



**Portrush Primary School  
Child Protection Policy  
Reviewed June 2015**

The Board of Governors of each school is required by the Department of Education to establish and maintain a policy on Pastoral Care / Child Protection which should be made known to all children, parents<sup>1</sup> and staff of the school.

This booklet outlines the means by which staff will protect and care for the children in Portrush Primary School.

Different categories of abuse are explained and the procedures the school will operate in the case of alleged or suspected abuse. It also contains guidance on the use of reasonable force to restrain or control pupils.

The information in the booklet will be kept under review and parents will be notified of any changes that are made.

### **Designated Teacher**

The Vice-Principal, Mrs J McNeill, is the Designated Teacher in charge of pastoral care and child protection. In her absence the Mrs M Cameron, the Deputy Designated Teacher, will act as the Designated Teacher. The Principal, DT and DDT will hold keys for access to all Child Protection records.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this document the expression "parent" in relation to a child includes a guardian and any person who has actual custody of the child.

### **Introduction**

The United Nations Convention on the "Rights of the Child" states that *"children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm; they must be given proper care by those looking after them."*

#### **( Article 19 )**

It also states that *"when adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what would be best for the child."* ( **Article 3** )

### **School Motto**

**"Together we shape our future"**

### **School Mission Statement**

Portrush Primary School recognises the unique and distinctive character of each individual pupil and aims for young people to achieve their potential. Each pupil will be provided with learning opportunities to develop as an individual, as a contributor to the economy and environment. The school will strive to equip pupils with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

### **School Ethos Statement**

In Portrush Primary School the welfare of every child is of paramount consideration and we endeavour to create a caring, happy, secure, supportive and stimulating environment where children can develop socially, emotionally and physically at their own rate.

## **Partnership with Parents**

We would remind parents of the importance of contact between home and school regarding the pastoral care of our children and we would request that parents inform teachers of changes in personnel collecting children from school or any external factors which may have an affect on the child in school.

We appreciate the support of parents in so many aspects of school life and one of these, helping out on school trips, now requires a change in procedures.

To ensure the safety of every child, parents who intend to help out in this way will have to undergo the vetting procedures of Access NI, which includes the carrying out of a criminal record search.

This vetting procedure is one means of protecting the children in our care and parents involved in youth clubs or church organisations will already have experience of this practice.

## **Responsibility of Non-Teaching Staff**

Non-teaching staff should immediately bring any signs of abuse to the attention of either the class teacher or the designated teacher. They should not talk to the children about their concerns, nor should they approach parents.

The same procedures should be followed in the event of a child disclosing to a member of the non-teaching staff.

## **Child Protection**

### **Categories of Abuse:**

Children may be abused by a parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer ( ie a person who has actual custody of a child such as a foster-parent or staff member in a residential home ), an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both. The abuse may take a number of forms, including:

**NEGLECT** - the actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child, or failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

**PHYSICAL INJURY** - actual or likely deliberate physical injury to the child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

**SEXUAL ABUSE** - actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE** - actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This is where it is the main or only form of abuse.

**GRAVE CONCERN** - where social and medical assessment indicates that there is significant risk.

## **Child Protection Procedures in Portrush Primary School**

### **STEP 1**

Teaching staff, classroom assistants and supervisory assistants will be made aware of the Categories of Abuse and their indicators.

### **STEP 2**

Any concerns will be reported to the Designated Teacher, Mrs J McNeill and a Child Protection Concern Sheet completed. The Principal will be notified.

Staff will be aware that they:

- must not investigate their concerns by questioning the child - only record factually what the child says
- must not investigate by removing the child's clothing - only record what physical evidence is clearly visible
- must not promise the child confidentiality

In the event of the Designated Teacher being absent then concerns should be notified to the Deputy Designated Teacher and a Child Protection Concern Sheet completed.

Complaints against members of staff should be notified in the same manner as above, except that:

- in the event of complaints being made against the Designated Teacher then concerns should be expressed to the Principal and a Child Protection Concern Sheet completed.
- in the event of complaints being made against the Principal then concerns should be expressed to the Designated Teacher and a Child Protection Concern Sheet completed. Two copies of the Child Protection Concern Sheet will be kept, one by the Designated Teacher and the other by the Principal.

If a complaint is made against a member of staff then that person will be told of the complaint. It will then be decided if it is necessary to complete a UNOCINI ( Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland ) form.

