Procedures

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in the School are vetted in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

12. Code of Conduct for all Staff Paid or Unpaid

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the child and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

The school's Code of Conduct is available on request.

13. Staff Training

Longstone School is committed to in-service training for its entire staff. Each member of staff will receive general training on Policy and procedures with some members of staff receiving more specialist training in line with their roles and responsibilities. All staff will receive basic child protection awareness training and annual refresher training. The Principal/Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher, Chair of the Board of Governors and Designated Governor for Child Protection will also attend relevant child protection training courses provided by the Child Protection Support Service for Schools.

When new staff or volunteers start at the school they are briefed on the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct and given copies of these policies.

14. The Preventative Curriculum

The staff of Longstone School recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging or they may be withdrawn. **(Article 28 good quality education).**

Our school ethos promotes a positive supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.

Through our Pastoral Care System at Longstone School Child Protection issues are addressed within elements of the curriculum (particularly Personal Development) and through assemblies to support pupils in considering their physical and emotional wellbeing and to manage their general interests and personal relationships. **(Article 17 right to information that is important to your well-being).**

Two FamilyWorks Counsellors are also available in school and pupils can access this through self-referral or will be referred through the VP (Pastoral Care) following consultation with the Key Stage Co-ordinators. **(Article 24 best possible health care).**

Relevant information is displayed in prominent places to provide advice on who to speak to.

The following issues will be considered:

- ensuring pupils have sufficient knowledge about themselves to be able to understand what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact.

- enabling children to become aware of strategies which they may use to protect themselves from possibly abusive situations.
- enabling young people to develop realistic and responsible attitudes towards the responsibilities of adult life.

We will ensure that sensitive professional judgement will be required in determining the content and delivery of such programmes. Outside agencies may be used to deal with issues in a sensitive manner (e.g. Relationships Programme for LLW).

15. Use of Images

The Data Protection Act (DPA) and Human Rights Legislation require that the school take care in the use of photographs, videos and web cams in the school environment. All photographs held on file (both electronic and paper) of the pupils exist in accordance with the DPA. **(Article 16 right to privacy).**

Photographs and videos of the pupils taken during the year to promote the school for publicity, use in the prospectus or in other printed materials will be subject to consent by parents. Images being used will portray the pupils appropriately attired.

Digital video recordings may be made at various functions or of class activities. These can help encourage creativity, motivate and enthuse pupils and improve communication, team working skills and may be used for assessment purposes.

Photographs of school staff will only be used with the consent of that staff member.

The use of camera phones to send offensive pictures in school to other pupils is not permitted and will be dealt with under the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Any incident of improper use of photographs should be reported to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher immediately.

16. Residential School Trips

EA guidelines will be referred to.

Form EV1 to be completed and approved by the Board of Governors.

Preparation and organisation to be completed by teacher-in-charge.

Parents to be made aware of the purposes of the trip and all planned activities.

Parental permission for their child's participation to be sought.

Medical/special circumstances information to be collected.

Adequate staffing levels to be provided.

School's child protection reporting arrangements to be applied.

All documentation to be kept by the teacher-in-charge.

17. Educational Visits (Non-Residential)

Venues to be vetted according to the categories stated on EA form EV1.

Preparation and organisation to be completed by the teacher-in-charge.

Parents to be made fully aware of the purpose of the visit and all planned activities.

Adequate qualified staffing levels to be provided.

All documentation to be kept by the teacher-in-charge of educational visits

18. Staff Liability

Correctly following the procedures will protect staff from legal redress.

19. Recruitment and Vetting Procedures

All vetting procedures take account of the requirements set down in the DENI Circular 2006/6: Recruitment of people to work with children and young people in educational settings.

Temporary staff

Temporary staff, teaching and non-teaching, in Longstone will be subject to checks, exactly as a permanent post holder would be. Only teachers who are on the NI Substitute Register will be appointed as substitute cover.

Emergencies and Exceptions

Temporary replacements for non-teaching staff may be made before a check can be carried out if no-one who has been checked is available. There are also circumstances in which a contracted employee may have to enter the premises e.g. to make repairs, without a check having been undertaken. There are also visitors entering for limited periods on an ad hoc basis, e.g. to make deliveries, or visitors for a meeting, who will obviously not be checked.

In such circumstances all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that:

- The individual wears a visitor's badge, showing that he or she is not a member of staff.
- He or she is not left unsupervised with children.
- The locations where he or she has to work or visit, including access routes, are as far as possible restricted.
- Visitors to meetings are accompanied to the location of the meeting.
- Staff are aware of the dangers of digital media and restrict use as appropriate.