### **Step 3**

- The Principal ( unless the complaint is against the Principal ) will then report directly to NEELB's Designated Child Protection Officer.
- The Designated Teacher will report directly to NEELB's Designated Officer if the complaint is against the Principal.
- In the event of the complaint being against a member of staff then the Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be notified.

### **Step 4**

This will be dependent upon the advice given by NEELB's Designated Officer and upon the nature of the concern.

Normally Social Services will be notified by a UNOCINI and they will become the investigating body. ( In the case of an emergency, notification will be by telephone which will then be followed up by a UNOCINI as soon as possible. )

In more extreme cases if the child's safety is jeopardised, or a suspected crime committed, PSNI may have to be contacted.

## Step 5

Liaison between the school and Health and Social Services with follow up through Inter-Disciplinary Case Conferences.

### **Guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force to Restrain or Control Pupils**

These guidelines do not relate to the normal physical contact which may be made between pupil and adult<sup>2</sup>

eg helping the child change for PE or demonstrating techniques, helping with music or science activities, comforting a sick or distressed pupil, or giving first aid.

Rather these guidelines cover the eventuality of an adult having to use physical force to control or restrain a pupil.

It is anticipated that it will be very rare for such restraint to be exercised.

These guidelines set out the occasions when such restraint may take place and they refer to any adult in lawful charge of pupils during, or after the school day, on or off the school premises eg school outings or sports' visits.

Physical restraint or force will only be used in self defence or when:

A pupil is in danger eg	Near a roadside or other hazard Misusing equipment in a dangerous manner
A pupil is at risk of injury eg	Fighting Trying to leave school unofficially Causing criminal damage
A pupil refuses to cooperate eg	Refuses to obey an order from an adult thus putting themselves and others in danger Disrupts good order

Any force which is used will be the minimum required and will be dependent upon the age, sex, size and physical attributes of the pupil. This force may involve blocking a pupil's path, holding back or leading by the arm. This force will not include holding by the hair or ear, slapping or kicking.

In the event of any physical force being used by an adult then a detailed written report will be completed and given to the Pastoral Care teacher.

These reports will be kept in an Incident File and this will be reviewed annually by the Board of Governors. Records will be kept for 35 years.

## **Intimate Care**

Staff may find, especially with younger children or those with special educational needs, that certain levels of intimate care are required e.g. changing, toileting etc. If this is the case then where possible another adult should be present and the child encouraged to be as independent as possible. If a child requires intimate care then the child's parent or guardian will be notified. If a child has special needs then details of particular care required may need to be explained on the child's education or care plan. This will be done in consultation with the parents and any medical agencies that may be involved with a child's care plan. Written permission for intimate care will be requested when children start school and a record of this kept in the school office. When intimate care is given a record will be made in a book which again will be kept in the school office.

## **Use of Images**

Photographs and videos of children may be taken by staff in school for display purposes. If images are to be used externally then permission will be sought from parents and guardians for such use. This will be done on an annual basis.

## **Mobile Phones/Electronic Devices**

According to a number of sources, mobile phone & cyber bullying is on the increase. Text bullying involves a number of behaviours including:

- sending anonymous texts, making threats of violence
- name-calling
- giving out personal information that children and young people feel embarrassed about
- sending frightening or obscene images with a threat.

As the number of children who own a mobile phone/electronic device continues to rise, the problem is likely to increase further. Young people become very attached to their devices and take them everywhere. This means that the perpetrator can bully at any time of the day. Incidents of bullying using these devices can become very intense and the victim can feel that there is no let up.

Due to the misuse of such devices it has been decided to ban them in Portrush Primary School. There may be special occasions where such devices are permitted.

If children disclose that they are being subjected to mobile phone bullying, staff may need to help them to contact the appropriate help numbers. All the main mobile phone providers have a telephone number to ring to complain about bullying or the misuse of a mobile.

<sup>2</sup> Here adult means Principal, Teacher, Classroom Assistant, Supervisory Assistant, Caretaker, Crossing Patrol Personnel or any properly vetted volunteer.

## **Related Policies**

The following policies are also designed to protect your child in Portrush Primary School:

- *Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *Discipline Policy*
- *Drugs Policy*
- *Health Matters Policy*
- *Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy*
- *Pastoral Care Policy*
- *Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy*
- *Special Educational Needs/Disability Policy*

The Staff Code of Conduct is also included as an appendix in this policy.

***No concern about any child will be ignored in this school.***

We have been requested by the Department of Education to include the following contact numbers:

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline - 0800 800 500

Northern Ireland Childline - 0800 212 888

Childline UK - 0800 1111

# CHILD PROTECTION CONCERN SHEET

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Nature/Summary of Concern:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Designated Teacher informed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Principal informed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION TAKEN:

Date NEELB informed: \_\_\_\_\_

ADVICE GIVEN:

Date Social Services informed & contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date PSNI informed & Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# REPORT ON THE USE OF PHYSICAL FORCE

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Where and when the incident took place:

Witnesses:

The manner of the force used:

How the incident began and progressed:

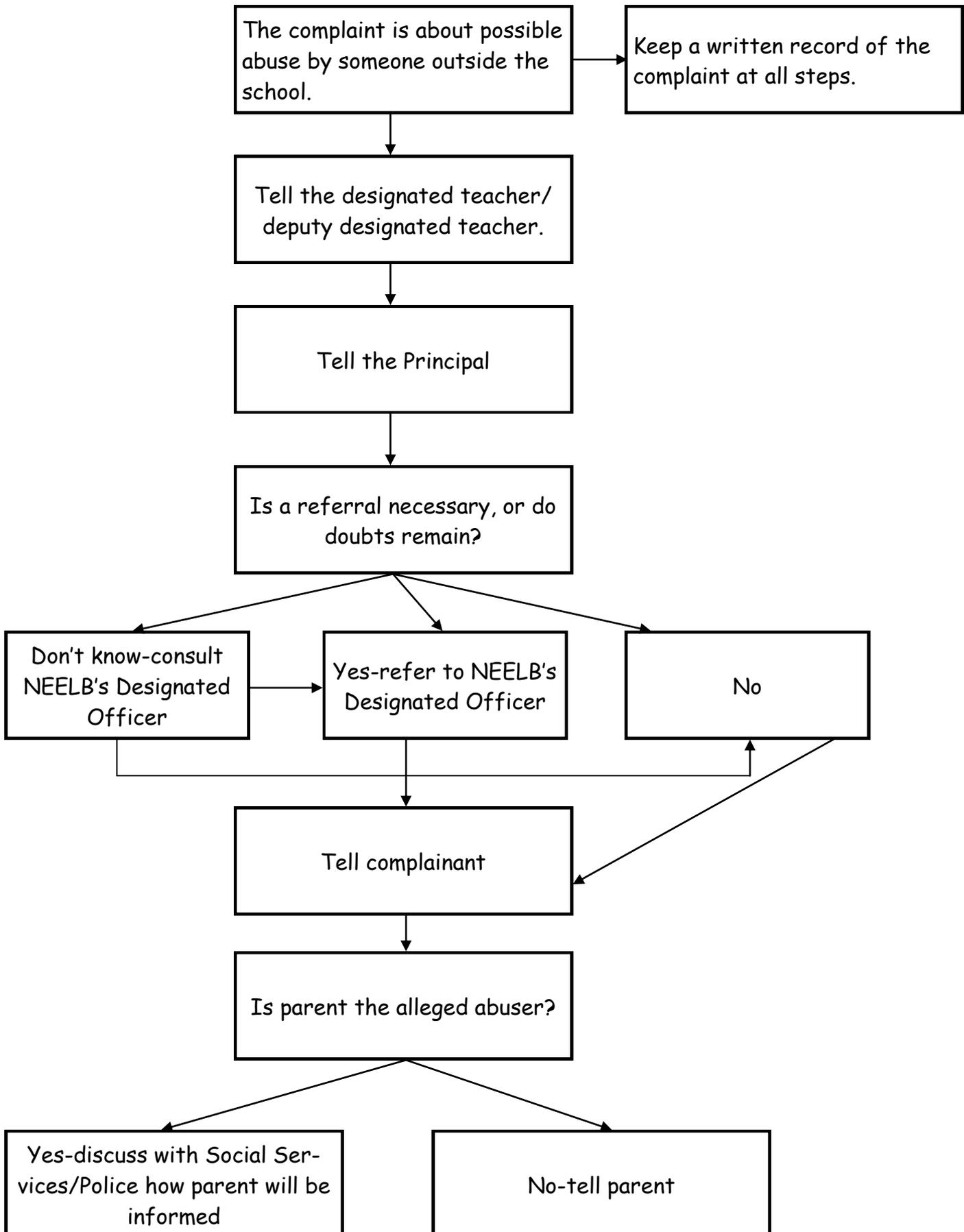
Details of apparent injury suffered by the pupil, or any other person, and of any damage to property:

Outcome of the incident:

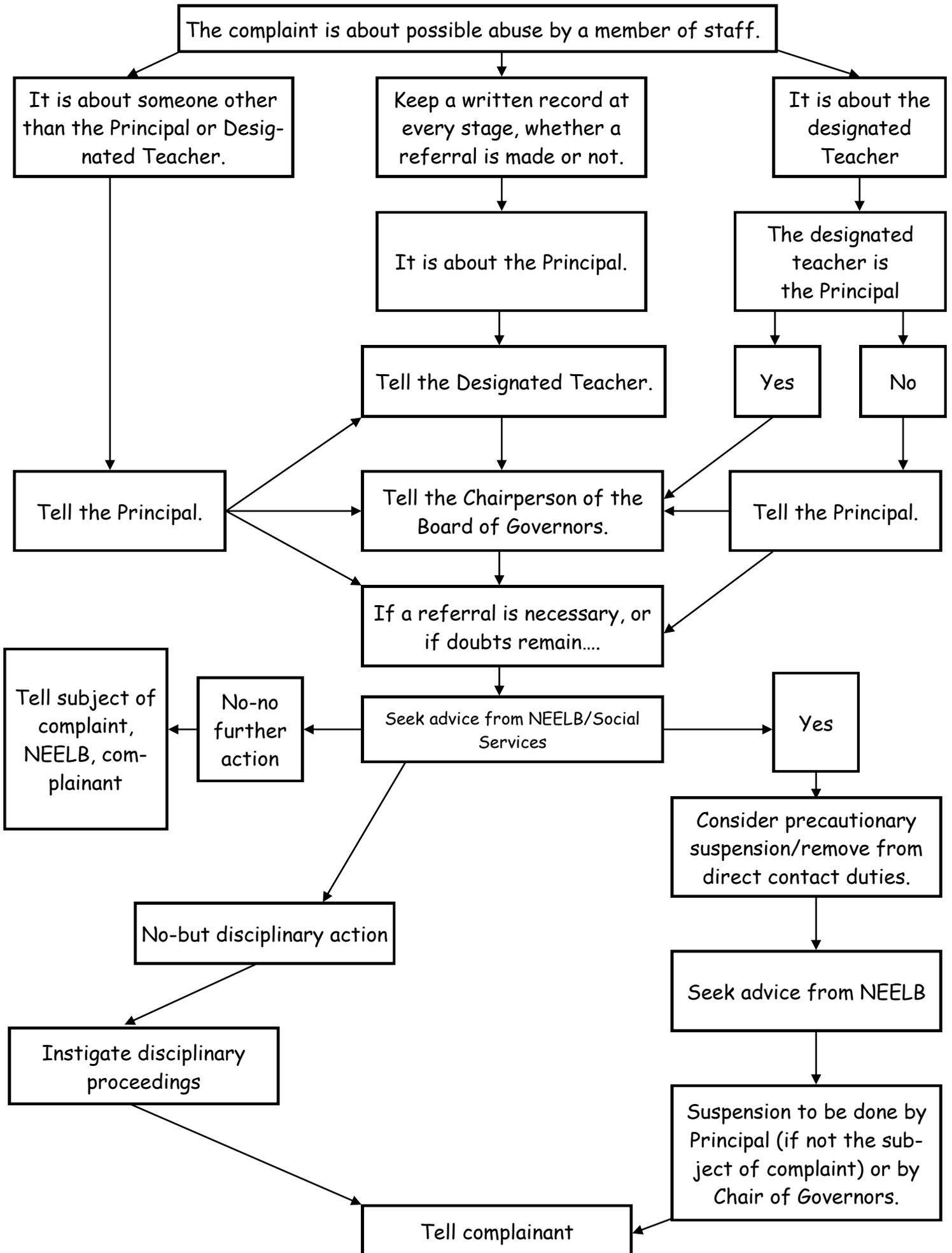
Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