The presence of unvetted people around the school is exceptional, short term, controlled and (except for visitors) only if vetted people have been sought and are not available.

20. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Safeguarding Team in Longstone School will update this Policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Date Policy Reviewed: _____

Signed:

_____ (Designated Teacher)

_____ (Principal)

_____ (Chair of Board of Governors)

Longstone School

Child Protection Incident Report

Child's Name: _____ DOB _____ Class _____

Details of Incident/Disclosure*

Name of Person completing the report: _____

Designation: _____

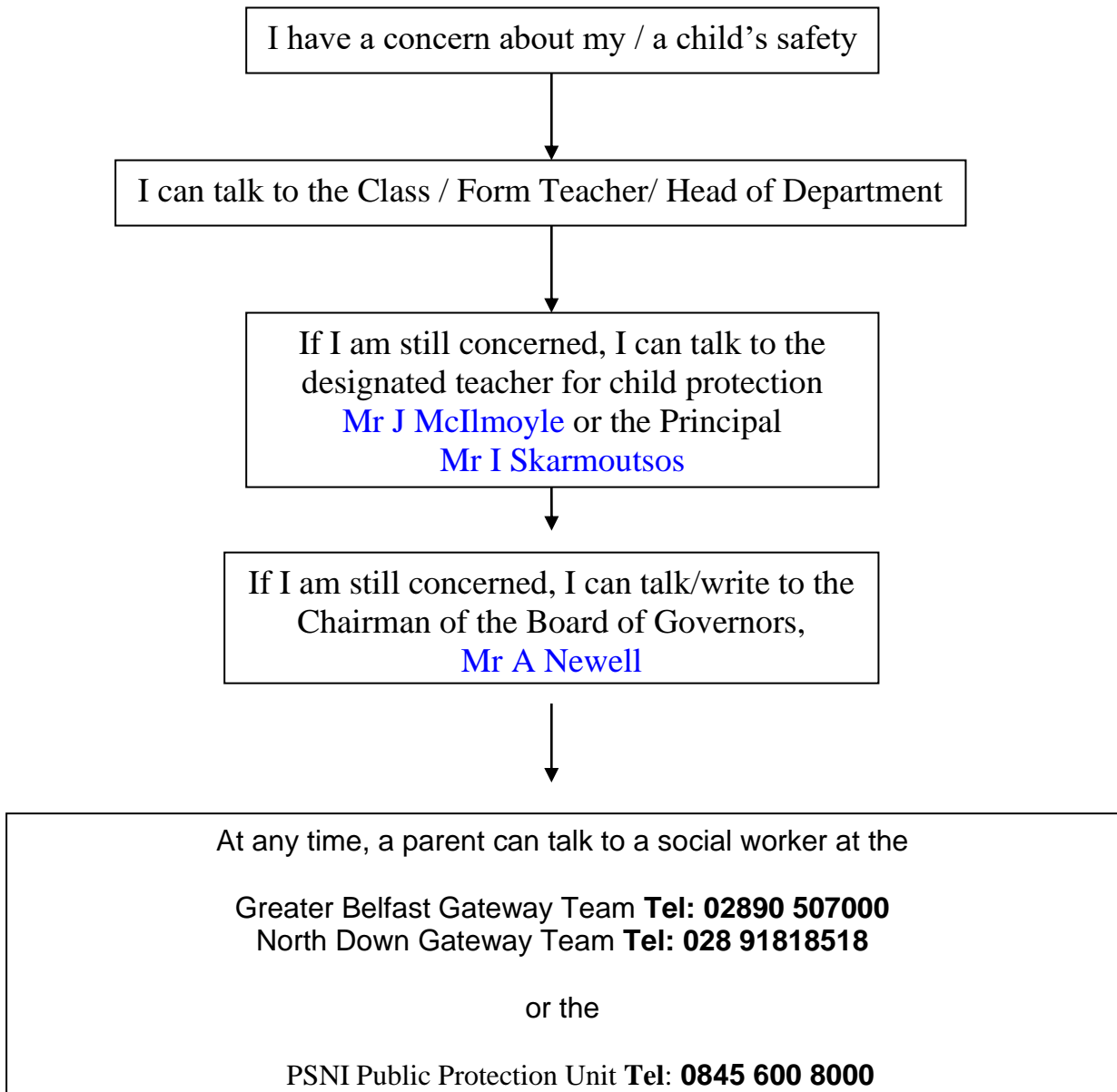
Signature: _____

Date: _____

*** Record actual words used by the child/young person**

Appendix 2

How a Parent can make a Complaint

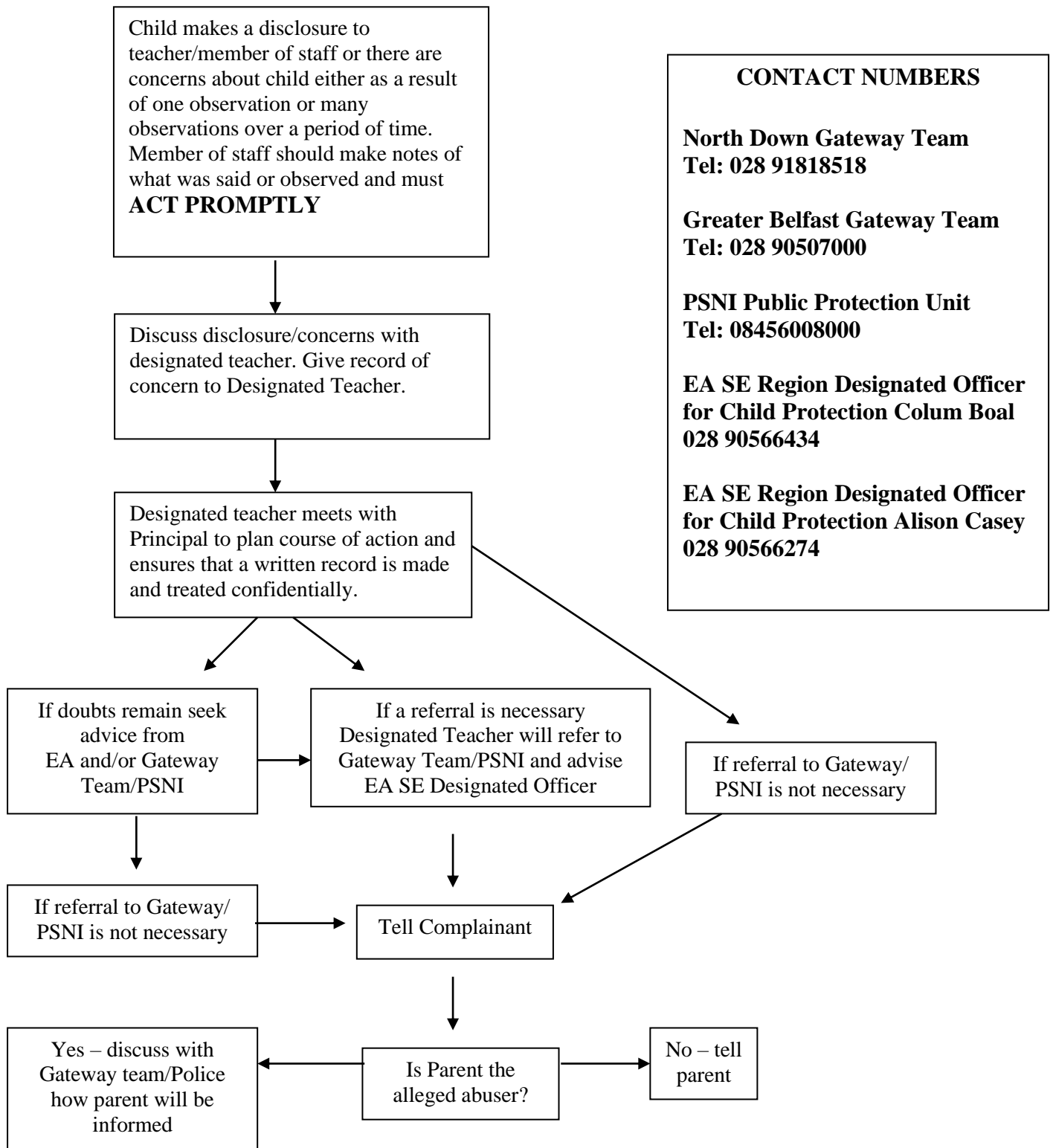


I can also talk to the Ombudsman – Freephone 0800 343 424 for details

A full copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is available from the School Office - 02890480071

Appendix 3

Procedure where the School has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff



Appendix 4

Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the school's staff