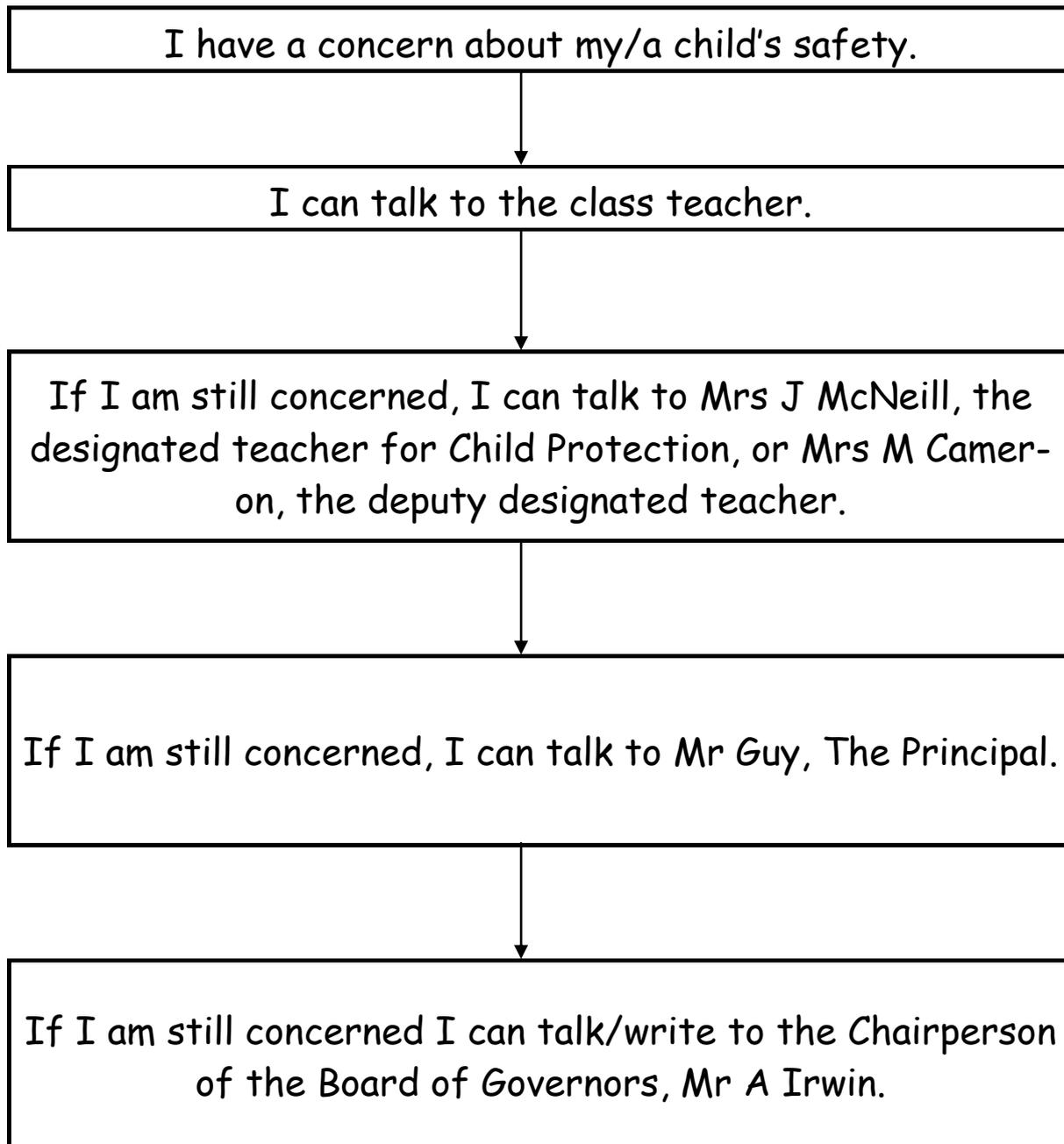
Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff:



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



How a parent can make a complaint:



# Portrush Primary School

Dear Parent /Guardian,

The school's Child Protection Policy states that:

*'Staff may find, especially with younger children or those with special educational needs, that certain levels of intimate care are required e.g. changing, toileting etc. If this is the case then where possible another adult should be present and the child encouraged to be as independent as possible. If a child requires intimate care then the child's parent or guardian will be notified. If a child has special needs then details of particular care required may need to be explained on the child's education or care plan. This will be done in consultation with the parents and any medical agencies that may be involved with a child's care plan. Written permission for intimate care will be requested when children start school and a record of this kept in the school office. When intimate care is given a record will be made in a book which again will be kept in the school office.'*

Please complete the slip below giving permission for 'intimate care' if the need arises for your child. This permission will only be requested once in your child's school career.

Yours faithfully,

***Designated Teacher for Child Protection***

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Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for 'intimate care' to be given to my child if the need arises.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian)

## **Glossary:**

DENI	Department of Education, Northern Ireland
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
NEELB	North Eastern Education & Library Board
UNOCINI	Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland A form completed by Social Services if a child is at risk.

